



City of Orillia

# Sunshine Scroll

Business Development Quarterly Newsletter

## The Business Development Beat

### Finishing the year strong

As the leaves change colour and the temperature begins to drop, the Business Development, Culture and Tourism Division welcomes fall with no shortage of exciting initiatives, projects, events and partnerships. No matter what you're looking to do or see, Orillia's got you covered with its beautiful trails, parks, bustling businesses, and the unique arts and culture scene. Whether you're still sipping a pumpkin spice latte from a local café or well into your holiday shopping, there's much to discover within Orillia's business community. Over the course of the summer and fall, the Business Development Division along with local partners have come together to help local businesses accelerate and grow through a number of different supports.



On September 7, the City of Orillia, in partnership with the [Orillia Area Community Development Corp. \(CDC\)](#), the [Downtown Orillia Management Board \(DOMB\)](#) and the [Small Business Centre of Barrie, Simcoe County & Orillia \(SBEC\)](#), hosted the Orillia Area Neighbourhood Social, funded through the [My Main Street, Local Business Accelerator Program](#).

The Orillia Area Neighbourhood Social was open to all businesses in the Orillia area to connect with local business support organizations and like-minded business leaders and to learn about regional programs and initiatives available to small businesses. The social also highlighted recent successes from the My Main Street Local Business Accelerator Program and provided information about how eligible businesses in the Business Improvement Area (BIA) can tap into what the Local Business Accelerator program has to offer. For example, our Main Street Ambassador has met with 18 business owners to review custom market research reports and create marketing strategies and business opportunities based on this research. Furthermore, more than 15 businesses have implemented these marketing strategies and/or business opportunities with great success. If you are a downtown business owner who hasn't yet had the opportunity to meet with the Main Street Ambassador, Amber Elliott, please contact [aelliott@orillia.ca](mailto:aelliott@orillia.ca) or 705-330-6631 to learn more.

The Orillia Area Neighbourhood Social was not the only event that brought strong business leaders together. On September 13, the City of Orillia, along with Georgian College's [Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre \(HBECE\)](#) and [Creative Nomad Studios](#), launched the first XcelerateHER Orillia event – a business accelerator program for female-identifying business leaders. This six-part series kicked off with a launch event, and will continue to feature peer groups, mentorship, and support opportunities throughout the series. This unique program supports female entrepreneurs through a four-pronged approach: skills development, networking opportunities, workshops, and success stories. As attendees arrived, they were welcomed with an array of various drinks, delicious food, and strong female entrepreneurs who were ready to take the next step in their business journey. Guest speaker Jenn Walker from [Dive Heart First Coaching](#) captured the group with an engaging, thought-provoking, and inspiring conversation that left all feeling motivated to realize their full potential. Through conversations during the networking portion of the evening, attendees noted the value of learning about a finite versus infinite mindset, what successful and sustainable businesses do differently, and to always trust your intuition. With the success and popularity of this launch event, we expect a full house at the remaining XcelerateHER Orillia events in 2023. It's not too late to join us – the next XcelerateHER Orillia

event is set for January 12, 2022. For more information about XcelerateHER Orillia and future events, please visit the [XcelerateHER website](#) for a listing of upcoming XcelerateHER events. If you'd like to stay up to date on the most current information including details on the next event, join the [XcelerateHER mailing list](#). Although not without challenges, 2022 has proven to be a year filled with innovation, perseverance, strategic synergies and, most importantly, a renewed sense of optimism for the future.

For more information about the City of Orillia Business Development Office, please visit [businessinorillia.ca](#) or call 705-325-4900.

Ryan Lay, Manager of Economic Development

[Visit Our Website](#)



The Business Development Division has engaged with more than 315 investor contacts to date in 2022.

(January - October)



Through the My Main Street Local Business Accelerator Program, the City of Orillia has successfully had 10 businesses approved for \$10,000 each in non-repayable funding, resulting in Orillia giving out their maximum allowance of \$100,000.

(January - November)



The City of Orillia's Main Street Ambassador has successfully completed 150 one-on-one meetings to provide various supports to more than 75 downtown businesses.

(January - October)

## What's Happening

### Focusing on workforce development

The City of Orillia continues to work with the County of Simcoe, the City of Barrie, the Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board, and other regional business support organizations to address workforce development challenges to support local industries in attracting and retaining talent.

Existing workforce shortages have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The "Success is Made in Simcoe County" collaborative project helps address these workforce challenges and facilitate employment for the local and regional economy. The multi-faceted workforce attraction and retention project involves special initiatives that target employers and job



seekers with a primary purpose to collaboratively execute an industry-driven solution to address workforce shortages.

The project includes four key focus areas:

1. Employer Collaboration and Education: Learning and networking opportunities focused on best practices for workforce attraction and retention.
2. Talent Attraction: Hosting virtual job fairs to connect job seekers and employers.
3. Awareness Building/Marketing: Promotion of resources and success stories including stories showcasing businesses that have hired international students and newcomers.
4. Labour Market Research Study: Identifying local skills needed in key sectors and the associated training programs available, including an assessment of how education and training programs are designed locally to produce and retain graduates for key sectors.

Fall 2022 initiatives include developing the Labour Market Research Study, running an employer workshop to help hiring employers learn new strategies and best practices for attracting new talent, and further planning of future workforce attraction and retention opportunities that align with the “Success is Made in Simcoe County” project’s vision.

The City of Orillia is also a proud partner of [workinsimcoecounty.ca](https://workinsimcoecounty.ca), an interactive website featuring local jobs, career exploration tools, labour market data, and resources for job seekers and employers. One of the many unique features on the website is the [monthly job demand reports](#), which compile labour market data, such as the number of active jobs each month, top employers, hiring trends over time, and more.

[Learn More](#)

## Business Spotlight

### My Main Street Local Business Accelerator program helps Florillia flourish.

*As part of the City of Orillia’s participation in the **My Main Street Local Business Accelerator program**, we will be highlighting businesses in the downtown area that have achieved success through new and innovative business practices and partnerships. My Main Street is supported by a \$23.25-million Government of Canada investment through the **Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario)**.*



The recently opened downtown Orillia flower shop, [Florillia](#), opened its doors in January 2022 at 21 Matchedash St. S., unit 1D. The shop is co-owned by local Orillia residents Meagan Breukelman and Brandon Melhado, and sells various floral arrangements and house plants, and offers floral services for any occasion.

Breukelman and Melhado decided to open the shop after moving to Orillia in 2021 and quickly falling in love with all the city has to offer. “Orillia has an extremely lively, vibrant downtown core and that’s something we really wanted to be a part of,” Melhado said. “We felt there was a gap in the market for a unique, modern floral shop in Orillia, and we’re really happy we were able to jump in and fill that need.”

On top of this, Breukelman and Melhado recognized the overwhelming support seen throughout the community. “Orillia has a huge support-local focus,” said Breukelman. “Consumers here put a large importance on supporting local businesses, which has been really encouraging for us. From the other small business owners to the local community, the support you’ll feel here in Orillia is over the top.”

[Read More](#)

# Upcoming Events



## Santa Claus Parade

November 19

This annual event always draws a large crowd and is one of the first signs of the holiday season in Orillia.

*Tip:* With the main street sure to be full of people this day, this is a good occasion to attract holiday shoppers by offering special discounts, themed treats, or updating your window display. With this being one of the first signs of the holiday season, it is important to display the various holiday gift options you offer and entice these individuals to begin their holiday shopping in Orillia.



## Google Analytics for Small Businesses Workshop

November 29

This beginner-level workshop hosted by the Orillia Area Community Development Corporation (CDC) will teach business owners how to connect your website to Google Analytics, how to create custom views and set goals within Google Analytics, how to generate five key reports to let you know how your website is performing, and more!

Visit the [CDC's events page](#) on their website for more information and to register.



## Orillia Discover Downtown Goosechase

November 19  
to December  
31

Through the My Main Street Local Business Accelerator program, the City of Orillia will be hosting the Orillia Discover Downtown Goosechase! This is an interactive online scavenger hunt where participants will be using an app to view available missions and will head downtown Orillia to complete these missions.

*Tip:* This is a great opportunity for downtown businesses to participate in the event and attract new consumers to their business! Business owners can connect with Goosechase-ers visiting downtown Orillia while completing missions.



## XcelerateHER Orillia

January 12

Whether starting, growing, or scaling a business, the XcelerateHER program has the potential to support a range of sectors here in the Orillia area. This unique program supports female entrepreneurs through a four-pronged approach: skills development, networking opportunities, workshops and success stories. This event takes place from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Creative Nomad Studios (23 Mississauga St. W.), and registration is required. Visit the [XcelerateHER website](#) for more information.

*Tip:* This event is a great opportunity for female-identifying entrepreneurs and business leaders to come together in a welcoming

environment to connect and network. Whether you simply have a business idea and are unsure of where to start or have an already established business and are looking to grow, you won't want to miss this event.

For more upcoming events, visit the [City's event calendar](#).

## Featured Partner

This column is dedicated to highlighting the great work our community partners are doing to support businesses and the community.

The Orillia Area Community Development Corporation is here to help your business start, grow, and succeed. The Orillia Area Community Development Corp. (CDC) is an invaluable resource for local business owners and entrepreneurs.



The CDC serves Orillia, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, and the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. The Orillia Area CDC has supported local entrepreneurs in all stages of business development for over 38 years, including:

- Business counseling
- Business loans
- Registering a business
- Professional development & training
- Business and marketing plans
- Support in selling/buying a business

Business Loans: The CDC is the first call to make when you are considering business financing. We understand the unique situation our entrepreneurs and business owners are in and the climate of our local community. This knowledge helps us offer business loans that fit your unique situation and we are able to work with you to create a manageable repayment schedule. Our staff can also help review your financial statements and make recommendations around best practices.

[Read More](#)



## Business Resources

- [Orillia Area Community Development Corporation](#)
- [Orillia District Chamber of Commerce](#)

- [Downtown Orillia Management Board](#)

- [Employment Ontario](#)

- [City of Orillia Downtown Tomorrow Community Improvement Program](#)

- [My Main Street Local Business Accelerator Program](#)

