



## Re-Opening Ottawa: Response to Ontario's Release of the Covid-19 Response Framework

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 3, 2020

OTTAWA, ON: The Ottawa Coalition of Business Improvement Areas (OCOBIA) is pleased with the announcement by Premier Doug Ford and the Province that it will move Ottawa in the new Orange Zone as of Saturday, November 7, 2020 allowing restrictions to be lifted on local businesses including restaurants, fitness centres, theatres, and bingo halls. We are confident that the *Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework* will serve to give business owners the insight they need as they plan and navigate for the future, including advanced notice that further restriction may be occurring based on changes in Ottawa's decision making data.

"For many, the new framework will be essential to facilitate future decision making" said Rebecca Palmer, Executive Director of OCOBIA, a statement echoed by many of the local Business Improvement Areas (BIA). "Our members are excited to reopen and have invested funds to ensure they meet or exceed public safety standards and protocols to provide a safe experience for their consumers."

OCOBIA also echoes the sentiment from Dr. Vera Etches that "we need to be learning to live with COVID, to coexist with COVID, with caution." OCOBIA has been working with the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health to recommend measures that will allow our businesses to reopen while maintaining customer and community safety. We appreciate the Mayor's support of businesses during the shutdown, and the strong Ottawa Public Health spirit of collaboration.

"Ottawa Public Health and the Mayor's Office are listening to the needs of our businesses and helping them to find safe ways to reopen" says Mark Kaluski, Chair of the organization. "The changes to allow indoor dining in restaurants is essential to their survival as the temperatures drop and make outdoor dining and activities less feasible."

Ottawa is home to 19 Business Improvement Areas (BIA) representing 6400 properties and businesses, many of which include restaurants, bars, bingo halls, and fitness centres. The reopening of these businesses, restaurants in particular, is essential to their survival as the temperatures drop and make outdoor dining and activities less feasible. In order to ensure public safety, many of these businesses have invested thousands of dollars in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to increase the safety of their establishments.

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THE OTTAWA COALITION OF BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREAS

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