

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Committee of the Whole
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 27, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Public Health Services Post-Peak Framework (BOH20010) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable.

INFORMATION

Over the past three months, COVID-19 has upended the lives of Hamiltonians, Canadians, and individuals across the globe. The first case of COVID-19 in Canada was identified in Toronto on January 25, 2020. By March 1, there were a total of 15 cases identified, all of whom were travellers or close contacts of cases. One week later the number of cases had doubled. As community transmission began, Ontario put an emergency order in place and introduced strict public health measures to slow and contain the spread of the virus. These necessary measures enabled us to “flatten the curve”; however, they came at a cost, resulting in profound social and economic disruption. Closure of non-essential business led to significant job loss and Ontario’s unemployment rate climbed to over 11%. The stress and uncertainty of the situation has negatively impact individuals’ mental health and led to increased substance use. The most vulnerable have been disproportionately impacted, including those with unstable housing, low incomes, seniors and those living in congregate settings.

Although the worst of the first wave has passed and businesses are starting to reopen, the pandemic is far from over. Until a vaccine is available, we must learn to live with COVID-19 and adapt to a “new normal”. To plan for this, Public Health Services (PHS) staff have developed a Post-Peak Framework, to be presented at the May 27, 2020

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Council Meeting, to guide the reorientation of public health measures. The primary objectives of this framework are to minimize morbidity and mortality due to COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 causes, and to prevent or reduce the trajectory of a second wave. The secondary goals of this framework include:

- To minimize the potential negative health impacts of the COVID response;
- To support Hamilton in resuming social and economic functioning in a safe manner; and,
- To protect the most vulnerable.

This Post-Peak Framework outlines the following recommendations for reorienting public health measures:

1. Encourage individuals with any COVID-19 symptoms to present for testing within 24 hours of symptom onset;
2. Increase capacity for intensive and timely case and contact management;
3. Support cases/contacts and their families during isolation and quarantine;
4. Endorse universal mask wearing in the community with homemade cloth masks with at least two layers;
5. Continue highlighting the importance of physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
6. Utilize a risk-based approach to guide the safe reopening of businesses and workplaces; and,
7. Identify and address barriers to implementation of recommendations.

It is important to reiterate that this is not a de-escalation plan, but rather a framework for reorienting public health measures. Maintaining a flexible and responsive approach will be critical as the situation continues to evolve rapidly. This will require close monitoring of triggers and key metrics as well as emerging evidence and new insights about the virus.

Using this framework as a guide, PHS and City staff continue to work together with health system partners, and provincial and federal levels of government to support a coordinated response.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.