



## REPORT FOR ACTION

### Business Recovery Planning Update due to COVID-19

**Date:** June 10, 2020

**To:** The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place

**From:** Don Boyle, Chief Executive Officer

**Wards:** All Wards

#### SUMMARY

---

This report provides an update and information regarding Exhibition Place business continuity planning for the restart, recovery, and rebuild plans, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The financial impact to the Board's 2020 Operating and Capital Budget from the cancellation of events and closure of tenants operations due to the global pandemic is the subject of a separate report.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

---

The Chief Executive Officer recommends that:

1. The Board receive this report for information.

#### FINANCIAL IMPACT

---

There are no financial implications to this report.

#### DECISION HISTORY

---

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) makes the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a Global Pandemic -  
<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/27-04-2020-who-timeline---covid-19>;

On March 12, 2020 the City of Toronto activates their Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) -  
<https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-s-emergency-operations-centre-activated-in-response-to-covid-19>;

On March 17, 2020 the Province of Ontario declares a State of Emergency in pursuant to an Order in Council 518/2020, Ontario Regulation 50/20 - <https://www.ontario.ca/orders-in-council/oc-5182020>;

On March 23, 2020 Mayor Tory declares a State of Emergency in the City of Toronto - under Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 59-5.1 - [https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184\\_059.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_059.pdf)  
<https://www.toronto.ca/news/mayor-tory-declares-a-state-of-emergency-in-the-city-of-toronto>;

On March 23, 2020 the Province of Ontario orders the closure of all non-essential businesses across the province for the period of March 24th extension to June 9th (current) - Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, ONTARIO REGULATION 82/20], ORDER UNDER SUBSECTION 7.0.2 (4) — CLOSURE OF PLACES OF NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES; Extensions and Amendments declared on: April 3rd, April 9th, April 16th, May 1st, May 7th, May 8th, May 14th, May 18th, May 29th - <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/200082>;

On April 30, 2020 Toronto City Council extends the declaration of the State of Emergency - <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CC20.3>

## COMMENTS

---

On March 13, 2020, Exhibition Place's Emergency Command Centre ("ECC") was officially activated to respond to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) developing emergency. The ECC is charged with responding to any emergency situations which impacts or could potentially impact Exhibition Place operations. Plans were quickly developed to coordinate all aspects of implementing orders from both the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario. The following chronicles segments of Exhibition Place response:

1. Communications with staff has been a major part of our planning since the onset of the crisis. The CEO has conducted a weekly All Staff Town Hall conference call to provide regular updates and allow employees to ask questions. A twice weekly newsletter has also been produced to ensure staff remain connected and supported with relevant and pertinent information.

2. Essential Services have been prioritized following guidelines from the City of Toronto:

- a) are required to meet legislative requirements;
- b) support employee and public health, safety, and security;
- c) support services necessary to keep essential services operating;
- d) the generation of future business bookings and revenue streams for Exhibition Place;
- e) protect and operate vital infrastructure; and
- f) comply with contractual, legal, and financial obligation.

All operational assets and infrastructure have been maintained and secured. Further, housekeeping staff continue with ensuring the highest disinfecting standards are being adhered to that protect our essential staff still working in the venues, and in preparation for the re-opening of business.

3. Any full-time staff who are not required to physically work on site and who can perform work duties remotely were provided the required technology to do so. This action was in compliance with the recommendation from the Medical Officer of Health. Logistics were put in place to ensure that staff working remotely are monitored and connected to supervisors with clear productive work plans.

4. Casual event staff who were scheduled according to event and business needs, and who were pre-scheduled to work, but were not able to because of event cancellations, were paid based on the approved schedule up to April 5th; this decision was consistent with the City of Toronto's payment of casual employees. After April 5th, casual staff received their record of employment ("ROE's") with their final pay cheques enabling them to apply for Federal COVID-19 benefits. A total of 827 ROE'S were provided and this action has been the largest savings in the cost containment strategy.

5. In support of these staff, management have been in constant communication with the local unions so they are informed and can support their members through these challenging times. We have also negotiated several Memorandums of Understanding to support our unionized employees make use of the new language in the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA); specifically regarding declared emergency leave provisions.

6. Vacation, Lieu time use and Cost Containment - In order to be prepared for a smooth re-opening, full time staff were requested to use up their previous year's lieu time carry over, their 2019 vacation carry over, and some 2020 vacation to ensure we are reducing these liabilities for Exhibition Place during these challenging times. This strategy is designed to prepare the organization and ensure that a full staff compliment is ready once operations resume. Along with the aforementioned measures, other cost containment tactics have been implemented, including but not limited to, gapping all vacant positions, a hiring freeze on all non-essential jobs, and a hold on all non-essential and discretionary expenditures.

7. Tenant relations continues to be an important component of regular engagement by staff. There has been ongoing dialogue with tenants to understand and provide information to help with safety protocols that reduce the risk and the spread of the virus. In the spirit of giving, MLSE, the Liberty Entertainment Group, and the Toronto Fashion Incubator have all donated time and resources to our health care workers with the preparation of meals and making of face masks. Activities are slowly restarting on the site with the Riding Academy at the Horse Palace; some training and workouts for the Argos and Raptors; and yoga pop ups in front of the Stanley Barracks hosted by Hotel X.

8. The Security of the grounds remains a priority. The team has ensured buildings are secured; and patrols have been communicating and educating casual visitors on the adherence to Provincial and Municipal Orders related to physical distancing, as well as, enforcing the closure of all amenities.

On May 1st Exhibition Place staff began designing, and engaging work teams, clients, stakeholders, and experts in the industry, to develop a 2 phased approach in a restart plan. The first would focus on the business at Exhibition Place and strives to rebuild and reimagine how conferences, trade shows, and congregate entertainment and meeting places will need to evolve, and adhere to new safety standards. The second will deal with internal processes that supports staff in their return to a safe work place.

## **1. Public and Client-Centric Focus - Rebuild and Reimagine Phase:**

As the implications of the COVID-19 crisis evolves, leaders in the convention and exhibition industries have collaborated to find solutions and best practices to ensure the rebuilding of this industry; Exhibition Place staff have been at the forefront of this charge. Staff have been actively participating as industry experts within the following associations and working groups: Canadian Association of Exhibition Management (CAEM) "Recovery Task Force"; UFI The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry "Connects Webinar Series as an expert Panelist"; Convention Centres' of Canada (CCC) "Re-opening Working Group"; Provincial Tourism Industry Subcommittee on Business Events and Sporting Events, International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) "Reopening Task Force - Update Calls"; Canadian Live Music Association (CLMA) "Live music festivals call"; and the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE) "Go Live - Together."

Guidelines and procedures are being developed that will cover the precipitous change in business requirements. Evaluative tools and best practices are being developed for the following: risk assessment; education and enforcement practices; new and enhanced sanitary standards (GBAC Global Biorisk Advisory Council); crowd queueing and line up procedures; PPEs; communication, signage and marketing; insurance and indemnification; autonomous cleaning and motion sensor technology; creative spacing - physical distancing; new modalities for interactions; floor plan modelling; event move-in and move-out strategies; and cashless technology, including touchless registration and pre-event ticketing.

This Phase will cover the above subjects and develop design fundamentals for each site and event. Comprehensive plans will be created keeping in mind the event activities, measures of success and logistics required for each facility. Plans will be tailor made based on the event and client requirements. Staff are continuously monitoring public health requirements and will amend our approach as required.

Discussions with clients have revealed a focus for: enhanced cleaning and disinfecting standards, 'no contact' customer interactions, signage regarding safety protocols, emergency procedures, and best practice with respect to hand hygiene as critical elements of reopening. Staff are currently in conversations with clients that have deferred their events for later on in the year, incorporating any new enhanced procedures, and the reformatting of event scope and size, based on any adjusted facility layouts, that will accommodate physical distancing measures.

## **2. Internal (Staff Focus) Processes - Recover, Readiness and Reopen Phase:**

As essential services continues to be delivered at Exhibition Place, a team has been set up to establish a plan that will inform the internal processes for the Recover, Readiness and Reopen Phase, while supporting the Rebuild and Reimagine Phase. The plan will lay out a series of steps and actions to ensure the safe return of employees, contractors, and clients to Exhibition Place.

Maintaining a safe work environment is a top priority and has been one of the leading principles for work teams as they begin developing their Department Plans. Seeking innovative solutions and researching best practices while ensuring all employees stay safe and healthy in an environment that has changed significantly because of the COVID-19 pandemic, will drive key results. Stopping the spread of this virus is the responsibility of every employee and everyone must participate in actions to ensure a safe work environment.

The following Principles will guide the development of this Phase:

1. Minimizing exposure to COVID-19
2. Follow Medical Officer of Health requirements and recommendations
3. Providing workable solutions in the continued delivery of services and business continuance
4. Processes and Procedures will be transparent
5. Employees will have an opportunity to provide feedback
6. Ensure compliance with other legislation and/or agreements where applicable; examples - Employment Standards Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Collective Agreements etc.
7. Creating employee trust and confidence that they will return to a safe work environment

A Framework that provides structure for this Phase has been divided into six (6) categories to ensure consistency and guide staff in the development of Department Plans:

1. Guidelines for safe behaviour that contribute to a safe work setting
2. Work Area Assessments and Job Function infectious prevention analysis
3. Mitigation Strategies to reduce exposure
4. New Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Business Practice Modifications
5. New Training Requirements
6. New Guidelines, Policies, and Procedures

## **CONTACT**

---

Laura Purdy, General Manager, 416-263-3020, [LPurdy@explace.on.ca](mailto:LPurdy@explace.on.ca)

**SIGNATURE**

---

Don Boyle  
Chief Executive Officer