



## THE SANDWICH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The construction phase of the Gordie Howe International Bridge project will bring thousands of workers to the Sandwich area, along with long-term community development opportunities. In response to community feedback, and to help Sandwich and west Windsor businesses and entrepreneurs take advantage of these opportunities, a new business development program has been created as part of the Community Benefits Plan.

The Sandwich Business Development Program is a **\$500,000 five-year initiative** that will provide ongoing support to existing and new businesses in the area by offering a series of free programs and two business summits.

The program officially launched on October 27, 2020, at the Sandwich Business Development Summit, a free, half-day event for businesses located in Sandwich/west Windsor and entrepreneurs considering locating to the area. The Summit helped businesses identify and leverage opportunities associated with the Gordie Howe International Bridge project during peak years of construction and focused on main-street revitalization, small business marketing, women-owned businesses and more. A second summit will take place in 2023 and will focus on business opportunities relating to the operations phase of the Gordie Howe International Bridge.

Ongoing program support will be offered through WindsorEssex Small Business Centre and Downtown Windsor Business Accelerator in partnership with Baker Tilly Live. This free programming is available for businesses and entrepreneurs within the Sandwich/west Windsor area.

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS

This programming will continue through 2024:

#### WINDSORESSEX SMALL BUSINESS CENTRE

WindsorEssex Small Business Centre will receive \$50,000 annually for five years, totalling **\$250,000**, to provide **business advisory services**, host business development **workshops** and implement a **Digital Main Street** program for the Sandwich area.

The Small Business Centre will expand services to Sandwich Town, which will include:

- Ensuring the Small Business Centre's business and entrepreneurship services are readily available to help existing business owners and future entrepreneurs
- Inspiring and fostering community and entrepreneurship opportunities
- Providing community engagement and entrepreneurship education and awareness
- Performing consultations and assessments with business owners to identify needs and tailored solutions

In fall 2020, the Small Business Centre will launch:

- The Digital Service Squad (Digital Main Street Program) to blitz the main streets and set-up meetings with business owners, provide digital assessments and tools and solutions for implementation
- Assistance to businesses to set up websites, including e-commerce, social media accounts and content creation
- Targeted hands-on learning workshops directed to early-stage and established businesses on key topics such as sales/marketing, digital technology and finance

Visit [windsorsexsmallbusiness.com](https://windsorsexsmallbusiness.com) or contact [info@windsorsexsmallbusiness.com](mailto:info@windsorsexsmallbusiness.com) for more information.

## THE ACCELERATOR IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BAKER TILLY LIVE

The Downtown Windsor Business Accelerator (The Accelerator) in partnership with Baker Tilly Live will receive \$20,000 annually for five years, totalling **\$100,000**. Programming includes:

### **Business Development and Discovery Workshops**

The Accelerator will host workshops for business development and discovery, for both established businesses in Sandwich Town and for individuals who want to start a business in the area.

Workshops will emphasize the economic opportunity that the construction of the bridge will provide. After the workshops, wrap-around service will be provided by the Accelerator to deliver business coaching and business development to evolve ideas from the workshops into actionable plans.

### **Women-Led Business Development and Discovery Workshops**

The Accelerator will provide programming for women interested in starting a business in the Sandwich community.

The project will leverage the audience and network that The Accelerator has developed over the past seven years through the Windsor Women Accelerate (WWA) Networking Programs, coupled with marketing efforts to reach new participants in this demographic. To lead this project, the Accelerator has engaged a group of six women entrepreneurs that are part of the Accelerator. This team has developed a series of workshops and events for women interested in starting or growing a business in Sandwich Town.

Desk space and other tangible services will be provided to participants who progress through the program achieving certain milestones.

Visit [downtownaccelerator.com](http://downtownaccelerator.com) or contact [siddique@downtownaccelerator.com](mailto:siddique@downtownaccelerator.com) for more information.

## PUBLIC REPORTING

The Community Benefits Plan includes a robust monitoring and reporting structure that demonstrates accountability to the region. The Community Benefits Plan is posted on [GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com](http://GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com), along with quarterly reports on progress and results.

Updates on the Sandwich Business Development Program will be published during the delivery period.

For more information about the Gordie Howe International Bridge project visit [GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com](http://GordieHoweInternationalBridge.com) or call 1-844-322-1773.

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