



COVID-19 - Updates from our Chamber and “Partners in Prosperity”

Dear Members and Associates:

Seriously, what is with this snow? At a time when we need all the warmth and sunshine we can get, now is not the time for grey skies and cold white snow. I am not a big fan of winter, but gladly ‘tolerate’ the season, however, in mid-April? I do, however, love CK summers..... So, in thinking of some bright points of staying distanced, staying home and staying safe, here are some of my sunshine moments:

I have talked to my parents almost daily in the last month. Some days I miss, then others we talk 2 or 3 times, so I think that makes up for missed days. This, I appreciate even more now as, traditionally, my life gets very busy and sometimes it would be far too long before we connected (they do not ‘do’ social media). This has been such a positive for us....lobby dropping groceries and waving through the window, what fun....considering.

I miss ‘the feel’ of my grandchildren but have watched them play, learn to ride a bike, a scooter and sing, all over FaceTime. We share air hugs from the street and pretend they are real ones. I can’t wait for their first post-COVID sleepover.

My children, luckily both live and work in Chatham-Kent, and have full lives. My daughter is busier now, with managing a retirement home and the local hospice. I constantly think of the people she and her team strive to keep healthy. My son-in-law is charged with day to day home operations and a fantastic dad, always. My son is remotely working from home whereby his career with a tek company often sees him travelling and distanced. My daughter, not-by-law, continues her days in legal work, safely distanced from co-workers. I am thankful for this time to connect, and check up, with all of them. I am a proud Mum and Mum-in-Law.

I have the good fortune to call my siblings and their spouses ‘friends’ and we annually vacation together. Thankfully, we had our bonding experience in February, now we bond over a glass of wine, or margarita, through I-Pads and cell phones. I miss them, but we continue to share laughs and tears together.

I have now spent 35 consecutive days with my husband who is distance working from home - he usually works out of country all work-week. This is the longest stretch of time together since meeting in 2012! We are using our home time to connect, do house projects and make dinners together that used to be rushed. Together, we delivered a full Easter spread to our family members and will forever have ‘porch drop pictures’ and the memories of “that time we all ate together, yet, apart”. Hubby and I are finding we really DO like each other and see it as a good test run for retirement! although, not any time soon.

Remember in this time of physically distancing, there are positives, we can step back and be socially connected. Even when we are tired of being alone, we do not have to be lonely. I hear of many others who are making connections and capitalizing on their new found time. I hope that when this pandemic is over and doors open and skies are sunny, we remember these special moments that we were provided to us due to the nasty COVID-19 of 2020. Please stay distanced, stay healthy and stay connected.

In closing, a couple of reminders:

1. The Mayors Economic Recovery Task Force session on Friday morning, I encourage your participation in the conversation with registration details below.
2. Please don’t forget to contribute your input..... the deadline for [Canadian Survey on Business Conditions \(CSBC\)](#) is this Friday, April 17th as government talks remain open and your Chamber continues advocating for you, your business and our community.

Please don’t hesitate to reach out for assistance and/or information. Your Chamber is here to help, now, more than ever.

Yours in Prosperity, *Gail Hundt* / President & CEO gail@chatham-kentchamber.ca

Visit the *Canadian Business Resilience Network* at CBRN.ca for the most up-to-date, relevant tools and links to aid you through this crisis and through to the path of success.

Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for up-to-date information regarding COVID-19. Below, and other, resources area available at www.chatham-kentchamber.ca



Concerned Businesses: As the Voice of Business Chamber calls on Municipality of Chatham-Kent

54 Fourth Street, Chatham Ontario N7M 2G2 • 519-352-7540

April 15, 2020

Municipality of Chatham-Kent
315 King St W.
Chatham, ON Delivery by email

Attention: Mayor and Council

Dear Mayor Canniff and Council Members:

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are increasingly challenging for our community. We recognize that the current circumstance being presented is rarely encompassed in a Business Plan or Annual Budget. Yet, a crisis is upon us, and business is fighting the battle and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the Voice of Business and partner in prosperity, I am writing on behalf of our membership and, openly, Chatham-Kent business at large. These are unprecedented times. Like you, we are hearing on a constant basis, business is ailing. As noted in our recent Chamber member survey, 49% of respondents shared that weathering the COVID-19 disruptions could be problematic to their business and operations. They are concerned, worried with tough decisions to be made, dealing with the pressures of who to pay, can I pay, will I have revenue, what costs can I eliminate and, ultimately, will my business survive this crisis? These are hard questions that are keeping our Chatham-Kent business owners and managers up at night. If a business survives the current crisis, can they afford to continue? We recognize there are various government reliefs, yet, 'bankruptcy' is a familiar word at present.

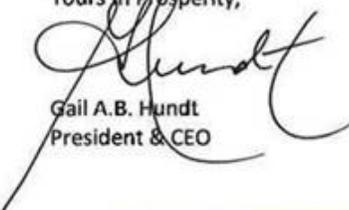
While our members and local proprietors are making the harshest decisions ever imagined, it is recognized that Council, too, has bold decisions to make, for conclusions that will impact the future of business in Chatham-Kent. It is necessary now, more than ever before, that our Municipal Leaders think to the future prosperity of Chatham-Kent. Let's be frank, if business does not survive, unemployment levels will increase, tax base will decrease, support to local initiatives and charities are eliminated, and new investments are a thing of the past, all the while any growth opportunity in Chatham-Kent looks bleak.

Clearly, this is not the Chatham-Kent our Chamber Board envisions for the future. While deferrals are appreciated for some short-term relief, this does not eliminate overall costs. We trust property owners will further defer rent collection to business tenants, recognizing their building tax deferrals. On behalf of our members and local business, we suggest pencils need be sharpened. The municipality must make the same bold considerations as a business owner and find substantial cost savings for the long-term gain of our community. Consider, if business doesn't close from the current crisis, will future tax levels put them in disparaging circumstances and force closures or, yet, bankruptcy? These are not favourable thoughts, yet, can be our reality if deep savings are not taken.

As a partner in prosperity, I reference the attached email of March 23rd, proposing the creation of, partnership and support of a Business Sustainability and/or Community Recovery Task Force. We are pleased to see introduction to this initiative as, together, Chatham-Kent will end in greater successes.

Truly, the Chatham-Kent Board of Directors are positive minded and see brighter days ahead. We trust you, as Council and the directive leaders of our municipality, will make the tough decisions, for the right reasons and long-term benefit for our business community and future of Chatham-Kent.

Yours in Prosperity,



Gail A.B. Hundt
President & CEO

Government Provides Funding To Ag Sector For Temporary Foreign Workers' Quarantine

On April 13, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada announced \$50 million (\$1,500 per TFW) to help farmers, fish harvesters and all food production and processing employers put in place the measures necessary to follow the mandatory 14-day isolation period required of all workers arriving from abroad.

The funding is conditional on employers not being found in violation of the mandatory 14-day isolation protocols or any other public health order. This program will be available as long as the Quarantine Act is in force and the isolation protocol is followed.

[Read More](#)

COVID-19 And Available Financing

Are you a non-essential business and wondering what you should be doing during this crisis to get your finances in order?

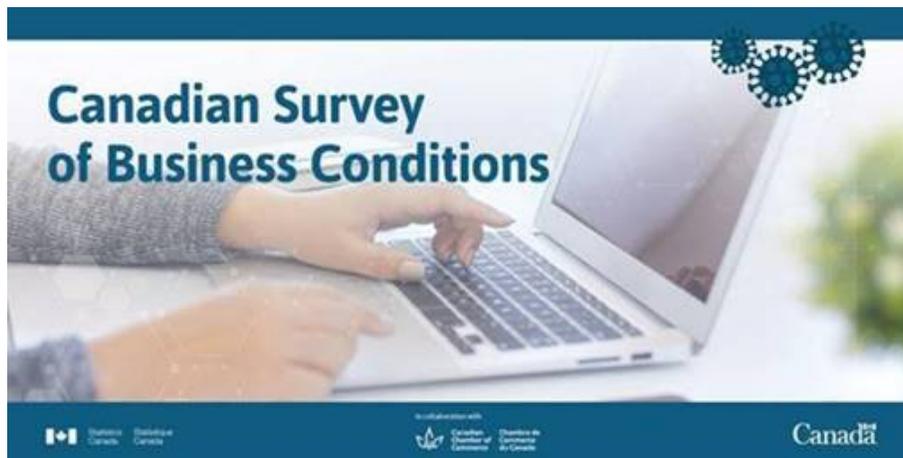
If so, Patrick Gill, our Director of Tax and Financial Policy, has some advice for you.

[Watch Here](#)

Have you completed the *Canadian Survey of Business Conditions*?

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has collaborated with Statistics Canada to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on business.

If you're a Canadian business owner, please take a few minutes to complete this survey



[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)



[Watch Now:](#) Understanding and Accessing the BCAP and Capital Loans During COVID-19

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce hosted a webinar discussion on understanding and accessing the Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) and capital loans during COVID-19.

We were joined by three experts from some of Canada's top institutions: [Meridian Credit Union](#), [MNP](#) and [RBC](#) who shared the most up-to-date information on navigating these new supports.

Featured panelists:

- Don Ludlow, *Regional Vice President, Business Financial Services, RBC*
 - Jason Teal, *Vice President, Business Banking, Meridian*
 - Dan Porter, *Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Corporate Finance, MNP*
- [Click here](#) to watch. We encourage you to share on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

How has your job been affected by the COVID-19 crisis?

Take our worker impact survey.



The survey has been extended to April 17, 2020. Please consider sharing your experience!

[Click here for the Survey.](#)

Business Development Bank of Canada

FINANCING FOR SMES

BCAP SME Loan and Guarantees Program

The breadth of the business cash crunch and the speed with which it took hold resulted in an unprecedented demand for financial assistance. To get capital out quickly and efficiently, BDC and EDC launched the new Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Loan and Guarantee program (BCAP) that will enable up to \$40 billion in additional lending.

Under BCAP,

- SMEs can get support through a new Co-Lending Program that will bring the BDC together with financial institutions to offer term loans to businesses for their operational cash flow requirements. Eligible businesses may obtain incremental credit amounts up to \$6.25 million, 80 per cent of which would be provided by BDC, with the remaining 20% by a financial institution.
- EDC will also provide a guarantee to financial institutions so that they can issue new operating lines of credit of up to \$6.25 million to small and medium-sized businesses. These will be 80 per cent guaranteed by EDC, to be repaid within one year.
- Eligible companies could obtain up to \$12.5 million through these two lending streams.

Financial institutions across the country are also able to give a loan under the new Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA). CEBA is a \$25 billion program providing government-backed interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to small businesses via eligible financial institutions. If repaid by December 2022, 25% of the loan is forgivable.

All legal businesses will now be eligible for BCAP and CEBA. Businesses in the cannabis sector, those in the hospitality sector including restaurants, bars, pubs and lounges, for example, are all included under BCAP. It means that all legal businesses can access BCAP financing via their financial institutions.

We are encouraging all businesses in need of a loan to see their financial institution to benefit from these new products.

BDC Direct Lending to SMEs

On March 11, BDC launched the first of a three-wave business survey to inform our response measures to the COVID-19 pandemic. The top two actions deemed most helpful from over 1100 business owners surveyed were to create a COVID-19 relief loan and offer payment postponement. Very early in the crisis, BDC offered its existing clients immediate relief through a payment postponement. We have postponed principal payments for over 22,000 clients that have requested it. BDC also introduced its COVID-19 response working capital loans.

- Working capital loans of up to \$2 million with flexible terms and payment postponements for up to twelve months for qualifying businesses;
- Postponement of payments for up to six months, free of charge, for existing BDC clients with total BDC loan commitment of \$1 million or less;
- Reduced rates on new eligible loans.

BDC has increased the credit risk taken on the COVID response working capital loans and streamlined its processes. We also significantly reduced the interest rates on these loans, and we are pricing these slightly above bank rates, to remain complimentary to the market, as well as to channel demand to the financial institutions and BCAP. In addition, we waived all fees associated with our COVID-19 working capital loans.



As a member of the Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce you can **SAVE MONEY** with these GREAT Value Added Programs offered by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

Shipping Discounts ~ Insurance Plans ~ Employee Benefit Plans ~ Gas Discounts & Great Rates for Visa/Mastercard



Check out these Value Added Programs TODAY [click the logos for more information!](#)

Community Futures Development Corporation of Chatham-Kent

Considering the restrictions levied by the Government with respect to the current Coronavirus situation and how they will have a detrimental effect on businesses,

especially cash flow, Community Futures Chatham-Kent is offering to its clients:

A three (3) month deferral of payments based on the client's payment cycle ~ such payments will be added to the end of their current amortization schedule.

This deferral will require written confirmation from the client along with confirmation in writing from all guarantors where required.

For more information please contact us directly @ peter.maguire@cfdcck.on.ca, brenda.richardson@cfdcck.on.ca or donna.pollock@cfdcck.on.ca or call us during regular business hours 226-996-1234.

We are working on a more pro-active initiative as well. We will provide that information once it is available.

Here is an example of partners readying for their clients in r

Resources:

Local

[Public Health Information on COVID-19](#)

[Workplace Information](#)

[Chatham-Kent Economic Development](#)

[Business Credit Availability Program](#)

Provincial & Federal

[Ontario Chamber of Commerce – COVID-19 Preparedness Toolkit](#)

[Canadian Chamber of Commerce – Pandemic Preparedness Guide for Business](#)

[Government of Canada Support for Small Businesses](#)

[Canada's COVID-10 Economic Response Plan](#)

[Wage subsidy for Businesses](#)

[Chamber Plan Ontario](#)
