

King joins Digital Main Street's ShopHERE to support local businesses

To help support local small businesses, King Township is joining the ShopHERE program, with a goal of helping local businesses sell online this year. ShopHERE, powered by Google, started in the City of Toronto. It helps independent businesses and artists build a digital presence and minimize the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May, Google Canada announced a \$1 million investment to enable Digital Main Street to expand the program to municipalities across the country, offering more businesses and artists the opportunity to build their own online store. Because the opportunities afforded by the digital economy are still limited if people don't have the right skills, Google's investment will also help more small businesses and artists receive the digital skills training needed to participate in the digital economy. The program is now available to small businesses in King Township. Local businesses and artists can apply for the program at www.economicking.ca/shophere/ to get their online store built at no-cost. Ever since the pandemic started, we've been communicating with and advocating for ways to help our local businesses navigate through the uncertainty," said King Mayor Steve Pellegrini. "We're pleased that Google Canada has launched a service that helps them do just that. Adding one more business support tool to the toolkit is a great thing for our local businesses. Economic Development staff will be reaching out to businesses to make them aware of and encourage them to apply. "Since Google began its business in Canada nearly 20 years ago, we've been focused on helping Canadian businesses of all sizes to unlock the prosperity of the internet," said Sabrina Geremia, VP and Country Manager, Google Canada. "We remain optimistic and more determined than ever that technology is the toolkit for a world of opportunities. Our one million dollar investment will go towards expanding the ShopHERE program nationally, so we can help small businesses across Canada navigate the challenges ahead. "Google Canada has offices in Waterloo, Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa with over 1,500 Canadian Google employees working on teams across Engineering, AI Research, Sales and Marketing. Digital Main Street is a program that helps main street businesses achieve digital transformation. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, and our Digital Service Squad, a team of street-level team members who help main street businesses grow and manage their operations through technology. Digital Main Street was created by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) with direct support from the City of Toronto. DMS is also supported by a group of strategic business partners, including Google, MasterCard, Microsoft and Shopify. The ShopHERE program offers businesses and artists the opportunity to build a digital presence and minimize the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. ShopHERE is supported by a number of community and corporate partners, including Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, Shopify, Google, Mastercard, Microsoft, Magnet, and The Schulich School of Business ? York University.