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Town of Halton Hills  
Office of the Mayor

February 7, 2022

VIA EMAIL: [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building,  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON, M7A 1A1

Dear Premier:

On January 17, 2022, Town of Halton Hills Council passed the enclosed resolution calling for the Provincial and Federal governments to support the survival of small businesses during Modified Step 2 of the Roadmap to Reopen.

With the overall priority being protecting health and safety, since the start of the pandemic the Town of Halton Hills, in collaboration with its Economic Support and Recovery Task Force, has taken proactive, decisive and coordinated action to support the local business community in response to the impacts of COVID-19.

Building on the 25+ actions implemented by the Town since the start of the pandemic, we launched an Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan to support the local business community, with a focus on helping businesses stay open, as well as become more resilient over time.

Small businesses have suffered the greatest negative impacts due to COVID-19. They also face the most significant challenge to survive and recover from the pandemic.

The restrictions put in place as a result of Ontario entering the Modified Step 2 of the Roadmap to Reopen have forced many small businesses to either close or significantly reduce capacity. Many may not be able to survive without immediate, meaningful and ongoing assistance.

At its January 17, 2022, meeting, Town Council unanimously passed the enclosed resolution, calling on the Provincial government to:

- Extend the Small Business Support Grant for a third round targeted towards all businesses whose revenues are directly and/or indirectly impacted by current public health restrictions. Eligibility should include businesses previously eligible for the Ontario Tourism and Travel Small Business Support Grant and businesses losing revenue as a result of restrictions affecting their clients (e.g., food service suppliers).

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- Work with the Federal government to increase rental subsidies provided under the newly expanded Local Lockdown Program similar to the enhanced Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program for businesses directly or indirectly impacted by public health restrictions.
- Immediately open the recently announced portal which would allow businesses to access rebates for property taxes and utilities, accompanied by rapid disbursements for eligible business expenses.
- Expand access to rapid antigen tests and PCR testing, with priority given to Ontarians unable to work from home, both to limit unnecessary isolation time and allow workers to demonstrate eligibility for paid sick days and other supports.
- Work with financial institutions and the Federal government to forgive loans for businesses most severely impacted by public health restrictions.
- Offer an additional grant to businesses required to implement the government's enhanced vaccine certification protocols and to cover increased pandemic-related expenses for PPE, improved ventilation, etc.

This resolution and letter build on my past correspondence to you regarding the need to support our business community. Also on January 17, 2022, the Small Urban GTHA Mayors met to discuss the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 across the GTHA. The Mayors recognize the hardships faced by small businesses that are the economic backbone in small urban centres and hope to have them open as soon as it is safe to do so. The Mayors call on all residents, who can afford to, to support small businesses by shopping locally, purchasing a gift card to their favourite merchant, and ordering take out.

As Mayor and Chair of the Town's Economic Support and Recovery Task Force, I hope that you will take Council's resolution into consideration in responding to business needs as they continue to struggle with COVID-19 impacts.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Damian Szybalski, the Town's Director of Economic Development, Innovation and Culture at [damians@haltonhills.ca](mailto:damians@haltonhills.ca).

Sincerely,



Rick Bonnette  
Mayor, Town of Halton Hills

Encl.

cc: Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction  
Provincial Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

Provincial Minister of Health  
Provincial Minister of Finance  
Ted Arnott, MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills  
Michael Chong, MP, Wellington-Halton Hills  
Halton Regional Council  
Councils of the Towns Milton and Oakville, and City of Burlington  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)  
Ontario Big City Mayor's Caucus (OBCM)  
Small Urban GTHA Mayors  
Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO)  
GTHA Mayors and Chairs  
Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC)  
Milton Chamber of Commerce  
Burlington Chamber of Commerce  
Oakville Chamber of Commerce  
Economic Support and Recovery Task Force (Downtown Acton Business Improvement Area, Downtown Georgetown Business Improvement Area, Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, Andrews Farm Market and Winery)  
Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA)



**THE CORPORATION  
OF  
THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS**

**Resolution No.:** 2022-0007

**Title:** **Measures to Support the Survival of Small Businesses during Modified Step 2 of the Roadmap to Reopen**

**Date:** January 17, 2022

**Moved by:** **Councillor C. Somerville**

**Seconded by:** **Mayor R. Bonnette**

**Item No. 15.1**

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WHEREAS since the start of the pandemic the Town of Halton Hills, in collaboration with the Economic Support and Recovery Task Force, has taken proactive, decisive and coordinated action to support the local business community in response to the impacts of COVID-19;

AND WHEREAS, building on the 25+ actions implemented by the Town since the start of the pandemic, the Town has launched an Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan to support the local business community in mitigating the impacts of COVID-19, with a focus on helping businesses stay open, as well as become more resilient over time;

AND WHEREAS when the Province of Ontario entered modified Step 2 of the Roadmap to Reopening on January 5, 2022, the restrictions forced many small businesses to either close their doors or significantly decrease their capacity until January 26, 2022;

AND WHEREAS both supply chain issues in the procurement of rapid tests and recent changes to criteria for PCR testing have left many critical supply chain manufacturers and their workers without testing to ensure worker safety and minimize workplace COVID-19 outbreaks;

AND WHEREAS the Ontario Chamber of Commerce met with the Honorable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance, to discuss business concerns and wrote an open letter to the minister requesting immediate business support, which can be read in the appendix to this Resolution;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario announced the Ontario Small Business Relief Grant on January 7, 2022, we continue to ask that the full \$20,000 grant be reinstated in line with the 2021 grant and that access be expanded to businesses who are not fully closed but required to reduce capacity;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Town of Halton Hills Council, in partnership with the Economic Support and Recovery Task Force, call on the Provincial government to provide the supports outlined in the Ontario Chamber of Commerce letter "Re: Dire Straits for Ontario's Small Businesses", dated January 5, 2022, including:


- Extend the Small Business Support Grant for a third round targeted towards all businesses whose revenues are directly and/or indirectly impacted by current public health restrictions. Eligibility should include businesses previously eligible for the Ontario Tourism and Travel Small Business Support Grant and businesses losing revenue as a result of restrictions affecting their clients (e.g. food service suppliers).
- Work with the Federal government to increase rental subsidies provided under the newly expanded Local Lockdown Program similar to the enhanced Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program for businesses directly or indirectly impacted by public health restrictions.
- Immediately open the recently announced portal which would allow businesses to access rebates for property taxes and utilities, accompanied by rapid disbursements for eligible business expenses.
- Expand access to rapid antigen tests and PCR testing, with priority given to Ontarians unable to work from home, both to limit unnecessary isolation time and allow workers to demonstrate eligibility for paid sick days and other supports.
- Work with financial institutions and the Federal government to forgive loans for businesses most severely impacted by public health restrictions.

- Offer an additional grant to businesses required to implement the government's enhanced vaccine certification protocols and to cover increased pandemic-related expenses for PPE, improved ventilation etc.;

AND FURTHER THAT, recognizing that businesses are in need of immediate financial relief, the Provincial government expedite the distribution of funding through its business support programs;

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor, as Chair of the Halton Hills Economic Support and Recovery Task Force, be directed to write a letter advocating for the actions outlined above to support the survival and recovery of small businesses to the Premier of Ontario;

AND FURTHER THAT the Town Clerk be directed to send a copy of this resolution and letter to the Premier of Ontario, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction; Provincial Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; Provincial Minister of Health; Provincial Minister of Finance; Ted Arnott, MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills; Michael Chong, MP, Wellington-Halton Hills; Halton Regional Council; Councils of the Towns Milton and Oakville, and City of Burlington; Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); Ontario Big City Mayor's Caucus (OBCM); Small Urban GTHA Mayors; Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO) ; GTHA Mayors and Chairs; Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC); Milton Chamber of Commerce; Burlington Chamber of Commerce; Oakville Chamber of Commerce; Economic Support and Recovery Task Force (Downtown Acton Business Improvement Area, Downtown Georgetown Business Improvement Area, Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, Andrews Farm Market and Winery); and Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA).



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Mayor Rick Bonnette