



Town of East Gwillimbury

MEMORANDUM

To: Council

Date: September 9, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Update #8

Origin: COVID-19 Control Group

COVID-19 Control Group Updates

The COVID-19 Control Group continues to meet and is in communications with Council, neighbouring municipalities and York Region. Town is closely following the Provincial Stage 3 reopening. The group also continues to work closely with Provincial and York Region Public Health Officials regarding this public health crisis.

York Region and the Town remain in a State of Emergency. The Ontario Government terminated the declared provincial emergency on July 24, 2020. Many emergency orders are still in effect under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020. On August 20, 2020, most of these orders were extended until September 22, 2020.

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

“Build Back Better” Recovery Plan Update

The Town’s Recovery Team continues to work on re-opening plans and gathering relevant information from all divisions to ensure all operating requirements are met for the purpose of returning staff and the public to a safe environment. A separate presentation entitled Resumption of Impacted Services is included on the September 9, 2020 Council agenda outlining the phased re-opening strategy and resumption of impacted services. Below is an update of next steps recommended as part of the continued re-opening plan.

Potential for a Second Wave

The COVID-19 Control Group and Recovery Team will continue to monitor risk level assessments completed by the Province and York Region Public Health officials. A recovery framework timeline and protocols have been developed to revert to Stage One (full closures) if required.

The Group has developed a Covid-19 Pandemic Response Framework, as shown on Appendix A, to track how we would proceed if a second wave occurs. This includes reverting to stage one, with all facilities closed.

Current Status in York Region

To-date, York Region has reported a gradual increase in the number of cases over the past 2 weeks and they are currently working on a COVID-19 resurgence plan. This plan will be circulated to all York Regional Municipalities.

A survey of all York Regional municipalities was conducted to determine the state of re-opening of all City and Town halls, as shown on Appendix B attached.

Successful Re-Opening of Atlas East Pad

The first re-opening of the Sports Complex – Atlas/East pad was successfully implemented on August 24, 2020. Staff would like to thank all participants for following the required safety precautions and guidelines and making this is a successful first step in re-opening Town facilities. The Town will continue to monitor and adjust these plans as required to ensure public safety.

Re-Opening of NewRoads/West pad – September 8

Thanks to the successful re-opening of the Atlas/East Pad the Town will expand to include the re-opening of the NewRoads/West pad as of September 8, 2020. This will allow for expanded ice rentals and programming through the East Gwillimbury Minor Hockey Association, East Gwillimbury Skating Club and the Town.

First Step in Re-Opening the Civic Centre

In response to a high demand and surge in building permit requests, the Town will be allowing appointment-based services to resume for Development Services building department on September 8, 2020. This pilot group will be able to significantly enhance their services by having a small group of staff return to the Civic Centre and offer in-person drop offs and appointments for building applications. This small re-opening will

allow a first step in piloting the re-opening of appointment-based services at the Civic Centre which is planned for later this fall, as explained below.

Expanded Re-Opening of Specific Community Centres and Libraries

The Town is continuing to plan for the next set of strategic and phased re-opening of Town facilities. The next phase will look to re-open, the Holland Landing Community Centre, Ross Family Complex and Library locations in September or October, following a safe return to schools. These re-openings would include the safety measures and precautions listed below with occupancy of no more than 25 occupants for the Library space and 50 occupants for the entire Community Centre facility (not including Town staff) as per the Provincial regulations.

Re-opening of Indoor Spaces will include Enhanced Safety Measures

Each user must adhere to protocol and guidelines established by the Town:

Recreation Facilities

- Face masks are mandatory within municipal facilities.
- All staff will be trained on the Town's Recovery Framework training and safety protocols.
- Community/Sports Groups and occupants will be provided with instructions and guidelines that must be followed when attending municipal facilities. In addition to written instructions a video outlining how to safely return to the Sports Complex will be provided.
- All facilities will include physical adaptations (physical distancing markers, directional arrows, physical barriers at service desks, hand sanitizing stations) to work places and operational environments prior to opening and as per York Region Public Health guidelines and industry best practices.
- Enhanced cleaning will be provided at each facility including additional cleaning of washroom facilities and changerooms, routine cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces, work surfaces, seating and equipment. Additionally, cleaning logs will continue to be maintained at each facility.
- Screening and contact tracing protocol for individuals and groups entering municipal facilities will be in effect.
- Recreation facilities will be open through monitored and controlled public. For example, access will be provided through permits or pre-registration to ensure maximum occupancy numbers do not exceed the provincial regulations of 50 individuals per facility. Total occupancy of 50 individuals does not include Town staff.

Library Specific Safety Measures

To ensure a safe re-opening of East Gwillimbury's Library facilities the following safety measures will be in place:

- Reduced opening hours to allow for additional cleaning measures. The Library will be open for 25 hours per week, 18 hours less than normal operating hours.
- All visitors will be required to wear a face mask/covering.
- There will be a limit to 25 occupants at one time. A library staff "greeter" will be used to monitor entry and help direct visitors as they enter.
- To ensure a smooth flow the library will limit computer use per visitor to one hour and encourage Grab & Go transactions.
- All collection items will be quarantined following industry recommendations.
- Physical adaptations including physical distancing markers, physical barriers at service desks, hand sanitize stations, and removal of furniture will be in place prior to opening.
- Contact tracing will be implemented through library card scan ins.
- Services will be reduced to computer use and access to the collection, with no in-library programs in September.

Resumption of limited services at the Civic Centre

In an emergency context, 'essential services' are defined as those services necessary to preserve and protect public health and safety, and to maintain critical municipal infrastructure. All other services are defined as 'non-essential'. As per the Recovery Framework, the Town is looking to initiate modified 'non-essential' services for residents by appointment only, in accordance with the following assessment criteria:

- **Priority 1** – No options exist to provide the service through virtual or other means.
- **Priority 2** – Virtual or other options exist, but effectiveness and efficiency are significantly enhanced by in-person delivery.
- **Priority 3** – Virtual or other options exist but in-person service meets a resident or business preference. The cost and risks of providing in person service are deemed justifiable and appropriate by the COVID-19 Control Group.

This approach will limit the number of residents coming into the building, and ensure the Town continues to focus on modernization efforts to move services online as much as possible.

As part of the next stage of re-opening, the Customer Service team will play a key role in engaging residents for scheduled in-person services, while still continuing to maintain a high service level response through phone and email.

Some of the services that were temporarily halted and/or significantly impacted due to COVID-19 include: issuance of marriage licence, civil ceremonies, certified copies, and commissioner of oaths. In addition, there will be a number of Development Services staff working from the Civic Centre to deal with the intake, processing and review of building permit and planning applications.

Resumption of limited in-person meetings – September 8, 2020

Virtual meetings will remain as the default structure for all internal and external meetings. However, the Recovery Team is recommending that meetings which would benefit from an in-person consultation such as a development meeting may begin to occur either on-site at a development location or at the Town office if required. In-person meetings should be kept to a minimum and may only occur when a Virtual Meeting would not be sufficient or would hinder the progress of the meeting. All meetings will be subject to COVID-19 safety measures and staff will be required to submit a request with explanation as to why the meeting should occur in-person to the General Manager of the department.

Electronic Council meetings to remain virtual until the end of 2020

Council meetings will remain virtual until the end of 2020. In January 2021, the COVID-19 Control Group and Recovery Team will look at the evolving situation and determine if it is appropriate to resume some in-person participation of Council meetings. An initial phase could include a hybrid set up with some in-person and some remote participants.

Additionally, the Town's Senior Management Team will continue to meet virtually for the remainder of the year. Similar to Council meetings, the ability of partial in-person meetings will be reviewed in January 2021.

Civic Centre Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The re-openings will include all safety procedures and guidelines as outlined above. Additionally, all visitors to Civic Centre will be required to enter through the front door and will be greeted by a Customer Service representative at the kiosk desk. The Customer Service representative will unlock the door for residents with a pre-arranged appointment. Visitors would be requested to use hand sanitizer and wear a face covering/mask once entering the building. From there, staff will assist the resident with their designated appointment or direct them to their meeting. There will be maximum of two residents allowed in the Customer Service at one time, additional residents would

queue out front of the Civic Centre. However, as services will be offered through appointments only, staff do not foresee line-ups at this time.

Resumption of Staff Operations at Civic Centre

At this time, the Health & Safety Coordinator and COVID-19 Control Group is granting approvals for staff to enter the Civic Centre on a case by case basis to conduct work that can not be completed at home. This ensures the number of staff attending the workplace will be kept to a minimum and scheduled collaboratively to ensure physical distancing is maintained.

The Recovery Team is currently looking into a strategy to determine a safe occupancy percentage that enables staff to come back in a manner that promotes social and physical distancing. Based on a successful re-opening of appointment-based services, the Town will look to provide limited space per area for staff to return to work by request only. This will ensure social distancing, and to allow staff the opportunity to work in the office on a rotational basis. By slowly phasing-in staff at the office we can ensure that proper safety procedures and guidelines are being followed, and that limited staff are in contact to ensure that if an outbreak occurs it is limited in scope.

Beginning October 1, 2020, staff who would like to request to resume occasional operations at the Civic Centre can begin submitting requests to attend the Civic Centre. However, resumption of staff operations at the Civic Centre should only occur if staff cannot provide the service remotely or quality of work would substantially be enhanced by attending work on-site. For example, if someone's work from home accommodations are not ideal, they may request to work from the office one to two days a week as space permits.

The initial phase of re-opening is expected to continue through fall of 2020 with a comprehensive review of the protocols which may enable the Town to transition into further expanding its gradual re-opening plans to include additional offices opening to the public on a by-appointment basis.

Modified Recreation Program and Permit Updates

With the re-opening of municipal facilities modified programming has been developed with consultation with York Region public health guidelines and industry best practices developed in partnership with other York Region municipalities and Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO). All programming will be physically distanced and not exceed the maximum indoor and outdoor occupancies. Modified programming and facility permits could include:

- Continuing virtual and outdoor programming.

- Addition of indoor programming including potentially fitness, drop-in activities, hockey instruction, art, youth leadership and possibly some seniors' activities.
- Continued ice rentals.

The Town is planning the release of the Health & Active Living Guide in late September to early October providing sufficient time to develop modified programs and start dates, recruit and train staff and update a virtual guide for the Fall and Winter program session. Communication to the public will be provided through the Town Page, Website, Social Media and the Active-net registration database.

Large Scale Events

At present, it is not possible to host large scale special events. Provincial regulations limit occupancy for indoor spaces at 50 participants and 100 participants for outdoor spaces including parks. As a result, staff will be holding off on hosting large scale in-person events for the remainder of the year. Given the success of the Canada Day virtual event, staff will seek to host online events where possible.

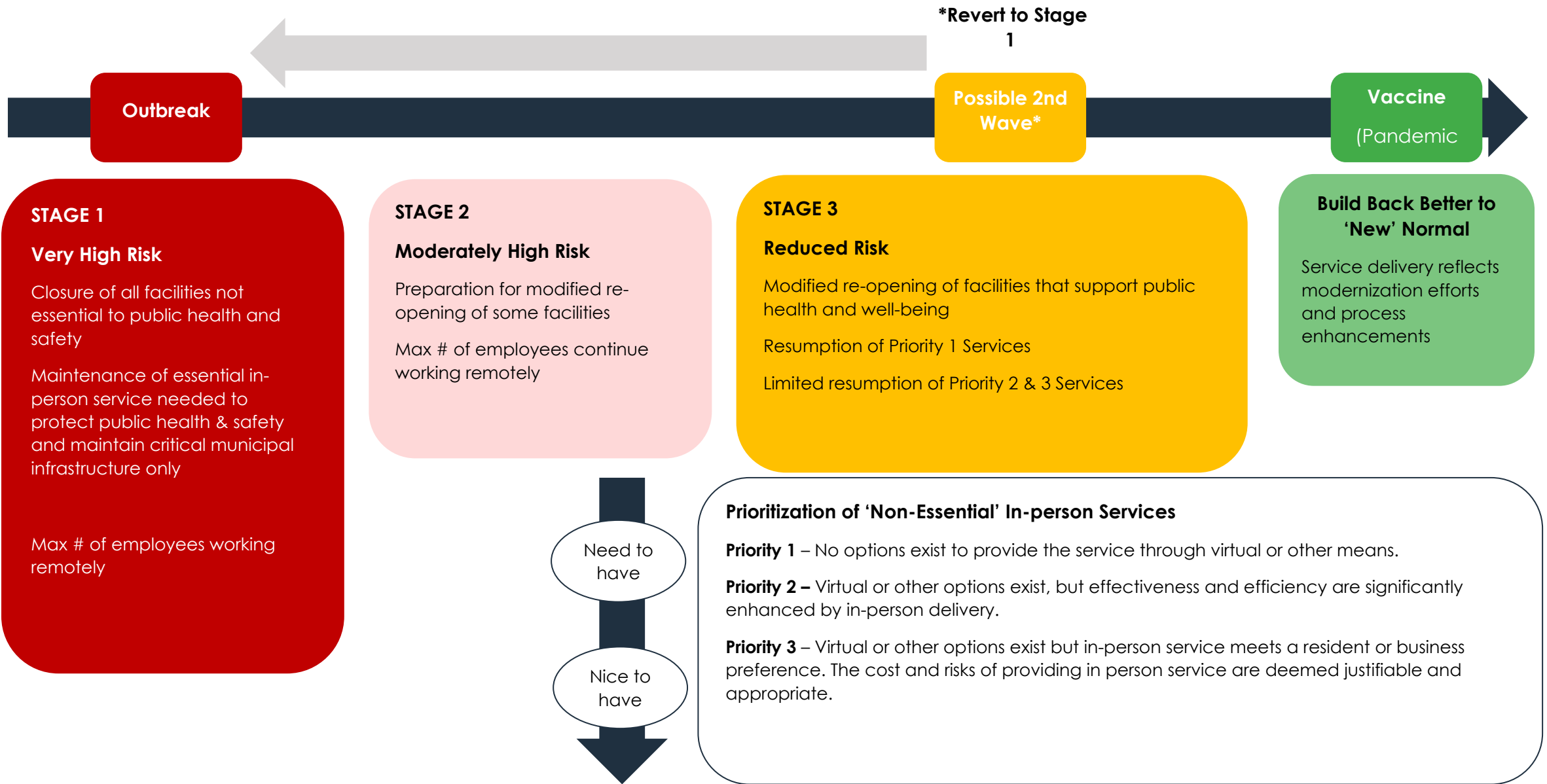
Impact of Bill 197, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020 on Meeting Rules

The Province has taken notice of the success of electronic meetings and in preparation of lifting the Provincial declaration of emergency at the end of July, the Province passed Bill 197 which amended various legislations impacting municipalities, including the *Municipal Act*, *Building Code Act*, *Planning Act*, and *Development Charges Act*, among others.

Bill 197 extends the permissions granted by Bill 187 relating to electronic meetings, to non-emergency periods. That is, Bill 197 further amends the *Municipal Act, 2001* such that Members of Council, committees, and local boards may now participate electronically in open and closed session meetings and count towards quorum during emergency and non-emergency periods, again provided that the municipality's procedural by-law is appropriately amended.

The proposed By-law 2020-063 has been placed on the September 9, 2020 Council agenda for Council's consideration and adoption.

Appendix 'A' – COVID-19 Pandemic Response Framework



Appendix 'B'

State of Re-opening of YR HQ, City and Town Halls Survey of York Region Municipalities as of September 8, 2020		
Municipality	Re-opening Date	Comments
Aurora	Closed until November 1, 2020 (potentially to January 1, 2021)	<p>Town Hall continues to be shut down until November 1, 2020. Potentially up to January 1, 2021 (no commitment) pending what September brings with respect to a second wave. (Set by Administration.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation staff are fully back at work • Facilities – three of five ice pads have been opened over various community centers. Limited availability. Can change due to demand over provincial orders. • Council will be having their first in person council meeting on August 25. However, no more than twenty people allowed and attendees have to pre-register.
Georgina	Closed until January 2021 with potential for change to fall 2020	Targeting January 2021 – Council may change to fall of 2020.
King	Closed until January 4, 2021	Will be introducing future “in-person by appointment only” services on a limited basis. Senior Leadership Team and our Forward Thinking Recovery Group continue to evaluate opportunities to further expand service levels in a safe, contained and fiscally responsible way moving forward.
Markham	Undecided	Staff have permission to continue to work remotely until January 4, 2021
Newmarket	No date confirmed	CAO to revisit in October, staff will be given ample notice and flexibility.
Richmond Hill	Closed until January 4, 2021 pending Council decision in September	Our plan is to open City Hall on January 4, 2021 pending Council approval in September. We are opening the Operations Center on August 24 to provide specific services during specific timeframes.
Vaughan	Closed until Jan. 4, 2021, at the earliest	Link to City of Vaughan's News Release News Release includes further details
Whitchurch Stouffville	Closed until January 4, 2021 pending Council decision in September	Currently providing Town Hall services by phone, email, virtual meetings and online apps. An online appointment booking system for in-person meetings is being implemented.
York Region	Closed until January 4, 2021, at the earliest	Regional staff have received communication from the CAO that the municipal offices will remain closed to the public until January 4, 2021, at the earliest
East Gwillimbury	No date confirmed	<p>The Town's COVID-19 Control Group is working with Council to review options for a modified re-opening of the Civic Centre in September of 2020.</p> <p>Any re-opening and modified operations would be for limited, by-appointment services only and include enhanced safety measures. Council meetings will remain virtual until the end of 2020.</p> <p>In January 2021, the Town's COVID-19 Control Group and Recovery Team will look at the evolving situation and determine if it is appropriate to resume some in-person participation of Council meetings.</p> <p>The re-opening of municipal offices remains a senior management decision based on directions from Council.</p>