



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 2, 2020

**Community Message from Mayor Virginia Hackson**

We are now in the third week of Canada's response to the COVID-19 crisis and during this time we have experienced unprecedented changes to our way of life.

Two weeks ago, on March 19, East Gwillimbury Council declared a State of Emergency. Our Town has never made such a declaration however, to align with the Province, our neighbouring municipalities and to demonstrate to our community the seriousness of this situation, it was the appropriate decision to make.

A dedicated COVID-19 staff team is in place at the Town to specifically deal with issues and concerns as they arise. Council, with staff, continue to monitor and assess this situation, making decisions that best serve our community. Over the past weeks, the Town has closed all Town facilities and cancelled all programs; closed all playground equipment and skate parks; posted signage at trails as a reminder of the importance of physical distancing when walking; approved up to five bags of untagged garbage, to be placed on the curb for pick up; and continue to provide community updates as information is made available. In addition, the payment of tax and water bills due in early April have been deferred to May 1. Staff are currently working with the Province and Region to address potential additional deferrals options. Please, if you have the means to continue to make your tax and water payments, you are encouraged to do so. This will ensure we can better support those that are most vulnerable.

Like many, I continue to urge everyone to be diligent in practicing self-isolation and physical distancing. It is what we do today, tomorrow and the coming weeks that will determine when we will get through this crisis. Staying at home is no longer a request, it is the social responsibility that each of us must follow. Limit your outings to essential trips only, and please remember if you are taking time to go outside for a walk, keep a two-metre distance from others. On April 7, Council will be meeting for the first time in the newly legislated virtual format to discuss the COVID-19 situation and the impact on our Town. Details on this meeting will be released later this week.

Please visit our website at [www.eastgwillimbury.ca/COVID19](http://www.eastgwillimbury.ca/COVID19) for updates and additional information.

In closing, I would like to thank all the frontline and essential workers for their efforts and dedication to keep us safe.

Be supportive and kind – together we will get through this.

Virginia Hackson