



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness

<b>Date:</b>	November 16, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Board of Health
<b>From:</b>	Jeff Griffiths, Auditor General
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### SUMMARY

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Because the City's pandemic planning is still in progress, the purpose of the audit was to provide a snapshot of what the City has accomplished and what work remains to be completed in preparing for a pandemic emergency. The overall audit question is: *"To the extent possible, how prepared is the City for a potentially severe pandemic?"* We are cognizant that this should only be answered within the context of what the City can realistically achieve as a municipal government in pandemic planning, in particular considering the City's current fiscal constraints and the need for provincial and federal guidance and coordination. In addition, the substantial degree of uncertainty surrounding a possible pandemic influenza makes planning for a pandemic emergency a complex and difficult task.

The City has undertaken a number of planning activities, and is working towards implementing key actions such as stockpiling personal protective equipment and essential operational supplies. Certain important pandemic public health measures remain to be completed, some of which are dependent upon federal or provincial guidance. The City has established a framework for pandemic planning and preparedness in which public health related planning is led by Toronto Public Health, and corporate planning for continuity of operations is led by the Pandemic Influenza Steering Committee. Our audit noted certain challenges and gaps in the pandemic planning and preparedness process, and as a result our report includes a number of recommendations to help strengthen the existing accountability framework and corporate coordination, as well as enhancing the completion of pandemic public health planning.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **The Auditor General recommends that:**

1. The City Manager define in writing the lines of authority and roles of the Pandemic Influenza Steering Committee, and establish a regular reporting relationship for the Steering Committee to report to the Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee on pandemic planning and preparedness.
2. The City Manager amend the Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 59 “Emergency Planning” to reflect the replacement of the former Community Services Committee with the Executive Committee.
3. The Toronto Emergency Management Program Committee consider providing periodic reports on the progress of emergency management activities and/or emerging issues to City Council.
4. The City Manager ensure that the operational support functions listed in the City of Toronto Emergency Plan are finalized and authorized by responsible agencies before December 2008.
5. Toronto Public Health develop timelines for completion of specific pandemic planning and preparedness activities, monitor the completion of these activities, and report progress to the Board of Health.
6. The City Manager undertake a detailed review of the proposed actions to sustain critical City functions in a pandemic emergency to ensure that the proposed actions represent the most effective and appropriate options. Such a review should include, but not be limited to, an examination of the viability, effectiveness, and resource requirements of the proposed preparedness actions.
7. The City Manager take necessary steps to ensure a coordinated corporate process to prioritize and implement the proposed preparatory actions to sustain critical City services in a pandemic emergency.
8. The City Manager take necessary steps to develop a corporate procurement policy and plan for infection control supplies, personal protective equipment, and critical operational supplies, in preparation for a pandemic emergency. Such steps should include, but not be limited to, a review, prioritization, and alignment of purchasing requirements with the World Health Organization pandemic alert phases.
9. The City Manager set a timeline for completion of the corporate pandemic response plan and the corporate pandemic communications strategy, and ensure that both documents contain essential details facilitating a timely and effective City response to the World Health Organization’s pandemic alert phases.
10. The City Manager undertake a review of the City’s Human Resources related pandemic planning assumptions and preparedness actions to ensure they are

- adequate and sufficient. Such a review should include, but not be limited to, an examination of Human Resources related pandemic planning issues and criteria, a review of other cities' employee support actions in preparation for a pandemic, and consultation with employee unions and management association.
11. The City Manager take necessary steps to develop and implement a process to systematically track and monitor costs associated with pandemic preparedness.
  12. The City Manager develop a corporate pandemic implementation plan outlining goals, specific short-term objectives and targeted timelines, as well as assignment of responsibilities.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The implementation of Recommendation number 7, 8 and 11 in this report will improve financial controls over spending related to pandemic planning and preparedness. The extent of any resources required or potential cost savings resulting from implementing the recommendations in this report is not determinable at this time.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

This is the first audit of the City's pandemic planning and preparedness conducted by the City's Auditor General. This audit was conducted as part of the Auditor General's 2007 Annual Work Plan, and the Terms of Reference was presented to the Audit Committee in April 2007.

## **COMMENTS**

The Auditor General's report entitled "Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness", contains 12 recommendations and is attached as Appendix 1. Management's response to each of the recommendations contained in this report is attached as Appendix 2.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Jeffrey Griffiths, Auditor General

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1: Review of City of Toronto Pandemic Planning and Preparedness

Appendix 2: Management's Response to the Auditor General's Review of Toronto  
Pandemic Planning and Preparedness