

# Economic Development and Culture Activity Report

## November 2024

### Economic Development

- The **Economic Development and Culture Strategy** has been finalized and will be presented to Council on November 18. Upon adoption, an implementation plan will begin immediately and identify actions to be completed in 2025.
- The **Orangeville and Area Job Fair** was held on Tuesday, October 1.
  - o 335 job seekers and 26 employers participated in the event
  - o 95% of employers said they would participate again
  - o 51% of job seekers were Orangeville residents
- **Business at Breakfast** (formerly Economic Outlook Breakfast) is scheduled for November 7 in partnership with TD Bank Group.
- Applications for incentives offered through the [Community Improvement Plan](#) have declined since the summer. Promotion is ongoing, but will be revamped in 2025 with a focus on targeted communications about specific programs to target areas.
- A Hallmark Christmas movie - Trading Up Christmas – was filmed in downtown Orangeville in September. A survey was conducted to understand the impact of the film to local businesses and the community. A complete post-game analysis will be completed to determine how/if to support future film requests.
- In response to ongoing parking challenges in downtown Orangeville, a new online resource has been created to highlight the location of parking spaces. When finalized, the tool will be promoted to residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Staff continued to support Dufferin County initiatives by providing input on the new Economic Development Strategy and Tourism Strategy Addendum. Both are expected to be presented to County Council in November.

### Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC)

- The July Starter Company Plus cohort completed their training program. The grant committee will meet on November 27 to allocate funding to the six applicants.
- Five applicants have been selected to participate in the October cohort of Starter Company Plus. Their bi-weekly training will begin on November 6.
- AI Secrets for Small Business Success workshop was held on September 18 with 11 attendees. A hybrid workshop, Introduction to Canva, was held on October 22 with 21 participants.
- Two additional workshops are scheduled for the remainder of 2024
  - o Building your Brand Online - November 13
  - o Intellectual Property - December 3
- Ask the Expert Expo was cancelled due to low registrations.
- The SBEC coordinator attended ODSS to review student's business plans and promote Summer Company.

### Tourism and Culture

- A [new digital guide](#) was developed on the Mapme platform to highlight the location and details of public art installations, tree sculptures, and heritage buildings. Self-guided tours have also been included. This platform is web-based and can be easily accessed by users online, eliminating the need to download an app.
- [Two new utility box art installations](#) were completed, increasing the collection to 35 locations.

- In August, Council made the decision to close the Visitor Information Centre due to changing visitor behaviour and decreased usage. Staff is working with Theatre Orangeville to close the centre by December 20. Alternative ways to find visitor information are being communicated and a satellite downtown location is being considered. The EDC office will offer visitor services during regular operating hours.
- To attract out-of-region visitors to Orangeville, a targeted tourism marketing campaign was delivered to the GTA through [BlogTO](#) (October 18) and [Curiosity](#) (October 17). The ads drove traffic to a dedicated webpage on the LoveOrangeville.ca website ([October in Orangeville](#)) and to other linked pages. An unpaid feature published through [Curiosity](#) on September 13 saw webpage traffic increase to over 2,100 visitors in one month.

### **Communications, Administration, and Infrastructure**

- Staff training and updates to the EDC office's CRM was completed to improve data analysis and reporting.