



Town of East Gwillimbury

MEMORANDUM

To: Council

Date: May 20, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Update #4

Origin: COVID-19 Control Group

COVID-19 Control Group Updates

COVID-19 Control Group continues to meet on a regular basis to respond to the emerging situation and is in communications with all Members of Council, neighbouring municipalities and York Region. The group also continues to work closely with Provincial and York Region Public Health Officials regarding this public health crisis.

The Town remains under a state of emergency and continues to monitor the Federal and Provincial updates with respect to the phased approach for a safe restart of economy.

On Tuesday May 12, the Province of Ontario extended the Declaration of Emergency until June 2, 2020. The Province indicated that this additional time will ensure the province has the necessary tools and health care capacity to contain COVID-19, while gradually reopening businesses, services, and amenities safely. The declaration will allow Ontario to continue to enforce current emergency orders, such as what is permitted to be open/closed.

On Thursday, May 14, the Province also announced their first phase of their Re-open Business plan. [The announcement](#) indicated that specific retailers, seasonal businesses and certain health and community service providers will be permitted to open or expand their services on Saturday, May 16, and Tuesday, May 19, 2020 provided that the general trend on health indicators continues to improve as part of the first stage of the government's reopening framework.

The businesses which were permitted to open Saturday include golf courses, marinas, private parks and campgrounds, businesses that board animals. Businesses that were permitted to open on Tuesday include retail stores with street-front entrances, seasonal/recreational activities that are individual or maintain social distancing, animal

services such as grooming and training, indoor and outdoor household services such as cleaning, construction, certain medical services such as in-person counselling and scheduled surgeries. A full list of the rules and regulations related to the openings is available on the [Province's website](#).

East Gwillimbury Public Library to re-open in early June with limited curbside service

As per the announcement, public library services may resume for delivery and pick-up as early as May 19, 2020. East Gwillimbury Public Library truly appreciates the public's support during this time and know that this is an anticipated service in the community. Library staff are working to develop protective processes and measures to ensure the health and safety of residents and employees during these uncertain times. Staff are hopeful to launch the curbside program in early June and will continue to keep Council and the public informed as we prepare for re-opening. Online programs will continue for residents and are available at www.egpl.ca.

Potential re-opening of Tennis Courts to the public

In response to the Province of Ontario lifting restrictions to some individual sports the Town will be reviewing guidelines for re-opening public Tennis at Town Tennis Courts including public health precautions. Town staff are planning to potentially re-open Tennis Courts to the public effective Monday May 25, 2020.

Off-leash dog area located at Bendor and Graves Forest Tract closed until further notice

The off-leash dog area located at Bendor and Graves Forest Tract is owned by York Region and is currently closed until further notice. The decision to re-open that area will come from York Region and staff will report back once a decision has been made.

COVID-19 Response, Review and Recovery Model – Status Update

As we continue to follow Provincial and Federal updates, the Town will begin shifting our response to recovery and building back better. As of May 19, 2020, the COVID-19 Control Group will scale back operations from daily meetings to meeting once per week on COVID-19 matters, with a focus on the Town's Recovery Plan. The Town's Senior Management Team will continue to meet once weekly as well to address operational and strategic items for the organization.

At the Council meeting held on May 5, 2020, staff presented [ADMIN Report 2020-03](#) outlining the Town's COVID-19 response, review and recovery model.

As part of the Phased-In Recovery Plan, staff are currently developing a short-term 100-day action plan that focuses on safely reopening Town facilities and open spaces. As part of the plan to reopen Town facilities and open spaces, the plan would incorporate ongoing remote work arrangements and general plans and directions with respect to Town programs and events that have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

A third-party consultant has initiated the after-action reporting process as part of the Emergency Management Plan following the Town's declared emergency. This review will serve as the basis for the future report to Council on the Town's performance on the Pandemic as well as the creation of a "Pandemic Plan" that will reside in the Town's Emergency Plan for future reference.

Staff continue to monitor the [Ontario framework](#) for re-opening and work collaboratively with employees, stakeholders and partners to respond to these changes and challenges. The COVID-19 Control Group, in partnership with the Recovery Team will also ensure that all Town decisions regarding reopening of facilities are in alignment with the province's framework, and public health agency recommendations.

Engaging employees is a key element of the Town's Recovery Plan

Employee Survey

The Recovery Team is working to create a brief Employee Survey to garner feedback from employees regarding their opinions on remote-work and to received employees' suggestions for building back better. The survey results will be used to inform potential future flexible work arrangement programs.

Employee Virtual Town Hall #3

The Town will be hosting the third employee Virtual Town Hall at 10 a.m. on May 21, 2020. To date, the Town Halls have been extremely successful with 130-150 participants per session. The sessions are held using the Towns virtual meeting platform, Microsoft Teams. The focus of the sessions are to provide Town-wide operational and departmental updates, messages from the Mayor and CAO, and to answer questions submitted by staff anonymously prior to the sessions. The third session will continue in this format with a major focus on the Town's Recovery Plans.

Facebook Live Session with Mayor Hackson and Dr. Kurji

On May 7, 2020, the Town hosted its first-ever Facebook Live session with Mayor Hackson and Dr. Kurji, York Region's Medical Officer of Health. The session lasted from 2 to 3 p.m. and provided residents and employees the opportunity to post questions for Dr. Kurji regarding COVID-19. The Town had over 60 participants and received many questions related to COVID-19, the Provincial orders and protective measures people can take at this time.

Long-Term Care/Community Care Facilities Outbreak Status Update

As of May 14, 2020, the Town of East Gwillimbury has had six outbreaks in Long-Term Care/Community Care facilities. An outbreak is defined as at least one case in the facility. As soon as an outbreak is declared, outbreak control measures are implemented within the facility. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the local public health unit, can declare the outbreak over when there are no new cases in residents or staff after 14 days (maximum incubation period) from the latest of:

- Date of isolation of the last resident case; OR
- Date of illness onset of the last resident case; OR
- Date of last shift at work for last staff case.

In total, four of the six outbreaks have now been declared closed. The outbreaks affected both residents and health care professionals with a total of 47 confirmed cases.

Wi-Fi Hotspots now active at three Town facilities

East Gwillimbury residents and visitors can enjoy free internet access outside of the Civic Centre, Holland Landing Community Centre, and Ross Family Complex. Signage and barricades have been installed at each facility that identify the location of the Wi-Fi access areas within each parking lot. Those interested in connecting to the Wi-Fi hotspots must park in one of the designated parking spots to successfully connect to the internet to ensure social distancing.

Bikes Updates

As we continue to conduct Town business, employees require access to transportation vehicles to move throughout the Town and to complete their daily tasks. With limited vehicles available, and with the need to have staff practice physical distancing the Town has acquired three mountain bikes to be used as an alternative mode of transportation. This ensures that vehicles can have minimal occupancy and staff can bike to work locations. Parks maintenance staff will be utilizing the bikes to reach all park and trail locations within Sharon to avoid driving together in vehicles. By-law staff and parks staff

are also utilizing the bikes to visit local parks and trails and remind people about the Provincial orders.

Health & Active Living Challenge Videos

On April 6, 2020, the Town recreation and communications staff launched daily online video challenges for the public to view and participate in. The videos were meant to provide an opportunity for engagement, positive mental health and inspire people while at home. The videos included activities for children, fitness tips, healthy recipes, karate sessions, yoga tips, as well as fun challenges. To date, the Town has completed 30 videos. Each video reaches an average of approximately 2,750 people on Facebook and Twitter. Top videos include fitness videos, karate videos, as well as healthy eating tips and a plank challenge.

Property tax and water bill relief to residents and businesses – Status Update

The second interim property tax levy payment was due April 30. To date, the Town has collected approximately 80% of the total interim billing. Council has approved waiving interest on the outstanding tax and water billing amounts until July 31 to provide relief on property tax and water bill payments. Staff has also encouraged residents and businesses that are having difficulty paying their property tax or water bill to contact Town staff to discuss their situation. Staff has received 49 calls and from those calls have entered into 17 tax bill and 13 water bill payment arrangements with residents and businesses. Staff continue to work with the Region and other stakeholders to review further relief options as required.