



## **The Regional Municipality of Durham**

### **Committee of the Whole Agenda**

Council Chambers  
Regional Headquarters Building  
605 Rossland Road East, Whitby

**Wednesday, December 9, 2020**

**9:30 AM**

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**1. Roll Call**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**3. Statutory Public Meetings**

There are no statutory public meetings

**4. Delegations**

There are no delegations

**5. Presentations**

- 5.1 Ian McVey, Manager of Sustainability, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, re: Follow Up Report including Regional Response to the Provincial Flooding Strategy (2020-COW-33) [Item 7. A)]

**6. Correspondence**

**7. Reports**

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|--|---------|
| A) Follow Up Report including Regional Response to the Provincial Flooding Strategy (2020-COW-33)                                    | 3 - 21  |
| B) Proposed Treatment of the Cash Advance Provided to Community Housing Providers in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-COW-34) | 22 - 25 |
| C) Report to Council with a status update on the Regional Recovery Framework and Action Plan (2020-COW-35)                           | 26 - 58 |

**8. Confidential Matters**

There are no confidential matters to be considered

**9. Other Business**

**10. Adjournment**

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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Chief Administrative Officer  
Report: #2020-COW-33  
Date: December 9, 2020

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**Subject:**

Follow Up Report including Regional Response to the Provincial Flooding Strategy

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**Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That in keeping with its constitutional responsibilities for managing flooding, the Province of Ontario should:
  - i) develop a detailed workplan identifying specific deliverables, leadership, partners and timelines for implementation of Ontario's Flooding Strategy; and
  - ii) clearly identify its multi-year financial commitment to supporting the workplan described above;
- B) That, where such workplans and commitments are developed by the province, the Region offer to share its expertise on provincially led multidisciplinary and/or cross-jurisdictional teams to update and develop related flood policies, guidance documents and programs;
- C) That Regional staff be directed to develop a proposed workplan and budget for the development of a Durham Region Flood Risk Management Strategy, with a focus on increasing property owner education and awareness of their role in the management of flood risks; and
- D) That a copy of this report be forwarded to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), local area municipalities and conservation authorities (CAs) within Durham Region.

**Report:****1. Purpose**

- 1.1 In April 2020, Regional Council received [Report #2020-COW-8](#) as a preliminary review of Ontario's Flooding Strategy. Staff undertook to provide a "more thorough examination of the implications of the Strategy for Regional operations and identify opportunities for the Region to share expertise and best practices with the Province".
- 1.2 This follow-up report provides:
- a. A brief primer on flooding including descriptions of the federal, provincial, regional/municipal and conservation authority roles with respect to flooding (Attachment #1);
  - b. A recap of key elements of the Ontario Special Advisor on Flooding Report 2019 and Ontario Flooding Strategy;
  - c. Analysis of the impacts and implications of those actions, policies and strategies for the Region and our five Conservation Authority (CA) partners;
  - d. An outline of the Region's strategies, programs and actions in relation to flooding;
  - e. Implications of actions the Region is undertaking (e.g. requirements for capital funding to address flood risks); and
  - f. Recommendations for the Province to consider as they implement the flooding strategy.

**2. Report of the Special Advisor on Flooding 2019**

- 2.1 In response to severe flooding in the spring and summer of 2019, the province consulted across Ontario on its flood mitigation and land use planning policies.
- 2.2 The Special Advisor on Flooding was appointed in July 2019 to assess the flood management efforts and advise on ways to improve Ontario's flood policy framework and response. The report released in November 2019 included 66 recommendations.
- 2.3 Key findings of the Special Advisor's report included:
- a. No evidence of negligence in fulfilling their roles by the organizations with specified roles in managing and responding to the flood situation.
  - b. Gaps and lack of clarity exist in the complex jurisdictional roles around flood prevention, forecasting, emergency response and disaster recovery funding.
  - c. Provincial policy frameworks, guidance documents, processes, technical standards around flooding have not been updated to incorporate current best practice, in some cases for decades.

- d. The basis for forecasting, preventing, managing and responding to flooding has not been kept up to date, nor reviewed or expanded to reflect climate change or increasing development pressures in some areas
  - e. Collaboration and communication among the stakeholder organizations and the public could have been improved.
  - f. Fiscal pressures and capacity issues appear to be limiting the efficiency and effectiveness of Ontario's water and flood management policies and processes.
- 2.4 The Advisor notes that jurisdictionally, the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of flood management legislation, regulation, standards policy and flood mitigation measures resides with the province. He suggests establishing the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) as the lead minister with responsibility, authority and accountability to direct other ministries and public bodies to carry out defined actions on flood-related issues.

### Ontario's Flooding Strategy 2020

- 2.5 In response to the Flood Advisor's report, on March 10, 2020 the province released [Protecting People and Property: Ontario's Flooding Strategy](#) which lists seven principles:
- a. Local governments hold the primary responsibility for identifying and managing flood risks.
  - b. Provincial and federal governments must play a key role in supporting local decision making.
  - c. Local decisions on managing flood risk should be based on the latest data and science.
  - d. The most cost effective, sustainable way to reduce risk is to keep people and property out of high-risk areas.
  - e. Where development exists, systems must be in place to support effective early warning and emergency response.
  - f. Flood recovery efforts should incorporate build back better to reduce vulnerability and build community resilience to future flood impacts.
  - g. Risks should be managed collaboratively by governments, conservation authorities, industry, landowners and indigenous communities.
- 2.6 The Strategy outlined five priorities and related actions:

**Priority 1: Understanding flood risks** through improved mapping by establishing a multi-agency technical team (federal, provincial, municipal, CA) to develop a multi-year plan to update standards, compile data and develop and maintain mapping programs. Increase public awareness of and education about flood risks.

**Priority 2: Strengthening governance of flood risks by** clarifying roles and responsibilities in identifying natural hazards and for urban flooding and promoting sound land use planning by updating existing provincial policy, legislative and regulatory requirements, and technical guidelines.

**Priority 3: Enhance flood preparedness** through improved flood forecast and warning systems based on research and use of satellite imagery.

**Priority 4: Enhance flood emergency response**, review results of disaster recovery assistance programs and support development of federal flood risk reduction initiatives.

**Priority 5: Invest in flood risk reduction** by leveraging existing provincial infrastructure funding, continuing to provide funding to CA's flood programs, and encourage expansion of federal disaster mitigation and adaptation funding programs.

- 2.7 While Ontario's Flooding Strategy provides a list of "actions" under each of the priority areas, it does not offer a workplan identifying specific deliverables, leadership, partners, timelines or new financial commitments to carry out this work.
- 2.8 Ontario is presently undertaking a province-wide Climate Assessment as directed in the "Made in Ontario Environment Plan" which is intended to provide municipalities with access to the most up-to-date information about the regional climate impacts their communities will be facing.

### **3. Regional Analysis and Response to Ontario's Flooding Strategy**

#### **Updated mapping standards and technology**

- 3.1 **Priority 1** of the Ontario Flooding Strategy is **understanding flood risks** through improved mapping, updating survey and mapping standards and tools for accurate consistent identification of flooding hazards is essential. Regional staff note it is critical that these items be updated to recognize the impact of climate change on flood risk and reflect modern technology, standards and best practices for flood mapping. Regional staff supports the establishment of a provincial elevation mapping program as this is beyond the fiscal capacity of most municipalities and CAs.
- 3.2 Mapping of the riverine and shoreline floodplain is a central concept on which many other regulations and policies rely including land use planning and municipal asset management. The province is urged to consistently integrate and apply the updated definitions and standards for flood management across provincial legislation, regulations and policies such as those relating to land use planning decisions and municipal asset management (O.Reg.588/17).
- 3.3 Regional staff support the Flooding Strategy action to improve mapping, policy and best management practices for identifying, maintaining and valuing wetlands.

- 3.4 Regional staff also recommend that:
- a. New standards and guidelines must be commensurate with jurisdictional responsibilities and fiscal capacity. It may be necessary to take a phased approach, supported by senior government funding.
  - b. The process of updating standards should ensure no undue burden of responsibility or cost for specific stakeholders. Senior governments may need to take on a role in mitigating the impact of new standards on property owners.
  - c. The process for updating policies standards and guidelines should include provincial collaboration with municipalities (who share jurisdiction with and fund CAs), CA staff and other stakeholders through task forces and working groups.
- 3.5 **Priority 1** also seeks to **increase public awareness and education** through activities like increasing public access to flood-related information, as well as education and outreach efforts.
- 3.6 Regional staff agree that MNRF should establish a clear communications protocol to inform and involve key stakeholders. The province should also engage and collaborate with municipalities to disseminate flood management education at the local level.

### **Governance, policy and regulatory updates**

- 3.7 **Priority 2** of the strategy **seeks to strengthening governance of flood risks**. This includes actions to clarify roles and responsibilities among the different agencies and responsibilities in identifying natural hazards and managing urban flooding.
- 3.8 Regional staff agree with the need to clarify roles but also recommend that the roles related to flood management must be appropriately aligned with jurisdictional roles and the fiscal capacity/funding tools to deliver the responsibilities assigned. Sufficient funding by senior governments may be needed where impacts on a delivery partner are significant.
- 3.9 The province should consider implementing mechanisms to protect existing property owners from flooding related to new development.
- 3.10 With respect to allowing development along shorelines and near floodplains, the Province should exercise caution in allowing any new development in areas that are now or may become prone to flooding and erosion.
- 3.11 A clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities will be necessary for the proposed inter-disciplinary, multi-agency working groups to develop a multi-year approach to floodplain mapping and to urban flooding as proposed in the provincial strategy. A firm provincial commitment to funding and timelines to complete the effort will be required to gain buy-in from partners.

- 3.12 Regional staff also recommend that the roles of the federal government and other stakeholders including property owners and other private sector actors should be clarified. The policy question for senior governments is whether waterfront property owners who have located near a known hazard should face higher insurance premiums.
- 3.13 Recent changes to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 and changes to the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe need to be integrated into Ontario's flooding regulations, policies and guidelines. This is vital to ensure development is directed away from flood prone areas as the most effective method of preventing flood damage.
- 3.14 Provincial policies and guidance documents need to be updated to reflect an approach to floodplains and urban flooding that considers new risks associated with climate change. Municipalities like Durham are leading the way in the absence of provincial action. For example, the Region supports drainage standards restricting runoff in urban areas to pre-flow conditions and already has such restrictions in place.
- 3.15 Regional staff note potential conflicts of flood policy with provincial land use plans that encourage intensification, infill and redevelopment inside existing urban boundaries. Areas identified for intensification, such as historic downtowns, may be in a floodplain that expands under updated mapping and definitions. Provincial guidance is needed on how this type of conflict should be addressed by municipal planners. Relying on structural flood-proofing to support development in these areas has inherent risks and can increase the flooding upstream of the flood-proofed lands.
- 3.16 Regional staff strongly recommend that existing Flood Hazard Limit Technical Guidelines continue to restrict landforms, dykes, berms, flood walls and other structural prevention methods. Such methods serve various functions but provide very limited protection to development allowed in or near the floodplain and require ongoing capital investment to maintain them.
- 3.17 Policies such as the Environmental Assessment Act and the PPS deal with new development. Regional staff note a significant policy gap with respect to legacy development in the floodplain or where an existing land use becomes unsafe due to changing flood conditions.
- 3.18 In October 2020, a group of Oakville property owners filed a nearly \$1-billion class action suit against the Town alleging that upstream development of green space has increased runoff and flood risk to their homes, making them more prone to water damage and less valuable. It is difficult to separate the effects of urbanization from the impact of climate change in such circumstances.
- 3.19 Legislating the identification of flood risk properties in a registry or on title could help raise owner awareness of their risks and enable them to take steps to prevent their property from flooding and/or understand their role in response to



flooding. This could assist municipalities in targeted public education efforts. However, it may also create stigma, affect property values, insurance rates/availability and legal liability. Such a change would need to be made in the context of other supports to the affected property owners.

- 3.20 Ontario's source protection regime may offer a risk management approach for dealing with existing development in a now flood-prone area. Creating a property-level flood-risk management plan based on a standard template could be an option. The template could be provided by their insurance company to help the owner to understand the risk and adopt flood mitigation measures to help protect the property in case of flooding.
- 3.21 Ontario's Flooding Strategy also suggests that municipalities be required to conduct flood vulnerability studies and develop resiliency plans and enhanced emergency plans for vulnerable areas. The Region is conducting flood vulnerability studies as outlined in Section 4 below.
- 3.22 Changes to policies and standards may result in needs to upgrade or alter infrastructure to make it more flood resilient. Municipalities will continue to have infrastructure that crosses floodplains to connect to existing communities. In setting these policies, the province needs to consider how the required capital investments can be funded and delivered through mechanisms like long term financial planning, asset management planning, and infrastructure grants.
- 3.23 **Priority 3 - Enhance flood preparedness** includes activities to "maintain flood forecasting and warning" and "review" and "explore" potential enhancements to provincial monitoring and modelling, and research and the use of remote sensing and satellite-based flood monitoring and mapping services. Regional staff supports the Province leading these activities which are beyond the capacity of municipalities and CAs to undertake.
- 3.24 Under **Priority 4 - Enhance flood response and recovery**, Regional staff support the continued implementation of the Auditor General's recommendations for improving emergency management in Ontario and the introduction of emergency management software to improve emergency interactions with municipalities. The Region supports clarification of roles and improved communication among levels of government to support coordinated emergency response.
- 3.25 A review of disaster recovery assistance, including evaluation of a "build back better" approach is also supported. The option of senior government funded buyouts of properties that are now repeatedly flooded may need to be considered as less costly than ongoing emergency response and disaster relief.
- 3.26 Ontario's Flooding Strategy emphasizes the shared responsibility to identify and manage flood risks and events by various governments and agencies and the need for collaboration. This statement is inconsistent with recent patterns of declining provincial funding to conservation authorities.

- 3.27 Historically, funding to conservation authorities was a 50/50 split between the province and member municipalities. Across Ontario, municipal contributions now represent about 53% of CA revenues. In contrast, the provincial contribution now represents only 8% of CA revenue province-wide, with the balance coming from CA revenue generation. In the mid-1990's, provincial funding to CAs was cut by 42% over two years<sup>1</sup> and has continued to decline. In April 2019, MNRF announced a 50 per cent cut to the funding provided to CAs for flood management<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.28 While **Priority #5 is to invest in flood risk reduction**, the strategy identifies no new provincial investments. Instead it refers to leveraging existing funding programs that are already fully subscribed and aligning potential provincial contributions with unnamed future federal funding.
- 3.29 The strategy further suggests that the federal government should expand their funding (National Disaster Mitigation Program) to support flood mapping in critical areas. It also references municipalities applying local improvement charges or area ratings to finance flood protection while offering no new Provincial commitments.
- 3.30 To deliver on the objectives of the flooding strategy, the Province will need to commit additional funding and resources to key partners, including CAs. Municipal ability to increase funding for these activities, through measures like local improvement charges may be impractical and inadequate and require significant administrative burden to manage.
- 3.31 These comments and recommendations echo the findings of the recent AMO discussion paper on flooding entitled "Come Hell or High Water: Flooding Climate Change and Municipal Responses" noting three crucial actions required:
- a. Clarifying governance and sharing responsibility between levels of government, residents, private property-owners, and other stakeholders to address flooding;
  - b. Fixing the patchwork of floodplain mapping and other flood data available to municipalities across Ontario; and
  - c. Implementing dedicated federal-provincial funding for municipal flood protection and adaptation infrastructure, with a focus on promoting green infrastructure projects and natural asset strategies." (AMO, 2020, p.4)
- 3.32 The paper also stresses the need for "an allocation of resources based on the principle of sharing responsibility. A federal-provincial partnering investment would be a crucial first step".

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1 Figures from article by Rachel Williams, Novae Res Urbis: Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, Wednesday February 13 2019, Vol. 22 No. 7

2 See also news article by Allison Jones, Canadian Press, April 22, 2019 at <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-flooding-cuts-conservation-1.5105897>,

#### **4. Regional Actions and Strategies Related to Flooding**

##### **Regional Climate Change Action Plan/Master Plan – Vulnerability Assessments**

- 4.1 Municipalities play major roles in prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery in relation to flooding.
- 4.2 In January 2020, the Region declared a climate change emergency and is advancing implementation of the award-winning Durham Community Climate Adaptation Plan (DCCAP) including risk assessments for flooding.
- 4.3 The DCCAP Transportation Working Group, in collaboration with the Flood Working Group, is leading two flood vulnerability assessment projects:
  - a. riverine flood risk assessment, and
  - b. urban flood risk assessment.
- 4.4 The riverine project will assess the impact of riverine flooding on roads and storm structures under current and future climate scenarios. This study will then screen those road assets for their ability to meet the intended level of service. The objectives of this project are to help the Region identify:
  - a. Bridges and culverts that are good candidates for upsizing to inform future asset management plans;
  - b. Roads that are vulnerable to flooding under different flood scenarios to inform future disaster route planning; and
  - c. Prioritize roads that require investment to increase resilience to changing climate.
- 4.5 This project began in early fall 2020 and covers the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) managed watersheds within Durham Region. This work is anticipated to conclude by Summer 2021. With a proof of concept completed in Durham watersheds covered by TRCA, the project is expected to expand in subsequent phases to the rest of Durham Region in collaboration with CA partners.
- 4.6 The urban flooding project is a high-level screening exercise to assess the extent of flooding risk within the urban stormwater system. The objective is to improve the understanding of the spatial priorities for urban flood risk reduction. This project began mid-fall 2020, covers all of Durham Region and is anticipated to conclude by Fall 2021.
- 4.7 These flood vulnerability assessments will identify risks and gaps that can be incorporated into asset management planning and prioritized and addressed through capital plans within the Region's Business Planning and Budget process. Assessments will also provide us with a pipeline of projects that could be eligible for federal and provincial infrastructure or climate change adaptation funding programs.

## **Future Climate Projection Modeling**

- 4.8 The Region worked with the Ontario Climate Consortium, and climate scientists from the University of Toronto, to develop updated climate projection modelling. This work was finalized in early 2020. An infographic which summarizes key results (including extreme precipitation projections) is attached for reference (Attachment 2). The new climate projection model projects climate data for the short (2011-2040), mid (2040-2070) and long (2071-2100) term based on a business-as-usual global greenhouse gas emissions scenario. The general objective of this climate projection model is to provide data for the Region's climate change adaptation planning efforts and provide a consistent approach that can be utilized by regional staff, local area municipalities and CAs for decision making and analysis.

## **Intensity-Duration-Frequency (IDF) Curve Update Project**

- 4.9 Rainfall IDF statistics that are used in municipal infrastructure design and operations are based on historical rainfall records, and therefore are of limited utility in addressing future rainfall regimes associated with climate change. The Region is working collaboratively with CA and local area municipal staff, and academic experts at the University of Toronto, to explore potential updates to IDF curves. The (potential) new IDF curves will better equip the Region, CAs and local area municipalities to design, construct, operate and maintain municipal assets that are resilient to future climate and offer the intended level-of-service.

## **Homeowner Flood Readiness**

- 4.10 The Region's website has flood-ready tips for residents. Staff also hosted a [homeowner flood education webinar in May 2020](#) to share simple actions homeowners can take to protect their homes from flooding. A recording can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22YI5cA9uZw&t=8s>.

## **Water and Wastewater Climate Adaptation and Asset Management Pilot**

- 4.11 Durham Region has joined a cohort of five municipalities (City of Toronto, Hamilton, Regions of Peel and Halton) undertaking a pilot climate change risk assessment focused on water and wastewater assets. Strategies will be reviewed to reduce risks and impacts from extreme weather events and long-term climatic changes. As work progresses, the framework may be used for other asset classes and ultimately asset groups beyond water and wastewater. The Pilot is anticipated to be complete by March 2021.

## **Planning policies**

- 4.12 Consistent with provincial policy, the Regional Official Plan (ROP) directs new development away from floodplains and vulnerable areas and has been effective in this regard. The ROP directs area municipal official plans to include natural heritage features and their associated vegetation protection zones (VPZ). In shoreline residential areas defined in the ROP, the VPZ is a minimum of 30

metres, consistent with provincial policy. Envision Durham - the municipal comprehensive review of the ROP, is examining the addition of policies related to:

- a. best management practices in shoreline management;
- b. the development of strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change on vulnerable areas;
- c. the provision of green infrastructure; and
- d. protection, enhancement and restoration of key natural heritage features as nature-based solutions.

- 4.13 Area municipal plans also contain policies that promote the protection of natural heritage, the use of green infrastructure, tree planting, and sustainable design practices that are intended to prevent and mitigate flooding impacts.

### **Durham Emergency Management**

- 4.14 Durham Region has a well-developed emergency management capability and 24/7 monitoring. However, we have not experienced a Region-scale flood emergency and have identified this as an area for enhanced planning.

### **Support to Conservation Authorities**

- 4.15 Durham Region contributes to the operations of conservation authorities. In 2020, this amounts to almost \$8.4 million provided to the five CAs within the Region to support watershed management activities. This does not include funding provided to CAs as fees for services related to specific projects.

### **Other Actions**

- 4.16 The Town of Whitby is investigating the use of climate adjusted IDF curves. Average IDF curves will be derived from this analysis and applied to the Lynde Creek precipitation model to evaluate the impact of climate change on flood risk.
- 4.17 The Regional Chair, and the Mayors of Whitby and Oshawa and the Chair of the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA) contacted Metrolinx regarding flooding caused by railway infrastructure in southern Durham Region. Metrolinx was asked to consider the bridge and culverts during scheduled maintenance updates to relieve some flooding issues caused by the railway tracks.
- 4.18 A 2017 study by the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA) identified flood prone areas according to the expected impact based on the type and occupation of structures affected. CLOCA also recently completed a Lake Ontario Shoreline Management Plan<sup>3</sup>.

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3 See at <https://www.cloca.com/lake-ontario-shoreline-hazard-manag>

## **5. Implications of Regional Actions**

- 5.1 These actions demonstrate the Region's commitment to addressing flood risks that are anticipated to increase with climate change. Working with local area municipalities and conservation authorities, the Region has invested in planning and action.
- 5.2 The climate change vulnerability studies now underway will provide the Region with a clearer picture of infrastructure needs and the program changes required to adapt to changes in Durham's climate and extreme weather events. It is important to note that this work is also consistent with the Region's currently approved Corporate Strategic Asset Management Policy and provincial regulatory requirements to consider climate adaptation as part of asset management planning.
- 5.3 One outcome will be identifying infrastructure needs for capital funding for special projects to address new needs and retrofits through the Region's multi-departmental asset management program to bring existing infrastructure to a more resilient state, to be addressed through the region's Business Planning and Budget process.
- 5.4 Sustained funding for conservation authorities will be required to carry out flow forecasting and monitoring programs, integrated watershed management programs and natural capital restoration programs to build ecosystem resilience and reduce the impact of extreme weather on communities. The Province should be encouraged to increase their contribution to this work as a critical support for Ontario's flooding strategy.

## **6. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:
  - a) Goal 1: Environmental sustainability – objective 1.4 Demonstrate leadership in sustainability and addressing climate change
  - b) Goal 2: Community Vitality – objective 2.2 Enhance community safety and well being.
- 6.2 This report also responds in part to the [Region's declaration of a climate emergency on January 29, 2020](#) and is provided in follow up to [Report 2020-COW-8](#).

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The province is commended for responding to the Report of the Special Advisor on Flooding with Ontario's Flooding Strategy. Many of the priorities and activities outlined in the strategy align with Regional goals and actions on flooding.

- 7.2 The urgent next step is for the province to develop an implementation plan in keeping with their lead role in this area and their own legislation. The workplan should include specific deliverables, partners and timelines for implementation of Ontario's Flooding Strategy and a multi-year provincial funding commitment and a phased plan to support that work.
- 7.3 As a jurisdiction that is leading with action and investments to reduce the impacts of climate change-related flooding on our community, the Region may be able to offer expertise to provincially led, multidisciplinary and/or cross-jurisdictional teams to update and develop related flood policies, guidance documents and programs.
- 7.4 A clear financial commitment and plan from the province will be vital to successfully engage partners and expertise available from leading municipalities like Durham Region and the conservation authorities.
- 7.5 In advance of a clear workplan and funding for the Province's strategy, and recognizing the significant policy changes since the release of that strategy particularly concerning the role and mandate of conservation authorities, there is an opportunity for the Region to work proactively with local partners to establish a Durham Region Flood Risk Management Strategy that addresses key gaps especially as it relates to homeowner education and awareness.
- 7.6 This report was prepared with input from the CAO's Office, Planning and Economic Development, Finance, Works and Corporate Services – Legal.
- 7.7 For additional information, contact: Ian McVey, Manager of Sustainability, at [ian.mcvey@durham.ca](mailto:ian.mcvey@durham.ca) or 905-668-7711, extension 3803.

## **8. Attachments**

- a) Attachment #1: Brief Primer on Flooding and Federal, Provincial, Municipal and Conservation Authority Roles in Flood Management
- b) Attachment #2: Climate Trends for Durham Region Under the Current Pace of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

### **Original signed by**

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachment # 1: Brief Primer on Flooding and Federal, Provincial, Municipal and Conservation Authority Roles in Flood Management** Flooding is a natural occurrence, generally defined as water inundating an area of land that is normally dry. In Ontario, the most common causes of flooding are rapid snow melt and excessive rainfall, sometimes in combination.

## **Major Types of Flooding**

**Riverine flooding** occurs when rivers or streams overflow their banks into an area known as the floodplain. In some cases, at spring break up, ice may clog the channel of a river, creating a flood upstream of the blockage. Riverine floods often take time to develop, providing time to prepare or evacuate.

**Shoreline or coastal flooding** along lakes may occur due to high water conditions, often in combination with wind-driven waves or severe storms.

**Urban flooding** occurs where rainfall runoff is channeled from roads, parking lots, buildings and other impervious surfaces to storm sewers (minor system) and the major systems (using the roads for conveyance) that cannot handle the flow. It usually occurs as a result of an often very localized rainstorm that drops a high amount of rain in a very short time. For example, in July 2013, 126 mm of rainfall was recorded at Pearson Airport in just five hours causing major damage to infrastructure including roads, bridges and subways. And yet surrounding municipalities experienced less than 25 mm of rain in the same period.

The financial impacts of the July 2013 storm to the City of Toronto were \$10.1 million in operating costs and \$55.5 million in capital requirements. More than 1,400 people had to be rescued from a GO Train stranded in the Don Valley. 4,700 basement flooding complaints were received by the city and 5,784 (uninsured and insured) claims were filed reflecting private property damage. By September 2013, the Insurance Bureau of Canada reported that over \$850 million in insurance claims had been received.<sup>4</sup>

## **Causes of Flooding**

Many factors contribute to flooding including weather events (heavy or prolonged rain, sudden snowmelt), and human-driven elements such as increased urbanization which adds impermeable surfaces and alters natural drainage patterns. It is important, given climate projections that all infrastructure owners continue to address asset risk and potential climate consequences by monitoring, revisiting and adjusting design standards and life-cycle maintenance requirements within adaptation programs. Shoreline flooding along Lake Ontario may also be influenced by decisions of the International Joint Commission associated with managing water levels on the Great Lakes and St Lawrence River.

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<sup>4</sup> See City of Toronto report at <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-61502.pdf> --- for more information.



Increasingly flooding factors are also linked to climate change. Scientific evidence published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and in the U.S. National Climate Assessment shows that the escalation in severe weather around the globe is attributable to climate change and that these loss trends will only worsen in the future. In Ontario, as is the case in many jurisdictions, flooding is the threat that represents the greatest cumulative losses.

Durham Region's recently updated future climate modelling projects a 20 to 30 per cent increase in annual precipitation by mid-century under a business-as-usual global greenhouse gas emissions scenario. Storms are expected to become more frequent and intense, including the number of extreme precipitation days which increases the risk of hazardous conditions and property damage.

### **Consequences of Flooding**

Since 2000, the cost of floods in Canada has increased dramatically to roughly \$30 billion in 2019. Severe flooding was experienced in Ontario in both 2017 and 2019. The Great Lakes remain at record high levels in 2020.

Financial liability for flood-related damages is concentrated: of the \$800 million in average annual uninsured losses attributed to flooding, nearly 75 per cent of the burden is borne by property owners.<sup>5</sup>

### **Flood Risk Management**

Responsibility for managing flood risk in Ontario is shared between all three levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal), as well as conservation authorities, the private sector (land developers, real estate professionals, the banking and insurance industry), and property-owners.

### **Federal Role and Action on Flooding**

The federal government's role in managing flood risk is primarily capital funding for municipal infrastructure through programs such as the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) and post-disaster financial assistance programs such as the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF), and the National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP).

Both the federal and provincial governments participate in the International Joint Commission (IJC) with respect to managing water levels on the Great Lakes. In the fall of 2020, the Commission is reviewing their order regulating Lake Ontario outflow, along with the regulation rules (known as Plan 2014) and is consulting shoreline communities, including Durham Region, and conservation authorities to gather information on high water impacts.

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<sup>5</sup> Henstra, D & Thistlethwaite, J. (2017). *Flood Risk Management: What is the Role Ahead for the Government of Canada*. Centre for International Governance Innovation.

In addition to capital infrastructure funding, the federal government also provides funding for updating flood risk maps and provides important meteorological data (e.g. rain gauges) that inform the monitoring and forecasting of flood risk at the local level.

The federal government launched a new Canadian Centre for Climate Services in October 2018 to enhance access to climate data and local capacity to integrate future climate projections into municipal planning (e.g. water infrastructure).

The December 2019 mandate letter for Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change instructs the Minister to:

- a. Work with the Minister of Natural Resources and provinces and territories to complete all flood maps in Canada; and
- b. With the support of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, create a new Canada Water Agency to work together with the provinces, territories, Indigenous communities, local authorities, scientists and others to find the best ways to keep our water safe, clean and well-managed.

### **Provincial Role and Action on Flooding**

The province's key role in flood management is to develop policy that serves to protect people and property from flooding impacts. Its efforts to prevent, manage and respond to flooding are reflected in a significant body of provincial legislation, regulation and policy. These include the Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement, the Conservation Authorities Act, the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, the Environmental Assessment Act, the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act, regulations related to asset management planning for municipal infrastructure, and a series of natural hazards technical guides and standards.

In the past the province has made significant investments in floodplain mapping and flood infrastructure. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry plays a key (but not exclusive) provincial role in flood mapping, monitoring and management.

### **Regional/Municipal Role and Actions related to Flooding**

Municipalities play several critical roles in flood prevention and mitigation through:

- c. land use planning to ensure that development is directed away from floodplains and vulnerable areas, that wetlands and natural areas are protected, and permeable surfaces are retained;
- d. assessing current asset resiliency and the design and development of municipal infrastructure such as roads, bridges, culvert, and minor and major stormwater conveyance systems through asset management planning;
- e. implementation of building codes and climate change adaptation plans;
- f. community education and preparedness;
- g. emergency planning and response coordination; and
- h. community recovery and restoration (e.g. waste removal).

Some of these roles are mandated in provincial legislation and policy, then implemented by official plan policy and local bylaws. The Region is also a key funding partner of Conservation Authorities, particularly for watershed planning and management.

While Ontario's new flooding strategy identifies a "primary role" for municipalities in identifying and managing flood risk, recent legislative changes in Bill 229 appear to weaken local authority. ([See Report 2020-P-26](#)).

Durham Region staff participated and led the Regional Public Works Commissioner of Ontario's Climate Change Subcommittee to complete a Climate Resilience Roadmap for Municipal Infrastructure and Systems. The goal was to develop an Ontario-focused approach for municipalities to address climate risks, including flooding, on infrastructure and systems by building on existing best practices. The guide also recognized the importance of varying municipal priorities and equity and provided guidance to priority setting so municipalities can move towards climate-resilient infrastructure.

In the Summer 2020, Durham Region staff participated in focus groups on flooding conducted by AMO with member municipalities. The goal was to gather their recent experiences with riverine, lake-based and urban flooding as input to their paper on flooding and drought response in context of climate change.

With respect to the municipal role in community education and preparedness, a 2017 nation-wide study from the University of Waterloo, revealed low public awareness of flood risks. It also found that responsibilities and costs related to flooding were being downloaded from federal and provincial levels to municipalities, conservation authorities and property owners. "This policy shift comes as the costs of flooding continue to grow and flood risk increases in a changing climate."<sup>6</sup>

This study showed that although 83% of Canadians feel they have a responsibility to protect their property from flood damage, less than 30% have taken action (e.g. installed sump pumps or back-flow valves, purchased overland flood insurance, etc.). There is low awareness of the flood risk in their area or how that may have increased due to climate change.

### **Conservation Authorities Role and Actions related to Flooding**

Conservation authorities play a critical role in the prevention and mitigation of flood risks at the watershed scale. They have responsibility for documenting flood risk through floodplain mapping, and for the identification of flood vulnerable areas. Within floodplains and flood vulnerable areas CAs are mandated by the province to regulate development through issuance of permits to limit exposure to flood risk. CAs also work to reduce flood

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<sup>6</sup> From [CANADIAN VOICES ON CHANGING FLOOD RISK](#) Findings from a National Survey, Jason Thistlethwaite, Daniel Henstra, Shawna Peddle and Daniel Scott, April 2017.

risk by operating a flood forecasting and warning program, maintaining flood control infrastructure, and implementing remedial works projects.

Changes to the Conservation Authorities Act as part of Bill 108 passed in June 2019 focused the activities of CAs to core mandatory programs and services including the risk of natural hazards, source protection responsibilities, and management of lands owned by the authority. Other programs and services can be delivered upon request by the Region via a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the authority and the municipality.

The Ontario Fall 2020 budget (Bill 229) includes further proposed changes to the role of CAs in planning and permitting within floodplains and flood vulnerable areas. Proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act would authorize the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry to assume jurisdiction for certain permit applications in place of the CA. Proposed changes to the Planning Act would prohibit CAs from appealing a planning decision to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) or becoming a party to an appeal before LPAT. ([See Report 2020-P-26](#)).

Regulations have not yet been released to accompany the CA Act changes brought in by Bill 108 or Bill 229. Following release of the regulations, new MOUs will be negotiated by the Region with its five CAs.

The changes the province has made to the Act and constraints to CA budgets in 2019 seem inconsistent with amplifying the CA role in flood protection, mapping, forecasting and management as is suggested in the provincial flooding strategy.

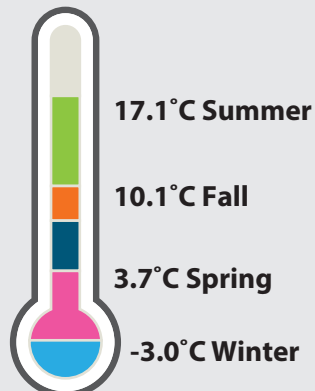
# CLIMATE TRENDS FOR DURHAM REGION

UNDER THE CURRENT  
PACE OF GREENHOUSE  
GAS EMISSIONS

## MEAN TEMPERATURE

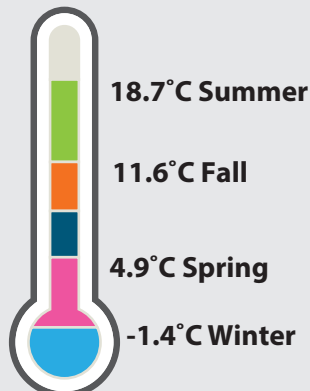
By the end of the century, Durham Region is expected to warm by 5°C, leading to more variable and extreme weather

1971-2000



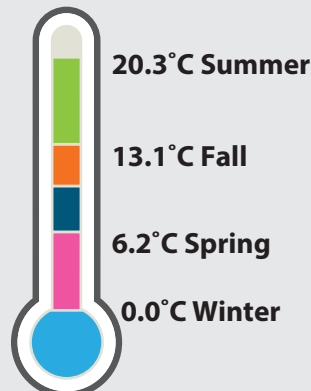
7.1°C ANNUAL

2011-2040



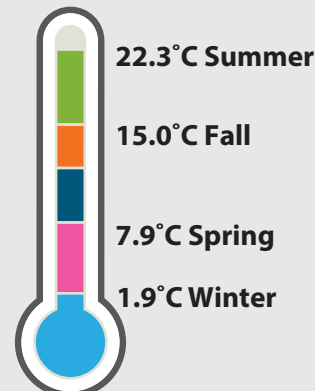
8.6°C ANNUAL

2041-2070



10.1°C ANNUAL

2071-2100



12.1°C ANNUAL

## DAYS ABOVE 30°C



A 6-fold increase in the number of extreme heat days is expected by the end of the century, which will pose significant risks to people's health and well-being

## DAYS BELOW -20°C



As winters become warmer, less snow and ice conditions are expected with more precipitation falling as rain instead of snow, which increases the risk of flooding among other impacts

## ANNUAL PRECIPITATION

Measured in millimetres (mm)

Storms are expected to become more frequent and intense, including the number of extreme precipitation days which increases the risk of hazardous conditions and property damage

1971-2000

952.4

2011-2040

1,075.0

2041-2070

1,117.5

2071-2100

1,231.6



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: The Committee of the Whole  
From: Commissioner of Finance and Commissioner of Social Services  
Report: #2020-COW-34  
Date: December 9, 2020

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## **Subject:**

Proposed Treatment of the Cash Advance Provided to Community Housing Providers in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

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## **Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

That, to support the sustainability of Community Housing, the Community Housing Providers be advised that the Region will not recover the cash advances, in the total amount of \$2,863,581, provided on March 25, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the Community Housing Providers be requested to invest the funds in their capital reserves if the funds are not required for pandemic response related purposes.

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## **Report:**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain council approval to allow Community Housing Providers to keep the cash advance that was provided by the Region in order to assist with the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 As a service manager under the Housing Services Act (HSA), the Region of Durham is required by legislation to pay a subsidy to Community Housing Providers, comprised of 42 Non-Profit and Co-operative Housing Providers.
- 2.2 The subsidy provided is to ensure that the prescribed service level standard of 4,446 rent-geared-to-income (RGI) subsidies is maintained and that financial and administrative structures are in place to ensure that Community Housing Providers operate in accordance with the HSA.

- 2.3 Community Housing Provider's subsidy entitlements are calculated annually and paid monthly.
- 2.4 On March 25, 2020, in response to the Province's and the Region's Emergency Orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Regional staff issued a cash advance, equal to one month of subsidy, to each of the 41 Community Housing providers. A total of \$2,863,581 was advanced and was in addition to the Community Housing Provider's regular monthly subsidy payment. An advance for the Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation was included at this time. Cash was not advanced to the Commercial or Durham Rent Supplement programs or the Portable Housing Benefit programs.

### **3. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 3.1 Funding for the Community Housing providers is included in the 2020 Regional Business Plans and Budgets for Property Tax Purposes, including General Purpose, Solid Waste Management and Durham Region Transit, Report 2020-F-4.

### **4. Proposed Treatment of Cash Advance Provided to Community Housing Providers**

- 4.1 The cash advance was provided to ensure the Community Housing Providers had sufficient funds to cover the mortgage payment in the event the pandemic left tenants unemployed and unable to pay their rent.
- 4.2 Community Housing Providers were notified in writing in October 2020 that as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic no decision had been made with regard to the treatment of the additional subsidy payment and that the Region would advise in early 2021 as to how the advance will be treated.
- 4.3 As a result of the ongoing pandemic and the impact of the second wave, there continues to be uncertainty around the financial impacts of the pandemic on Community Housing Providers' cash flow.
- 4.4 The following financial impacts facing Community Housing Providers directly related to COVID-19 have been identified:
- Vacancy loss - increased turnover duration due to COVID-19 restrictions, the delay of maintenance work required to refurbish units and the implementation of new methods for filling units, such as virtual tours. These factors result in lost rental revenue while the unit is vacant.
  - COVID-19 related expenses – extra cleaning and sanitization products, additional employee labour costs, and personal protective equipment (PPE). There may be additional enhanced safety features, such as touchless doors, or plexiglass screenings, to be installed to protect residents.
  - Rent freeze – the Province of Ontario has implemented a rent freeze period for 2021 which means that community housing providers are not permitted to

increase market rents during this time. This will result in lost rental revenue historically realized through annual increases.

- 4.5 No additional grants or funding have been provided by the Region to Community Housing Providers to assist them with offsetting the above financial implications. Should their current cash flow be sufficient to cover these costs, it is recommended that the Community Housing provider use the additional funds to address capital needs, particularly related to enhanced health and safety measures.
- 4.6 In order to support the sustainability of Community Housing, it is recommended that the Community Housing Providers be advised that the Region will not recover the cash advances, in the total amount of \$2,863,581, provided on March 25, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the Community Housing Providers be requested to invest the funds in their capital reserves if the funds are not required for pandemic response related purposes.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The 2020 Business Plan and Budget applicable for the Community Housing Provider's totals \$36,073,709. The recommendation in this report will result in the Community Housing Provider receiving thirteen instead of the budgeted twelve subsidy payments for the year, potentially creating an overbudget situation for 2020.
- 5.2 However, the potential \$2,863,581 overspend on the Community Housing Provider budget as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic will be included as necessary costs to assist recovery and sustainability of the community under the municipal operating stream of the Safe Restart Program.

## **6. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:
  - Revitalize community housing and improve housing choice, affordability and sustainability.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 Regional staff will continue to monitor the needs of Community Housing Providers and address potential cash flow issues as they arise during the ongoing pandemic.
- 7.2 It is requested that the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council the approval from Community Housing Providers to keep the \$2.9 million cash advance to assist with the financial obligations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed By

Nancy Taylor, BBA, CPA, CA  
Commissioner of Finance

Original Signed By

Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou  
Commissioner of Social Services

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original Signed By

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Committee of the Whole  
From: Elaine Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer  
Report: #2020-COW-35  
Date: December 9, 2020

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**Subject:**

Report to Council with a status update on the Regional Recovery Framework and Action Plan

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**Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends:

That this report be received for information.

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report provides a year-end review of action items identified in the Regional [Recovery Framework and Action Plan](#) (report #2020-COW-22).

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented change to how we live and work. On March 24, the Region of Durham declared a state of emergency. Staff have provided Regional Council with regular updates of the numerous actions undertaken to slow the spread of the disease, to manage the financial impacts, and to support our businesses and residents during these uncertain times.

**3. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 3.1 Regional Council endorsed the Regional Recovery Framework and Action Plan on June 24, 2020. The recovery framework aligned with Council's priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan 2020-2024.
- 3.2 Rooted in international best practices, the recovery framework is centred on four pillars: Social, Built, Economic and Municipal. Specific initiatives focused on actions

that could be implemented within the 2020 calendar year. Regional staff organized into working groups who carried out and reported on the specific action items.

- 3.3 A Regional Recovery Task Force including representatives from key stakeholder groups including Regional senior leadership, healthcare, emergency services, community agencies and the business community, provided guidance and input to the framework.

#### **4. Current State of Recovery in Durham Region**

- 4.1 During the first wave of COVID-19 in the spring of 2020, regional staff started planning for recovery. At the end of 2020, new COVID-19 cases continue to be reported and the province has recently elevated Durham Region to the Control (red) category. Despite best efforts to move towards recovery, the Region is still operating in response mode to support residents and businesses as we continue to weather the pandemic.
- 4.2 The Region's provision of essential services to the community has not changed. What has shifted over the last nine months has been how programs and services are delivered to meet the changing needs and expectations.
- 4.3 While focused on responding to immediate needs of the community, Regional staff and our partners continue to make progress on each of the 50 action items listed in the recovery framework (see Attachment #1).
- 4.4 Significant efforts have been made to ensure the safety of the community, to respond and adapt to changing needs, to communicate transparently and to guarantee continuity of services.

#### **Safety of the Community**

- 4.5 Public health and safety remain the Region's top priority. The Health Department has rapidly responded to changing provincial guidelines. Public Health Nurses are performing contact tracing, supporting schools and managing the health information line. Public Health Inspectors are supporting businesses to reopen and operate safely. In addition, the following examples demonstrate the commitment to community safety:
  - a. The Durham Emergency Management (DEM) coordinated internal resources, led a decision-making control group and sourced and delivered personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - b. The Region of Durham Paramedic Services (RDPS) deployed paramedics to a mobile test unit to reach vulnerable residents
  - c. The Long-Term Care division rapidly hired, trained and deployed staff to ensure residents continued to receive quality care
  - d. Durham Region Transit implemented safety barriers and new processes to protect passengers and drivers.

**Responsive and Adaptable to Changing Needs**

4.6 As the province implemented closures in March, Economic Development staff led the creation of the Durham Economic Task Force to deliver coordinated and effective outreach and support to the business community. Staff across departments adapted to providing services virtually. In addition, the following examples demonstrate the responsiveness and adaptability of staff:

- a. Human Resources have transitioned to virtual hiring practices to ensure recruitment could continue for essential services
- b. Social Services coordinated the COVID-19 Funders Table to assist funding organizations with allocating funds according to available local data
- c. Waste Management has modified operations to meet new service demands
- d. Family Services has implemented video service options for community counselling and mental health supports to ensure residents get the support needed.

**Transparent Communications**

4.7 The unknown health risks of COVID-19 transmission and the resulting unprecedented government response has required increased communication to keep the public informed. Communication to stakeholders has increased through many channels including:

- a. The Finance Department has provided regular updates to Council to summarize the provincial and federal funding and programming announcements
- b. Corporate Communications has used websites, news releases, social media and other tools to provide current information to the public
- c. Senior leaders have held internal and external town halls to ensure staff and community members are kept up to date
- d. Dr. Kyle, Dr. McTavish and members of the Region's Health Department have provided expert, credible information through townhalls, media interviews and other avenues
- e. Staff from the Health Department, Planning and Economic Development and Corporate Services collaborated to create the COVID data tracker which provides up to date community health information and has received hundreds of thousands of public views.

**Continuity of Services**

4.8 Despite the changes made to delivery of many regional programs, the continuity of Regional projects is essential. The Works Department took advantage of less traffic to advance planned construction projects. Additional examples include:

- a. Corporate-Services IT supported the transition of more than 1,600 staff to working from home by deploying technology and providing virtual IT support

- b. Planning continued to process development applications and further the Municipal Comprehensive Review
- c. Children's Services opened emergency locations to support the return of frontline workers
- d. Staff have continued to develop and implement environmental sustainability plans with a view to building back better
- e. Legislative Services and IT worked together to transition to virtual Council meetings to support the ongoing business of the Region.

## **5. Looking Ahead to 2021**

- 5.1 There continue to be many unknowns as we head into 2021. Regional staff remain committed to supporting response efforts and planning for long-term recovery.
- 5.2 The strategic investments and decisions made since March have positioned the Region to respond to resident and business needs over the long term. The transition to virtual service delivery aligns with the *myDurham* 311 project and the Region's focus on providing multiple options for customers to access information and services.
- 5.3 To ensure recovery actions items progress, Regional staff working groups and the Regional Recovery Task Force will continue to meet quarterly through 2021.
- 5.4 All recovery projects that transition from short term pilot projects to a regular part of Region's service delivery will be included in the normal business planning and budgeting process.
- 5.5 Regular COVID-19 progress updates and financial impacts will continue to be provided to Council through quarterly information reports.
- 5.6 The Region will continue to advance priority projects from the Strategic Plan, such as implementing rapid transit projects, building supportive housing, demonstrating leadership on addressing climate change, promoting service modernization, and economic development. These projects will be the foundation on which we continue to build the Region's recovery. Further, we will address urgent corporate and community priorities, like anti-Black racism and community safety and well-being, to strengthen our community and our organization.

## **6. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 6.1 This report provides an update on the Regional Recovery Framework and Action Plan. This framework was developed to ensure that strategic plan goals and priorities were adapted as needed to support our Region's recovery.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The intent of the Regional Recovery Framework and Action Plan was to transition Regional services to support post-pandemic recovery. However, the ongoing

presence of COVID-19 in our community means the Region remains in response mode.

- 7.2 We continue to evolve and adapt services and plans while integrating lessons learned since March, working collaboratively with residents, businesses and partners to curb community spread and support one another.
- 7.3 Prepared by Alison Burgess and Christine Drimmie, Managers of Corporate Initiatives, at 905-668-7711, extension 2089.
- 7.4 Approved by Sandra Austin, Director of Strategic Initiatives, at 905-668-7711, extension 2049.

## **8. Attachments**

Attachment #1:

Respectfully submitted,

**Original signed by**

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Elaine Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

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Attachment #1 – Detailed description of Recovery Action Items

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Each of the action items below includes:

- Lead department
- Brief project description
- Progress
- 2021 Outlook

\*Note that financial implications are noted where they extend beyond the Region budget (eg. Supported by grant funding).

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## **Social Recovery Pillar**

Health Department staff remain fully focused on the COVID-19 response and restoration to keep the community safe. Social Services Department staff have pivoted to providing services online where possible. In 2020, there was great collaboration between Health, Social Services and community agencies to ensure the community was well-supported and positioned for social recovery.

### **1. Priority: Support for Vulnerable Residents**

#### **1.1 Action Item: Supportive Housing**

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: COVID-19 has highlighted the need for all residents to have safe, affordable and suitable housing not only for their own health and safety but for the health and safety of the community. Developing supportive housing options for unsheltered residents is a priority and steps to develop this housing are being expedited. Housing with supports can accommodate clients over the long-term or act as transitional housing.

Progress:

- Following Regional Council's decision in July to support the two expedited Supportive Housing projects, significant work on the Beaverton Supportive Housing project has occurred.
- Durham is using funds from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) and the Canada -Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (COPHI) to fund this project.
- Residents will have access to wrap-around services to promote life stabilization. The project will include a service hub for all residents of North Durham.

2021 Outlook:

- With a goal to have the Beaverton Supportive Housing site open before the end of 2021, staff continue with community engagement, arranging building permits and facility design.

## 1.2 Action Item: Primary Care Outreach Program (PCOP)

Lead Departments: Social Services and Health

Description: A temporary service redesign of PCOP was required in response to the immediate needs for homelessness services and requirements for RDPS to initiate mobile COVID-19 testing. The PCOP Social Worker provided counselling and service navigation through the Back-Door Mission Hub and collaborated with CMHA to provide mobile outreach to vulnerable clients. The PCOP Paramedics have led the RDPS COVID-19 Mobile Testing teams to address the needs of clients unable to attend COVID Assessment Centres. The temporary redesign has enhanced virtual connections and improved collaborations with other Community and Health Service agencies thereby enhancing support.

Progress:

- Virtual assessments with a physician and nurse practitioner located at the Back Door Mission hub, continue to be very successful in treating vulnerable residents.
- The PCOP program engaged with a student from Ontario Tech through the CityStudio Durham model. The student assisted with research about existing best practices and models.

2021 Outlook:

- Explore options to expand the program and align it with the non-violent crisis response initiative.

## 1.3 Action Item: Health and Social Support

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Social Services department is participating in the Mission United partnership. The Back Door Mission serves as the centralized location for various social service agencies. This includes a medical clinic with doctors and nurses on site, crisis counselling, harm reduction, withdrawal management, and a calming rest centre. Additional partners include the Canadian Mental Health Association, Durham Mental Health Services, AIDS Committee of Durham Region, Lakeridge Health, Carea Community Health Centre, John Howard Society and other community partners.

Progress:

- The community hubs in Oshawa, Ajax and North Durham have brought together resources to support Durham's vulnerable population.
- In addition to providing wrap around supports in one location, the hubs served as an active screening point for COVID-19 for unsheltered residents to help reduce the spread.



- The In and Out of Crisis program at Camp Samac assisted clients with accessing provincial programs. All clients were connecting to alternative housing options before the program closed in September.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- The community hubs in Oshawa, Ajax and Cannington will continue to operate until the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2021). The Durham Advisory Committee on Homelessness (DACH) continues to explore the hub model.

## **2. Priority: Quality of Life**

### **2.1 Action Item: Counselling / Mental Health Services**

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: Family Services Durham (FSD) provides barrier-free and accessible counselling, mental health, intimate partner violence response, and case management services. Services are accessed by residents who are often marginalized, struggling financially, and who do not have access to mainstream mental health and counselling services. Attention is focused on individuals, couples and families who are considered 'hard to serve' and who face multiple barriers to employment and community inclusion.

#### Progress:

- Remote and video services were launched for EAP contracts.
- Video service options available for community counselling and mental health services.
- Video intake and group sessions launched for individuals referred by courts and probation services.
- Ongoing telephone safety checks with victims of intimate partner violence.
- Remote counselling and mental health service to OW clients

#### 2021 Outlook:

- Continue to provide services to support the counselling and mental needs of the community.

### **2.2 Action Item: Change to Service Delivery in Long-Term Care Homes**

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: Virtual care models are a cornerstone of health system transformation in Ontario and are intended to improve patient care and experience with the health system while facilitating implementation of comprehensive digital health strategies. Within long-term care (LTC), virtual health models have the potential to build from the provincial strategy and enhance resident access to specialized care in the community.

#### Progress:

- Four virtual care models are in multiple stages of integration. This includes evaluation of virtual support for emergency department transfers, use of eConsult and eVisit, and accessing ConnectingOntario.
- Addressing immediate staffing needs with redeployed staff and proposing investment in staff in the 2021 budget with a goal of reaching 70/30 coverage by full and part time staff respectively.
- Advocacy efforts, including an AMO delegation and support of AdvantAge Ontario, have supported the request for four hours of direct care per resident per day. The province announced four hours of direct care in October.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- Significant funding will be required to meet staffing requirements and related PPE for 2021. Particular investments will be requested through the 2021 budget process.

### 2.3 Action Item: Child Care and Support to Families

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: Explore options for quality early learning and child care programs by investigating the feasibility of flexible child care options (such as 24/7 models) and investigating affordable licensed part-time and flexible schedule options for rural families to use as required. Seek opportunities to expand EarlyON services.

#### Progress:

- Parents who accessed extended child-care services during the early pandemic, indicated their need for ongoing flexible child-care options through a survey.
- EarlyON child and family centres have begun to reopen and provision of virtual services continue. Early analysis reveals that virtual EarlyON programs were successful with 334 events and more than 1,207,805 views.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- A partnership between Child Services Durham and a post-secondary student, facilitated through CityStudio Durham, will identify the best way to meet the childcare needs of Durham families.
- Pilot flexible childcare programs to enhance the system will be explored.

### 2.4 Action Item: Life Stabilization

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: Due to COVID-19, Social Services have transitioned to providing virtual support for clients in Income Support and Ontario Works programs.

#### Progress:

- Employment Counsellors are meeting with clients via email and over the phone to ensure their life stabilization needs are met. Where appropriate, diagnostic referrals are being completed.
- Employment Counsellors are connecting to various groups to provide wrap around services (including schools, specialized programming and those exiting Ontario Works).
- Virtual events in July and August supported students in the Durham College in the RISE to Success Transition.
- The Case Activity Support Application (CASA) tool was rolled out to staff.
- Job development efforts have increased to connect clients to jobs.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- Staff will continue to provide virtual client support which is cost-neutral to the organization.
- Access to technology has been a barrier for some clients and staff will look for opportunities to ensure equitable access to services.

### **3. Priority: Social Investment**

#### **3.1 Action Item: Strengthen Community Capacity**

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: The not-for-profit community is a critical to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations. Community leaders are being engaged to ensure a coordinated response to needs in the community, ensuring funding allocation are informed by available data and service provision decisions are based demonstrated need.

#### Progress:

- The Region has coordinated the COVID-19 Funders Table, to assist organizations that have funds available to support the not-for-profit community response to COVID-19. The goal of the Table is to ensure funding allocations are coordinated and informed by available local data.
- Data on funding allocations are being tracked by geography, organization and category).
- The regions coordinated the Durham Wellness Check Table with eight members. The Wellness Table realizes efficiencies, coordinates efforts, collects data, identifies gaps and shares best practices amongst the organizations doing wellness checks across the region.
- Wellness data is being collected through a survey.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- The Funders Table has agreed to continue to work in cooperation for the foreseeable future.

#### **3.2 Action Item: Early Learning and Child Care Community**

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: Seek opportunities to expand access to EarlyON services by increasing the hours and locations that programs are offered so families can still attend in person with physical distancing in place and working families are able to access evening and weekend programs with their children as well.

Progress:

- The Children's Services Division developed and implemented a plan to enable the safe reopening of childcare centres. 276 of the 289 sites have reopened. Processes related to PPE and cohorts have been implemented.
- Newsletters and town halls have ensured effective communications with the childcare and early learning community.
- Virtual training sessions have been attended by more than 500 participants and Durham College ECE program continues to be supported virtually using Kognito virtual simulation.
- Durham's provincial / federal Safe Restart Funding allocation of \$6,811,867 was received and allocations are being distributed across the early learning system in Durham.

2021 Outlook:

- Continue to support the early learning system in Durham to offer virtual and in person services through training, communication and support.

### 3.3 Action Item: Poverty Prevention

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: Mitigate risks of deep poverty by expediting efforts through tax filing, eviction prevention and credit counselling. Thousands of residents have relied on free low-income tax clinics to file income tax and ensure eligibility for the Canada Child Benefit, OAS, CPP, and HST. The impact of COVID-19 on financial instability may increase the number of residents requiring these services.

Progress:

- COVID-19 created barriers to tax filing clinics (11 operating locally). Surveys were completed with the community of practice to understand the number of tax filings, dollar values and barriers to filing due to COVID-19.
- The Region has advocated to the federal government for accelerated tax filing options.
- Supports for eviction prevention and credit counselling are being provided by community organizations.
- Data from September had suggested there is no noticeable increase in evictions compared to the past three years. Data continues to be collected as the pandemic continues.

- Durham.ca pages are complete with current information for individuals facing eviction.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- Continue to support community organizations with eviction prevention and tax filing.

### 3.4 Action Item: Community Social Investment Framework

Lead Department: Social Services

Description: A Community Social Investment Framework is required for allocation of social services investment for community non-profits serving residents facing the greatest needs and barriers. A framework will use an outcomes-based approach to funding local social service agencies.

#### Progress:

- Staff completed the analysis and review of current processes for community investment allocations to non-profit community sector in Durham Region.
- A Community Investment Framework has been developed and presented to Department Heads. The Framework will go to Council in December (via the Health and Social Services Committee).

#### 2021 Outlook:

- Develop an engagement strategy prior to implementation while piloting the approach and project in 2021.

## 4. **Priority: Public Health and Safety**

### 4.1 Action Item: COVID-19 Outbreaks

Lead Department: Health

Description: The Health Analytics & Research Team is responsible for epidemiological assessment and surveillance of COVID-19 and reporting through the COVID-19 Data Tracker. Epidemiological modeling is being performed and will be refined as new information becomes available. Collaboration is being sought to support this work.

#### Progress:

- Led by the Health Department in collaboration with Planning and Economic Development and Corporate Services – IT, the COVID data tracker has been regularly updated. Key updates include demographic breakdown of positive cases, outbreaks in schools and centres, and additional filtering features.
- The data tracked has been accessed hundreds of thousands of times indicating that the public is interested in the data and welcomes the transparent communications.

### 4.2 Action Item: Enhanced Public Health Inspection

Lead Department: Health

Description: Public health inspectors conduct routine inspections of facilities and shared spaces such as food premises and provide a green, yellow or red colour posting. COVID-19 has resulted in increased need for public health measures such as physical distancing. The Health Protection Division will enhance the current inspection criteria to include the additional measures identified through the COVID-19 pandemic and use the existing green, yellow or red colour posting.

Progress:

- Between 300-400 public health inspections are being completed monthly in addition to 300-400 complaint investigations. This includes gyms, entertainment centres and other facilities.
- Health Protection division continues to reach out to all workplaces where a positive case has been reported to provide COVID-19 related guidance.
- COVID-19 infractions observed during inspections are available on the disclosure website: [durham.ca/checkandgo](https://durham.ca/checkandgo).

2021 Outlook:

- All routine and complaint-based inspections will continue to be investigated and disclosed as required.

#### 4.3 Action Item: Public Physical Distancing

Lead Department: Health

Description: Health Department staff have been reviewing evidence and recommendations to develop communications, guidance documents and resources for local stakeholders and the public. During the recovery period, education of local partners and residents will continue and will be based on the latest evidence and provincial direction.

Progress:

- Durham Health Connection Line (DHCL) greeting message includes general messaging regarding the Medical Officer of Health special instructions on the use of non-medical masks.
- Health Protection division has expanded its weekly meetings with DRPS and municipal by-law to include staff from the TSSA, the AGCO and the Ministry of Labour to ensure a coordinated response to enforcement of COVID-19 requirements in Durham Region.
- Hundreds of businesses/organizations have requested guidance on COVID-19 measures for their facility.
- Between 300-400 complaints/inquiries regarding physical distancing, public gatherings and non-medical mask use have been reported and responded to per month.

2021 Outlook:

- Public Health will continue to work with DRPS, municipal bylaw and related agencies to ensure a coordinated response to COVID-19 enforcement.
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## **Built Recovery Action Items**

### **5. Priority: Modern Rapid Transit System**

#### **5.1 Action Item: Priority infrastructure Projects**

Lead Departments: Works (Planning and Durham Region Transit)

Description: The priority transit infrastructure projects including the Bus Rapid Transit, Simcoe Street Rapid Transit and the Lakeshore GO East extension, will create jobs and support the Region's transit vision.

Progress:

- Rapid Transit and Transit Oriented Development Office established in September and staffing of three positions is underway. Now establishing policies and plans to advance rapid transit implementation in Durham.
- Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding approvals secured for several transit projects including parts of the Highway 2 system and Simcoe Street projects.
- Public Information Centres (PICs) for Highway 2 BRT design options held in November.
- Simcoe Street pilot study findings presented to Transit Executive Committee in October 2020. Initial steps for Environmental Assessment and business case underway. Virtual PIC held in November.
- With Region's support, Metrolinx will present the Lakeshore East (LSE) GO Extension Preliminary Design Business Case to Treasury Board at the first opportunity.
- Governance framework for rapid transit project refined with Metrolinx.
- Consulted local area municipalities on draft policies for Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) planning policies. MTSA policy proposals presented to Planning and Economic Development Committee December 1, 2020.
- Region reviewing pilot with Global Innovation Hub to improve transit business case design.

Financial Implications

- \$83 million of ICIP funding was announced by the federal government in October towards the purchase of electric buses and bus-rapid transit project.
- We are still awaiting the announcement of \$132.9 million in ICIP funding.
- Council approval of ICIP-ineligible costs (e.g. land, staffing for implementation) related to the transit projects will be sought.

2021 Outlook:

- Develop Transit Oriented Development strategy and business plan to integrate with CIP, MTSA and other Regional policies.
- Complete visioning and Business Case for Simcoe Street rapid transit service
- Explore funding opportunities from Canada Infrastructure Bank.

## 5.2 Action Item: Building Transit Ridership

Lead Department – Durham Region Transit (DRT)

Description: During the pandemic, DRT ridership went down by approximately 70 per cent. The pandemic is expected to have a long-term impact on ridership given on-going concerns with community transmission, work from home arrangements, reduced traffic congestion and increased parking availability, and increased on-line education and service delivery options. In 2020, staff will track emerging ridership patterns and preferences as COVID restrictions are lifted.

Progress:

- All safety measures recommended by the Ministry of Transportation were installed/implemented (mandatory masks, capacity limits) by early summer. November – Masks 2.0 Campaign launched.
- Fare collection resumed July 1. Approximately 4,500 free PRESTO cards have been distributed, including 1400 free PRESTO cards loaded with \$14 distributed to social service agencies for vulnerable populations. PRESTO E-tickets on mobile devices launched in September. In September, 78 per cent of boarding's were made using PRESTO contactless fare payment.
- September 28 – Implemented Phase A Service plan, including OnDemand services for lower frequency service routes and apps for booking rides. Ridership has increased 5 percent.
- October OnDemand ridership – 6,750 rides. 90% customer satisfaction rate from those using app to book trips.

Financial implications:

- Revenues severely impacted by reduced ridership including loss of the post-secondary institution not participating in the U-Pass for 2020/21 school year.
- Received \$8.4 million of Provincial Safe Restart funding - Phase 1 to offset lost revenues and additional pandemic safety expenses. Safe Restart Funding - Phase 2, will support revenue losses and expenses between October 1 and March 31, 2021.

2021 Outlook:

- Services will continue to evolve in response to shifts in ridership demand and ongoing emergency and safety measures during the second wave.

## 6. **Priority: Active Transportation**

### 6.1 Action Item: Update the Regional Cycling Plan and expand the Regional Cycling Network



Lead department: Planning

Description: This sustainable transportation strategy will implement a comprehensive, region-wide cycling network. Cycling demand is growing as a convenient, accessible and inexpensive option to connect people to jobs, education and services, and during the pandemic, offers safe physical distance.

Progress:

- Draft Regional Cycling Plan circulated to Regional departments for review.
- Work to develop funding options and refine key elements of strategy is ongoing.
- Determination of sustainable funding for the RCP, including the examination of the current funding model, further exploration sources of funding and grant opportunities will be explored.

2021 Outlook:

- Anticipate Draft Regional Cycling Plan to be presented to Regional Council prior to summer recess.

## 6.2 Action Item: Active Transportation Promotion

Lead Department: Planning

Description: Promote active transportation as it supports a variety of long-term Regional policy goals. Active transportation is low-cost, equitable, and sustainable, and can help people practice physical distancing while promoting health and well-being. Smart Commute Durham works with employers to promote sustainable commuter options. The project links to the Active and Sustainable School Travel Initiative that will promote increasing the number of children using active modes of travel to get to school, and to reduce congestion around schools.

Progress:

- Active School Travel Planning Summary Report released summarizing the activities of eight participating schools in Durham.

2021 Outlook:

- Continue with the Active and Sustainable School Travel Planning initiative in consultation with participating schools in Durham.

## 7. **Priority: Community Vitality**

### 7.1 Action Item: Community Improvement Plan

Lead Department: Planning

Description: A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is an incentive-based financial tool that allows municipalities to implement policy objectives within a defined project area.

**Progress:**

- Consultant assignment awarded. Project launch meeting in December 2020.
- Financial impacts and risk analysis of candidate programs will be coordinated by Finance, with input from a project consultant. Additional costs will go through the 2022 and subsequent budgets.

**2021 Outlook:**

- Undertake the required study to inform potential incentive programs with an emphasis on affordable housing and potential transit-oriented development.
- Consultation with area municipalities and stakeholders will occur in 2021 prior to the presentation of CIP recommendations to Regional Council.

**8. Priority: Transformative Projects****8.1 Action Item: Durham Forest Centre for Innovation and Resilience**

Lead Department: Works

Description: The Durham Region Forest was established in 1926 in partnership with the province to provide flooding and erosion protection. Today, it provides recreation activities, outdoor education (Durham District School Board), research, wildlife habitat, filming and special events. The Centre would be designed and constructed as a net energy positive facility to test zero carbon technologies and be a training, innovation and demonstration site for energy efficient, zero carbon technologies.

**Progress:**

- Advocated with senior governments for funding.
- House has been demolished and compostable toilet facility for trailhead is being researched. COVID-19 response has limited Facilities ability to advance the project.
- Construction costs estimated at \$6 million for a 5,000 square foot facility. Operating costs will depend on the measures implemented.

**2021 Outlook:**

- Identify partners, develop concept, seek funding.

**8.2 Action Item: Community Development - Housing and Service Hubs**

Lead Department: Planning

Description: A strategic approach to the redevelopment and improvement of existing community housing sites and other Region-owned sites will be developed. The Region is committed to revitalizing its community housing portfolio using an evidence-based strategy and improving assets in response to increasing costs. Opportunities for revitalization, and/or regeneration (redevelopment) and development of community hubs will be explored,

**Progress:**

- Terms of Reference for due diligence completed.
- Consultant assignment procurement process completed. Contract awarded November 2020.
- Consultant to develop and lead community consultation strategy.
- Financial implications of the policy framework will be managed through the Regional housing strategy implementation.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- Develop public consultation strategy for candidate DRLHC sites for the review and approval of Council.

## 9. Priority: Sustainability

### 9.1 Action Item: Low Carbon Corporate Fleet Strategy

Lead department: CAO's Office

Description: In response to Regional Council's Climate Emergency Declaration, development of a Low Carbon Corporate Fleet Strategy is underway. The Strategy will analyze existing patterns of fleet use and age, equipment replacement schedule, technology advancements and opportunities, against fueling and facility needs. External funding opportunities together with provincial and federal policy will help to expedite this practice. The results will feed into the Corporate Climate Change Master Plan.

#### Progress:

- Workshops held with all Regional Departments.
- Fleet analytics model was completed. Modelling is underway to determine potential GHG reductions.
- Recommended actions will be part of 10-year action plan to be completed in Q4.

#### 2021 Outlook:

- 10-year action plan will be presented to Council in Q1 as a component of the comprehensive Corporate Climate Change Master Plan.

### 9.2 Action Item: Sustainable Transit

Lead department: Durham Region Transit

Description: COVID-19 has significantly impacted transit ridership. These efforts will promote and showcase transit as a mode of sustainable travel. Sustainable transit initiatives include the DRT electric bus (e-bus) project and the sustainable bus stop project. DRT will purchase of up to eight e-buses and the required depot-based charging infrastructure in 2020. Further, DRT will increase the number of solar powered shelters, introduction of solar powered digital media signs, review of customer furnishing amenities, environmentally friendly de-icing products, development of a bus stop standard to guide asset planning.

Progress:

- Agreement formalized with Oshawa Public Utilities Commission (OPUC) for provision of charging infrastructure.
- Procurement process for charging infrastructure launched by OPUC.
- E-bus project manager hired.
- 2020 sustainable bus stop installation program completed.
- Electric bus pilot project, including dedicated project management, funded through federal gas tax.

2021 Outlook:

- Completion of power study and charging requirements and development of technical specifications.
- Request for Proposal and award of contract for buses and depot charging.
- 12-18 month delivery time for electric buses.
- Sustainable bus stop amenities transition to support OnDemand service model.

### 9.3 Action Item: Durham Home Energy Savings Program

Lead department: CAO's Office

Description: This residential retrofit program to transform the energy efficiency of existing buildings is a key element of the Durham Community Energy Plan (DCEP). The program design through partnership with local electricity utilities to deliver a region-wide home-energy literacy campaign, supported by an interactive website.

Progress:

- FCM funding application for retrofit program submitted and received positive feedback.
- RFP for core program management services 90% complete.
- Involves initial capital outlay of ~\$350-400K to support program start-up costs and first 4 years of program implementation. If FCM grant is successful in securing \$4million, it will support program launch and four-year implementation. Decision expected in January.

2021 Outlook:

- Release RFP, evaluate bids and select service provider for Program Administration.
- Formalize partnership agreements with local credit unions and energy utilities.
- Develop marketing strategy, advertising and web platform in preparation for Spring 2021 program launch.

### 9.4 Action Item: Corporate Climate Change Master Plan

Lead department: CAO's Office

Description: In response to Regional Council's January 29th Climate Emergency Declaration, preparation of a Corporate Climate Change Master Plan and Strategic

Framework (CCMP) is underway. The CCMP will: include development of a detailed 5-year implementation plan (2021-2025). Develop a strategic framework that integrates a climate change lens for all Corporate decisions. Creates an opportunity to embed sustainability and resilience across the Corporation and throughout community.

Progress:

- Analyzed gap between Durham practices and corporate best practices.
- Developed corporate climate framework with targets and carbon accounting framework to be integrated with Regional asset management process.
- Funding for recommended actions will be approved through annual operating and capital budget or through the Climate Change Reserve Fund.

2021 Outlook:

- Council approval of Master Plan in Q1.

#### 9.5 Action Item: Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Deployment Strategy

Lead department: CAO's Office

Description: Emerging from the Durham Community Energy Plan (DCEP), the EV Strategy is focused on increasing the availability of EV charging stations across the Region, for public use as well as for workplace charging and (municipal) corporate fleets. Regional staff are coordinating applications to federal funding programs. This project complements the Region's Low Carbon Fleet Strategy.

Progress:

- Received ~\$250K in funding from NRCan in partnership with local area municipalities and energy utilities for 60 EV Charging connectors (each station has two connectors).
- 32 new charging connectors installed on Regional property. Balance of stations to be installed on local municipal properties in 2021.
- Secured \$50,000 in NR Can funding to OPUC in partnership with the Region and Elexicon for development of EV education and awareness campaign.
- Financial support for these projects is from federal funding programs.

2021 Outlook:

- Mobile test drive events in March April 2021 in partnership with Plug'n Drive
- Launch of a branded marketing campaign and web info platform aimed at encouraging test drives and dispelling myths.
- Awaiting word from NRCan on our round 2 funding application for community charging stations.

#### 9.6 Action Item: Nature-based Climate Solutions Program

Lead department: CAO's Office

Description: Durham's Community Climate Adaptation Plan identified the need to build climate resilience by enhancing natural capital in both urban and rural landscapes. Many studies also note that natural areas support our mental and physical health. The adaptation plan highlighted the need for stewardship and outreach programs to encourage tree planting and wetland restoration projects on both public and private lands, which support ecosystem-based carbon sequestration and stormwater management. Such an initiative would complement existing programs, including the LEAF Backyard tree planting program and Trees for Rural Roads, among others.

Progress:

- LEAF program launched in summer 2020 exceeded target with 138 trees sold to 100 participants
- Nature-based solutions strategy drafted and presented to Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change in September.
- Regional capital investment of approximately \$500K would be needed to help leverage funding from partners, including non-profit sector as well as senior levels of government. Federal government stimulus funding is expected to prioritize green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.
- Regional contributions to be funded from within existing budget allocations.

2021 Outlook:

- Continue LEAF program.
- Seek funding partners for nature-based solutions strategy.

#### 9.7 Action Item: Climate Adaptation Vulnerability and Risk Assessment

Lead department: CAO's Office

Description: Through this project, the Region will be better prepared to make investments that increase the climate resilience of critical infrastructure systems and the communities that those systems support.

Progress:

- Two studies to identify and prioritize vulnerable structures, areas of urban flood risk and public health risks are underway for completion in Q2 2021.
- Study results will enable prioritization of future capital investment in regional infrastructure and services and provide a pipeline of projects for grant funding opportunities.

2021 Outlook:

- National Disaster Mitigation Program application to extend riverine flood risk assessment from pilot application in TRCA watershed to CLOCA and GRCA watersheds in 2021.
- Also conducting shoreline hazard mapping study for Pickering/Ajax waterfront to prioritize capital investment to reduce erosion, and shoreline flood risk.

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## Economic Recovery Action Items

### 10. Priority: Small Business Support

#### 10.1 Action Item: Buy Local Campaign

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: The Downtowns of Durham initiative forms the basis of our buy local campaign. This website includes business listings and service levels of downtown businesses to showcase the local businesses in each of the downtown areas within the project. This is a two phased project beginning with launching a website with business listings with full support local Mayors and the Regional Chair. The second phase will provide an opportunity for community members to apply to become a contributor to the Downtowns of Durham 'stories' section

Progress:

- The Economic Development and Tourism team collaborated with Durham Region Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) to develop the Downtowns of Durham project, which included a website that provides a directory of over 800 businesses, and an associated campaign encouraging residents to shop local. Additionally, a #ShopInDurham campaign was developed and launched in coordination with the region's Joint Chambers, to showcase opportunities for local spending during the holiday season through paid promotion and a giveaway content featuring local business products and services.
- Economic Development & Tourism funded the development and launch of a central eCommerce marketplace, 'Shop Durham Region', allowing locally owned and operated businesses to list their products in the shared platform for free with other local vendors.

2021 Outlook:

- In phase II of the Downtowns of Durham project deliver enhanced content marketing activities to increase traffic, enhance awareness of, and revenues for downtown businesses. The Region will collaborate with BIAs and local area municipality's economic development offices to highlight real estate opportunities that are linked to key sectors.
- Undertake creative placemaking activities that add to the quality of place in Durham's downtowns and continues to promote Downtowns of Durham website.
- Grow and promote the Shop Durham Region marketplace to grow online visibility for locally owned and operated businesses.
- Enhance promotion of local food producers through continued development or directories, calendars and maps; and associated campaigns.

#### 10.2 Action Item: Emergency Support Programs

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: To provide one-on-one assistance to Durham Region businesses, the Economic Development and Tourism team launched an online intake form and published a 1-800 number at [investdurham.ca/covidresponse](https://investdurham.ca/covidresponse).

Progress:

- The Economic Development team launched an online intake form and a published 1-800 number for support of businesses. A detailed process was developed and executed for internal staff to be able to provide timely and accurate support to the business community while tapping in to the wide range of support available through the Durham Economic Task Force.

2021 Outlook:

- Support local businesses as they navigate COVID-19 through communications materials and timely updates to the website.
- Increase support to businesses through Invest Durham channels by continuing to offer a centralized intake form with 1-on-1 advice and support

## **11. Priority: Infrastructure Support for Business**

### **11.1 Action Item: Improved Access to Broadband Across the Region**

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: Internet service in many areas of Durham is slow, unreliable, and expensive. Many communities do not have adequate broadband infrastructure and hence do not have access to fast and reliable internet service. Business surveys through the COVID-19 pandemic have continued to highlight the strong need for broadband in our business community. It is no longer a luxury to have high speed internet, it has become a right for residents and businesses.

Progress:

- The broadband survey has been successfully completed and key findings from the 2,400 respondents. The data from the survey continues to support planning to continue to advance the Region's implementation of the Broadband Strategy.
- RFI results from ISPs were also completed during this time and provide visibility into the challenges and potential opportunities across the Region for delivering broadband to rural and underserved communities.
- The team has engaged with an independent consultant to develop a business case for the Regional Broadband Network. This engagement for the business case is expected to be finalized before the end of 2020.

2021 Outlook:

- Continue with advocacy efforts to promote broadband investment in Durham Region.
- Apply for provincial and federal funding to implement broadband infrastructure.



## 11.2 Action Item: Improved Access to Downtown and Business Areas

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: The scope of the first phase is a jurisdictional scan on urban infrastructure across the GTA, Canada and internationally. The jurisdictional scan will be desktop based through online research that will identify key themes and insights from other jurisdictions.

Progress:

- Published a jurisdictional review in June of 2020 to highlight both National and International strategies to support access to downtown and business areas through COVID-19.
- This report, which was distributed in a CIP in June and circulated to area municipalities, identified unique strategies in relation to: outdoor dining and parklets, dedicated curbside pickups, dedicated walking and biking lanes, urban farming and parklets.

2021 Outlook:

- Launch a CityStudio project for a jurisdiction scan in January of 2021 that looks at COVID response for downtown and business areas over the second half of 2021 with a particular focus on places with similar climates to Ontario.

## 12. **Priority: Business Attraction**

### 12.1 Action Item: Pre-servicing of Employment Lands

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: The servicing of well-located and vacant employment lands has been identified as one of Council's highest priorities to stimulate economic growth and job creation in Durham Region. This will be important for economic recovery from COVID-19. At present, the Region has less than 150ha of serviced employment lands that have been defined as 'market ready'.

Progress:

- Regional Council received a report in September 2020, detailing various designated Employment Areas which were deemed a high priority by area municipalities, and providing analysis and prioritization of possible regional servicing projects with respect to their ability to enable investment and job creation.
- Regional Council approved the recommendations to proceed with certain planning and design projects immediately and prioritize certain other high priority construction projects, which required commitments from other external parties to be approved for commencement.

2021 Outlook:

- The financial business case will be developed for each proposed project to identify costs.

## 12.2 Action Item: Cluster Development Around Durham's key sectors

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: Durham Region has a unique opportunity to continue to build and market the Energy, Environment and Engineering industry cluster as a means of investment attraction. Industry clusters are groups of similar and related firms in a defined geographic area that share common characteristics and draw a competitive advantage based on proximity to key stakeholders including suppliers, competitors, academia and the Public Sector. As every municipality within the Region currently has a stated focus on Energy, Environment and/or sustainability, the Economic Development team will prioritize cluster development to continue to build this sector.

Progress:

- Several actions have progressed around Cluster Development for Energy, Environment and Engineering that continue to position Durham Region as a leader in these sectors.
  - Collated existing data and assets as a means to update marketing materials and also provide valuable insight into the current cluster. This has included getting up-to-date information on (a) business environment (b) workforce and talent and (c) potential subsectors.
  - Defining 8 subsectors.
  - Extensive stakeholder engagement with local area municipalities, post-secondary, industry and other areas of government to understand and explore support for continuing to build this sector. This included a detailed presentation on EV/AV to DEDP.
  - Developing new marketing assets, including: (a) Energy Innovation Whitepaper (b) talent fact sheet for Energy Innovation (c) EV/AV Website Content (d) Energy, Environment and Engineering landing page. Collate existing assets, align stakeholders and get agreement in principle, create information assets and landing page on investdurham.ca, work with stakeholders to determine the viability of a cluster and create next steps.

2021 Outlook:

- Develop a BR&E plan for existing Durham Region EN3 companies with a specific focus on Foreign owned companies.
- Develop a target list and marketing materials for Investment Attraction purposes.
- Focus on building relationships with other levels of government to communicate the EN3 value proposition MEDJCT, Invest in Canada, Invest in Canada, ISED, etc.

## 12.3 Action Item: Post-secondary Retraining Programs

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: The Economic Development and Tourism team will continue to work with post-secondary partners in the Durham Region to promote their current and new post-secondary programming to up-skill and retrain workforce to adapt to the 'new normal' of our changed economy.

Progress:

- Created and delivered a campaign to promote reskilling, micro-credential, and up-skilling programs at Durham Region's three post-secondary institutions. A central website detailing select programs at the three schools was developed and an associated advertising campaign was launched which resulted in hundreds of thousands of impressions.

2021 Outlook:

- Continue to update information pages about upskilling programs in Durham Region in collaboration with our three post-secondary schools.

### **13. Priority: Smart Durham**

#### **13.1 Action Item: Smart City Framework**

Lead Department: CAO's Office

Description: The Region is working with the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) to develop a smart city framework. To inform the development of this framework, CUI has gathered examples of best practices and hosted focus groups with key staff and external stakeholders to ensure our smart city initiatives connect to the Region's strategic plan.

Progress:

- Consultation with staff across departments and at local area municipalities is completed.
- Revised branding to reflect feedback. The framework is now referred to as the Intelligent Communities Framework.
- Launched the Intelligent Communities Framework in a CIP to Council in November.
- Showcased Intelligent projects on [durham.ca/IntelligentCommunities](https://durham.ca/IntelligentCommunities)

2021 Outlook:

- Launch internal Sparking Regional Innovation program to encourage staff involvement in intelligent comments.
- Apply to the Intelligent Communities Forum for designation as Intelligent Community.

#### **13.2 Action Item: Launch CityStudio Durham**

Lead Department: CAO's office

Description: The Region is formalizing our partnership with the local post-secondary institutions by adopting the CityStudio model. CityStudio Durham will increase student

engagement, promote innovative solutions and highlight projects from across Regional services.

Progress:

- An MOU was signed with all partners (DRPS, Durham College, Ontario Tech University, and Trent University – Durham).
- The [durham.ca/CityStudio](http://durham.ca/CityStudio) web portal was launched and serves as a public portal for matching municipal challenges with post-secondary students and faculty.
- 12 new collaborations began in Fall of 2020.
- Staff from all seven departments at the Region have been engaged in the CityStudio model.

2021 Outlook

- 10 new collaborations are expected to begin in January 2021 and more in the fall semester.
- Staff will continue to liaise with local municipalities who would like to participate in the collaboration.

### 13.3 Action Item: Automated EV Shuttle Pilot

Lead Department: Durham Region Transit

Description: DRT is partnering with the Town of Whitby, SmartCone Technologies, Pacific Western Transportation and others to launch Canada's first autonomous electric shuttle pilot project aided by smart transportation infrastructure. The pilot will be the longest operation of its kind in Canada, both in terms of duration (12 months) and route length (six kilometres). The shuttle will operate on a loop between Whitby GO station and the Port Whitby area.

Progress:

- Automated shuttle deferred to 2021 due to COVID-19 border closures.
- Staff participate in working groups that continue to plan for the launch of the project.
- Engagement with other municipalities and relevant industry associations and stakeholders have resulted in increased awareness and visibility of the project.

2021 Outlook:

- The Automated shuttle project will launch in April 2021.

### 13.4 Action Item: Innovation Community

Lead Department: Planning and Economic Development

Description: The Economic Development and Tourism team is committed to assisting the growth of small businesses and the innovation ecosystem in the Durham Region. The goal is to continue to develop a culture that encourages and welcomes innovation.

**Progress:**

- Economic Development participated in virtual Collision in 2020 and capitalized on the exposure. We successfully increased our visibility, exceeding 2019 metrics and KPIs.
- Durham Region continued to sponsor the 1855 Masterclass Sessions and participated as attendees and hosts throughout the year. The final Masterclass for 2020 occurred November 18, 2020, with a guest speaker discussing the needs and opportunity for access to technology and broadband by Indigenous Communities.
- Durham Region continues to participate in the Pioneer Program at Spark Centre, providing an overview of the Region at the kick off of all of their cohorts. These presentations are valuable to demonstrate a welcoming environment not only to innovation, but also to innovators from around the world.

**2021 Outlook:**

- Collaborate with the innovation community to participate in Collision 2021.
- Continue to participate in the Pioneer Program virtually.
- Continue to support the 1855 Masterclass series
- Partner with Durham Region innovation stakeholders to transition innovation companies and organizations and the graduates of the innovation programs into Durham Region communities.

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**Municipal Recovery Action Items****14. Priority: Restoration Framework****14.1 Action Item: Health and Safety**

Lead Department: Corporate Services - Human Resources

Description: This work supports the Regional response to emerging orders and directives, intended to protect against the ongoing transmission of COVID-19 as staff return to work.

**Progress:**

- Mandatory “return to workplace training” for staff developed but uptake has been delayed due to continuation of teleworking agreements to March 2021.
- Construction of respirator disinfection room at Headquarters will be completed in December.
- 550 mask fit tests completed for staff at long-term care homes to end of Q3
- All JHSC have been given infection control protocols and resources.
- Health and safety compliance software RFP anticipated to go out by year end with approximate purchase by the end of February 2021.

**2021 Outlook:**

- Staff will continue to respond to emerging/new safety directives.

#### 14.2 Action Item: Financial Sustainability

Lead Department: Finance

Description: In the short-term (2020), Finance staff are working with all departments (including DRPS) to continue to refine COVID-19 financial implications based on emerging information in a very fluid environment. Staff are continuing to develop financial mitigation actions including cost containment and project deferral as appropriate to mitigate the projected financial implications of COVID-19. Staff also are working with municipal associations and the provincial and federal government to advocate for financial assistance and legislative changes to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.

Progress:

- Monitoring and frequent reporting to Council on COVID-19 financial impacts.
- Received Safe Restart Funding Phase 1 - \$22.9 million.
- Oct 30 - Submitted detailed financial information required by Province for Safe Restart Funding – Phase 2 (general and transit-related).
- Projecting impacts into 2021 through the budget process.

2021 Outlook:

- Additional waves of COVID-19 may affect Regional revenues and expenditures. Staff will continue to update and refine the projected financial impacts of COVID-19 and report regularly to Council.

#### 14.3 Action Item: Restoration of Regional Services

Lead Department: CAO's Office – DEM

Description: Durham Emergency Management (DEM) established a planning framework for the orderly restoration of Regional functions, services and activities halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes a standardized approach to scaling-up of services and the return of staff to Regional facilities. The framework promotes: continued teleworking where possible, adoption of process and procedure improvements (e.g. to ensure physical distancing of staff and visitors), and identification of lessons learned.

Progress:

- Childcare centres reopened July 29.
- Departmental plans for restoration of services in late September were completed but not implemented due to emergence of second wave of COVID-19 illness.
- About 1500 staff working from home at end of Q3.
- Some services by appointment are available for those who can't meet virtually.
- Protocols such as mask wearing in Regional facility common areas implemented and communicated to staff via email, signage, intranet and CAO Townhalls.

2021 Outlook:

- Safety protocols in Regional facilities and teleworking arrangements for staff will continue to at least March 2021.

#### 14.4 Action Item: Legislative Changes

Lead Department: Corporate Services – Legal

Description: Project includes review of the existing Delegation By-laws in relation to the updated Budget Management Policy and Purchasing By-Law. Review of all by-laws as they relate to conducting electronic meetings, delegations etc. Draft Report and By-Law to be presented to Department Heads on June 1 and brought to Council for the July session.

Progress:

- New delegation of authority bylaw approved by Regional Council in July.
- Of more than 90 bylaws and policies since reviewed, 11 were identified as now unneeded, for future repeal.

2021 Outlook:

- Bylaw review continues part of Region's regular budget and business plan.

#### 14.5 Action Item: Staffing

Lead Department: Corporate Services – Human Resources

Description: Action includes review of existing training programs to determine which ones can be delivered virtually, and for the rest, what changes will be required for classroom training. Continued virtual recruitment with staff working remotely and alternative hours. Assess types and design of positions now required in the organization due to changes in the way services are being delivered in the service restoration period and beyond in relation to the public service modernization program. Changes in work requirements will need to be resolved with the unions.

Progress:

- COVID-related hires to end of Q3 – 563.
- Other hiring – 429.
- Regular recruitment resumed in June.

2021 Outlook:

- Virtual recruitment will continue to be used for most hiring. Activity continues part of Region's regular budget and business plan.

### **15. Priority: Modernization**

#### 15.1 Action Item: Public Service Modernization

Lead Department: Corporate Services – Information Technology

Description: Using funding from the Provincial Audit and Accountability initiative, the Region reviewed its Call Centre setup and analyzed it with a view to creating a 311

service for Durham. A 36-month project has been designed to integrate and implement the recommendations of these three reviews to modernize these areas.

Progress:

- Budget for Year One of 36-month project approved by Council in July.
- Work proceeding on creating electronic forms on Durham.ca.
- E-commerce pilot commenced online payments for waste tags in October.
- Updates to servers, software and telephony to support planned changes underway.

2021 Outlook:

- First wave of modernization changes will be implemented. Project continues part of Region's regular budget and business plan.

## 15.2 Action Item: Workplace Modernization Project

Lead Department: Works

Description: The Workplace Modernization Project seeks to address space challenges faced by our growing organization by integrating innovative work into the design and use our workplace, leveraging technology and facilitating a mobile and flexible workforce. Teleworking success during the COVID-19 crisis, acceleration of the digitization of Regional records, and innovative process improvements will directly affect how space is configured and used. A modernized workplace will defer or eliminate the need to expand Regional Headquarters which directly impacts the Region's environmental footprint, ongoing energy usage and the capital costs to build and maintain additional facilities.

Progress:

- Work Package 1 design development is completed for presentation to Department Heads in December.
- Work Package 2 schematic design is in underway.
- Construction of sample workstations/suite is on hold.
- Bids for workstation booking station software RFP are being evaluated.
- Original estimates considering only space reconfiguration work were estimated at \$17.9M. This estimate will be influenced by post-pandemic workplace standards (currently unknown), the scope and breath of workplace modernization initiatives such as tele-working, digitization of records, and the incorporation of other building system improvements not part of the original scope.

2021 Outlook:

- Tendering for Work Package 1 in spring 2021 with construction anticipated Summer 2021.

## 16. **Priority: Digital Durham 2023**

### 16.1 Action Item: Baseline Performance



Lead Department: Corporate Services - Information Technology

Description: As part of the Digital Durham 2023 strategy, the Information Technology team is enhancing the infrastructure and maturity of the support network for Regional staff. The first step was documenting the existing infrastructure and environment. This will be the basis for a plan to move the organization forward. Several advancements have been made to move the organization to the Cloud, and several security pieces were put in place however work still needs to be completed.

Progress:

- IT service assessment survey and review completed. Benchmarks finalized.
- Action items for 2021 identified.
- Departmental budgets will need to account for the replacement of all desktop equipment to move them to more mobile devices and cloud-based applications. Several applications are legacy based and will need to be upgraded.

2021 Outlook:

- Project continues part of Region's regular budget and business plan.

## 16.2 Action Item: Platform for Analytics

Lead Department: Corporate Services – Information Technology

Description: Part of the Digital Durham 2023, this project will review the various functions and software options to select a software suitable for delivering the Corporate Dashboard by reviewing the organization's requirements to display data internally or externally or both. In addition to the display of the information related to the Regional Strategic Plan, other key management indicators need to be presented to Senior Management on a regular basis.

Progress:

- Analytics program launched in Corporate Services – Information Technology Division.
- COVID-19 dashboard, Situation report dashboard brought into service in April and July respectively. Flu tracking dashboard prepared.
- Technology portfolio review continues.

2021 Outlook:

- Project continues part of Region's regular budget and business plan.

## 17. **Priority: Improve Emergency Response**

### 17.1 Action Item: After-Action Review

Lead Department: CAO's Office – Durham Emergency Management

Description: The project will establish a framework for Regional departments to undertake formal After-Action Reviews (AARs) of their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. AARs are a critical tool used after an emergency to highlight and learn from the successes and challenges encountered throughout the response. Identify ways to sustain the things that went well and develop recommendations on ways to overcome obstacles encountered in the response. DEM has begun an AAR related to Phase 1 response of the Emergency Management team's roles and functions. A corporate approach to AAR will highlight co-benefits across departments. Durham Region may also be invited/compelled to participate in a public inquiry, ministry-led After-Action Reviews and the recently announced Independent Commission into Ontario's long-term care system. This process will support that participation.

Progress:

- Business continuity project charter and working group terms of reference are complete. The policy is currently being drafted and related software needs are being assessed.
- Region applying lessons learned from first wave of COVID-19 to ongoing response.

2021 Outlook:

- The After Action Review framework will be developed.
  - The AAR will point to departmental reports that deal with major impacts and lessons learned (e.g. public health, transit) and integrate/highlight activities/learnings not captured in other departmental reporting.
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