



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, June 1, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City expands Digital Main Street program to help local small businesses succeed online

Barrie, ON – The City of Barrie has received a \$155,000 grant from Digital Main Street to expand programming that will continue to help small businesses improve their online presence. The Digital Main Street program offers online learning platforms, structured training programs, and a team of digital experts (Digital Service Squad) that provide free digital support and advice to businesses.

“The Digital Main Street program has become an invaluable resource that has helped many local businesses in our community elevate their digital skills and strategy,” notes Stephannie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Development at the City of Barrie. “With the expansion of the program through this investment, we hope to continue to support businesses achieve digital transformation.”

“Small businesses are innovative and entrepreneurial, but often lack the resources to respond to change, be resilient, yet flexible,” said Kay Matthews, Executive Director, OBIAA. “OBIAA is delighted to work once again alongside the Digital Main Street team and is thrilled to support Barrie’s squad. The Digital Main Street program’s resources, grants, training, and Digital Service Squad assistance provide the means for more small businesses in communities across Barrie to adopt innovative ways, create new revenue streams, expand their markets, and face the future with optimism and confidence.”

In addition to access to one-to-one expertise from the Digital Service Squad, the expanded Digital Main Street program will offer one-day digital transformation boot camps on a semi-annual basis, and weekly sessions for businesses, led by Digital Service Squad members.

Businesses may be eligible for the program if, among other requirements, they have 1-50 employees and have a permanent ‘brick-and-mortar’ establishment.

Businesses are encouraged to contact the Small Business Centre of Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia by phone (705-720-2445) or email (smallbusiness@barrie.ca) to learn more about the Digital Main Street program and how to participate. Businesses can learn more about the program at “[Digital Service Squad](#)” via barriebusinesscentre.ca.

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ABOUT the City of Barrie

Barrie is an exciting, caring, and progressive community that 151,000 people call home. Situated 90 km north of the Greater Toronto Area on beautiful Kempenfelt Bay, Barrie offers an excellent lifestyle and multitude of recreational opportunities. We are committed to the growth of prosperity of Central Ontario’s leading City and most dynamic waterfront community.

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 a program that helps main street businesses achieve digital transformation. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, and our



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Digital Service Squad, a team of street-level team members who help main street businesses grow and manage their operations through technology.

Digital Main Street was created by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) with direct support from the City of Toronto. DMS is also supported by a group of strategic business partners, including Google, Mastercard, Shopify, Microsoft, Facebook, Intuit QuickBooks, Square, and Lightspeed. The program is delivered pan-Canada in support of small business thanks to the support of all three levels of government. www.digitalmainstreet.ca

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