

Vaughan Business Resilience Plan, 2020-23

Economic and Cultural Development (Strategic Business Plan) Addendum

Prepared by Economic and Cultural Development

Objective:

1. Enable a climate for businesses to grow, prosper and create jobs, by listening and responding to the needs of businesses, by promoting Vaughan in domestic and international markets, by making Vaughan an entrepreneurial hub, and by creating a new economic development brand reflective of Canada's newest modern City.

Key Activity:

1.6 Secure Vaughan as the Region's largest employment centre through programs that will help our business owners build resilience into their businesses and adapt to the new normal

Actions:

1.6.1 Review and support Vaughan's effective municipal policy regime to allow for businesses to succeed while protecting public safety

1.6.2 Deliver business development and entrepreneurship programs to help local businesses understand the opportunities available to them in Vaughan in a post-COVID context

1.6.3 Support marketing initiatives that support local commercial activities

1.6.4 Understand and share trends that were changing how business was conducted that have been accelerated by COVID-19 like alternative work arrangements, e-commerce, etc. through ongoing research and communications

Project Matrix:

Activity	Ready: mitigate the immediate impact of the Global COVID-19 pandemic on businesses and prepare for support activities post-pandemic. Ends when economies start re-opening.	Resilient: immediate post crisis response aligning available resources to short term impacts of COVID-19 on key Vaughan sectors. Ends when a viable treatment and/or vaccine is found.	Resourceful: medium and long-range response to mitigate impacts of future pandemics on the business community.
Monitoring	Conduct ongoing research to track: • Business closures and staffing decisions with existing clients • Peer organization approaches • Local, provincial, and national economic impacts In partnership with York Region and other stakeholders, scope and conduct a business and economic impact study program to deploy in response AND recovery Find free online tools to educate and support the business	Conduct ongoing research to track: • The ability of businesses to reopen and grow • Impacts on key and effected industries • Peer organization approaches • Local, provincial, and national economic impacts Review terms of current economic development grant and sponsorship agreements and consider implications and/or adjusting scope	Automate and digitize ongoing research, including: • CRM integration with service requests to easily aggregate data • Diversify data sources • Integrate marketing channels (constant contact) • News and data monitoring Conduct ongoing research to track: • Economic resilience over the medium to long-term (job losses/gains, business establishment, shift in industry sectors) • Peer organization approaches • Conduct follow-up survey to gauge recovery efforts and uncover any major shortcomings in policy/programs • Adapt corporate calling program to include reviews of COVID-19 recovery

	community		
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Outreach and Education (incl. Marketing)	Connect with businesses and cultural industries to ensure their concerns and questions are addressed and to educate them about government programs: • Maintain webpage as an information portal • Maintain e-Newsletters Enlist key partners (Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, York Region (including Arts Council) Central Counties Tourism, media, Kleinburg Business Association) to: • Help promote small businesses • Help promote tourism, art & culture experiences • Provide information • Determine vulnerable sectors in need of information	Streamline provision of information to businesses and cultural industries: • Leverage partners to ensure resources are widely available while avoiding duplication Deliver and evaluate comms campaigns targeted at high priority needs	Develop a future emergency communications plan and package • Key messages • Mobilization of existing channels • Assess efficacy of comms resources Build channels amongst the private sector to foster collaboration via tools like the Business Café Leverage partners to deliver information to the business community and cultural industries (formal MOUs, agreements through MP, etc) Develop marketing campaign to educate businesses and culture industries on trends accelerated by the crisis: • AWA • E-Commerce • Commercial Real Estate • Supply Chain Develop and share business and culture industry resiliency toolkit: • Succession planning • Financial health • E-Commerce

			Innovation
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Policy and Regulation	Ease restrictions on businesses to deliver goods in a reliable manner to essential businesses like food and pharmacy vendors Document and capture decision-making processes	Assess regulations: - Sign by-laws as part of business recovery - Noise by-laws (MTO) - Property Tax collection - Municipal Accommodation Tax (TAX)	Work with OCIO to enhance internal digital tools to respond to crises (work from home access, phone redirection, etc.)
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Advocacy	Work with Corporate and Strategic Communications (CSC), stakeholders, industry associations (like Tourism Industry Association of Ontario) and partners (like Vaughan Chamber of Commerce) to relay important information to the Provincial and Federal governments	Work with community partners to share the efficacy of front-line Economic & Cultural Development services in crises Advocacy for potential revisions to noise by-law, vacancy rebates, government programs, income supports programs, etc. provided by other levels of government Work with partners like the Chambers of Commerce and industry associations to strengthen advocacy referenced above	Work with partners like the Chambers of Commerce and industry associations to: Encourage the development of rapid emergency response packages for businesses across all industries (ie: Small business, cultural, tourism, etc.)
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Programming	Deliver business advisory services Partner with local providers for	Deliver business advisory services Dedicated provincial grant programs	Increase support to mainstreet businesses to adopt online and ecommerce

	webinars Leverage the Business Café and other online tools to run events and forums	Dedicated seminars and events to rebuild capacity of small business community Invest in technology that enables efficient online delivery Undertake an initiative that aims to increase consumer spending confidence Work with employment agencies and labour organizations to ensure local hiring needs are addressed Research and communicate grant funding announcements to support external job creation Support shop local campaign initiatives	<i>Activate!Vaughan</i> - continue hosting pitch competitions and adjust challenge statements to include building resilience Provide professional services to small businesses (legal, financial, tax, succession planning, employee training, AWA, etc.) to promote resiliency and financial longevity Research, communicate and support grant funding announcements to support external job creation Engage in Corporate Calling Program to help Vaughan businesses to respond to Ontario's needs Develop an operating procedure for ECD to quickly adapt services to future crises
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Objective:

2. Advance economic opportunities and attract new investment in Vaughan, by advancing new high-impact strategic municipal economic development projects, including: Smart City, Tourism Vaughan Corporation, Municipal Partnerships and Sponsorship, Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct and the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.

Key Activity:

2.6 Build resilience into Vaughan's key strategic sectors (health, tourism, supply-chain and logistics, and manufacturing) to ensure that economic opportunities continue in Vaughan in a post-COVID world.

Actions:

- 2.6.1 Understand the impact of COVID-19 on Vaughan's economy through formal stakeholder engagement via existing partnerships and boards to identify partnership opportunities in a post-COVID world to strengthen respective sectors
- 2.6.2 With government partners, assess, report on, and implement wherever possible available municipal financial tools to support business
- 2.6.3 Prepare emergency regulatory, program, and marketing packages to quickly support key industries in future crises
- 2.6.4 Work inclusive of the Tourism Vaughan Corporation to engage with Vaughan's tourism sectors to attract and host safe multi-day cultural festivals, sports events and meetings and conventions in a post-COVID context
- 2.6.5 Work inclusive of the Tourism Vaughan Corporation to partner with regional, provincial and federal tourism marketing groups to promote Vaughan as a safe destination for domestic leisure and business travel, staycations and industry investment

2.6.6 Ensure that the Vaughan Mackenzie Healthcare Precinct economic opportunity study is completed and considers the opportunities presented by the COVID pandemic in future-facing healthcare paradigms

2.6.7 Evaluate the next steps in the Vaughan performing arts centre project to consider the potential impacts of COVID, ensuring that future work reflects how social distancing is changing how we consume the arts.

Project Matrix:

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Monitoring	Assess VHCP - impact on partners' core business: - Reassess vision document authored in partnership with ventureLAB - Inventory gaps in data and information with a Smart City lens in partnership with Transformation Department Monitor impact on office sector (construction and leasing) and tourism sectors by connecting with key stakeholders Research and inventory grant funding announcements to support	Establish a schedule to meet with key stakeholders on a regular basis (accommodation providers, banks, ecosystem partners, etc.). VHCP – opportunities to support partners – jurisdictional scan on what resources or activities are required Work with key stakeholders on impact and short/medium term plans for ongoing and future development and marketing of major office and commercial hubs Create a core, internal database and impact dashboard of all relevant data in	Monitor the market to determine timing for sponsorship outreach and properties Research and track grant funding announcements to support resiliency in post-pandemic economy (ie. pivoting to different markets, financial planning, staff subsidies/professional development) Monitor medical officer of health messaging to determine timing for in-market destination marketing when travel is safe, and engage in tourism event attraction

	post-pandemic economy	partnership with the Office of Transformation and Strategy Establish key benchmarks to measure future economic recovery/growth Research and track grant funding announcements to support post-pandemic economy	
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Outreach and Education (inc. Marketing)	Research, communicate and support grant opportunities related to COVID-19 response efforts internally to offset costs to the local tax base Partner with local and regional groups to promote no-contact services and digital experiences, including the digitization of local cultural experiences Support essential service businesses by enabling cross-sector connections to support economic stimulus (i.e. hotels offering special rates for first responders)	Re-evaluate marketing and business development plans for major projects including the VMC, the Economic Prosperity Fund, and the Innovation Catalyst project Reassess the City-wide Community Improvement Plan and adjust based on accelerated AWA trends Re-evaluate and launch Economic Prosperity Task Force and Tourism Vaughan Advisory Committee to consider COVID-19	Work with Economic Prosperity Task Force and Tourism Vaughan Advisory Committee to deliver customized support to increase resilience of businesses in a difficult economy Work with regional and provincial tourism partners to promote Vaughan as a safe travel destination for domestic travelers and safe host destination for event planners.
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Policy and	Monitor emerging policy changes	Assess Community Improvement Plan in	Reassess long-term Strategy and Vision: To

Regulation	coming from other jurisdictions	light of COVID – changes to demand economics Assess Tourism Vaughan Corporation's 2020 Budget and Business Plan in accordance with lost revenues resulting from suspension of the Municipal Accommodation Tax and an assumed decrease in overnight stays as travel resumes, and costs associated with tourism industry COVID-related tactics. Including updated forecast for 2021 budget and collections.	promote diversification and self-sufficiency in targeted industry sub-sectors in Vaughan through a "Local Import Substitution Development Strategy" in partnership with industry associations and regional partners (Phase 1. Phase 2 = programs). Assess barriers to tech, manufacturing, etc. companies responding to emergency needs (ie. connecting supply chain directly to Mackenzie Health and emergency services) Assess future Community Improvement Plans to represent/address opportunities for Small Business community Contribute to the development of official plans, and other master plans to drive economic, social and cultural resiliency in the new environment. Assess innovative emergency management tools (ie; drone delivery for medication) and identify opportunities for regulatory action Assess and establish governance for data collection balancing the realities of emergencies and privacy protection Develop an emergency regulatory package to rapidly deploy in future crises
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Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Advocacy	Support the Mayor and Council through CSC by providing advocacy messaging based on business needs.	Work with CSC and Council to advocate for targeted support for businesses in affected sectors (Tourism Vaughan Corporation Board for tourism sector) Work with CSC and Council to advocate for grant applications related to city recovery	Work with partners like OBIAA to advocate for expansion of existing programs like Digital Mainstreet and creation of new programs to help business community build resilience
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Programming	Work with current sponsors to extend or suspend contracts accordingly Work with event venues (cultural, sport, meetings and conventions) to develop a Vaughan event venue asset inventory to prepare for event hosting.	VHCP – complete the feasibility study leveraging the lessons, best practices and case studies for a future healthcare innovation hub that serves the greater region and builds resilience in future crises Consider subsidized options for Vaughan small businesses to access regional opportunities like events	VHCP – initiatives to attract targeted functional areas that are resilient to future pandemics (ie. community-delivered healthcare services, aging population, chronic care, data and informatics) Leverage big data platforms (maps, hot zones etc.) to present more information Launch cost-effective marketing-based partnership options through city and partner assets like the digital billboards Develop a Tourism Event Hosting Program to encourage the attraction, hosting and marketing of one-time, national and international events in the areas of sports, culture, meetings, conventions and special tourism projects

Objective:

3. Enrich Vaughan's communities and economy through public art and cultural development, by developing creative-cultural amenities through partnership opportunities, by nurturing public engagement, by increasing public art awareness and by developing public art place-making in the Vaughan community

Key Activity:

3.3. Share Vaughan's reimagined public spaces within social distancing measures and invite the community to experience the cultural fabric of Vaughan as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides through public art and cultural development and highlight Vaughan as a welcoming community.

Actions:

3.3.1 Support local culture and heritage events and creative amenities through digital public engagement to maintain a sense of community and recognize Vaughan's culture during times of social distancing, and support the safe transition back to in-person engagements when permitted.

3.3.2 Leverage public art on digital channels to inspire a sense of place-making and convey Vaughan's unique identity with the community and welcome people to experience Vaughan's public spaces when social distancing is lifted.

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Monitoring	Impose and track cancellations and	Leverage opportunities within arts,	Develop and/or maintain ongoing databases

	postponements of festivals, events, exhibitions, public art projects and activations – quantify the scale and impact of losses (e.g. VFF, ICFF, etc.)	culture and tourism sectors to get short-term data on tourism, arts and cultural impacts Engage with stakeholders for input (in partnership with government and associations) on recovery tactics and revise plans, goals and objectives for cancelled/postponed/future projects Re-evaluate budgets and staff resources to deliver on plans and projects Develop methodology and process data collection for Tourism and related businesses	(contacts, capital assets, other assets) and inventory resources
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Outreach and Education (inc. Marketing)	Communicate and relay information collected through monitoring to key stakeholders and internal groups specific to the Arts and Cultural Industries	Continue to communicate and relay information about our recovery response tactics/planning Engage stakeholders to provide and collect feedback on our recovery planning and their contribution Encourage and support stakeholder collaborations and partnerships Deploy communications and marketing plan to inform and share next steps for	Develop and provide a recovery information package to begin re-invigorating Vaughan's cultural programs and events (CoV and third party) Deploy marketing and communications strategy to invigorate re-launch of exciting experiential opportunities Develop digital marketing channels, processes and policies to sustain delivery of TAC programs through digital experiences

		TAC support/recovery	
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Policy and Regulation	Monitor sector related government and association groups on related policy and regulations	Ensure that Vaughan and its stakeholders are employing best practices: Sharing policy and reg developments with stakeholders. Assess Municipal Accommodation Tax regulations and monitor Provincial sentiment on this front	Ensure that current policy and regulations identify pandemic impacts on sectors that build Vaughan's communities and quality of place Governance review of TVC Board to enhance stakeholder representation, thereby garnering industry buy-in, program support and advocacy: Inc: orientation packages and training sessions about roles on public boards
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Advocacy	Work with CSC, internal/external stakeholders (like Vaughan Chamber of Commerce), government organizations and associations to relay sector specific information to the Province and Federal government Communicate advocacy work to stakeholders Reinforce the role of TAC sectors on the socio-economic landscape and importance for recovery phase	Continue tactics of response phase in alignment with new developments As a vulnerable sector, continue to reinforce TAC as a vital element in the recovery phase to keep it top of mind during recovery planning Research and communicate support opportunities for recovery programming development with City and stakeholders	

	Leverage TAC as a vital element of healthy communities (I.e. digital experiences) Channel industry advocacy for relief from the Municipal Accommodation Tax		
Activity	Ready	Resilient	Resourceful
Programming	Business advisory services Support adoption of online formats for community events Working with stakeholders and partners on current and upcoming projects to maintain viability and opportunity Survey of priorities from stakeholders and develop links with upcoming planning	Support local festivals community activations, and events as key to the reinvigoration of our communities and sense of place Collaborate with and support stakeholders/partners on next steps and prioritizing for programs: Re-assess budget and resources to support Funding resilience – explore micro-grant or micro-loan program for cultural industries, including festivals, not-for-profit, and community-based arts, cultural, and heritage organizations to reanimate communities from city-side MAT funds.	Develop and maintain a succinct database of TAC programming Embed programming provisions in future emergency plans Build capacity in non-profit, community and cultural organizations to deliver programs Establish policies to enable supports and grants to arts and cultural organizations on an emergency and/or non-emergency basis Build and leverage partnerships to enhance the public realm through public art