

---

**Subject:** Economic Recovery Plan Update  
**Report to:** Planning and Economic Development Committee  
**Report date:** Wednesday, September 9, 2020

---

## Recommendations

1. That Planning and Economic Development Committee **RECEIVE** report ED 11-2020 Economic Recovery Plan Update for information.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to provide Planning and Economic Development Committee with an update on the progress on the Niagara Economic Recovery Plan.
- Niagara Economic Development continues to focus its work on supporting local businesses through actions developed in collaboration with the other Economic Development offices in the region as the Economic Rapid Response Team (ERRT).
- Niagara Economic Development is the Project Manager for the Economic Recovery Plan, but the action items included within the plan are owned by the ERRT members and requires the support from these members and business stakeholders across the region, where applicable, to advance and complete.
- The actions in the plan are under the pillars of Research and Information; Advocacy; and Resilience. Each pillar has Immediate, Short-Term and Long-Term actions. This time-line is meant to progress in succession with the Province's Framework for Business Re-opening as best as possible.
- Many of the actions in the plan have been initiated or are in-progress.

## Financial Considerations

All financial implications of advancing or completing the action items included within the Economic Recovery Plan are being funded by the operational budget of the Economic Development department. This was achieved by reprioritizing work plans to focus on economic recovery.

## Analysis

The Economic Recovery Plan has been through extensive stakeholder consultation with economic development professionals, Chambers of Commerce, Business Improvement Associations, industry associations, private sector businesses, academic institutions, Niagara Workforce Planning Board, Niagara Region staff, Employment Ontario providers, etc.

These stakeholders have reviewed and approved the plan and the action items included within it. For each action item in the plan, there will be a lead person/organization identified that will be responsible for advancing the priority. The actions will also outline a support person/organization(s) that will be contributing resources to drive the action forward to completion.

The actions in the plan are categorized by Immediate, Short-Term and Long-Term/On-going actions. The actions in the plan are intended to progress in conjunction with the Province's Framework for Re-opening.

We are currently in Stage 3 of Phase 2 of the Province's Framework. As a result, the actions in the plan under Immediate and Short-Term are the first actions to be initiated and/or completed. The actions under Long-Term will not be initiated until the Province provides direction that we will be entering into Phase 3. These action items will be monitored and assessed for relevance as we progress through the Province's Framework for Re-opening.

Below is a high-level overview of the action items from the plan that have been completed and/or initiated from the plan:

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
Engagement with stakeholders representing tourism, manufacturing, agri-business and Task Force	Completed, on-going communication	Nearly 10,000 private-sector businesses were consulted on their immediate needs through two (2) surveys. These businesses represented a variety of industry sectors in Niagara. Additional stakeholders consulted include support organizations representing tourism, agri-business and manufacturing in Niagara.

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
ERRT website - as tool for promotion, hosting business directory, showcasing success stories	Completed, on-going maintenance	The website is updated regularly with new announcements. A web form is being created and will be added to continually gather information from businesses on the pandemic's impact. This site will be used to show-case success stories in the future.
PPE Directory	Completed, on-going maintenance	The list includes NIA members and non-member companies from Niagara who produce different types of PPE or have pivoted to produce PPE. The directory has been built and is hosted on Economic Development's website at <a href="https://niagaracanada.com/covid-19/ppe/">https://niagaracanada.com/covid-19/ppe/</a>
COVID-19 Business Impact Surveys 1 and 2; prepare and circulate reports	Completed	The first survey was completed in April and the COVID-19 Business Impact Survey report was released in May with the results being widely circulated. The second survey was completed in May 2020 and the report was circulated to all stakeholders in June.
Encourage "buy local" with <a href="https://openinnlagara.com">OpenInNlagara.com</a> tool	Completed, on-going maintenance	The online OpenInNlagara.com directory was launched in May to allow businesses in Niagara a free channel to promote that they were open and/or offering modified services. Nearly 375 businesses are listed on the directory. A promotional campaign was launched at the same time as the tool to encourage sign-ups.
Partner with Venture Niagara on Regional Recovery and Relief Fund (RRRF)	Completed, on-going until funds are disbursed	Niagara Economic Development partnered with Venture Niagara CFDC to provide administrative, loan preparation and approval, and marketing support for the new fund. To date, approximately 40 businesses

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
		across Niagara have accessed the interest-free loan ranging from \$2,500 to \$40,000 to support their business's recovery efforts.
GTA Economic Development Alliance participation	Completed, bi-weekly attendance	Niagara Economic Development continues to represent the region on bi-weekly GTA Economic Development Alliance meetings. This group is jointly promoting the impact being felt by businesses across the GTA to the provincial and federal governments and serves a resource for discussion on recovery planning best practices.
Targeted BR&E, specific to businesses in distress	Initiated and on-going	Economic Development professionals in each community were provided the survey results for their municipality. The EDOs undertook follow-up efforts to connect with businesses that identified that they required additional support and/or were vulnerable to closure.
Business Reopening Calls in partnership with Public Health and Emergency Services	Initiated and conducted bi-weekly	The Economic Development division has partnered with Emergency Management and Public Health to facilitate weekly calls with business membership organizations across the region, including but not limited to Chambers of Commerce, BIAs, etc. The calls focus on relevant safety guidelines and documents that are meant to assist businesses in safely reopening. Calls are now moving to bi-weekly schedule.
Training and education for businesses, hosting online webinars	Initiated, running until Dec 2020 as pilot	Niagara Economic Development invested in the expansion of the Small Business Enterprise Centre services in Niagara to ensure all businesses have access to advisory support and

<b><u>Action(s)</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Progress</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
		training opportunities to build their business's resilience. Webinars will include business-planning, ecommerce, building their online presence, etc. The pilot runs from July 2020 – Dec 2020.
Supply chain replacement action	Initiated and underway	Local Economic Development representatives are surveying businesses in their community to identify what key supplies are being sourced and to explore opportunities for replacement (localized) suppliers. The surveying is underway and a report will follow.
Monitor and assess the impact of remote education on Niagara's economy and employment needs	Initiated	A proposal outline has been developed and Niagara Economic Development is working to identify a lead organization that can assist in executing this research. The research will look at all potential impacts including: real estate, transportation, housing, discretionary spending, labour market, etc.

There are additional action items in the Immediate and Short-Term timeframe that have not been advanced on to date. These items require coordination of external support or resources in order to advance. The ERRT is working with business stakeholders from across the region to identify resources available to action these items and will be reported on in a future update.

Regular updates on the progress of these actions will be provided to the Economic Recovery Plan Task Force members noted in the Economic Recovery Plan. The ERRT's Project Manager (Acting Manager of Strategic Initiatives, Niagara Economic Development) will manage this communication.

The Economic Recovery Plan will be branded as a stand-alone document and will be placed on the [ERRT website](#), as well as circulated to all Niagara stakeholders and GTA Economic Development Alliance members.

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

No alternatives.

## **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The ERRT Economic Recovery plan supports the Council Strategic Priority of “Supporting Businesses and Economic Growth”.

## **Other Pertinent Reports**

- ED 9-2020 - COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Economic Development
- ED 10-2020 COVID-19 Response and Business Continuity in Economic Development

---

### **Prepared by:**

Kelly Provost  
Acting Manager, Strategic Initiatives  
Economic Development

---

### **Recommended by:**

Valerie Kuhns  
Acting Director  
Economic Development

---

### **Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1                      Niagara Economic Recovery Plan (final version)