



**SUBJECT: Risks and opportunities in COVID-19 emergency response and service re-design strategies**

**TO: Audit Committee**

**FROM: City Manager's Office**

Report Number: CM-15-20

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 155-03-01

Date to Committee: June 10, 2020

Date to Council: June 22, 2020

---

### **Recommendation:**

Receive and file city manager's office report CM-15-20 providing risks, mitigations and opportunities from both COVID-19 emergency response strategy and service re-design strategy as detailed in Appendix A.

### **PURPOSE:**

#### **Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- Improve integrated city mobility
- Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
- Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

---

### **Background and Discussion:**

Since the arrival of the COVID-19 virus in Canada, the City has been on high alert; making the necessary decisions to amend our operations with the goal to continue to protect the health and safety of the Burlington community and City of Burlington staff and do our part to limit the spread of COVID-19.

A Rapid Response Working Group (RRWG) was established March 6, 2020 to make initial assessments of immediate actions to limit the spread of the virus through facilities, fleet, Fire, and counter services.

In compliance with the City's Municipal Emergency & Continuity Management Program, the RRWG transitioned to the Crisis Management Team (CMT) on March 13, 2020. The CMT transitioned to the Hybrid Emergency Control Group (ECG) on March 17, 2020 and continues to manage and monitor city operations and the community response. On March 21, 2020, the City declared a state of emergency and in doing so, closed city facilities and parks, and focused efforts on delivering only essential and critical services to ensure the safety of the community. These closures and other decisions made are based on the advice being provided by the provincial and regional Medical Officers of Health.

In City Manager's Office report CM-03-20 (April 20, 2020), the City of Burlington COVID-19 emergency response strategy was provided to Committee. This strategy:

- defines the City's resource needs over the next 3-month operating period to deal with the affects and impacts of the virus on our community and staff, and
- establishes the scope of work for continued support of:
  - the delivery of essential services,
  - the City's emergency operations center,
  - our work from home program,
  - our flexible workforce for redeployment of resources to assist in other essential areas.

In City Manager's Office report CM-12-20 (May 14, 2020), the City of Burlington service re-design strategy was provided to Committee. This strategy is responsive and takes a highly measured approach to resuming delivery of City services and operations considering the Province's direction for continued protections for vulnerable populations and continued practice of physical distancing, hand washing, respiratory hygiene and significant mitigation plans to limit health risks. It also highlights that the way we interact with our community and customers to deliver services in the post-pandemic environment will not be the same way we delivered our services pre-pandemic. Every service will have some degree of change and some services may have cycles of change dependent on the Province's staged re-opening.

### **Strategy/process**

The overarching goal of our 3-month emergency response strategy has been to continue to protect the health and safety of our community and staff and do our part to

limit the spread of COVID-19. This goal is maintained in the service re-design strategy with the addition of advancing the way we deliver services. These strategies each identify expected outcomes such that the decisions we make and the actions we take are expected to achieve something. Additionally, each is based on principles and assumptions.

In laying out this foundation of goals, objectives, principles and assumptions, therein lies the risks that may stand in our way to achieving our intended outcomes. Appendix A contains the original risks, mitigations and opportunities from our 3-month emergency response strategy with updates for new risks in the service re-design strategy. For ease of reference, the updated information pertaining to risks in the service re-design strategy are highlighted in yellow.

As we work through our service re-design, risk is a primary factor for service leads to consider. Significant effort and coordination have been, and continues to be, focused on health and safety policies, procedures and practices so that we can continue to protect the health and safety of our community and staff and do our part to limit the spread of COVID-19.

---

## **Financial Matters:**

The full financial impact of service re-design will not be understood until all stages of the Province's re-opening framework have been implemented and the City has had the time to implement the necessary changes.

Notwithstanding, it is known that the city's 2020 operating budget will be impacted by the actions taken to continue to protect the health and safety of the Burlington community and City staff and do our part to limit the spread of CoVID-19. 2020 remains the focus as 2021 can be assessed through the development of the 2021 Budget process (with the benefit of further information acquired during 2020). The city has implemented a 2020 Expenditure Restraint Program to help ease the financial impacts. In addition, proposed deferral of capital projects and 2020 business cases is also being considered (F-27-20 CSSRA May 14, 2020). Regular monitoring of the financial impacts, including those related to service re-design, is performed by the Chief Financial Officer. Overall financial impacts are reported to Council on a regular basis.

---

## **Climate Implications**

The effect of the actions taken by the City as it re-designs services to ensure the continued protection of the health and safety of the Burlington community and City of

Burlington staff and to limit the spread of COVID-19 pandemic may result in reductions of fossil fuel use and other environmental impacts of facility and vehicle/equipment operations.

---

### **Engagement Matters:**

The City has engaged with the local agencies, boards and commissions and Team Burlington to maintain open lines of communication and share information about service re-design. Notwithstanding the sharing of information, local boards and Team Burlington report to their own boards for decisions related to their service resumption plans. As resumption and re-opening occurs throughout the region, the City continues to be in regular communication with our municipal and regional counterparts to share information.

---

### **Conclusion:**

The identification of risks in our 3-month emergency response strategy and our service re-design strategy is an on-going practice. The mitigation actions for some risks have already been implemented to minimize the impact in the areas of human resources, health & safety, governance and legislative, communication, financial, technology, community confidence/reputation, and legal.

Throughout these times, we are maintaining our focus on the overall goal to continue to protect the health and safety of our community and staff and do our part to limit the spread of COVID-19.

---

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila M. Jones

Executive Director, Strategy, Risk & Accountability

905-335-7600 ext. 7872

### **Appendices:**

- A. CM-15-20 Appendix A: Risk and Opportunities in Strategies
  - B. CM-15-20 Appendix B: COVID-19 Emergency Response Strategy
- CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Council. Final approval is by the City Manager.