
MEMORANDUM

Strategic Initiatives Office
Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

Date: December 17, 2009
To: EDAC
From: Anthony Ierullo
Re: 2009 Year of Business Initiative

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the memorandum and attached report be received and forwarded to Council for information;

BACKGROUND

In February, Mayor Phyllis Morris proclaimed 2009 as 'The Year of Business Initiative' in the Town of Aurora. Over the past 10 months, staff has been working on a number of initiatives aimed at supporting business in Aurora. This memorandum provides a summary of the key activities completed to date:

1. **A New Economic Development Website:** The Town of Aurora recently launched a new economic development website located at www.businessaurora.ca. The upgraded and updated site includes information targeted to both residents and businesses and will act as a virtual economic development office providing up-to-date information. New features include a calendar of events that allows for event registration and payment, a map gallery and up-to-date statistical information in the data report generator.
2. **A Business Retention and Expansion Strategy:** In the 'Year of Business', the Town of Aurora engaged the consulting firm of Millier Dickson Blais to prepare a Business Retention and Expansion Strategy. The purpose of the strategy is to expand and strengthen the Town's relationship with the business community. The Town of Aurora Business Retention and Expansion Strategy will be presented to the Town's Economic Development Advisory Committee on December 17th, 2009.
3. **The Aurora Promenade Study:** The Town of Aurora has been working towards the completion of a downtown revitalization study and secondary plan for the Yonge Street and Wellington Street corridors. The project aims to promote opportunities for economic development and growth in the Town's downtown core. The Town, in association with the Planning Partnership consulting firm, has completed several rounds of public consultation and recently presented a

series of conceptual plans for public consideration and comment. The project will result in a new secondary plan for the area in the coming months.

4. **A Series of Small Business Workshops:** In 2009, the Town of Aurora and the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre organized three small business workshops. The workshops were extremely well received with close to sell out crowds at all of the events.
5. **Strong Construction Activity in 2009:** Despite the weaker economy, the Town of Aurora was able to attract significant construction investment in the first three quarters of 2009. The growth was particularly strong in the commercial and industrial sectors with 2009 values 190% higher than in 2008.
6. **A New Economic Development E-Newsletter:** The Town of Aurora also completed a new economic development electronic newsletter available for circulation through the businessaurora.ca website. The electronic newsletter will allow for more frequent communication with the Aurora business community.

These activities are a testament to Council's commitment to supporting of the local business community in Aurora. Congratulations on a successful 'Year of Business Initiative' in 2009.

Anthony Ierullo,
Manager of Strategic Initiatives
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