



## Municipality of North Grenville

**Report No.**  
CAO-004-2020

**File No.**  
C7-FIN

<b>Agenda Date:</b>	<b>May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 - Council Meeting</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>COVID-19 Business Support Programs</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Appendix 1: Response Reserve &amp; Cost Containment Fund Allocation Plan</b> <b>Appendix 2: Business Support Programs Report</b>

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The following recommendation is provided for Council's consideration:

**That Council direct Staff to move forward with the recommended Business Support Programs as outlined in Staff Report CAO-004-2020.**

### **BACKGROUND**

On April 1, 2020 Council approved the creation of the COVID-19 Response Reserve in the amount of \$960,000 for use to offset unbudgeted expenses experienced by the Municipality related to the COVID-19 pandemic (**Appendix 1**). On April 08, 2020 Council allocated \$150,000 of the COVID-19 Response Reserve for the development of a business support program.

The Economic Development Division, as part of the development of the business support program, has engaged with the local business community to identify effective support initiatives specifically designed to provide assistance businesses during this period of local and provincial emergency. The discussions were focused on both short and long-term initiatives to provide assistance during the current period of economic and community restrictions as well as for the extended period of economic recovery that will follow the lifting of the Provincial order.

The engagement program included the creation of a Business Support Group comprised of local business leaders and business support agencies to assist the Municipality in the development the COVID-19 business support programs. The Business Support Group consists of representatives of the following business groups:

North Grenville Chamber of Commerce  
Old Town Kemptville BIA  
North Grenville Business Builders  
Leeds Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre  
Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation  
Eastern Ontario Women in Business  
CSE Consulting

Additionally, the Municipality has been working closely with the Economic Development Department for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

The Business Support Group meetings have been successful both in helping the Municipality understand the concerns of various business sectors within our community, and, in bringing together business leaders to share ideas, identify potential solutions and discuss the effective use of know best practices to develop meaningful and effective support programs in support of our local business community.

## **ANALYSIS**

As the Province continues to execute the reopening of the economy, the business support programs will be in place to assist businesses in transitioning to the new normal. The programs will support businesses as they reconfigure their companies and reinvent their activities. The programs have been designed to assist businesses survive the short-term economic impact, recover as restrictions are phased out, and return to prosperity.

The Business Support Group has developed the attach Business Support Programs Report that outlines the recommended support programs for Council's consideration (**Appendix 2**).

The following is a summary of the recommended action items:

### **Love NG Website - \$10,000**

The LoveNG website was launched on March 30th with the aim to encourage North Grenville residents to support local by providing them the operating status of local businesses. Staff will continue to work with the business community to determine how the site can be used to market and support our businesses.

### **Webinars - \$5,000**

The Municipality will be hosting a series of educational webinars. The first webinar was hosted on May 11<sup>th</sup> and focused on repositioning your business for recovery. Future webinars will cover topics such as available programming/insurance/financing, and mental health. The topics will be decided bases on the current needs of the business community.

### **Virtual Tour - \$20,000**

A virtual business tour that will showcase and market our local business community. The tour will give customers the ability to virtually visit our local businesses. The program will also aim to help businesses improve their online presence.

### **Marketing Strategy - \$50,000**

Development of a Marketing Strategy that will focus on promoting spending in North Grenville as businesses re-open. It will target both locals and non-locals. We will work collaboratively with the Regional Tourism Organization 9 (RTO9) and the County to align with their promotion of the region.

### **Local Currency - \$10,000**

An "NG bucks"/gift certificate program that would allow people to purchase bucks that can only be used at local businesses. The program would be administered in partnership with the BIA and Chamber of Commerce.

### **Buying Local Partnerships**

This program would involve working with industry partners (school board, hospital) to encourage local procurement. This would be implemented once most businesses have re-opened.

### **PPE and Safety Support**

The aim of this program will be to work with businesses to help them get the information and supplies required. This would include collecting and distributing information, as well as looking into the purchase of bulk PPE orders.

The budget for these programs will come from the \$150,000 Response Reserve that has been allocated to business support programs. The total budgeted amount for the recommended programs is \$95,000. The additional \$55,000 will be used to develop future support programs as the needs of the businesses change over the next 6 months. As new support programs are identified, they will be brought before Council for review and consideration.

Working together, local businesses, community members, elected officials and Municipal Staff will continue to implement actions to mitigate the negative outcomes of the COVID-19 outbreak and work towards a more resilient future.

### **FINANCIAL/STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

The budget for these programs will come from the \$150,000 Response Reserve that has been allocated to business support programs.

### **LINK TO COUNCIL WORK PLAN**

The recommended support programs will help to contribute towards the achievement of the following strategic goals set out in Council's work plan:

- 1) North Grenville is an attractive place to set up businesses
- 2) Increase the NG commercial base through strategic investments in community driven economic growth
- 3) Explore development that enhances tourism

#### **Prepared by:**

Original Signed By

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**Matt Gilmer**  
**Economic Development Officer**

#### **Reviewed and Submitted For Council consideration by:**

Original Signed By

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**Gary Dyke**  
**CAO**



# Municipality of North Grenville

**Report No.**  
CAO-002-2020

**File No.**  
C7-FIN

<b>Agenda Date:</b>	<b>April 8, 2020 – Special Council Meeting</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>COVID-19 Response Reserve &amp; Cost Containment Fund Allocation Plan</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>N/A</b>

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Staff Report CAO-002-2020 be received;

And Further That Council approve the Allocation Plan for the funds in the COVID-19 Response Reserve and the funds identified in the COVID-19 Cost Containment Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

On April 1, 2020 Council approved the creation of the COVID-19 Response Reserve through the transfer of approximately \$960,000 for use to offset unbudgeted expenses experienced by the Municipality related to the COVID-19 pandemic and also for the development of community and business support programs. The funds for the Response Reserve came from the deferral or cancellation of capital investment projects slated for 2020.

In addition to the creation of COVID-19 Response Reserve, Staff have implemented a Cost Containment Plan (referenced in Staff Report CAO-001-2020) to further offset forecasted expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As noted in report CAO-001-2020, the forecasted savings through the Cost Containment Plan total approximately \$400,000.

These two municipal initiatives have created funding support for the COVID-19 pandemic response in the amount of \$1,360,000.00.

The following report has been prepared in consultation with the Director of Finance to provide Council with an outline of the potential allocation of the above noted funds. It is noted that the allocation plan and the forecasting of expenditures is based on a 90 day timeline to the end of June 2020.

## **ANALYSIS**

For the purposes of clarity, the fund allocation plan has been broken down into the following categories:

- i. Revenue loss off-set - **\$135,000**

This represents the projected rental revenue loss due to the closure of municipal facilities.

ii. Unbudgeted operating expenses - **\$75,000**

Allocations includes expenses related to:

- one-time technology upgrades to support the holding of virtual Council meetings
- increased media buys and communication initiatives
- new signage for municipal outdoor facilities in response to closure Orders

iii. Community Support Programs - **\$290,000**

Community support program allocation is further broken down as follows:

- Waiving of new penalty and interests on deferred property tax accounts  
**\$110,000**
- Extra Security measures (contracted security services) for the protection of closed businesses<sup>1</sup>  
**\$30,000**
- Enhancement of the 'Love NG' marketing and promotion program in support of local businesses<sup>1</sup>  
**\$150,000**

The total requested allocation of funds at this time is **\$500,000.00**; leaving a balance of \$860,000 in available COVID-19 related funds.

It is noted that municipal staff are engaged with members of the community as well as the local business community on an ongoing basis to explore other potentially needed community support initiatives during this period of local and provincial emergency. As new support programs are identified, they will be brought before Council for review and consideration.

### **FINANCIAL/STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

This item has been identified in the current budget:      Yes ☐      No **X**      N/A ☐

This item is within the budgeted amount:      Yes ☐      No **X**      N/A ☐

Staffing implications, as they relate to implementing Council's decision on this matter, are limited to the existing staff complement and applicable administrative policies as approved by Council.

### **LINK TO COUNCIL WORK PLAN**

The establishment of this Emergency Reserve to respond to COVID-19 is part of responsibly managing the resources and tax base of North Grenville by ensuring the Municipality pre-emptively has sufficient, dedicated resources available to provide necessary measures.

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<sup>1</sup> These initiatives were identified as required through discussions with local business organizations.

**Prepared and submitted by:**

Original Signed By

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**Gary Dyke,  
Chief Administrative Officer**



# BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMS



On April 1, 2020 Council approved the creation of the COVID-19 Response Reserve through the transfer of approximately \$960,000 for use to offset unbudgeted expenses experienced by the Municipality related to the COVID-19 pandemic and also for the development of community and business support programs. Municipal staff are engaged with members of the community as well as the local business community on an ongoing basis to explore other potentially needed community support initiatives during this period of local and provincial emergency. As new support programs are identified, they will be brought before Council for review and consideration.

The Business Support Group (BSG) formed to identify options for business support programs (BSP) for Council to review. The programs (except the security and funding program) would come from a dedicated \$150,000 pot.

### **Group Members**

Ann Max, Eastern Ontario Women in Business

Deron Johnston, Old Town Kemptville BIA

Heather Lawless, Grenville Community Futures Development Corporation

Robert Salm, North Grenville Business Builders

Terri-Lyn McEvoy, North Grenville Chamber of Commerce

Tracy MacDonald, CSE Consulting

Wendy Onstein, Leeds Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre

William Pearl, Steven Creek Shutter Company

Matt Gilmer, Economic Development Staff

Hillary Geneau, Economic Development Staff



Since the start of the pandemic, the Economic Development team has been working to connect with the business community to support them. The following programs have been implemented.

Creation of the  
business support  
portal on Invest site

Business calls to  
connect businesses  
with available  
programs

Coordination with  
County, OMAFRA,  
and business  
groups

Launch of #LoveNG  
campaign

Business follow-up  
from County survey

The aforementioned group was formed to suggest additional programs to support businesses. All programs are to support the following two goals:

1. Support businesses through the challenges they face in the pandemic
2. Promote and support businesses as the economy opens as we come out of the pandemic

The following programs have been suggested, and are being put before council for approval. A summary chart is below, and each program is laid out in more detail afterwards. The following timelines are used to indicate the suggested starting date of the program:

- Short-term: immediately to 1 month out
- Mid-term: 1-3 months out
- Long-term: 3 months out

The suggested programs and respective budgets would utilize \$95,000 of the \$150,000 allotted (excluding the security and funding program which are/would be separately budgeted).

Program	Description	Goal	Budget	Status	Timeline
Love NG Website	A website dedicated to showcasing the operating status of NG businesses.	Goal 1 & 2	\$10,000	Operating with ongoing updates	In progress
Security	A security firm was hired to patrol the commercial areas in the evenings.	Goal 1	\$30,000	Operating	In progress
Webinars	A webinar series to review topics pertinent to businesses.	Goal 1 & 2	\$5,000	First webinar May 11, more to follow	In progress
Funding	Funding could be distributed by the municipality in a variety of ways to cover different needs of businesses.	Goal 1 & 2	TBD	Council to review	Mid-term
Virtual Tour	A virtual tradeshow would showcase local businesses.	Goal 1 & 2	\$20,000	Council to review	Mid-term

Program	Description	Goal	Budget	Status	Timeline
Marketing Strategy	A marketing strategy would largely be facilitated by a hired company	Goal 2	\$50,000	Council to review	Short-term
Local Currency	An "NG bucks"/gift certificate program would allow people to purchase bucks that can only be used at local businesses.	Goal 2	\$10,000	Council to review	Mid-term
Buying Local Partnerships	Work with industry partners (school board, hospital) to agree to purchase locally	Goal 1 & 2	None	Council to review	Long-term
PPE & Safety Support	Work with businesses to help them get the information and supplies required	Goal 1 & 2	TBD	Council to review	Short-term

These first three programs are already in implementation.

### **Program: Love NG Website**

The LoveNG website was launched March 30th with the aim to encourage North Grenville residents to support local by providing them the operating status of local businesses. Limited Facebook ad campaigns have also been running to support it as well as promotion on other social media platforms.

#### **Considerations**

- Adding a map
- Use after pandemic

### **Program: Security**

A security firm was hired to patrol the commercial areas in the evenings. Their contract is in place until July 15th. So far the program has been successful in resolving several minor issues.

#### **Considerations**

- Extension of contract

### **Program: Webinars**

The Municipality will be hosting a series of webinars. The first will be focused on repositioning your business for recovery on May 11. Future webinars will cover topics such as available programming/insurance/financing, and mental health.

#### **Considerations**

- How many sessions to run?
- Getting appropriate presenters
- Low attendance at first webinar



## Program: Funding

Many municipalities have created funding programs to support their businesses through these challenging times. Most are facilitated by single or upper-tier municipalities. Programs range from giving money for broad use such as covering operating expenses to a more narrow focus such as transitioning a business to an online model.

### Partners

Businesses  
Business Groups

### Budget

TBD

### Timeline

Mid-term

## Considerations

- There are a few options for providing funding to businesses:
  - CIP: this would require the province altering how CIPs work
  - Pulling CIP or using other budget: this money could be either funneled to a not-for-profit organization (GCFDC) or used to pay for services directly (web design, training, etc)
- Municipal funding should be structured as to avoid excluding recipients from other funding (CEBA, CERB, etc.)
- Who should the funding be geared to (ie. those that cannot access current programs?)
- Businesses have noted forgivable funding would be best

## Program: Virtual Tour

A virtual tradeshow would showcase local businesses. Coordination could be done with staff and other parties that organize similar in-person events.

### Partners

Businesses  
Business Groups

### Budget

\$20,000  
from LoveNG  
Fund

### Timeline

Mid-term

## Considerations

- How will this be done? What platform? How is each business showcased?
- What is the capacity of businesses to partake (tech set-up)?
- How to work with and avoid duplication of others that do this (Shop Local Showcase, Meet Me on Main Street vendor show case)
- Work with local media (eg. radiothon, digital ads)
- Could just be social media takeovers one a week

# Program: Marketing Strategy

A marketing strategy would largely be facilitated by a hired company, and could contain several components including:

- Continued LoveNG messaging
- Window clings
- Promotion of day trips
- Giveaway packages
- Co-op paper ad buys
- Add a call to action for the #LoveNG campaign eg. Shop Local Pledge
- Made in North Grenville campaign

This campaign would focus on promoting spending in North Grenville as businesses re-open. It would target both locals and non-locals. We would also work collaboratively with our Regional Tourism Organization 9 (RTO9) to align with their promotion of the region.

<b>Partners</b> Hired Contractor Business Groups RTO9	<b>Budget</b> \$50,000 from LoveNG Fund	<b>Timeline</b> Short-Term
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## Considerations

- Procurement policy
- Who would be the steering committee to provide input?

## Program: Local Currency

There are two options for running this program:

1. Isolated Giveaway: this would involve giving out the local currency to encourage people to shop local. An example was done in Prescott, \$2,500 was given out with a date to be used by and \$1,800 was used.
2. Ongoing System: this would involve setting up a system for people to buy currency to use or give as a gift. An example of this is done in Downtown Brockville, they sell \$15k-25k a year.

### Partners

Businesses  
Business Groups

### Budget

\$10,000  
from LoveNG  
Fund

### Timeline

Mid-Term

## Considerations

- Would need to onboard businesses, this would require time to reach out to all businesses
- Can all businesses participate (eg. home-based, virtual)
- Finance department to review feasibility if selling and depositing payments



## Program: Buying Local Partnerships

This program would involve working with industry partners (school board, hospital) to encourage local procurement. This would be done once most businesses have re-opened.

### Partners

Industry Leaders

### Budget

None

### Timeline

Long-term

## Considerations

- Internal buying procedures and procurement policy
- Analysis needed of industry needs and local availability of supplies

## Program: PPE and Safety Support

Many businesses have expressed concerns about the procedures they need in place to be able to re-open and operate safely. The aim of this program is to work with businesses to help them get the information and supplies required. This would include distributing collecting and distributing information, as well as looking into the purchase of bulk PPE orders.

### Partners

Businesses  
Business Groups  
Industry Experts  
County

### Budget

\$20,000  
from Love NG  
Fund

### Timeline

Long-term

## Considerations

- The County Economic Development team is creating a list of local suppliers
- Sharing correct information
- Availability of resources