

**For Immediate Release**

**Business Centre Guelph-Wellington Celebrates Over \$500,000 in Digital Main Street Grants to Help Local Businesses Adopt Online Technologies**

June 12, 2023: Guelph, ON. Business Centre Guelph-Wellington has reached a milestone with the Digital Main Street program in awarding over 200 Digital Transformation Grants (DTG) to brick-and-mortar small businesses to help them enhance their online presence and better adapt to a rapidly changing environment. The Business Centre's Digital Service Squad (DSS) has been visiting small businesses across the City of Guelph and Wellington County, assisting them with the development of their Digital Transformation Plan (DTP) and then applying for the \$2,500 DTG to implement it.

*"This is great news for Guelph and Wellington County," said Kristel Manes, Executive Director for the Business Centre Guelph-Wellington. "The Digital Main Street program has made an enormous difference to small businesses over the past four years. With this new round of funding, we have seen an even greater impact on our local businesses, with over \$500,000 being invested in our business community's digital future. Our Digital Service Squad has been busy helping small businesses in accessing the grant, completing applications, and assessing their digital needs. They have done an amazing job and will be continuing to work with small businesses over the next eight months."*

With an investment from Ontario's Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and administered by the Ontario BIA Association (OBIAA), in partnership with the Toronto Association of BIAs (TABIA), the DTG program will continue to help small businesses across Ontario pivot their operations to include online business models, digital technologies for operational management, and automated processes to better enable businesses to become more resilient and more competitive.

Fundamental to the DMS program are the Digital Service Squads, trained specialists who meet with small businesses, at no cost, to help them improve their digital technologies. The squads assist with several activities, including developing a Google Business Profile, enhancing their social media presence, and providing advice for digital areas that may need improvement.

*"The Digital Main Street Digital Transformation Grant program is a vitally important and immensely valuable resource for small businesses," says Kay Matthews, Executive Director, OBIAA. "We join the Business Centre Guelph-Wellington in celebrating the success of the program that continues to provide their local businesses with the knowledge, resources, and training to revitalize their operations with an expanded digital presence."*

Business Centre Guelph-Wellington's Digital Service Squad will be running drop-in sessions over the summer to help small business owners work through the grant process and gain advice in completion of the program. The next upcoming session will be held in Guelph City Hall's Marg MacKinnon Room



on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. It is recommended to bring your laptop, if you have one, to help make the process smoother for all attendees.

The DMS Digital Transformation Grant is open to brick-and-mortar small businesses registered in Ontario that employ under 50 employees. Other eligibility requirements and exceptions can be found on the Digital Main Street [website](#). Businesses not eligible for the grant are still welcome to [connect](#) with the Business Centre Guelph-Wellington's Digital Advisor for advisory support and digital assistance.

- 30 -

### **ABOUT Business Centre Guelph-Wellington**

Business Centre Guelph-Wellington is a not-for-profit organization that has been helping entrepreneurs, business owners, professionals and students achieve business success since 1999. For over 20 years, we have added to the wealth and the diversity of our business community, one entrepreneur at a time.

### **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 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](http://www.digitalmainstreet.ca)



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