

City of KITCHENER
Love My Business
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Introduction

The City of Kitchener has launched the Love My Business program to support suburban businesses re-engage their customers (and attract new ones) by supporting collaborative marketing initiatives and providing access to business support services. This program was developed to assist businesses that were deeply affected by COVID-19 restrictions. With the ultimate source of economic recovery lying in the spending potential of our residents, the Love My Business program focuses on building community and engaging customers through marketing collaborations.

2. Love My Business Area

The Love My Business program intends to serve businesses in suburban areas of Kitchener and is available to any business located outside of the My Main Street Program areas, as described on the map in Schedule “A”.

3. Intent and Objectives

The intent of the program is to offer marketing support to suburban businesses (similar to the collaborative support that the Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) offer to our city’s urban areas).

The objectives are as follows:

- i. Create community among suburban business owners
- ii. Facilitate collaboration between businesses
- iii. Increase connections with customers

4. Make it Kitchener Recovery Framework

The Love My Business program was approved as part of the Make it Kitchener Recovery Framework by Council on April 19, 2021. The Love My Business program supports the goal of unleashing community spirit and spending power. The support this program provides aims to engage new customers and re-engage previous ones through creative and collaborative marketing strategies.

More information on the Make it Kitchener Recovery Framework can be found at:
<https://www.makeitkitchener.ca/mik-2-recovery-framework-final-draft-high-res-.pdf>

5. Funding Support Programs:

The funding programs that exist within the Love My Business program include:

1. Community Events Funding
2. Marketing Collaborations

These funding programs run alongside a digital content support program that will assist businesses with social media and short form video content.

All initiatives and applications for assistance for any funding program are subject to funding being available. In all situations, the total level of the funding provided shall not exceed the value of the work done.

5.1. Community Events Funding

Background

Community events are opportunities to heighten connections in neighbourhoods, while also increasing foot traffic and exposure of participating businesses. The intake period for this funding is May 1, 2022, to October 31, 2022.

Intent

The intent of this program is to increase community and customer connections with businesses while also facilitating collaboration and cross promotion between Kitchener businesses.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet the following application criteria:

- The business is located within suburban Kitchener, as identified in Schedule A.
- The business was required to close or reduce capacity during 2021 or 2022 COVID-19 Provincial restrictions.
- The business provides in-person services at a bricks and mortar location.
- The business has a City of Kitchener business license, if required to have one.
- The community event must include a collaboration with at least one other Kitchener business, performer, educator, artist, or speaker.
- The community event must be made available to the public and must be free.
- The City of Kitchener reserves the right to deny or refuse any application.

Financial Assistance

A business can apply for up to \$1000 in in-kind support toward hosting a community event. This could include, but not limited to, the cost of hiring a performer, setting up tents and tables, etc.

All applications shall be submitted electronically or in writing, addressed to the Love My Business Marketing and Program Coordinator.

All applications for assistance under this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding in the Love My Business program.

Businesses will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible, but typically within 2 to 3 weeks of application submission.

Businesses may only apply for one community event funding opportunity. This funding is a one-time opportunity and is not intended to provide financial support on a recurring basis.

5.2. Marketing Collaborations

The funding dedicated to marketing collaborations gives eligible businesses an opportunity to target new customers and grow their community connection in collaboration with other businesses.

Background

Marketing is a key method for businesses to attract new customers and begin to build new community connections. The intake period for this funding is May 1, 2022, to October 31, 2022.

Intent

The intent of this program is to provide businesses with exposure to new customers through marketing collaborations (including but not limited to direct mail, social media influencer campaigns, digital or print media advertising, etc.).

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet the following application criteria:

- The business is located in suburban Kitchener, as identified in Schedule A.
- The business must collaborate with two other suburban Kitchener businesses who also meet these eligibility requirements.
- The business was required to close or reduce capacity during 2021 or 2022 COVID-19 Provincial restrictions.
- The business provides in-person services at a bricks and mortar location.
- The business has a City of Kitchener business license, if required to have one.

The City of Kitchener reserves the right to deny or refuse any application.

Financial Assistance

A minimum of 3 businesses must participate in a given collaborative marketing effort. Each collaboration may apply for up to \$500 per participating business to cover the costs of a collaborative marketing effort. The Love My Business Marketing and Program Coordinator may limit the total funding allocated to a collaborative marketing effort.

All applications shall be submitted electronically or in writing, addressed to the Love My Business Marketing and Program Coordinator.

All applications for assistance under this program will be considered subject to the availability of funding in the Love My Business program.

Businesses will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible, but typically within 2 to 3 weeks of application submission.

Businesses may only apply for one marketing collaboration funding opportunity. This funding is a one-time opportunity and is not intended to provide financial support on a recurring basis.

6. Advisory Support Programs

In addition to the funding programs listed in section 5, businesses can book a one-on-one consultation with the Love My Business Marketing and Program Coordinator to assist with digital content creation. This may include batch producing photos and video content for social media, creating Instagram Reels, getting started with TikTok, and automating scheduled content. Consultations will be provided on an as-requested basis, subject to the availability of City resources. Alternatively, businesses may be directed to the various programs of the Waterloo Region Small Business Centre.

Schedule A: Love My Business Map

The Love My Business area includes the yellow shaded area. The excluded areas (in black) are covered by the My Main Street Ambassador program (Lancaster/Victoria St. E, Downtown Kitchener, King St. East, and Belmont Village).

