

## **COVID-19 Recovery July 2021 Update**

**Date:** June 21, 2021  
**To:** Executive Committee  
**From:** City Manager  
**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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This report is the ninth COVID-19 response and recovery update from the City Manager since April 2020, when the City was in the early weeks of the global COVID-19 pandemic. As the number of COVID-19 cases is currently in decline, and the City continues to work to ensure that all residents are vaccinated, attention is shifting to reopening plans and longer-term recovery strategies.

Over the past 16 months, the City has progressed from holding only emergency sessions of City Council, closing all but critical services, and a single public health message – stay home – to a return to a full Council and Committee cycle enabled by technology, the creation of new and remote services, and robust COVID-19 information, guidance and supports to the public and businesses through repeated surges of COVID-19.

The City's priorities remain on both short-term response and sustainable recovery. City staff are continuing to identify and plan for emerging strategic issues related to re-opening. As we move forward, the City must consider how to scale and roll back emergency responses such as mass vaccination clinics, and how best to learn from and apply the many lessons from the pandemic to the City's future decisions.

*"Building back better also means learning from the past and starting sustainable improvements that make a difference for future generations. Our recovery efforts must take a long-term view towards building the city we want for those who will call Toronto home decades from now."*

City Manager's October 2020 Towards Recovery report

The pandemic remains a global health crisis. In Toronto, its immediate impacts continue to be felt along with a growing understanding of potential longer-term effects. COVID-19 is not solved for Toronto until it is resolved elsewhere as well. The stress, concern and grief faced by many residents affected by COVID-19 in our City, as well as for those with loved ones living in other countries who are experiencing critical rates of infections, limited access to vaccines and significant loss of life, will have lasting impacts and require years of recovery here in Toronto.

In all of the past eight City Manager's response and recovery updates, the first sections have highlighted COVID-19 case counts, Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and public health updates. These omnibus-type reports also included information and recommendations from across all City Divisions to City Council for their consideration.

This report marks a change in that approach. Over the past several months, divisions have applied a COVID-19 lens to their work and included response, recovery and rebuilding information in their reports to Council, rather than relying solely on the City Manager's updates to bring forward recommendations to City Council. This and future updates from the City Manager will focus on new information and recommendations that are not otherwise routed through an appropriate Standing Committee or Community Council and are cross-cutting or whole-of government in nature, for City Council's consideration.

This report also provides:

- COVID-19 impact indicators the City will monitor as we move towards recovery;
- Updates on re-opening Toronto;
- An update on the City's intergovernmental actions; and
- Information on the launch of RecoveryTO, a series of new webpages that will provide a snapshot of the previous four months, curating highlights from City Council decisions, staff reports, data, dashboards, and media announcements on the City's recovery actions.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The City Manager recommends:

1. City Council authorize the City Manager and/or any other relevant City Official, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, to apply for and receive funding, and negotiate, enter into and execute any agreements required in respect of such funding, including any amendments and extensions thereto, with either the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario, and their respective agencies, until the first scheduled City Council meeting after September 1, 2021, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The City has experienced significant and unprecedented financial impacts, both in the form of added costs and revenue losses as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, COVID-19 related financial impacts totalled \$1.635 billion for the City of Toronto, prior to offsets achieved through a series of implemented mitigation strategies that focus on spending and workforce restraints and various program specific in-year funding programs (\$558.5 million); and COVID-19 funding support from the Government of Canada and Province of Ontario in the form of Safe Restart Agreement and added Reaching Home funding totalling a combined \$1.077 billion, reducing the 2020 year-end shortfall to \$0.

Through the 2021 budget process, a further \$1.596 billion in COVID-19 related financial impacts were identified for the City of Toronto in 2021. Through the first half of the year the City has been successful in securing \$1.477 billion in continued funding from the federal and provincial governments, reflecting 92.5% of all budgeted 2021 COVID-19 impacts, with our COVID funding shortfall that had been \$856 million at the start of the 2021 budget process now reduced to \$119.8 million.

As reflected in the Operating Variance Report for the four months ended April 30, 2021, the City is also projecting an added \$114.7 million shortfall due to greater than anticipated COVID-19 financial impacts in 2021.

The 2021 Operating Budget assumed a gradual recovery of COVID related impacts on revenues over the course of the year, although not yet returning to pre-COVID levels. Impacts on City revenues have been greater than originally expected when the budget was developed last fall due to impacts resulting from COVID variants and the third wave of the pandemic Toronto experienced earlier this year. Additional revenue impacts are projected for corporate revenues and user fees. Furthermore, it is anticipated that added costs will be incurred for mass immunization by Toronto Fire Services, including costs of efforts to vaccinate people experiencing homelessness.

Financial impacts will continue to be monitored over the course of the year and reported to Council through COVID-19 response and recovery updates from the City Manager and ongoing 2021 variance reports. It is expected that all 2021 COVID-19 impacts will be fully funded through continued federal and provincial funding support by year-end.

COVID-19 related financial impacts will continue into 2022 and future years. Based on preliminary pre-submission budget estimates, it is anticipated that COVID-19 related financial impacts will total between \$562 million to \$1.263 billion in 2022 across all City programs and agencies.

## **RECONCILIATION AND EQUITY IMPACT**

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COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted Toronto's racialized and vulnerable communities. The City is committed to recovering and rebuilding from the pandemic through actions – described in this and other reports – that acknowledge, consider and prioritize equity, anti-Black racism and Indigenous reconciliation.

### **Vaccination Strategy**

The City's immediate priorities to address inequities is a vaccination strategy that focuses efforts to promote vaccination, overcome vaccine hesitancy, ensure information is provided in ways that are accessible to the most-impacted populations, and ensure priority access to first and second vaccine doses for neighbourhoods with high incidence of COVID-19 and low vaccine coverage.

After an initial Sprint Strategy for first doses, the City launched Sprint Strategy 2.0 in June with additional focus on where the Delta variant has been identified. The Team Toronto Sprint Strategy 2.0 uses Toronto Public Health Data to concentrate on 18 hot-spot postal codes to increase first and second-dose uptake. Alongside the Sprint

Strategies, there continues to be specific focus on providing priority vaccine access for Indigenous residents. City has allocated \$1 million for Indigenous agencies and groups to self-determine their approach to community engagement and mobilization.

Early on in Toronto's vaccine strategy, the City engaged the Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity, recognizing that external expertise would support achieving more equitable vaccine outcomes.

A final report from the Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity was presented to the Board of Health June 14, 2021 which summarized months of consultation and research by the Task Force with Black communities across Toronto and outlines seven key community concerns regarding responses during the pandemic. The report recommendations address such issues as inadequate sick days and income support, high levels of mistrust in health care and vaccine producers, misinformation circulating on social media, and the inconsistent collection and availability of race-based data. <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-168126.pdf>

The City has also granted \$5.5 million in COVID-19 Vaccine Engagement Teams Grants to fund 14 Vaccine Engagement Teams to reduce barriers to the COVID-19 vaccines and increase vaccination uptake in vulnerable communities, in part through the recruitment of 280 local resident ambassadors to support outreach.

More information on vaccinations is included in Section 1: Update from Public Health, and the City's announcements related to vaccines are posted to the new RecoveryTO webpages.

### **Reconciliation Action Plan in Development**

The City's Indigenous Affairs Office has been working in partnership with Indigenous service organizations and in consultation with other City Divisions to develop a 10-year strategic Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Plan will identify guiding principles and a broad strategic vision for engaging and working with Indigenous communities in Toronto. It will also articulate specific commitments that will translate the City's Statement of Commitment to Indigenous People ([www.toronto.ca/indigenous-affairs-office/commitments-to-indigenous-peoples/](http://www.toronto.ca/indigenous-affairs-office/commitments-to-indigenous-peoples/)) into action to advance Indigenous self-determination, health and well-being in Toronto. Sharing circles with Indigenous organizations and community members will take place to test and seek input on the draft Action Plan. The Plan is anticipated to be presented to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee and City Council in Q4 of this year.

### **RecoveryTO - Equity and Reconciliation Recovery Actions**

As described in Section 3 of this report, a new set of webpages – RecoveryTO – will supplement recovery reports from the City Manager to help City Council, the public and staff navigate the various ways the City is sharing recovery action information including media releases, reports from staff and other updates.

Information about equity and reconciliation actions the City is prioritizing for Toronto's recovery is described for all 6 themes found on [www.toronto.ca/RecoveryTO](http://www.toronto.ca/RecoveryTO):

- Business & Economic Recovery
- Public Health & Safe Reopening
- People, Housing & Neighbourhoods
- City Building & Mobility
- Climate Change & Resilience
- A Well-Run City & City Finances

## DECISION HISTORY

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This report provides updates on recommendations and directions from previous City Manager recovery reports that have not otherwise been communicated in Divisional reports to Standing Committees or Councils since April 2021. Many of these Divisional reports are posted at [www.toronto.ca/RecoveryTO](http://www.toronto.ca/RecoveryTO) based on identified recovery priority themes. All are available through the City Council Meetings, Agendas and Minutes webpage [www.toronto.ca/Council](http://www.toronto.ca/Council).

The City Manager's most recent report on the City's COVID-19 response, financial and intergovernmental updates and the status of recovery-related actions was adopted by City Council at its meeting of April 7 and 8, 2021.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX22.1>

In October 2020, the City Manager's "Towards Recovery and Building a Renewed Toronto" report transmitted the final report from the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild and set out a multi-year recovery strategy.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX17.1>

## COMMENTS

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### 1. COVID-19 Pandemic Ongoing Impacts

As the number of COVID-19 cases decline, and the City continues to work to ensure that all residents are vaccinated, attention is shifting to reopening plans and longer-term recovery strategies. At the time of writing this report, the City of Toronto is implementing Step 1 of the Ontario Three-Step Roadmap to Safely Reopen the Province and seeing reduced rates of COVID-19 infection and increased vaccination rates.

The COVID-19 pandemic remains a global health crisis and the toll it has taken on our economy, health and well-being continues to be felt even as case counts decline and vaccination rates increase, and services begin re-open. Prolonged school closures, the debts and challenges small business have taken on to try to keep from closing their doors and the mental health impact from loneliness, financial and human losses, and profound changes to how people live, will take months and years to recovery from.

The City's recovery depends on Toronto, Ontario and Canada acting in concert to comply with public health directions, achieve high rates of vaccination, and ensure those most in need receive the resources and supports they need to not only survive the pandemic, but be able to thrive and prosper coming out of it. As one of the world's most diverse cities and an international newcomer and tourism destination, Toronto will need both local and global solutions to COVID-19 to be in place for our city's recovery.

Jurisdictions around the world echo the City's research and reports that show recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic will take years, not months. Governments have suggested that the goal is not to "return to normal," but rather to take advantage of the critical understanding of the need to invest and improve our cities and address social, environmental and economic inequity coming out of the pandemic.

The City's priorities will remain on both continued attention to short-term response and increasing focus on a sustainable recovery. City staff are also continuing to work to identify and plan for emerging strategic issues related to re-opening that will require attention such as:

- Rescinding or amending emergency orders and related bylaws;
- Winding up pandemic-related operations and implementing processes that are scaled to recovery, rather than an emergency;
- Scaling back mass immunization centres, pop-ups, PPE procurement and distribution, and related communications and outreach;
- Reviewing assignments for redeployed staff;
- Restarting paused programs and communicating service changes;
- Identifying post-pandemic operational considerations for major services impacted by COVID-19 including supportive housing and shelters, municipal licensing, and long-term care; and
- Considering a formal review of lessons learned from the pandemic and recommendations for incorporating strategies into future emergency planning.

My next City Manager's COVID-19 recovery update will include information to City Council about a review of lessons learned from the pandemic and incorporating strategies into future emergency planning.

### **Monitoring Indicators of COVID-19 Impact**

Toronto's recovery will need to address the inequities the pandemic has further exacerbated, such as health and socioeconomic inequities, housing inaccessibility and the disproportionate employment impacts on women. Our recovery should also build on positive indicators that have arisen over the last 12-18 months such as public support for local businesses and services, increased interest and use of parks and public spaces, and new City partnerships with businesses, academic institutions and community organizations.

How the City monitors and assesses the progress of Toronto's recovery must therefore consider many factors, including:

- Indicators of social determinants of health such as education, employment and job security, housing, food security and social inclusion and reducing discrimination.

- Recovery status of our academic, business, arts, culture and public benefit sectors;
- The state of the City's finances and relationships with other municipal, regional, provincial and federal governments; and
- The status of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and vaccination rates.

As noted in past City reports and those from our partners, institutions and think tanks, vulnerable residents including those precariously housed and employed, facing racial discrimination and lower income have been more severely impacted by the pandemic. Highlights from recent research and data that the City monitors related to social and economic indicators tell us that:

- **Food bank usage is up 70%** as of March 31, 2021 compared to one year before. Data from Daily Bread Food Bank suggests that food bank demand will remain high and not likely to return to pre-COVID-19 levels for 10 years, which will place long-term stresses on local food security networks and community partners,
- **Rent bank loan approvals has increased 40%** as of December 31, 2021 compared to one year before.
- **Shelter demand remains critical** and supportive housing and shelter costs to the City are currently estimated to be \$291M in 2021 above pre-pandemic base budget.
- **Employment insurance beneficiaries are up 312%** as of March 31, 2021 compared to the previous year and the employment rate is down 3%.
- The **impact of the pandemic on women's participation in the labour force** and the longer-term implications and recovery to pre-pandemic levels. Economic Development and Culture division report that women experienced a disproportionate share of job losses at the onset of the pandemic, and have been slower to recover these losses, a reflection of their greater representation in sectors hard hit by COVID-related business restrictions and physical distancing measures, including retail trade and hospitality. City of Toronto employment (unadjusted for seasonality) totalled 1,307,700 as of May 2021, down from 1,475,000 in February 2020. **Women account for roughly 70% of these displaced jobs (116,600 of 167,300).**
- Mental health of Torontonians, particularly for children. According to Children's Healthcare Canada, social isolation, school closures, and restricted access to sports and recreational activities have negatively impacted children's mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Signs of this impact include a **200 percent increase in hospital admissions for substance use disorders and a 100 percent increase in suicide attempt admissions** compared to the year before.
- After a year of COVID-related lockdowns and rent declines, according to Rentals.ca, the average **monthly asking rent for condos and apartments in the former City of Toronto was \$2,027 in May, down roughly 10 percent** year over year but up on a month over month basis for the third consecutive month. Rents are expected to increase further in the second half of this year as vaccines continue to roll out and

borders gradually reopen to increased immigration, international students and tourism. (Rentals.ca June 2021 Rent Report)

- **How transit usage recovers as offices re-open** will be important to understand and inform planning, and understand impacts on the City's financial health. Transit use has rebounded slightly since the most severe closures and stay-at-home orders, but continues to be 50 percent below year ago levels, which significantly reduces revenues to the City and affects routes and service for riders.
- A final report from the **Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity** presented to the Board of Health June 14, 2021 which summarized months of consultation and research by the Task Force with Black communities across Toronto, outlines seven key community concerns regarding responses during the pandemic. The report recommendations address such issues as inadequate sick days and income support, high levels of mistrust in health care and vaccine producers, misinformation circulating on social media, and the inconsistent collection and availability of race-based data. <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-168126.pdf>

The City will continue to monitor these and other indicators as the vaccine strategy rolls out and City services, businesses and communities reopen.

## 2. Key Updates

### A. Province of Ontario Roadmap to Reopening

The Province's COVID-19 Roadmap to Reopen includes three steps to gradually reopen various amenities and relax public health measures based on vaccination rates and public health indicators such as hospitalizations and admissions to Intensive Care Units (ICU). The City moved into Step One June 11, 2021. It is anticipated that Toronto will move into Step Two in July. See Figure 1.

Toronto Public Health is working closely with Provincial partners on the steps to reopen and will be guided by the emerging learnings from the experience of other jurisdictions with reopening and information on variants of concern, particularly the Delta variant.

Under Step 1 (see Figure 2) the City was able to open a variety of services, including: CaféTO patios, parks and beaches, outdoor pools and splash pads (and wading pools at the end of June), outdoor sports and fitness, certain services by Toronto Animal Services, washrooms and sanitation services, waste and Drop-Off Depots, zoos. Torontonians were also allowed outdoor gatherings of up to 10 people, outdoor activities (e.g., outdoor dining for up to four people per table), and the operation of essential and non-essential retail with capacity limitations (25% and 15% respectively).

More information about the status of City services is available at [www.toronto.ca/affected-city-services/](http://www.toronto.ca/affected-city-services/).

Figure 1: Highlights of Ontario Roadmap to Reopening



Figure 2: Overview of Step 1 of Ontario Roadmap to Reopening



## B. Update from Toronto Public Health

An [update on COVID-19](#) is provided by the Chief Medical Officer of Health to the Board of Health at each meeting, including to the most recent meeting on June 14, 2021.

### COVID-19 Case Update

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on the City. While Toronto Public Health is observing a continued decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, it is critical that the City remains vigilant.

As of June 16, 2021, the seven-day moving average for new COVID-19 cases is 96. Current data on COVID-19 cases can be found on the COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard at [www.toronto.ca/covid-19-status-of-cases-in-toronto/](http://www.toronto.ca/covid-19-status-of-cases-in-toronto/).

At the time of writing, the majority of COVID-19 cases in the City are infected with variants of concern. Of note, the Delta variant (B.1.617.2) is increasing and is expected to become the dominant variant of concern by early summer. Evidence suggests that the Delta variant is more transmissible and that a single dose of COVID-19 vaccine is less effective in protecting against this variant.

### **Update on the City's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan**

On June 17, 2021 the Province of Ontario announced an accelerated dose schedule for second doses of vaccine:

- As of June 21 at 8:00am, all Ontarians who received their first dose of an mRNA vaccine on or before May 9, 2021 will be eligible to book or rebook their second dose appointment at a shortened interval.
- As of June 23 at 8:00am, individuals who received their first dose of an mRNA vaccine on or before May 30, 2021 and who live in one of 10 Delta hotspots (Toronto included) will be eligible to book or rebook their second dose appointment at a shortened interval.
- Starting the week of June 28, it is anticipated that all Ontarians aged 18 or over who received their first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine will be eligible to book an accelerated second dose appointment. Exact dates and timing will be confirmed by the Province.

The ongoing emergence of the Delta variant is influencing Toronto's vaccine strategy, particularly for the administration of second doses. As of June 17, 2021, 74.9% of all Toronto adults aged 18 and over have received their first dose, and 24.5% have received their second dose in the City.

The Team Toronto Sprint Strategy, a partnership between the City, hospitals, health care centres, Ontario Health Teams, and community organizations has focused on providing vaccine to some of the hardest hit neighbourhoods. The expansion of pop-up and mobile vaccine clinics has been especially successful in facilitating vaccine delivery for vulnerable populations, such as individuals who are homebound and individuals experiencing homelessness. A major focus of the Sprint Strategy Team in June 2021 has been the operation of mobile vaccine clinics for youth aged 12 to 17.

Toronto Public Health continues to monitor vaccine rates and coverage across neighbourhoods and population groups. Local data will be used to implement new strategies with partners to increase distribution of first doses, particularly in communities where distribution may be lagging or where inequities have been observed. The rollout of the vaccination campaign remains one of the most critical strategies to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To that end, the city launched VaxTO to build on the City's ongoing outreach efforts. VaxTO is a multi-faceted campaign to connect residents with COVID-19 vaccination appointments and information. It was launched to proactively help ensure every resident

in Toronto can easily access vaccine information and book an appointment so that the City's tremendous success administering vaccine to residents continues.

## **C. Reopening Toronto**

### **City Supports to Re-Opening Businesses and Community Organizations**

The City has initiated re-opening planning with input from Toronto Public Health and Occupational Health and Safety in accordance with the Province of Ontario Roadmap to Reopen and in alignment with the Downtown Core re-opening efforts, economic development and the approaches of other public service organisations.

Toronto Public Health continues to update COVID-19 compliance and re-opening guidelines for business sectors and community organizations to reflect the Ontario Roadmap to Reopening. Information is available at <https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-reopening-recovery-rebuild/covid-19-reopening-guidelines-for-businesses-organizations/>

### **Reopening of City Facilities**

The City of Toronto organized a National Leadership Table on Re-opening and Workplace Modernization allowing the City to leverage benchmarking approaches and leading alignment discussions across the country.

Aligned with the provincial guidelines the City's facilities will re-open potentially with a hybrid approach of virtual and in-person options, with a focus on three areas: return of employees to the office, re-opening of Council meeting spaces and Councillors' offices, and considerations for in-person services.

The City's overall approach to re-opening will support:

- The safety of employees, visitors and communities both at city facilities as well as their travel to and from these locations;
- A phased re-opening of public buildings and City offices to allow for a safe, flexible and coordinated return;
- Alignment with reopening plans for other levels of government, the private sector, safe resumption of commuting options and the City's ModernTO Workplace Modernization program and equity objectives.

Through its re-opening efforts, the City also continues its modernization work by aligning existing initiatives: ModernTO Workplace Modernization Program, One Toronto, Integrated Hubs and Digitization of Services. Specifically, the re-opening efforts support the acceleration of key principles such as hybrid remote work and digital services.

### **Reopening of In-Person City Services**

The City has been successful in digitizing many services and processes since the start of the pandemic to continue high-quality service delivery to the public. The City's customer experience goals are to provide clear, accessible and simple services, and to meet the public where they want to be met, which includes in some cases in-person service delivery.

As part of the City's reopening efforts, all relevant divisions with counter services are being engaged to better understand their current status, how they have changed since the start of the pandemic and impacts on the public. The City is seeking opportunities to enhance and optimize counter services to reflect legislative requirements, equity and accessibility needs, and any process and technology limitations that may still exist. The City is seeking appropriate coordination, standardization, and consistency across City divisions for in-person service delivery. Concepts to be further explored include phasing in counter service starting with City Hall and key Civic Centres, delivering in-person services on ground-floors only to manage capacity and ensure health and safety controls, scaling virtual services, implementing services by appointment only where appropriate, and establishing concierge/greeters to improve wayfinding and general service support to the public.

## **Civic Engagement**

Civic engagement opportunities have been primarily virtual during the pandemic, delivered through online surveys and WebEx for public consultation, and WebEx and YouTube for meetings of City advisory bodies, tribunals, Standing Committees and City Council. Virtual methods have created new opportunities for people to participate and City staff have monitored accessibility barriers and endeavoured to address them software vendors and staff training. The Chief Technology Officer recently summarized the City's efforts to increase the accessibility of virtual meetings <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/di/bgrd/backgroundfile-167026.pdf>. The City re-opening will include a gradual resumption of in-person engagements, including public consultation events, to complement continued virtual methods in accordance with public health guidance and regulations.

## **D. Update from the City's Emergency Operations Centre and Office of Emergency Management**

The City of Toronto activated the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) on March 11, 2020 to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 23, 2020 Mayor Tory declared a state of emergency in Toronto, in response to COVID-19. This is the first declared emergency in Toronto's history.

Over the past 15 months, staff from more than 50 City divisions, agencies and corporations came together under the City's COVID-19 Incident Management System to centralize planning and coordinate response and communications across the organization. In March 2020, Toronto's Fire Chief & General Manager of Emergency Management was appointed to lead this work as the City's COVID-19 Incident Commander and continues in that role.

From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City's COVID-19 Incident Management System has supported City senior leaders to achieve the following strategic priorities:

- save lives and prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- prevent the healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed; and
- protect the social and financial systems in our City to enable as timely and complete a restart and recovery as possible.

Operating under the COVID-19 Incident Management System, and in accordance with medical direction provided by the Medical Officer of Health, City divisions, agencies and corporations continue to collaborate in order to coordinate a wide range of response and proactive activities, such as:

- improving access to COVID-19 testing in hotspot neighbourhoods by supporting Parks, Forestry and Recreation to make City recreation facilities available to health care organizations to hold “pop-up” testing clinics;
- working with Toronto Paramedic Services and the TTC to provide access to human resources and buses to provide mobile testing clinics in neighbourhoods with no suitable indoor locations;
- working with the Indigenous Affairs Office, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Senior Services and Long-term Care, Social Development, Finance and Administration, Toronto Community Housing Corporation, Toronto Public Health and community and health service partners to help provide supports for vulnerable communities and equity-seeking groups;
- working with divisions and agencies to expand public education efforts in targeted neighbourhoods and vulnerable communities, including work to update, simplify and translate key COVID-19 resources ([toronto.ca/covid19posters](https://toronto.ca/covid19posters));
- supporting community partners and City divisions, agencies and corporations (e.g. Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Corporate Real Estate Management, Economic Development and Culture, Toronto Public Library, Toronto Community Housing Corporation) to use City buildings to operate programs related to COVID-19 such as food banks, and advanced planning for vaccine clinics.
- supporting Toronto Office of Partnerships to manage offers of assistance and space from Toronto businesses and residents;
- supporting the continuity of critical City services across Divisions in close partnership with People and Equity, Technology Services Division and Corporate Real Estate Management;
- supporting the City's Immunization Task Force operations;
- monitoring hazards to identify other emerging threats, including ensuring that emergency heat relief opportunities are available and accessible to those who may need it, through managing eight Emergency Cooling Centres across the city during Heat Warnings from May 15th to September 15th; and
- responding to urgent requests for support from Divisions, Agencies and Corporations to manage the unforeseen impacts of COVID-19.

From the outset of the City's response to COVID-19, our Incident Management System has been nimble, scalable and responsive. The City has responded in a proactive, efficient and effective manner as the COVID-19 pandemic emergency has evolved.

Currently, the City's COVID-19 Incident Management Team is preparing for the transition towards post-pandemic operations. Some of the transition elements that will be considered include:

- Supporting reopening of City facilities and services;
- Ending the municipal state of emergency in accordance with the evolution of Provincial Regulations;
- Scaling down of both EOC and COVID-19 Incident Management System operations;

- Scaling down of immunization clinics after substantial second doses of vaccines have been administered, in accordance with Public Health direction;
- Supporting Toronto Public Health to transition to post-pandemic operations;
- Winding down the temporarily assignments of staff that have been engaged and deployed to support emergency COVID-19 response;
- Supporting City services including agencies such as the TTC to return to full and normal operations; and
- Supporting post-COVID-19 reviews.

The City is working to ensure that these transition plans are implemented seamlessly and communications on each step of the demobilization/recovery efforts are provided to Council and the public on a regular basis.

## **E. Intergovernmental Update**

City officials continue to advance the renewed intergovernmental strategy as outlined in the March 2021 City Manager's recovery report ([Agenda Item History - 2021.EX22.1 \(toronto.ca\)](#)) and to engage federal, provincial and regional counterparts on COVID-19 emergency response and shared recovery priorities. An update on key intergovernmental actions and the City's discussions with other governments is provided below. Detailed intergovernmental information such as specific federal and provincial announcements related to the City's recovery priorities are provided on the RecoveryTO webpages (Section 3 of this report provides more information on RecoveryTO).

This report recommends that City Council provide delegated authority to the City Manager to negotiate and enter into any required intergovernmental agreements through the summer recess of City Council.

### **Federal Update**

Conversations at the federal level continue to advance recovery priorities:

- On April 19, 2021, the Government of Canada released [Budget 2021](#) which outlined commitments to a range of priorities, including over \$30 billion for a national early learning and child care system. A summary of key highlights of interest to Toronto was provided to Council. Through Budget 2021, the Government has noted that its priorities include an equitable and green recovery. As of June 14, 2021 [Bill C-30](#), which seeks to implement many of Budget 2021's commitments, was still under consideration in Parliament.
- Big City Executive Partnership (BiCEP): The City Manager continues to meet with big city peers to share ongoing situations related to COVID-19 and recovery and engage officials at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the federal government. The conversation has recently broadened beyond the original six cities to include Halifax and Winnipeg.

A recent subject of discussion was a study commissioned by the City of Montreal and published as [The Impact of COVID-19](#) on the Downtown Areas of Canada's 6 Major Cities. This report will be another input into the City's work on economic recovery. Other topics of discussion are digital (led by the City of Toronto), mental health/addictions and homelessness, economic recovery, fiscal health, and community safety.

### *Big City Mayors Caucus (BCMC):*

- The BCMC, including Mayor Tory, met with the Deputy Prime Minister and the head of the Canada Infrastructure Bank on May 31, 2021 to discuss housing affordability and large city building initiatives. The BCMC noted the need for strong intergovernmental partnerships, discussed the tragic discovery at the former site of the Kamloops Indian Residential School and also condemned the recent rise in acts of hatred in cities. (<https://fcm.ca/en/news-media/news-release/cities-ready-face-canadas-housing-affordability-challenge-and-lead-recovery>) The BCMC issued a statement on June 1, 2021 calling for the urgent advancement of the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (<https://fcm.ca/en/news-media/news-release/municipal-leaders-call-action-canadas-residential-schools-legacy>).
- On April 15, 2021, City officials participated in a BCMC event on mental health in cities. As host, the City of Calgary shared learnings from their Mental Health and Addiction Strategy (<https://fcm.ca/en/news-media/news-release/the-urban-project-and-the-city-calgary-mental-health-and-the-role-cities>).

### *Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)*

- The FCM conference was held from May 31, 2021 to June 4, 2021 with the theme Forward and included discussions on a broad range of topics. FCM elected a new board of directors and table officers. FCM's new President is Mayor Joanne Vanderheyden, Strathroy-Caradoc, Ontario. Toronto City Council's representatives on the FCM Board, Deputy Mayor Bailao and Councillor Lai, were also formally appointed at the AGM (<https://fcm.ca/en/news-media/news-release/municipal-leaders-gather-move-canada-forward>).

## **Provincial Update**

Conversations at the provincial level continue to primarily focus on COVID-19 emergency response, but are rapidly moving to reopening and recovery:

- The City Manager and senior leadership continue to engage at the Deputy Minister level to discuss both the emergency response and the emerging plans for reopening and recovery.
- Staff have also been meeting regularly with officials from the Province and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) through the Provincial-Municipal Technical Working Group on Emergent Municipal Needs in Response to COVID-19, using this as a forum to discuss specific issues related to responding to the pandemic. Focus since January 2021 has been on vaccine rollout, the evolution of public health measures, and ongoing coordination between federal, provincial and municipal governments on COVID-19 response.
- On March 24, 2021, the Province released the 2021 Ontario Budget which highlighted almost \$1 billion in COVID-19 relief funding for municipalities that was announced in March 2021, including approximately \$350 million for the City of Toronto. <https://budget.ontario.ca/2021/index.html>. A summary of key highlights of interest to Toronto was provided to Council.
- Political tables such as Ontario Big City Mayors continue to be focussed on protecting public health, and the need to continue to support residents and businesses through the pandemic. Recent discussions have included a focus on improving mental health and addictions services, as well as school reopening

and a return to normal for small business and the service industry.

<https://www.ontariobigcitymayors.ca/news/details.php?id=743>

## Regional Update

- The City Manager and senior leadership across the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) continue to collaborate on shared interests and outcomes to enable the recovery of the region and rebuild from COVID-19. They are exploring opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, reduce costs and bring innovation through enhanced collaboration and cooperation in five areas of mutual interest transit, housing, digital infrastructure, municipal procurement and sustainable finance.
- The Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Mayors and Chairs also continue to meet on a weekly basis and have been primarily focussed on COVID-19 emergency response including protecting public health, vaccination roll-out and supporting residents and businesses through the pandemic.

### 3. RecoveryTO: [www.toronto.ca/RecoveryTO](http://www.toronto.ca/RecoveryTO)

In April 2021, the City Manager's Recovery Update committed to establishing a new communication and web strategy to support and complement future recovery updates.

RecoveryTO is the City's new website that will provide the public and Council with an accessible, one-window snapshot of Toronto's recovery-related Council decisions, staff reports, data, dashboards, and media announcements. The new site will provide information and updates that had previously been in the City Manager's quarterly updates that included how the City's recovery planning continues to support of the Corporate Strategic Plan priorities, informed by lessons from the pandemic.

In addition to RecoveryTO:

- Recovery information is now provided in reports to Council, Standing Committees, Community Councils including from the City's agencies and corporations that apply a COVID-19 lens and considerations,
- Future City Manager reports will focus on content and recommendations that is not being routed through a Standing Committee or Community Council agenda, or issues and recommendations that are significant or include whole-of government content that required Council's attention, and
- The public is also provided information and updates on a near continuous basis through twice-weekly media availability, news releases and social media announcement, webpage updates and the outreach and engagement conducted by Members of Council.

### RecoveryTO: 6 Themes for the 6ix

RecoveryTO will provide a snapshot of the previous four months, with curated highlights along 6 key themes to provide Council, residents, city staff and others stakeholders a common entry point from which they can easily navigate the information from the City's media releases, Council reports, dashboards and other webpages.

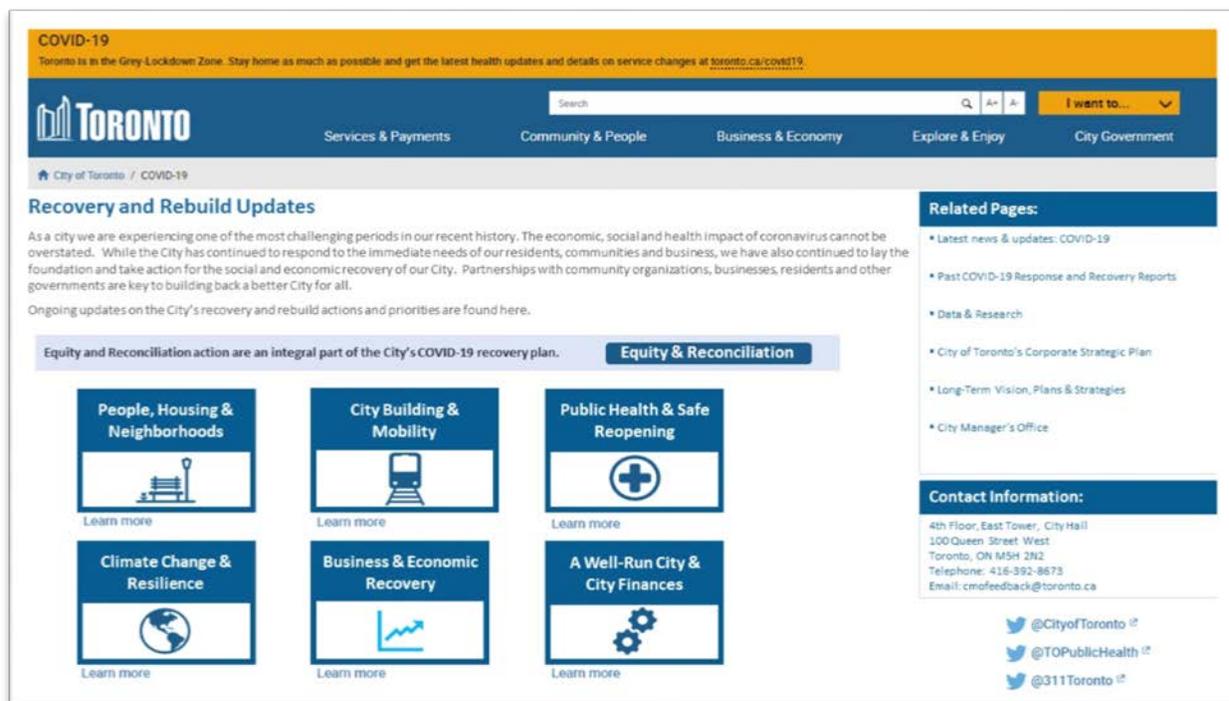
Integrated throughout the content is a focus on equity and reconciliation initiatives and priorities for recovery as well as information on the City's partnerships and intergovernmental initiatives as key pillars for recovery.

For the launch the RecoveryTO "6 themes for the 6ix" are:

- Business & Economic Recovery
- Public Health & Safe Reopening
- People, Housing & Neighbourhoods
- City Building & Mobility
- Climate Change & Resilience
- A Well-Run City & City Finances

The site will evolve as lessons from the pandemic, input from the public and direction from Council on the City's recovery are received.

Figure 3: RecoveryTO landing page launched July 2021.



Important links to key dashboards and data to monitor trends related to each theme will also be included. For example:

- 211 which regularly publishes COVID-19 snapshots that include key community indicators [www.211central.ca/covid19snapshots](https://www.211central.ca/covid19snapshots)
- Toronto's rankings [www.toronto.ca/world-rankings-for-toronto](https://www.toronto.ca/world-rankings-for-toronto) as an international centre of investment, commerce, trade, development and innovation, important signals of business and economic recovery trends, attributes that make Toronto attractive to international investors, companies, visitors and talent.
- One example by fDi Intelligence ([www.fdiintelligence.com/article/79912](https://www.fdiintelligence.com/article/79912)) shows that Toronto recently moved from third place into second place in a study of the most promising investment locations in the Americas and placing in the top 10 in the

Human Capital and Lifestyle category and sixth (up from seventh) in the Connectivity category.

- The City's Progress Portal ([www.toronto.ca/toronto-progress-portal](http://www.toronto.ca/toronto-progress-portal)) which provides information to assess trends and directions of key indicators for Toronto as a whole and for City of Toronto services.

RecoveryTO launched in early July as an important resource to understand how the City's recovery is progressing and will serve as a complement to ongoing recovery updates from the City Manager to City Council. Future City Manager reports will highlight the latest updates to RecoveryTO along with other critical information and recommendations.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

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Chris Murray  
City Manager