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**Subject: 2019/20 Economic Development Report**

**Department: Community Services**

**Division: Economic Development**

**Report #: CMS-2021-014**

**Meeting Date: 2021-06-28**

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## Recommendations

**That report CMS-2021-014, 2019/20 Economic Development Report, be received.**

## Background and Analysis

For the past several years, the Town's Economic Development office has published an annual review of the business, tourism and cultural events, developments and relevant statistics that help to provide an annual overview of the Town's overall economic vitality.

The completion of a year-end review provides Council and staff with an opportunity to measure areas of growth and competitiveness in the community as well as the outcomes of activities undertaken in the previous year. The year-end review helps the municipality to identify economic trends and activities that could create new opportunities and it provides a baseline that can establish goals and objectives for the upcoming period. The report also provides an opportunity to recognize successes, partnerships and contributions made within the past year. Over time, these reports can be used collectively to track significant developments and trends and to identify potential longer-term issues so that the Town can adjust programming and initiatives to respond accordingly.

Due to the onset of the COVID pandemic in early 2020, the Economic Development and Culture office was unable to obtain some of the important 2019 data required to provide a fulsome 2019 report to Council in a timely manner. As a result, this year's Economic Development report (**Attachment 1**) provides data for both 2019 and 2020.

## Analysis

The 2019/20 Economic Development Report provides a summary of activities and initiatives undertaken by the Economic Development and Culture office over the past

two calendar years. Data presented within the report also summarizes key economic changes that occurred between the years ending December 2019 and December 2020.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our community, as it has across Canada and around the globe. The total number of jobs in Orangeville decreased by 10 percent in 2020 from the same period in 2019 (loss of approximately 1,200 positions to a new total of 11,299 jobs in 2020). Job losses were recorded across all sectors of the economy, apart from Transportation and Warehousing, which grew by five percent. Not surprisingly, the most significant declines occurred within the Accommodation and Food Services sector (-28%), the Arts & Entertainment sector (-27%), and in Other Services (-16%, includes automotive repair, personal services, funeral services, dry cleaning services, etc.).

These declines, while negative, are in keeping with trends that occurred across the province during the same time period. Total job declines of 10% for all of Dufferin County were also recorded, and overall job losses across the province averaged 9%.

The regional unemployment rate of 7.5% in December 2020 was up significantly from 2019 (4.7%). It is important to note however, that Orangeville is part of the very large Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie employment region and that unemployment rates fluctuate seasonally.

While job losses occurred, businesses overall showed resiliency. Total number of business operating within Orangeville declined by only 1% between 2019 and 2020 (from 2,613 to 2,578 in 2020). Small businesses with 0 to 9 employees experienced the greatest number of losses. The greatest number of business losses occurred within the Professional, scientific and technical services sector (23 businesses ceased to operate - 35% of these were classified as Indeterminate, or sole operators with no employees). Accommodation and Food service establishments (10 businesses) and retail (7 businesses) also accounted for the highest levels of closures.

These business closures were balanced out by growth in other sectors. Twenty new businesses were established within the Construction sector, 7 new businesses established within the 'Other Services' category, and the Agriculture, Real Estate and Educational services sectors each added 5 new businesses.

## **2021**

As outlined in Attachment 1, the Economic Development and Culture office will continue to monitor the impact of the pandemic on the business and development community throughout 2021. Staff will continue to offer all existing programs and make modifications, add initiatives, and adapt services and programming as needed. Efforts underway for 2021 to date include:

- Continuing to monitor, support and advocate for Orangeville businesses and key sectors impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic through the provision of up-to-date information on changes, programs and funding opportunities that arise.

- Continuing to attract and support potential and existing entrepreneurs, including delivery of initiatives offered by the Orangeville & Area Small Business Enterprise Centre.
  - Executing year one actions outlined in the 2020 Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, including the development of a tourism brand for Orangeville, revising marketing materials, enhancing the tourism section of the Town website, and introducing new initiatives geared to encouraging visitation to the community.
  - Completing foundational tasks required to prepare the municipality for future private sector investment in the community. These tasks include completion of a new Community Improvement Plan, preparations for the potential future development of 82-90 Broadway, and ongoing collaboration with community stakeholders on various initiatives.
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## **Strategic Alignment**

### **Orangeville Forward – Strategic Plan**

Priority Area: Strong Governance

Objective: Enhanced Communication

### **Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan**

Theme: Economic Development and Culture

Strategy: Enhance economic resiliency

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## **Notice Provisions**

None

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## **Financial Impact**

None

Respectfully submitted

Ray Osmond,

Prepared by

Ruth Phillips,

General Manager, Community Services  
Manager

Manager, Economic Development  
and Culture

**Attachment(s):** 1. 2019/20 Economic Development Report