

City of Mississauga
Corporate Report



<p>Date: June 30, 2020</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of Council</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Shari Lichterman, CPA, Commissioner of Community Services</p>	<p>Meeting date: July 22, 2020</p>

Subject

Community Pillar Recovery Plan

Recommendation

That the report entitled 'Community Pillar Recovery Plan' dated June 30, 2020 from the Commissioner of Community Services be received for information.

Report Highlights

- On May 13, 2020, Council endorsed a "COVID19 Recovery Framework" which provides a framework for recovery operations in the City of Mississauga. The report identified four pillars of recovery, each to be detailed in a separate report. These pillars are: Financial, Economic, Corporate and Community. This report contains the overarching plan for the Community Pillar.
- This pillar focuses on the services, tactics and programs that are public-facing, and impact Mississauga's residents directly.
- The City has provided a strong response to support the community during this crisis – listening to the community through consultation, using policy tools to mitigate impact, working with partners and staying connected and communicating.
- The first major phase of recovery entails the reopening and restoration of services to the community. This is well underway and involves detailed operational plans to ensure services are restored in a safe and modified manner.
- As we move into a more mature state of recovery, and gain a full understanding of the longer-lasting impacts to our community and community organizations, key strategic plans will be revised with a 'Covid-19 Recovery Lens' – including Older Adult, Youth, operating models for venues such as the Living Arts Centre, Paramount Fine Foods Centre and programming in many areas will be shifted for the foreseeable future.

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- Recovery planning will also involve a review of the Culture and Community Grants program for 2021, to determine if funding should be redirected in support of key community organizations, particularly if the programs and events traditionally funded by the grants are still significantly impacted or reduced.
- Recovery support must also be done in coordination with partners – particularly the Region of Peel – where these organizations have the funding and mandate to deliver services that are critical to the community but are not delivered by the City. The City can be a resource and a strong voice to assist in bringing these services to the community.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a worldwide impact on public health, communities and economies. The City of Mississauga, like many others, has shifted focus from containing the initial outbreak to planning for recovery and a 'new normal'.

On May 13, 2020, Council endorsed a "COVID19 Recovery Framework" which provides a framework for recovery operations in the City of Mississauga. The principles of the framework and recovery planning are:

- Protect the Health and Safety of the Public and Employees
- Phased Approach
- Mental Wellness & Psychosocial Support
- Building Back Better
- Whole Community Approach

The report identified four pillars of recovery, each to be detailed in a separate report. These pillars are:

1. Community
2. Economic
3. Financial
4. Corporate

This plan (Appendix 1) addresses the Community recovery pillar. This pillar focuses on the services, tactics and programs that are public-facing, and impact Mississauga's residents directly. Most of this plan will reference activities led by the Community Services Department, however there are many other City business units that support and resource this pillar, in addition to the Region of Peel and many community agencies and organizations.

Comments

Following the initial actions to close facilities and cancel programs and events, the City of Mississauga turned its attention to supporting the response to this crisis and mitigating immediate impacts to the community. City Council and staff have taken many actions to

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support the community during this challenging time. These included listening to the community through consultation, using policy tools to mitigate impact, working with partners and staying connected and communicating (outlined in more detail in Appendix 1).

City staff have also participated on the Regional Community Response Table – providing input into funding for the community organizations who are actively responding to this crisis and helping residents with their need for food and other necessities.

The City has partnered with the Raptors 905 and Hand Up Toronto to use Paramount Fine Foods Centre as a storage and distribution site for food – with large quantities being delivered to local food banks and charities, along with a drive-through family food box program.

These are just some of the ways the City has stepped up in the community to support other agencies and organizations in their response; from making straps for shields using Library 3D printers, to donating spring flowers to hospital staff, to contributing food inventory directly to the food bank – there have been many small initiatives that have helped during this time.

As the initial critical messaging needs from public health slowed down, City staff were able to work on other programs and services to allow residents to stay connected to the activities they were missing.

All of these response actions were implemented to quickly address the needs of the community and to use the tools and resources of the City to the extent possible. Many of these continue as the recovery and reopening phases have started, and many will likely be a key part of ‘building back better’.

Moving into Recovery – Reopening & Restoring Services

In May 2020, as the initial 6-8 weeks of response to the crisis concluded, the Province and Public Health turned their attention to recovery and reopening, with a response needed from the City at every step.

The first phases of recovery entail the reopening and restoration of services, where closures and cancellations had occurred. Each service being restored requires a plan of its own, as this reopening comes with new regulations, guidelines and safety measures – while COVID-19 is still a risk and no vaccine is available.

There is no playbook for operating services in the community under these circumstances. Guidelines are being developed quickly, in consultation with Public Health, governing agencies, municipal counterparts and sector associations.

As the direction from Public Health and the Province allow, these services will continue to reopen under new guidelines, and over time, it is expected that each service area will gradually resume to a more ‘normal’ state of operation.

Continuing Recovery - Building Back Better & Whole Community Approach

There are many long-term impacts of the closure, cancellation and even modified return to these services for the community. City facilities are a major point of access for many community groups and organizations. City programs are the affordable, accessible option for many residents, especially those most vulnerable. And the City's sport fields and facilities, along with fitness centres, classes, therapeutic and inclusion programs are the backbone of physical literacy, health and wellness and recovery for our residents of all ages and demographics. As the City moves further into recovery, it will be critical to assess the impact this limited access has had on the community – from a financial, mental and physical well-being perspective.

The longer-term impacts to be considered with recovery will be best reviewed through the lens of existing strategic and community plans and programs. Plans that need to be updated and revised for 'COVID-19 modifications' include the Older Adult Plan for Recreation, the Youth Plan, Sport Plan and the business models for the Paramount Fine Foods Centre, Living Arts Centre and other venues.

In addition, through the Community Group Support Program Policy, continued engagement and development of tools will be needed to support the community groups that deliver so many important services to the residents of Mississauga. This could include adjustments to the Community and/or Culture Grant Programs, Active Assist fee assistance program, training resources, access to insurance and other important tools for these not for profit organizations.

Building back better has been a key principle in the framework for recovery planning and certainly will apply as support for community recovery moves forward. Many services that have been moved online or virtually may still benefit from a continuation of this platform. The adoption of technology in many areas has been forced during this crisis – this can be an opportunity longer term, as many strategic plans have included plans for leveraging technology. Tools such as booking appointments and access online, applying for permits and city services, hosting virtual meetings – these will all be opportunities for continued improved service in future.

Additional consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and residents across the City will be required as the City moves into a more mature state of recovery. This will allow the City to determine strategic changes to plans and programs as everyone gains a better understanding of 'the new normal'. It is difficult to plan ahead at this time, given the frequency of change of information and direction. It is also difficult for the City to commit to financial initiatives in supporting community recovery, while the City itself is incurring such significant deficits and revenue impacts. Future supporting programs will need to align with the Financial recovery plan and pillar. In the meantime, staff continue to bring to Council the plans to reopen and recover, while minimizing the financial impact to the organization.

Next Steps

While the response to the pandemic has been ongoing since March, the recovery has only just begun. Next steps in the Community pillar of recovery include:

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- Continue to reopen services and facilities as regulations permit, developing plans to ensure compliance with new public health guidelines.
- Consult and communicate with groups and stakeholders impacted with each reopening plan (sports groups, rental customers, event organizers, etc.) – identifying areas for accommodation and adjustment that are within the City’s control and financial resources.
- Begin the review of key strategic plans and community support programs to identify changes or additions based on recovery impacts – Older Adult, Youth, Sport, grants, etc.
- Plan follow-up engagement with community groups once recovery is well underway, to understand longer term issues and opportunities to better support these stakeholders and residents. Target Fall 2020 for these engagements.
- Identify opportunities to continue supporting the community through partnerships – leverage existing organizations, funding sources and people resources – to advance recovery and return to ‘normal’.
- Incorporate longer term initiatives with financial impact into future budget and planning, once the City has solidified its financial recovery.

Strategic Plan

The Community Pillar Recovery Plan aligns with the City’s strategic plan pillars of Connect and Belong.

Financial Impact

The financial impact of this crisis has been significant – both to the City and the community. The Community Pillar Recovery Plan has no direct financial impact; however it will be a key consideration in the 2021 budget and business planning cycle and four-year plan.

Conclusion

Community recovery efforts will help to ensure that residents continue to choose to live in the City of Mississauga based on community amenities, support networks, activities, and other facets that make Mississauga a great place to live. Through the City’s work with its many community stakeholders, residents will be encouraged to join and participate in opportunities to re-engage in our vibrant municipal life.

Attachments

Appendix1: Community Pillar Recovery Plan



Shari Lichterman, CPA, Commissioner of Community Services

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