



Press Release- Bancroft This Week

Bancroft Launches Digital Service Squad to Help Small Businesses Adopt Online Technologies

Receives \$60,000 Digital Main Street Grant

September 04, 2020: Bancroft, ON. The Bancroft BIA has received a \$60,000 grant from Digital Main Street Ontario for a Digital Service Squad (DSS) to help downtown small businesses use digital technologies to adapt to a rapidly changing environment. Funding for the grant is provided by FedDev Ontario, a federal program. The Bancroft BIA worked together with several partners to obtain the grant: the Barry's Bay BIA, the Township of Wollaston, the Township of Killaloe, Hagarty & Richards, the Madoc Chamber of Commerce, the Maynooth Business Association, the Township of South Algonquin and the Township of Highlands East.

"The COVID-19 crisis has reshaped the way we do business. Now, more than ever, it is important for main street businesses to embrace digital technology and establish an online presence." Jody Didier Executive Officer Bancroft BIA.

Established in 2018, Digital Main Street Ontario was recently extended thanks to an investment of \$42.5 million from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) and \$7.45 million from the Ontario Ministry for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT). The nearly \$50-million investment will help small businesses across Ontario to pivot their operations to include online business models, regain lost revenue and become more resilient and competitive as the economy recovers. The Ontario BIA Association administers the DMS grant program to Ontario's main street small businesses.

"Ontario's small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and the keystone of our economic recovery. That is why we have invested in Digital Main Street to help these enterprises adapt to doing business in a digital world, and take advantage of the record number of people shopping online. Congratulations to the Bancroft BIA on the launch of your Digital Service Squad. The work you're doing with small businesses in your community will help keep our main streets vibrant, support good local jobs and help our economy come back strong." (The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)

Digital Service Squads are fundamental to Digital Main Street's design and success, with trained specialists who meet with small businesses, at no cost, to help them improve their online presence. The squads assist with a number of activities, including developing a Google My Business profile, enhancing their social media presence and providing support for basic website and e-commerce set-up. Squads will also assist qualified small businesses through the

application process for a \$2,500 Digital Transformation Grant, which includes an online assessment, online training modules and the development of a Digital Transformation Plan (DTP).

“The COVID-19 pandemic hit Ontario’s main streets hard, so Digital Main Street is needed more than ever,” said Kay Matthews, Executive Director of OBIAA. “We know that businesses that participated in Digital Main Street last year were better able to cope when the pandemic hit, and we’re excited that FedDev Ontario and Ontario are providing the funding to extend this important program to help small businesses in communities like Bancroft.

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ABOUT the Bancroft BIA

The Bancroft BIA Board of Management is a group of member-elected volunteers who oversee the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures in the area beyond that provided at the expense of the municipality generally and promotes the area as a business or shopping area, on behalf of the BIA members and in cooperation with the Town council and area stakeholders.

ABOUT OBIAA

OBIAA is the network that represents unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario. The Association supports and advocates on behalf of its members through the building and nurturing of strong relationships and partnerships. OBIAA is a leader in the development and sharing of information, tools, resources and best practices, and is the ONE voice on common issues.

ABOUT Digital Main Street

Digital Main Street is an innovative program designed to help main street small businesses achieve digital transformation. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, grants and Digital Service Squads teams of street-level experts that help main street small businesses manage and grow their operations through technology adoption. The program was originally created in 2016 by the Toronto Association of BIAs (TABIA) and a group of strategic partners including Google, MasterCard, Microsoft, and Shopify. For more information, please visit digitalmainstreet.ca.

ABOUT Digital Main Street Ontario

Digital Main Street was expanded across all of Ontario in 2018 with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs through the \$38 million Main Street Revitalization Initiative. It has been further extended through funding from FedDev Ontario and the Ontario Ministry for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT). The new round of funding includes \$42.5 million from the Government of Canada’s Regional Relief and Recovery Fund, a national recovery initiative delivered by Canada’s regional development agencies. With \$7.45 million from Ontario, this combined federal and provincial project will strengthen Ontario’s economic capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration,

and will promote the development of a strong and diversified Ontario economy. For more information, please visit digitalmainstreet.ca/ontariogrants

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