

## **Funding program continues to incentivize downtown development**

**For immediate release (May 30, 2019) –** The City of Orillia awarded three recipients with grants through the Downtown Tomorrow Community Improvement Plan (DTCIP) today, bringing the total funding awarded for 2019 to \$122,500.

“It’s a really exciting time in Orillia and we are seeing a diverse range of businesses choosing the downtown core as their new home,” said Mayor Steve Clarke. “The grants awarded today help facilitate the expansion of Wilkie’s Bakery, the creation of a new entrepreneurial hub, and the sale of a key piece of property in the center of town.”

Bowood Properties is the recipient of a \$7,500 façade improvement grant, which will allow for renovations to the front façade of 160 Mississaga St. E. New windows, an awning and an accessible door are just a portion of the extensive renovations planned for the currently vacant location in preparation for its new tenant, Wilkie’s Bakery and Pizza.

“With the assistance of the grant program funding, we were able to complete a larger project for our new tenants,” said Tracy Christie, owner of Bowood Properties and 160 Mississaga St. E. “We are able to create a beautiful new space and new landmark for Wilkie’s Bakery and Pizza who will be relocating from their existing location to this building.”

Two additional grants, totaling \$22,500, were awarded to Anitta Hamming, the new tenant of 23 Mississaga St. W., commonly referred to as the former BiWay building.

“The Downtown [Tomorrow] Improvement Plan has been a key component to move this project forward and has allowed me to negotiate the completion of the initial engineering studies,” said Hamming. “Without the extensive support of the City of Orillia and this grant program, this project may not have even gotten off the ground.”

Hamming will be completing façade improvements to replace and upgrade the front windows, add an accessible door as well as new signage. In addition, she will be completing building improvements to renovate this vacant building into a flexible workshop and teaching space for creative entrepreneurs called Creative Nomad Studios.

Empower Simcoe at 4 King St., is the recipient of a \$5,000 feasibility and design study grant and has plans to use the funding to obtain a risk assessment report to facilitate the sale of the building.

In 2017, the first year of the DTCIP, the City awarded \$106,500 to local recipients. Within the first two intakes of 2019 alone, the City exceeded this total by awarding \$122,500. A total of \$77,500 remains of the \$200,000 in funding approved by Council for the DTCIP for 2019. The final intake deadline for this year is Oct. 31, 2019.

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Downtown business and property owners are encouraged to contact the City of Orillia Economic Development Office at 705-325-4900, or visit the project webpage at [orillia.ca/downtowncip](http://orillia.ca/downtowncip) for more information.

The City of Orillia is a city of 31,000 people in the heart of Ontario's Lake Country on the shores of Lake Couchiching and Lake Simcoe. Visit our website at [orillia.ca](http://orillia.ca).

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**Photo cutline:** The City of Orillia presented three recipients with grants as part of the Downtown Tomorrow Community Improvement Plan on May 30, 2019. From left to right are: Coun. Tim Lauer, Coun. Pat Hehn, Anitta Hamming of Creative Nomad Studios, Mayor Steve Clarke, Tracy Christie, owner of Bowood Properties and 160 Mississaga St. E., and Coun. Rob Kloosstra.