

# COVID-19 Update for City Council

April 8, 2020

Michael Prowse, Chief Administrative Officer



# Agenda

- Update on current status
- New Provincial orders/direction
- Updates on City services
- New City actions to support community health and safety
- New City actions to support local economy
- Manufacturing success stories
- Construction progress updates
- City staffing changes
- Communications
- Financial impacts
- Good news
- County of Simcoe updates
- Emerging matters

# Overview of current status

- City of Barrie Emergency Operations Control Group activated on March 13, 2020
- Emergency declared March 23, 2020
- RVH added to Control Group
- 108 confirmed cases of COVID-19 including 40 recovered, 14 hospitalizations and 5 deaths in Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit area
- Evidence of community transmission
- **If we're very good at physical distancing, mathematical modelling shows we can reduce the cases by up to 95%. Need to act now.**

# New Provincial Orders/Direction

- March 30 – extension of declaration of emergency until April 14
- March 30 – Order - closure of outdoor recreational amenities
- March 31 – school and child care closures extended to May 4 for students/April 13 child care
- April 1 – \$50 M Ontario Together Fund for essential equipment and supplies

# New Provincial Orders/Direction

- April 2 – additional mental health funding
- April 3 – extended business closures (marinas), COVID modelling released, staffing of retirement homes, on-line portal for public to access their test results
- April 4 – new web portal for agri-food sector, \$40M residential relief fund April 5
- April 6 – support families during closures, first responder access to COVID information, recruitment health care workers

# Updates related to City services

- Free Barrie Transit extended to April 30
- No Communities in Bloom in 2020
- Special events cancelled until at least June 7
- Marina and boat launch to be closed
- Spring session of recreation programs cancelled

# New actions support community health

- COVID-19 enforcement line launched
  - 705-739-4241
  - [Enforcement.services@barrie.ca](mailto:Enforcement.services@barrie.ca)
  - 8 am to 11 pm
- Physical distancing by-law enacted
  - 2 metre distance required for individuals unless sharing a household
  - Minimum \$500 and maximum \$100,000 fine

# New actions support community health

MLEO activity March 16 to April 6

- Total instances – 641 including
- 271 from routine patrols (231 no violation)
- 159 emails and 36 phone general enquiries
- Complaints
  - Gatherings – 83
  - Park equipment use - 42
  - Businesses – 38
  - 2 metre distance – 12
- Voluntary compliance in all cases so far



# New actions supporting economy

- The Economic & Creative Development Department (ECD) is playing a central role in Mayor Lehman's Economic Support Task Force through its Director, Stephannie Schlichter, and the Manager of the Small Business Centre (SBEC), Dave Hyde, engaging with other business service organizations to discuss impacts and opportunities to deliver program and service to businesses impacted.
- In regular communication with the Chamber, MP & MPP offices, Sandbox, Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre, BIA, Tourism Barrie and other key business service organizations to share information, resources and develop programming that can be shared with local businesses.

# New actions supporting economy

## ***Manufacturing Support***

- Based on feedback from industry, ECD has launched a chat forum for manufacturers with the support of Access Barrie, focussing on best practices as they are working through COVID-19. It is a private platform that enables local manufacturers to share ideas, best practices and ask questions of each other. To date there are 33 businesses registered on the forum and we have been able to connect companies for supply chain of PPE, sharing of job opportunities and retooling opportunities in support of medical supply.

## ***Arts Community***

- Staff are exploring innovative ways to deliver the Emerging Musicians Program, as part of contingency planning for programs and is overall exploring opportunities to bring together virtual live events for local artists.
- With the support of the arts community, ECD has sent out an arts community specific survey to obtain a better understanding of the impact to this sector and their key needs.

# New actions supporting economy

## ***Small Business Programs:***

- SBEC daily operations have continued without interruption. All support services are continuing virtually, i.e. one-on-one consultations, business planning assistance, group information sessions and general advice to small business owners, including provision of information on financial aid programs.
- Launched the [Going Digital](#) project as an immediate response to the need for assisting individual business owners with problem areas relating to their online presence. By leveraging our current three person Digital Service Squad the Centre is able to provide remote assessments of a company's digital shortcomings and connect the company with one or more of a roster of 18 digital agencies who are able to perform any work necessary to correct the issue(s) and position the company to be able to generate revenue from online sources

# Construction Updates

- With regard to the provincial order dated April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 related to the amended List of Essential Work Places, the City's construction projects remain not subject to the Order by virtue of Section 1(5) of O.Reg 82/20, and as such work could continue on the City's construction projects
- That said, we all need to do our part to flatten the curve by staying home if possible. As community leaders, the City of Barrie is seeking a collaborative and mutually agreed upon approach with our construction industry partners regarding continued activity on City-initiated construction projects.
- The City is assessing which projects are deemed most critical and will continue, provided that all required public health protocols can be maintained.

# City staffing changes

- Continued closure of Community Centres, Theatres and Libraries; Spring session of registered programs cancelled; special events cancelled until June 7
- Difficult decision to lay off positions due to:
  - closures of community centres and theatres
  - positions not required due to service changes
- Library has also placed positions on leave or laid off
- Further lay offs are contemplated based on assessment of key services and resource availability

# New Communications Initiatives

- In addition to previous communications activities:
  - Who to call in emergency added to media releases and web
  - Increased signage at parks, sports fields, playgrounds referencing new Provincial order
  - 40,000 robocalls completed
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> robocall with option to identify community needs began April 5; staff will call back and assist
  - Newsletters mailed to all households
  - Banner ads and other assets provided to Council members to utilize
  - Ads placed at RVH to thank Health care workers on behalf of the City
  - Extension of ads on radio stations, online news websites
- Media releases - garbage bag tags, extension of free transit, Tips line, physical distancing by-law, extension of recreation and culture closures, temporary layoffs.

# Financial Impacts

- Estimated lost revenue projections from actions to date - \$1.7M/ 30 days
- Offsetting savings from staff reductions to date - \$425K/30 days
- Energy consumption reductions from closed buildings estimated to be \$70K for first several weeks plus an additional \$20-30K in other utilities
- \$65M less in cash projected by year end



# Good news

**Street Sweeping has started and** takes approximately 10 weeks to complete, weather-permitting. The Source Water Protection zone is swept first followed by residential streets.

- Tentative schedule for street sweeping April 6 to 9, 2020:
  - Ward 5: Subdivision bordering inside Miller, Edgehill, Ferndale (i.e. Jagges, Pringle, Sproule area)
  - Ward 8: Subdivision bordering inside Bayview, Essa Road, Little Avenue (Chieftain, Marshall, Cumberland, William area)
- For an updated schedule, visit [barrie.ca/StreetSweeping](http://barrie.ca/StreetSweeping)



# Good news

## **CIP uptake has been very good.**

Received 15 applications:

- 4 Preservation of Built Heritage Grant Applications;
  - 5 Affordable Housing Grants;
  - 5 Applications for both an Affordable Housing & Redevelopment Grant (combo); and,
  - 1 Application for a Redevelopment Grant.
- 
- Projects range from small-scale affordable housing projects and heritage improvements to large scale mixed-use developments in excess of 150 units per hectare.
- 
- Executive Staff led committee will meet in May to review recommendations.

# Good news

The [Social Distance Mentorship Cycle](#) being offered by Talk is Free Theatre - Using online tools, Young Company members will have dedicated mentorship time to talk, advise, explore and ultimately create original work inspired by place they are in. Over three weeks they will have skype or phone meetings with their mentor as they create a new piece of work (monologue, play, song, story etc.) These new works will be showcased later this year.

[Caswell Community Choirs](#) have been hosting weekly online choral sing-a-longs for all to enjoy

The 18 digital agencies that came on board to support the Going Digital project did so with a real sense of altruism and “what can we do to help”. Here are a couple of their comments:

- “We are truly honoured and grateful that you reached out to us and asked us to be part of such a great opportunity! We look forward to however we can help and support our business community. You guys are amazing, really and truly amazing!” - Heather Wilson, Cheetah Fusion
- “Thanks...for putting this program together, looking forward to the success we can all achieve, together as a community!” - Ryan Tomlinson, Gooder Marketing

# Potential Emerging Matters

- Further extension of special event cancellations
- Yard sale ban
- Fire ban
- Reduced level of service in City parks
- Virtual Easter Egg Hunt is being explored

# QUESTIONS

