

Norfolk County Economic Recovery Taskforce

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN



BUY
Norfolk



BUILD
Norfolk



INNOVATE
Norfolk



RECOVER
Norfolk

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The Taskforce

Led by the Norfolk County Economic Recovery Taskforce, this Economic Recovery Plan is the outcome of consultations and resulting project ideas emerging from engagement with several of the County's local business organization partners, including the Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), the Board of Trade, the Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Board (TEDAB), and the Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB). The Taskforce members include:

Carl Atkinson (Chair)

Michelle Kloepfer

Claire Senko

Trish Fournier

Anthony Massi

Doug Cadman (until October)

Chris Garwood (Staff Lead)

Jason Burgess

Brandon Sloan

Zvi Lifshiz

Kathy Laplante

Matt Terry

*Coordinating support by Nancy Patterson and Pat Duffy

This Economic Recovery Plan represents an *early phase* of a broader economic recovery planning process. The intent of this plan is to establish initial key project priorities and areas of focus, allowing the Taskforce get actions underway quickly and set up a framework to consider future ideas.

Together We Are Undeniably Norfolk

“We need to do more to help our local businesses during these tough times. The impact of COVID-19 on the local economy has been widespread, affecting everything from our smallest businesses to our large agricultural and manufacturing companies. Through collaboration between government, industry and the not-for-profit sectors, acting as one team, we can deliver innovative and bold solutions that are tailored to supporting business recovery and resilience, and building a strong future for Norfolk.”

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BUY Norfolk

Actions aimed at promoting “Buy Local” and supporting local small businesses in efforts to increase sales

Action	Description	Status	Timeline
Online Marketplace	A virtual marketplace solution that will allow individuals to search for and possibly purchase products from multiple local retailers on one website. Additionally, investigate options for a shared logistics/product delivery solution that would allow retailers to pool resources and be competitive with large online retailers in terms of delivery speed and cost.	New Program	Short-Term
Digital Services Squad	The County has recently partnered with the Digital Main Street Ontario program to create a Digital Services Squad in Norfolk County, which will help small downtown businesses use digital technologies to adapt to a rapidly changing environment and become more resilient and competitive as the economy recovers. The squad will assist with a number of activities, including developing a Google My Business profile, enhancing social media presence and providing support for basic website and e-commerce set-up. The Squad will also assist qualified small businesses through the application process for a potential \$2,500 Digital Transformation Grant.	In-progress	Short-term
Branded Marketing Campaign	A branded County-led marketing campaign and website aimed at promoting Norfolk County, enhancing “Buy-Local” and “Visit-Local” messaging, highlighting business successes, and generally increasing consumer confidence. Additionally, leverage the ecommerce capabilities created by the online marketplace and digital services squad solutions, by launching non-local digital marketing campaigns that would enable Norfolk businesses to develop new markets.	In-progress	Short-Term
Covered and heated patios	Explore opportunities for covered and heated patios in Norfolk County’s downtowns, along with additional requirements that would allow for extended restaurant seating capacity during the shoulder seasons (and possibility the winter) to be ready for early spring 2021.	New Program	Short-Term



BUILD Norfolk

Actions aimed at creating the conditions for continued growth of the business sector and the community

Action	Description	Status	Timeline
Improved internet and mobile service in underserved parts of the County	Advocate and identify opportunities for improved broadband and cellular service in underserved parts of the County. This could include seeking opportunities to engage potential private sector partners, pursuing viable funding sources, and assessing feasibility of making County-owned lands available for telecom providers' communications equipment at a reduced cost.	In-Progress	Short-term to Long-term
Supports for businesses and developers applying for various approvals, permits, and licenses	Accelerate growth through investigation and implementation of various initiatives aimed at providing greater support for business and development applications. Investigations could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review development processes and customer service for efficiencies, predictability and "how can we help" • Implementation of support tools such as development standards, checklists, informational bulletins, instructional videos, self-serve portals, tracking and monitoring • Website with regular updates for regulatory requirements (particularly for COVID) 	In-progress	Short-term to Medium-term
Entrepreneurship Support Services (AKA the "Norfolk Collaborative")	Explore opportunities to build an entrepreneurship support ecosystem, with programs and services designed to assist small business owners and startup entrepreneurs. The ecosystem could provide services such as mentorship, domain-specific guidance (e.g. food labeling), identification and support for grant funding applications, business skills development, webinars on common business challenges, acceleration programs and more. The initiative could engage existing entrepreneurial and business support organizations in the community, to create a collaborative ecosystem that would support both struggling businesses (for example, assist entrepreneurs to pivot their business models during the pandemic), as well as enable the startup of new ventures.	New Program	Medium-term to Long-term
Infrastructure Priorities	In anticipation of possible Federal and Provincial funding, the taskforce identified shovel-ready infrastructure projects the should be prioritized in the event that infrastructure development funding is released. The taskforce identified the following 2 projects as having significant impact on economic recovery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of Haycock Way in the Judd Industrial Park – This project would support development opportunities in the industrial park, facilitating job creation, new business development, new capital investment and increased business levy. • The construction of the Inter-Urban Water Supply project – This project would address the current water capacity issues in parts of Norfolk County, thereby permitting new development that is on hold due to a development moratorium (in Port Dover) and removing future water capacity concerns related to growth. 	Shovel Ready	Dependent on Funding



INNOVATE Norfolk

Actions aimed at developing Innovative solutions to specific COVID-related business challenges

Action	Description	Status	Timeline
Digital collaboration portal for businesses and community-based organizations	<p>Working with partners, explore opportunities to provide technology solutions for connecting business and community organizations to one another through a common portal, providing a platform that helps to address challenges through the power of networks and collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local B2B procurement/supply chain • Shared procurement for volume-based purchases (eg PPE) • Transportation solutions for workforce to increase recruitment area • Labour sharing and matching • Volunteer matching • Sharing best practices for working through COVID-19 challenges • Connecting industry stakeholders to jointly work on ideas and challenges to common problems 	New Program	Medium-term
Training and workshops	<p>Support business owners with in-demand training for themselves and their employees, as well as for individuals looking to build new skills and be part of a work-ready labour pool. Seek opportunities to partner with post-secondary institutions, not-for-profit organizations and other training organizations.</p> <p>In a recent COVID-19 recovery survey, the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie found that up-skilling and re-skilling job seekers with emerging skillsets was identified as one of the top 5 recommendations to support businesses. The same survey found that the top 5 skills that have increase in demand are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptability/Flexibility • Communication Skills • Resilience • Teamwork/Interpersonal Skills • Customer Relations 	New Program	Short-term
Central COVID-19 Resources and Information Portal	<p>Develop a COVID-19 information portal that provides reliable and up-to-date information including listings of Provincial and Federal funding and relief programs, easy to understand Federal/Provincial/Health Unit COVID-related rules and regulations, and other resources as the pandemic continues to evolve.</p>	New Program	Short-term



RECOVER Norfolk

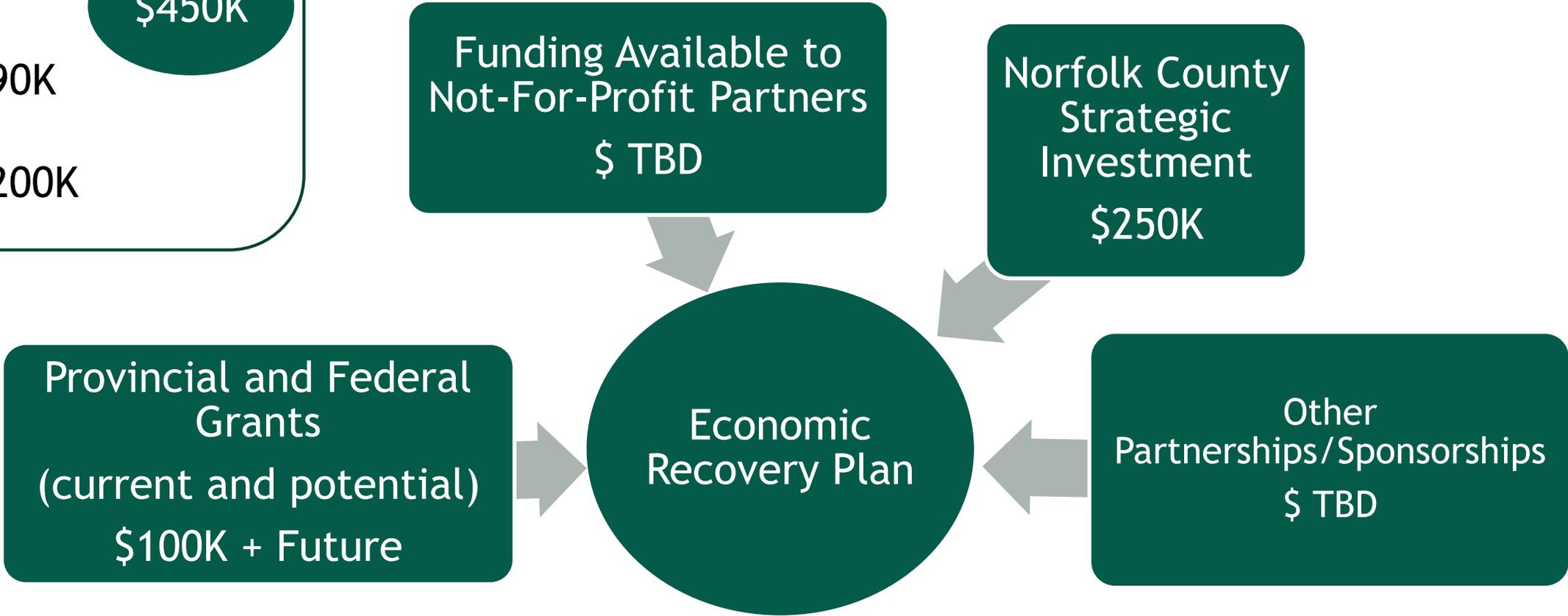
Actions aimed at funding community-based not-for-profit organizations, to support industries that have been most impacted by COVID-19 (reviewed through Economic Recovery Taskforce)

Action	Description	Status	Timeline
Downtown Stimulus Fund	<p>Investigate the possibility of establishing a Downtown Stimulus Fund, with defined criteria, for the purpose of enabling strategic initiatives that support and enhance economic vibrancy in Norfolk County's downtowns. Funding would be available to Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, BIAs, other not-for-profit organizations and may include businesses in partnerships with the municipality. Project examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotating pop-up stores, mural projects, small business supports • Downtown Currency (gift cards that can be used at participating retailers) 	New Program	Medium-term
Arts & Culture Recovery & Resilience Fund	<p>Investigate the possibility of establishing arts & culture recovery and resilience fund, aimed at utilizing and leveraging matching funding for the development of programming and/or support structures that will increase the sustainability of the arts & culture community and industry in Norfolk County. Project examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative events that leverage social distancing as a unique feature of the event rather than a drawback, including Music Strolls, Drive-in Events, and others. • Establishment of a local arts council, which can promote the local arts and culture "scene", seek to increase the amount of Provincial and Federal arts funding that is secured by Norfolk artists, provide shared services for artists, etc. 	New Program	Medium-term
Agriculture Industry Solutions Fund	<p>Investigate the possibility of establishing a program that would fund projects that address labour-related challenges in the Agriculture industry. Funding would be available to not-for-profit organizations including Chambers and Associations. Project examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation sharing applications that allow farmers to share the cost of transporting employees from a larger catchment area so as to increase the effective recruitment area • Labour sharing programs that increase labour options while aligning with the rules established by health authorities <p>Additionally, investigate options for establishing a program for reducing or waiving agriculture related development/permit application fees, including for bunkhouses.</p>	New Program	Medium-term
Incentives for increasing overnight accommodations and tourism destinations	<p>Investigate the potential to create incentives for increasing the amount of overnight accommodations and tourism destinations in Norfolk County. This would augment the various tourism-focused projects underway (or planned) in Norfolk County, funded through the FedDev Ontario Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF), such as development of a new Tourism Brand Strategy, establishing new tourism offerings for the shoulder and winter seasons, and implementing various promotional campaigns to capitalize on our diverse tourism assets.</p>	New Program	Medium-term

Leveraging

-  \$80K
-  \$80K
-  \$90K
-  \$200K

\$450K



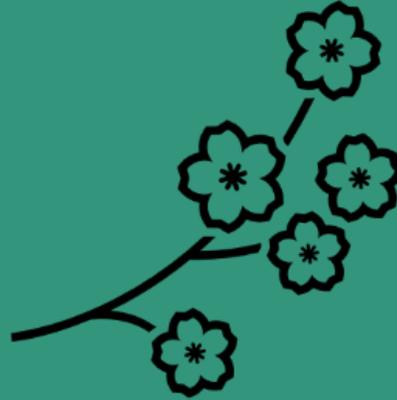
Implementation

Investigate Feasibility



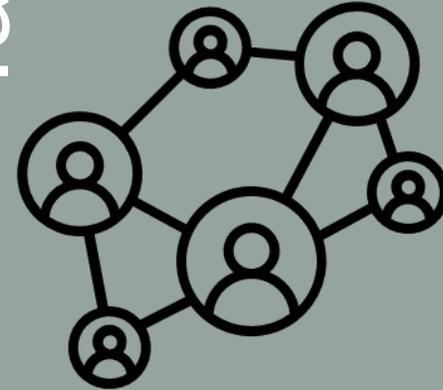
- Seek viable solutions
- Establish approach
- Framework

Explore Opportunities



- Identify and engage
- Explore and assess
- Partnerships

Take Action



- Short term (early 2021)
- Medium term (2021)
- Long Term (2021-2022)

Future Updates

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