



# Initiatives to Support Ottawa's Economy



The City of Ottawa is seeking input and ideas with respect to how we can further support our business community.

While the City has a number of economic development initiatives currently underway, we want to develop new short-term strategies in collaboration with the business community to help us weather the current downturn and position Ottawa for continued prosperity.

For your reference, we have prepared this document to highlight initiatives we have completed recently as well as those we are currently exploring. It would be appreciated if you reviewed these lists and provide any comments directly to Ian Duff, Manager, Economic Development.

## RECENTLY COMPLETED INITIATIVES

- **Reduced building permit fees** by 5.6 per cent, in response to the current economic downturn and in an effort to encourage more building and renovations
- Approved a list of **ready-to-go infrastructure projects** that has been submitted to the federal government for consideration under the economic stimulus package
- Completed the development of **broadband access** to all urban and rural areas of Ottawa, which has been shown to improve sales and profitability, help retain businesses in their present locations, and facilitate telecommuting for rural residents
- Partnered with the Ottawa Business Journal and Canadian Association of Family Enterprise to plan and host the

2<sup>nd</sup> annual **Ottawa Business Summit**, a one day learning and networking event attended by over 250 local entrepreneurs and business owners

- Partnered with the private sector to develop the **Orléans Town Centre and Shenkman Arts Centre**, increasing capacity for arts and culture businesses, and their integration with the general business community
- Facilitated the preparation of **major event bids** for Ottawa (e.g. FIFA U20 World Cup Canada, IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships)



## CURRENT INITIATIVES

- Working with the Ottawa business community and economic development leaders to refresh **Ottawa's Economic Strategy**
- Partnering with Carleton University to deliver the **"Lead to Win"** program, aimed at growing new jobs through the development of startup companies.
- Developing a **promotional campaign** in partnership with the downtown BIAs to support BIAs who were affected by the transit strike and the downturn in the local economy. The campaign would seek to restore public interest

## CURRENT INITIATIVES (continued)

- and awareness of the advantages of shopping, visiting and obtaining services in the downtown area.
- Redeveloping the \$180 million **Ottawa Congress Centre** (now known as the Ottawa Convention Centre), including an investment of \$40 million by the City
  - Partnering with Algonquin College to house the new **Centre for Construction Trades and Building Sciences**, which will expand the college's training capacity, and help address the city's chronic shortage of skilled trades people
  - Partnering with La Cité collégiale to develop a new **Centre of Innovation** (Centre des métiers) campus in Orléans. This new skills training facility will also enhance the City's workforce capacity in the building trades.
  - Developing a "**Home-based Business Guide**," which provides valuable information on starting and growing a home-based business in Ottawa
  - Expanding the outreach capacity of the OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre by opening **kiosks** in Kanata and Barrhaven. The kiosks consist of free information and printed materials, as well as a smart computer terminal that allows clients to interact live with an Entrepreneurship Centre client service assistant via video teleconference.
  - Partnering with the OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre to deliver **iProfit, a business mentoring program** aimed at businesses who are experiencing critical challenges or business opportunities. The program matches clients with a

roster of volunteer mentors who provide advice and real answers.

- Creating the "**Surviving and Thriving**" program with the OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre. This program will provide a suite of content, tools and resources leveraging existing Entrepreneurship Centre resources to address critical business needs during these difficult economic times.
- **Helping foreign businesses** acclimate to the North American market with incubation-type services and facilities in an effort to encourage subsequent Ottawa business investments
- Closing existing **investment leads** and continuing to generate new ones



## INITIATIVES BEING EXPLORED

- Conducting a series of "**Doing Business with the City**" workshops for Ottawa's business community
- Opportunities to assist local small- and medium-sized enterprises with **access to capital**
- Investigating and understanding how the City could play a more active role in supporting the **Angel/Venture Capital funding** communities
- Developing a web-based **site location tool** for businesses and investors that will provide accurate demographic and market data
- Promoting **broadband applications** for improved productivity, and the development and capture of new market opportunities
- Continuing efforts to help Ottawa businesses capture federal **Industrial Regional Benefit** obligations, which are commitments of foreign suppliers to the Canadian Government to purchase goods and services, or invest money, in Canadian companies
- Facilitating **major project investments** throughout the community (e.g. stadium development, innovation hub, etc.)

If you have any immediate thoughts about the initiatives the City could undertake in the next 12 months, please contact:

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