

Province boosts Schomberg revitalization

By Mark PavilonisEditor

The Province has stepped up and is supporting economic development in King. King-Vaughan MPP Stephen Lecce announced last week that the Schomberg Downtown Revitalization Strategy will receive up to \$69,702 in funding through Ontario's Rural Economic Development (RED) program. The Schomberg Downtown Revitalization Strategy will attract investments, businesses, and local partners that will diversify the local economy, bring jobs into the community, and provide easier access to services for local residents. This is one of more than 60 projects the Ontario government is supporting to help diversify local economies, retain skilled workers and create jobs in communities like King Township. The Province is committing a total of \$5 million in cost-share funding in this latest intake of the RED program. "I am committed to supporting small businesses and preserving the history and charm of our villages and communities throughout the Township," said Lecce. "I am proud to deliver funding and support for the revitalization of Main Street in historic Schomberg to support outdoor patio expansion, street beautification and greening, and efforts to further attract investment and market main street Schomberg as a prime destination to live and work." "I would like to thank the Province of Ontario for their continued support through the Rural Economic Development (RED) Program," said Mayor Steve Pellegrini. "We are delighted to build on the foundational Downtown Revitalization Strategy that was supported through RED in 2018. Working together with our incredible businesses and dedicated community groups, we will now move forward with the implementation of our Strategy to highlight Schomberg Main Street as it is and one of our true hidden gems in King Township." "We have seen some significant tangible improvements and private sector investments made on Main Street Schomberg as an outcome of our efforts," said Councillor Bill Cober. "This new RED project will build on these investments and partnerships while developing new signature events, marketing tools and support for our amazing businesses to promote our beautiful Main Street and the community of Schomberg." "Supporting local jobs and economic development in rural communities is more important than ever," said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. "As the economy continues to reopen, our investments in the Rural Economic Development program will have a very real impact for communities across rural Ontario." "In addition, the Ontario government is committing \$5 million in cost-share funding under the next intake of the RED program to help rural communities implement additional economic growth plans to address the economic impacts of COVID-19. The new RED intake opened Aug. 30. Ontario's Rural Economic Development (RED) program will allow rural communities to better respond to the local economic impacts of the pandemic, by supporting actions that will address barriers to economic development, and better position rural communities for economic growth and job creation. Economic growth in rural and Indigenous communities during COVID-19 is part of the government's plan to get every region of Ontario back on track so they can create jobs, opportunity and prosperity for everyone. Municipalities, not-for-profit entities, Ontario Indigenous communities and organizations, and local services boards are eligible for the Rural Economic Development program. The RED program offers two project streams: "Economic Diversification and Competitiveness: Projects that remove barriers to business and job growth, attract investment, attract or retain a skilled workforce, strengthen sector and regional partnerships and diversify regional economies." "Strategic Economic Infrastructure: Minor capital projects that advance economic development and investment opportunities. The province will contribute up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$150,000 for the Economic Diversification and Competitiveness Stream, while the province will invest up to 30 per cent of eligible project costs to a maximum of \$250,000, for the Strategic Economic Infrastructure Stream. The RED program supports projects with tangible benefits to rural and Indigenous communities that help to attract business, investment, and create jobs, while also providing greater value for taxpayer dollars.