



COVID-19 Pandemic Response

A Year in Review January to
December 2020

Fourth Interim Report

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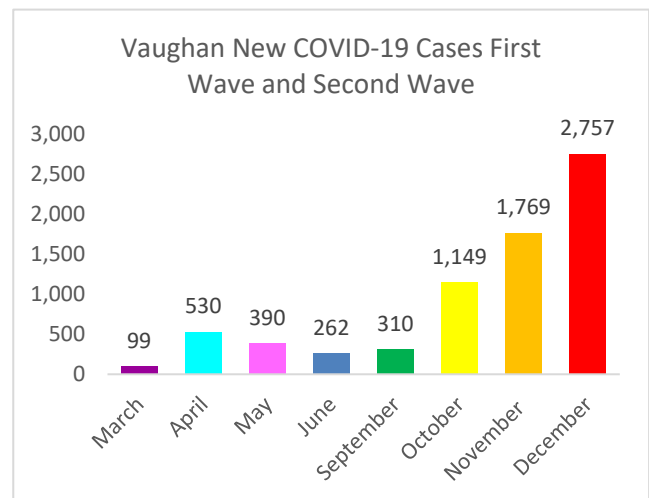
Executive Summary

In an emergency event, it is important that an analysis of the response be conducted. During the course of the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, three reports were generated for the purposes of analyzing our response efforts, identifying lessons learned from the first wave to apply to the second and future waves and facilitating continuous improvement. The first interim action report covered the monitoring phase from January to March 2020 and the first 30 days of the response from March 13 to April 13, 2020. The second interim action report analyzed the next 90 days from April 14 to July 13, 2020 of managing the pandemic. The third interim report covered the response from July 14 to October 13, 2020. This report is a consolidation of the previous reports and the activities from October 14, 2020 to December 31, 2020 which was the second wave of the pandemic.

The second wave of the pandemic manifested with greater numbers of cases that crossed all age ranges. The end of the first wave on June 30, 2020 saw 1,292 cases in Vaughan predominantly in older adults. The case counts in the second wave by the end of the year were close to six times greater at 7,697 cases. Hospital and intensive care unit capacity was strained, and the Province imposed a new response framework with stronger restrictions.

With the restart of the school year, new cases appeared in educational facilities. In the City, 29 schools were deemed to have outbreaks, 142 schools were under surveillance with several having multiple incidents and 19 daycares had cases. The number of school cases was much lower than anticipated with the highest number of cases reaching 124. Outbreaks in long term care facilities, retirement homes and congregate care sites rose rapidly with surges of over 30 new cases in one day.

City staff took responsive action to implement the orders issued by the province to protect residents and staff. The City continued to leverage technology and the number of staff able to work from home increased. Virtual platforms for Recreation Services and Vaughan Public Libraries (VPL) continued to engage citizens in an array of activities. City building efforts were successful through virtual services for development applications and permits. All portfolios have and continue to balance operational and response demands by implementing protocols limiting risks of adverse effects on critical infrastructure, service delivery and the health and safety of our staff. Our experiences in the first wave and our innovations prepared us to be agile and adaptable to manage the new restrictions in the second wave.



Chronology

Pre-Declaration of Emergency | January to March 12, 2020

January 2020

- Reports of a novel corona virus in China Emerge
- Virus rapidly spread across Asia and Europe
- First case diagnosed in GTA
- EOC moved to enhanced monitoring mode

February 2020

- The WHO assigns the name COVID-19 to the virus
- Large growth in new cases globally
- First case diagnosed in York Region

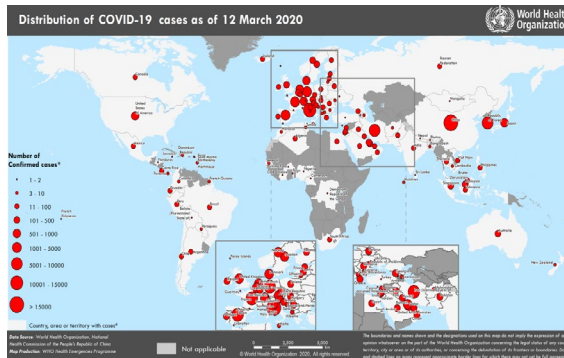
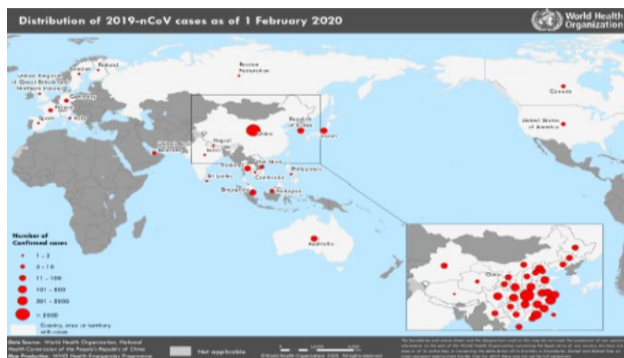
March 1 to 12, 2020

- First Case diagnosed in Vaughan
- The WHO declared a Global Pandemic
- The City enhances preparedness
- Professional sports were suspended
- The Province announced schools would close effective March 16

A novel coronavirus emerged in Wuhan, China in December 2019. Patients presented with a severe form of pneumonia of unknown origins. The number of cases grew rapidly. Patients experienced symptoms that ranged from mild to severe that included fever, cough, difficulty breathing, muscle aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat and runny nose. More serious complications included pneumonia and kidney failure. In some cases, patients contracted the virus without displaying symptoms or feeling unwell. The virus rapidly spread throughout the globe within the first month affecting every continent except for Antarctica. The City began monitoring the spread in the early stages in January 2020 and elevated the emergency operations centre from routine monitoring to enhanced monitoring mode.

The World Health Organizations (WHO) assigned the name COVID-19 to the virus on February 11, 2020. By the end of February, the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed in York Region. Vaughan received its first case on March 1, 2020. The number of cases continued to grow rapidly across the globe with the case counts rising 910% and the number of deaths increased by over 1,656% from February 1, 2020 to March 11, 2020. The WHO declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. To curb the spread of the virus many countries implemented stringent restrictions and lockdowns. These restrictions included suspending non-essential travel, closing borders, ordering non-essential businesses to close, restricting gathering limits and closing schools.

The City took efforts to prepare for the eventuality of restrictions and lockdowns to ensure essential services continued. Business continuity plans were reviewed and updated, the VPN bandwidth was increased to accommodate work from home, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of buildings and high touch surfaces was implemented and a COVID-19 Taskforce was created. On March 12, 2020, two significant triggers occurred that indicated the seriousness of the situation; professional sports suspended their seasons and the Province announced that all schools in Ontario would be closed effective March 16, 2020.



First Wave Response | March 13 to April 13, 2020

The Senior Leadership Team Executive (SLT-E) and Taskforce conducted a situational assessment on March 13, 2020 and identified that activating the emergency plan was the next course of action to manage our response to the pandemic effectively. An alert was issued to the members of the Emergency Management Team (EMT) and the Mayor and Members of Council. The decision was made to close all community centres and libraries at 1700 hrs on March 14, 2020. The emergency operations centre was activated using a hybrid method where leadership EMT members attended the facility and officers met separately in virtual platforms to reduce the risk of possible transmission of the virus to the response group.

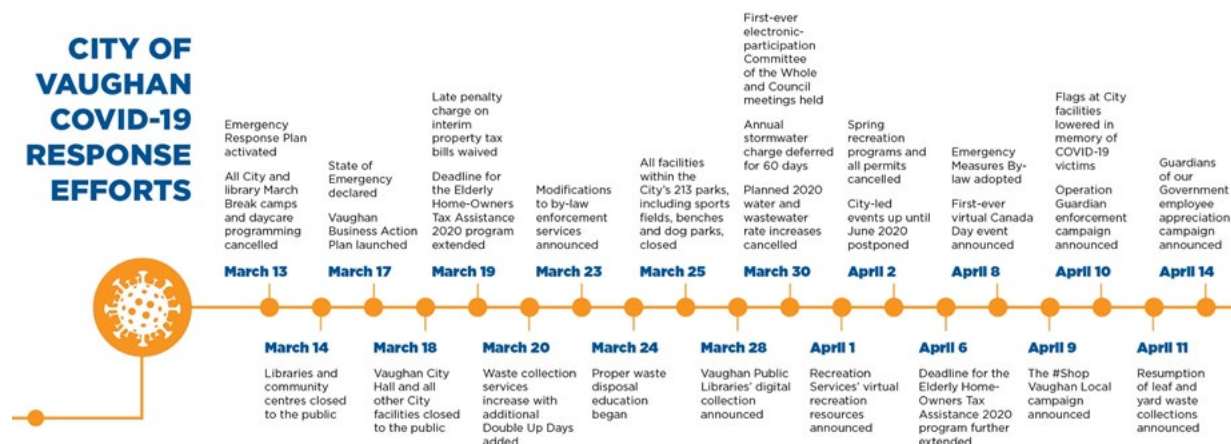
The Premier of Ontario declared a provincial state of emergency on March 17, 2020 and issued orders that restricted the number of people who could gather, closed childcare centres, bars, theatres, concert venues and limited restaurants to take-out and delivery services. Citizens over the age of 70 were encouraged to stay home. COVID-19 assessments centres were opened across the province to test for the virus. The Province issued 23 orders in the first 30 days of the pandemic. The EMT subsequently conducted a declaration assessment and determined that conditions were present that warranted declaring a municipal emergency. The Mayor officially declared a state of emergency on March 17, 2020.

To comply with the orders and maintain core services, the City pivoted operations to continue to support our citizens and businesses. Many in person services moved to virtual platforms and 29% of staff moved to working from home. To ensure necessary services continued in the community the following actions were implemented:

- The noise by-law was suspended to facilitate deliveries to food stores.
- Late penalty on interim tax bills waived and elderly homeowners tax assistance program application deadline extended.
- March Break camps were cancelled, and refunds issued.
- Animal Services and City Hall services became by appointment only.
- Issuing of special events permits was suspended.
- Engineering staff cross trained for redeployment to water if necessary.
- Waste collection expanded due to increase in garbage from more people being at home.
- Public notices issued on changes to service delivery.
- Signage installed in parks and public notice issued to not use equipment and closure of amenities.
- Recreation Services developed tips for wellness and staying active while in isolation.
- VPL began development of digital services.
- Park patrols were implemented and staff redeployed to support monitoring of parks initiated.
- The water/wastewater rate increase was cancelled.
- Data Collection Team and Lessons Learned Teams was created to conduct research, collect and analyze data and conduct debriefings related to the COVID-19 response.

The Province extended the emergency orders and ordered all communal or shared public and private outdoor recreation facilities closed. School closures were extended to May 4. Regulation restricting gatherings to 5 people was enacted.

First Wave Peak and Trough / April 14 to August 31, 2020



The new case counts of COVID-19 across Canada reached the peak of the outbreak during the last two weeks of April, but ongoing measures to curb the spread were necessary at all levels of government. To contain the spread of the virus, eight provinces and territories closed their borders to inter-provincial travel. Both Quebec and Manitoba had set up check points on the border with Ontario and turned back non-essential travellers. As a result of the weeks of restrictions, demonstrations occurred in Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver.

Joint planning between the federal, provincial and territorial governments occurred that established the following common principles for restarting the economy:

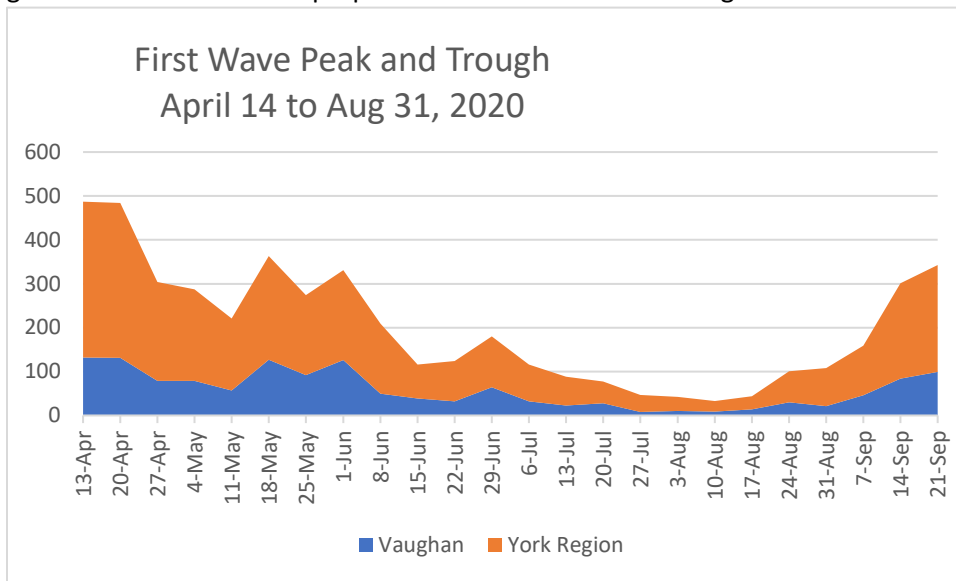
- Protecting the health of Canadians,
- Easing restrictions gradually,
- Protecting high risk groups (vulnerable due to age, underlying health conditions, remote locations, close living spaces and temporary or unstable living spaces),
- Ensuring our public health capacity remains strong to prepare for and respond to any future waves of the pandemic, including enhanced testing and contact tracing, and
- Supporting a broad range of economic sectors.

The number of COVID-19 cases in Ontario peaked on April 20 which lead to the development of a three-stage reopening approach that included,

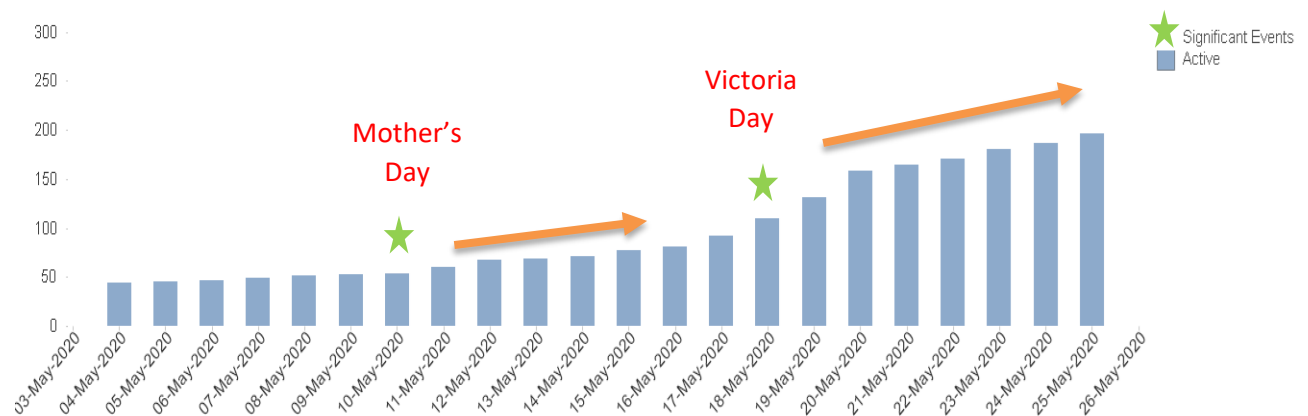
- Stage 1: Opening select workplaces that could immediately modify operations to meet public health guidance. Opening some outdoor spaces like parks and allowing for a greater number of individuals to attend some events. Hospitals would also begin to offer some non-urgent and scheduled surgeries, and other health care services.

- Stage 2: Opening more workplaces, based on risk assessments, which included some service industries and additional office and retail workplaces. Some larger public gatherings would be allowed, and more outdoor spaces would open.
- Stage 3: Opening of all workplaces responsibly and further relaxing of restrictions on public gatherings.

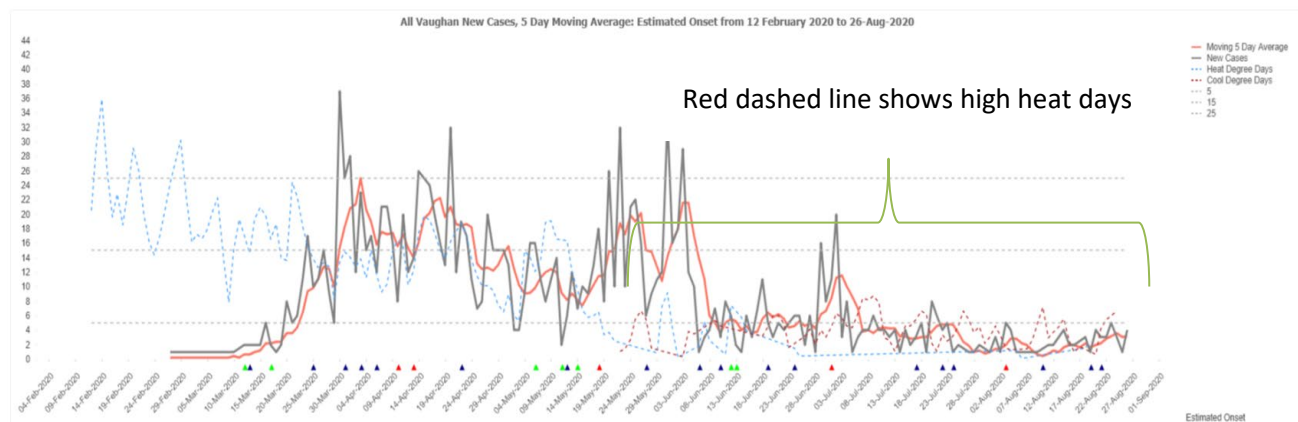
Before the next stage could be entered, monitoring over 14 to 28 days to identify trends in case numbers that showed a positive progression was required. Workplace-specific health and safety guidelines were issued in preparation for the eventual easing of restrictions.



The City became the hotspot of COVID-19 case in York Region with outbreaks in 10 healthcare facilities and essential workplaces. The first wave of COVID-19 in Vaughan presented at a flattened and elongated curve in comparison to the second wave. The Ministry of Health indicated that the peak occurred around April 23 for the first wave, but small surges occurred around holidays, re-openings and on farms with migrant workers. The Data and Analytics Team identified that there was a correlation between Mother's Day and the Victoria Day long weekend and a spike in new cases due to gatherings.



Temperature increases and decreases were also found to result in a spike in cases due to people congregating indoors to escape high temperatures or low temperatures. Between May 1 and August 31, there were 29 heat warnings issued by Environment Canada.



The Lessons Learned Team under the direction of the Office of Transformation and Strategy and Emergency Planning issued a survey to all staff electronically in May to obtain feedback on six key areas along with the opportunity to make additional comments. The six key survey areas included:

1. The pandemic response
2. Leadership
3. Communication
4. Ability to perform work and meet department objectives
5. Work from home
6. Mental health supports

The team received 705 responses to the survey which constitutes approximately 50% of staff. The responses identified recommendations to enhance our response capacity and strengthen supporting resources for staff.

The efforts of staff were focused on City building, managing the response and non-emergency operations, protecting the safety of staff and residents and planning for recovery. To promote City building a portal was launched to receive building permit applications. Essential capital projects that needed to continue were identified. Council and Committee meetings moved to virtual platforms.

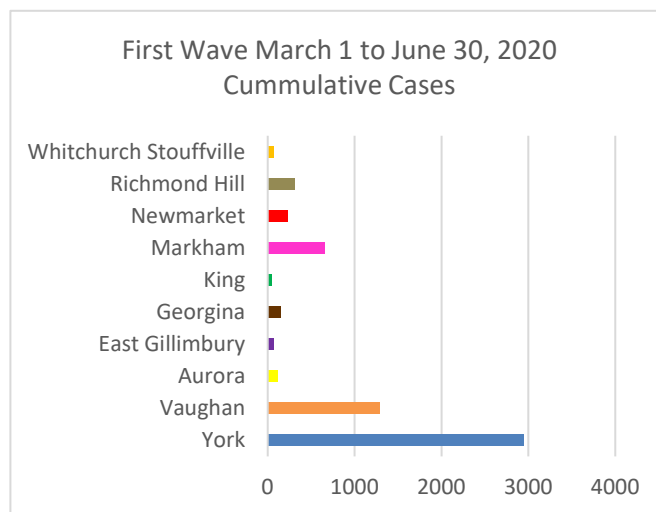
Stage 1 Opening

The Province developed a regional approach to reopening and easing restrictions. The first easing of restrictions allowed for seasonal businesses and the construction sector to restart operations on May 1. Garden centres, safety supply stores and hardware stores opened followed by professional sport training facilities, provincial parks and retail stores with street entrances and curbside pick up. Additional seasonal businesses were permitted to open on May 16. Outdoor recreational amenities, sports fields, off-leash dog areas, picnic sites, benches and park shelters were the next amenities that were given the green light to open.

The City took a cautious approach to re-establishing outdoor services during the Stage 1 phase. The case counts remained high in Vaughan in comparison to the other municipalities in York Region. The

City accounted for 44% of cases in the Region. Service delivery evolved with new innovations that protected the health and safety of residents and staff that included:

- Automation of paper-based processes.
- Launch of Building Standard's portal for development applications.
- Curbside marriage license.
- Virtual Design Review Panel meetings and public hearings.
- Fitness equipment loan program.
- VPL virtual summer reading program and curbside pick up of materials at the three resource libraries.
- Virtual camps for children during the summer.
- Public Works identified alternatives for seasonal work.
- Recreation Services developed a new organizational structure to mitigate financial impacts caused by the pandemic.
- Process to facilitate restaurants expanding outdoor patios.



Stage 2 Opening

The replication of the virus number (RO) ranged between 0.7 to 1 which provided a positive indicator that the Province could consider entering Stage 2 of their reopening plan. The decision was made to implement a phased approach to easing restrictions as municipalities were affected to different degrees by the pandemic. Plans were developed for reopening childcare centres and post secondary education institutions. Large outbreaks were identified in migrant workers on farms in Southwestern Ontario. On June 10, the Premier announced that 24 Public Health Unit areas could enter Stage 2 which excluded the Greater Toronto Area. Ontario parks, beaches and campgrounds were reopened. Social gatherings were increased to 10 people, places of worship reopened to a maximum of 30% of their capacity with distancing measures in place and 50 people could attend weddings and funerals. On June 19, York Region was permitted to move into Stage 2.

The Stage 2 openings necessitated that we pivot again in our service delivery. Tennis courts, off-leash dog park, sports fields, benches, gazebos, picnic shelters, basketball courts, park washrooms and splashpads were opened for citizens to use. To prepare for in person camps that would be starting in July, Facility Management was busy installing plexiglass shields on community centre counters. Public Works identified 32 no mow zones in selected parks and stormwater management ponds.

Counter services were remodelled to regularly scheduled curbside marriage licenses, online payments for garbage tags, online fitness classes, and the VPL virtual Reading Buddies program. Public Works ran a pilot program for curbside drop-off of replacement blue and green bins that was well received by the community. VPL expanded its curbside pick up program to all community libraries.

Nationally the number of new cases, hospitalizations and deaths related to COVID-19 steadily declined and the situation became more stable. The Canadian Armed Forces withdrew their personnel from the last care facility they were supporting. The announcement that Edmonton and Toronto would be the hub cities for the National Hockey League play-in and play-off series, caused cheers of joy from Canadian fans. Municipalities lobbied for the federal and provincial governments to provide financial aid of \$10 billion to help offset the response costs to COVID-19 and lost revenue caused by mandatory closures.

More restrictions were eased with in person court appearances resuming, outdoor public gatherings were increased to 100, indoor public gatherings were increased to 50, the daycare cohort was increased to 15 and the announcement on July 13 that 24 Public Health Regions could enter Stage 3 at the end of the week.

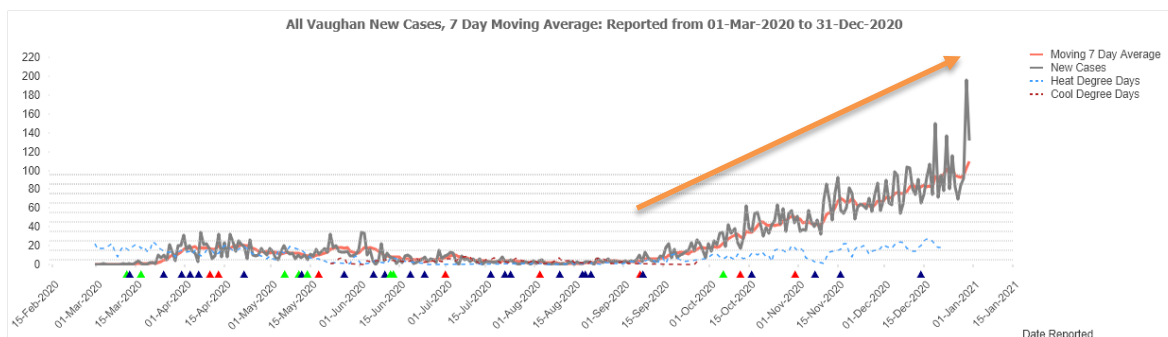
Stage 3 Opening

The Province enacted government proposed Bill 195 that would keep the emergency orders in place once the declaration lapsed. The provincial declaration of emergency officially ended on July 24, 2020. The announcement was made that in class education would begin in September.

York Regional Council approved a policy for mandatory face coverings or masks while in public spaces, with the onus on the business or building operator/owner to enforce the policy. Case data showed that there was a higher rate of infection in younger age groups (under 20 years) but a steady overall decline in new cases, hospitalization and the need for intensive care. Public Health proposed that a mobile testing clinic be run in Vaughan in one of the hotspot areas and joint planning was initiated.

August provided somewhat of a reprieve from restrictions and regular albeit modified operations became the norm. We continued supporting our community, our staff and City building. Fitness centres opened to public on August 10 by appointment only and fitness classes resumed on August 17.

Second Wave | September to December



September

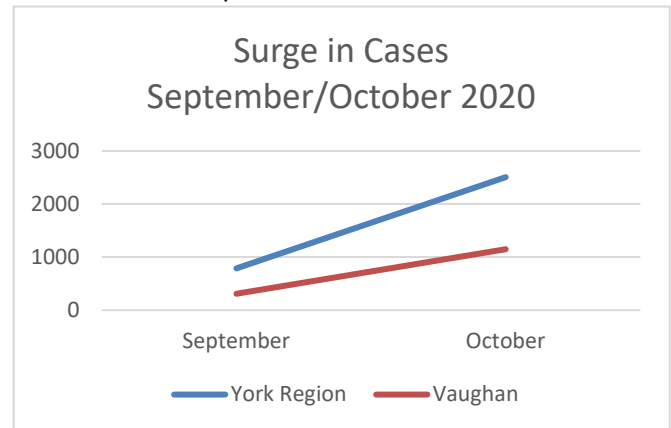
Surges in cases occurred with one million new cases being reported every four to five days. Spain announced that they were in the second wave followed by France and the United Kingdom.

The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy programs were expanded to include more workers, business and persons with disabilities. To ease pressures on citizens and business the Canada Revenue Agency announced an extension to the payment deadlines and offers interest relief on outstanding tax debts during the COVID-19 pandemic for individual, corporate and trusts.

In Ontario a surge in cases began and regulations were passed that limited personal gatherings to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors. It became mandatory for every workplace to conduct active screening of workers for COVID-19 symptoms. Cases began appearing in schools and the webpage for reporting COVID-19 cases in schools and child centres was launched.

To increase testing capacity in the province, 60 pharmacies began offering testing of people who were asymptomatic by appointment only. Saliva testing began at three Toronto hospitals. The annual influenza vaccination campaign was launched with the goal of increasing immunizations to prevent a “twindemic” of COVID-19 and Influenza.

Positivity rate of tests rose to 2% for the province. Toronto and Peel Region were placed into modified Stage 2 restrictions as their cases rose. A directive was issued that testing was by appointment only. Targeted public health measures were ordered for the Ottawa, Peel and Toronto public health unit regions in attempt to slow the rise in cases.



York Region began to see the positivity rate for tests ranging between 1.1% to 1.2% and the reproductive rate rose to 1.29%. A shift occurred from the over 70 age group being the impacted the most to half of new cases in the under 30 age groups. The surge of cases in the Region were attributed to weddings and religious services. A satellite testing clinic opened in Vaughan at 9401 Jane Street.

Indoor pools started reopening in phases starting on September 8 and arenas opened for permit holders only on September 14th. The Resource Libraries opened on September 8th. Elementary and high schools opened in phases over the month.

October

Globally the number of new cases rose dramatically to over 425,000 per day with Europe being the hotspot. The number of new cases across Canada rose by 159% from September to October. Canada surpassed 225,000 cumulative cases by the end of October and sadly over 10,000 cumulative deaths were recorded.

The case counts rose to over 800 per day and positivity rate increased to 3.6% in Ontario. York Region experienced a surge of over 100 new cases per day, positivity rate for testing was at 2.6 and the reproductive rate was 1.3. In York Region the number of new cases rose by 218% in October versus September. The demographics of persons contracting COVID-19 shifted to the 40 to 50 years of age group. Outbreaks in long term care, retirement homes and group homes began to rise but were mainly in staff at the beginning of the second wave. Vaughan experienced a 271% growth in cases from September to October. The positivity rate of tests in Vaughan citizens rose to an average of 6%.

The surge in cases resulted in York Region being placed in modified Stage 2 restrictions on October 19 for a period of 28 days. The restrictions included closure or suspension of:

- Indoor food and drink service in restaurants, bars, nightclubs and food courts in malls.
- Indoor gyms and fitness centres.

- Casinos, bingo halls and other gaming establishments.
- Indoor cinemas.
- Performing arts centres and venues.
- Spectator areas in racing venues.
- Interactive exhibits or exhibits with high risk of personal contact, such as museums, galleries, zoos, science centres and landmarks.
- Personal care services where face coverings must be removed for the service (makeup application, beard trimming).
- Jury selection for provincial court trials.

Modified Stage 2 also limited gathering sizes for social and organized public events to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors. Team sports were restricted to training and games or scrimmages were prohibited.

Under the Modified Stage 2 regulations, the City closed our fitness centres and halted in person fitness classes. Indoor pools remained open but with reduced capacity. Arenas remained open for permit holders only with a limit of 10 people on the ice surface and no spectators. Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer and the Office of the Chief Information Officer collaborated on developing an active screening tool for staff, contractors and visitors entering City buildings.

The first school in Vaughan, Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary School was ordered closed by public health officials due to transmission of COVID-19. At the start of October there were 11 educational facilities with a total of 13 cases and by the end of the month the numbers rose to 26 facilities with 45 cases.

November

Globally, the number of new cases per day averaged between 500,000 to 600,000. Many European countries peaked in their second wave throughout November. In Canada, the second wave was still growing. The Government of Canada announced new mandatory requirements for travellers to Canada, that required pre-screening protocols be in place to ensure that people entering Canada were not infected with COVID-19.

The federal government introduced financial assistance for rent relief that targeted businesses that were affected by the next round of restrictions. The Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy was extended to June 2021. In the fall economic statement, the government reported that agreement was reached to secure 429 million COVID-19 vaccine doses from multiple sources and 38 million rapid tests.

Ontario releases the new COVID-19 Response Framework to Help Keep the Province Safe and Open which transitioned to a colour code system from the stages system.



The green prevent zone is characterized by a weekly incidence rate is less than 10 per 100,000, the test positivity rate is below 0.5%, the effective reproduction rate is below 1. New cases are mainly community-based with little transmission that can be contained, hospital and intensive care unit (ICU)

capacity is adequate and the public health unit has the capacity to case and contact trace within 24 hours of reporting.

The yellow protect zone is characterized by a weekly incidence rate of 10 to 24.9 per 100,000, the test positivity rate ranges between 0.5-1.2%, the reproductive rate holds around 1, there are repeated outbreaks in multiple sectors or there are increasing numbers of large outbreaks but community transmission is stable, hospital and ICU capacity is adequate, and the public health system has adequate resources to case and contact trace within 24 hours of reporting.

The orange restrict zone is characterized by a weekly incident rate of 25 to 39.9 per 100,000, the test positivity rate ranges between 1.3-2.4%, the rate of transmission ranges between 1 to 1.1, there are repeated outbreaks in multiple sectors/settings and increasing numbers of large numbers outbreaks, the level of community spread is stable or increasing, hospital and ICU capacity is adequate or occupancy is increasing and the public health system capacity to perform case and contact follow up within 24 hours is adequate or at risk of becoming overwhelmed.

The red control zone is characterized by a weekly incident rate of 40 or higher per 100,000, test positivity rate is above 2.5%, the rate of transmission is 1.2 or higher, there are repeated outbreaks in multiple sectors/settings with increasing number of large outbreaks, the level of community transmission are cases increasing, hospital and ICU capacity is at risk of being overwhelmed and the public health unit capacity for case and contact management is at risk or overwhelmed.

The grey lockdown zone is characterized by worsening trends after entering Red/Control, including increasing weekly case incidence, increasing test positivity rates, increasing case rates in people aged 70 and older, increasing outbreaks among vulnerable populations such as long-term care residents and residents of other congregate settings, hospital and ICU capacity at risk of being overwhelmed and the public health unit capacity for case and contact management is at risk or overwhelmed. A trigger for ICU capacity is greater than 350 beds across the province are occupied by COVID-19 patients.

On November 16 the Province moved York Region into the Red Control Zone and on November 23, Toronto and Peel Region were put into the grey lockdown zones with restrictions in place until December 21, 2020. The case counts continued to rise with the positivity rate at 5.7% and more public health regions were moved into stricter levels of the COVID-19 Framework.

As Health Canada moved closer to approving the first vaccine candidates from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, the Province created the Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force. Retired General Rick Hillier was named as the Chair of the Taskforce. The Taskforce would,

- Advise on delivery, storage and distribution of vaccines.
- Support the health care system's partners to deliver a phased vaccination program.
- Provide clinical guidance on vaccine administration, data, reporting and technology,
- Provide public education outreach to encourage vaccination.

York Region implemented directives to charge businesses that failed to take steps to prevent or stop spread of COVID-19 and failure to comply can result in a fine of \$5,000 per person or \$25,000 for a corporation. The positivity rate in the Region increased to 5.8% and close contact became the primary source of spread.

With Toronto and Peel Region moving into greater restrictions, the concern arose of the potential for spillover effect of their residents seeking various services in Vaughan and potentially increasing community transmission of COVID-19. Large outbreaks occurred in two long-term care facilities, an industry and as a result of social gatherings and a sporting event. Smaller outbreaks occurred in 78 schools with a total of 81 cases during the month. The test positivity rate for Vaughan citizens rose from 6% to 9%.

The City was placed into the Red Control Zone on November 16 which coincided with the launch of the active screening tool for staff and contractors entering our buildings. Indoor gathering limits were reduced to 5 people and outdoor gathering limits were reduced to 25 people. Indoor dining at restaurants and mall food courts was reduced to 10 people and outdoor dining was permitted. The decision was made to close recreation facilities and redeploy staff to other departments where possible.

Santa Claus was able to come to town through a virtual presentation of past SantaFest parades. Canada's Wonderland played host to filming of the Toronto Santa Claus parade.

December

Case counts continued to rise at all levels. Globally, on December 10 the highest number of new cases in one day was reported of 1.497 million. Throughout December the average daily case count ranged between 600,000 and 700,000. New variants were found in the United Kingdom and South Africa that are more transmissible.

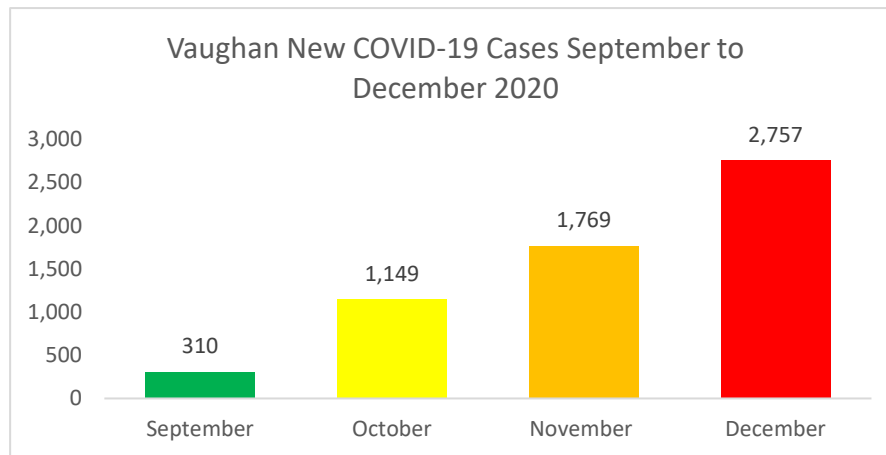
Positive development occurred with vaccine candidates. The federal government announced that the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine was approved for use in Canada with the first doses being administered on December 13 in Toronto and Ottawa. A second vaccine produced by Moderna was approved by Health Canada with the first doses arriving on December 30. The priority groups for vaccination were health care staff in hospitals and long-term care facilities and residents in long-term care facilities.

Ontario announced its three phase plan to receive, store and administer the COVID-19 vaccine. Phase 1 has the vaccines delivered to Grey and Red Zones and to 20 hospitals across Ontario by the end of January. The early arrival of limited numbers of doses of both vaccines allowed for Phase 1 to be accelerated. Phase 1 focused on vaccinating health care workers in hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes and other congregate settings caring for seniors and remote aboriginal and metis communities. Phase 2 will begin once regular deliveries of vaccine occur. Phase 2 is focused on vaccinating essential workers, home care workers, elderly adults living in the community and individuals with high risk chronic conditions. Phase 3 is focused on vaccinating the general public over the age of 16 years.

The Government of Ontario is allocating \$635 million to municipalities to ensure they do not operate deficits in 2021. The \$635 million fund was allocated as follows:

- \$299 million will be allocated to 444 municipalities.
- \$396 million will be allocated to 48 municipalities that have seen the greatest impact due to COVID.
- \$1.3 Billion is also being allocated for municipality transits systems which is above of the \$700 million already allocated under Phase 1 of the Safe Restart Agreement.

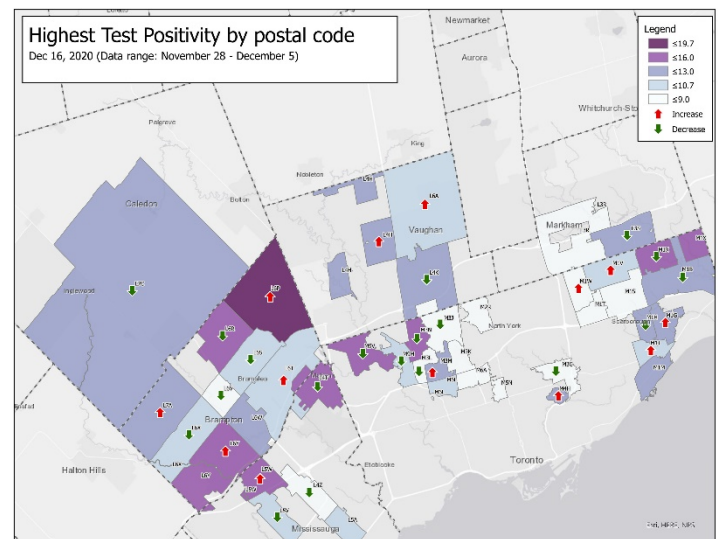
The case counts continued to rise at a rapid pace across Ontario. The testing positivity rate was 5.6% and the reproductive rate rose to 1.09. The increase in cases created a strain on the health care system with hospitalizations and admissions to the intensive care units doubling from the beginning to the end of December. A Province-wide lockdown took effect on December 26 for 28 days in Southern Ontario and 14 days in Northern Ontario. The school holiday closure was extended to January 11, 2021 and



Highschool classes moved to online until January 25, 2021. The Province announced that grants of \$10,000 to \$20,000 would be available for small businesses affected by the lockdown.

York Region experienced increased case counts and a rise in hospitalizations. The percent positivity rate was 6.3% and the

reproduction rate was 1.1. A voluntary school-based asymptomatic testing program was initiated at 23 elementary and seven secondary schools. Four schools in Vaughan participated that included Father Bressani Catholic Secondary School, Immaculate Conception Catholic Elementary School, Blue Willow Public School and St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Elementary School. York Region was placed the grey lockdown zone on December 14, 2020. The Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital became a Pfizer BioNTech vaccine delivery centre on December 21, 2020.



With increased restrictions, the City promoted outdoor activities and the outdoor ice pads were prepared for opening. Recreation Services initiated the development of a snowshoe loaner program targeted for implementation in the New Year. The outdoor ice rinks proved to be popular with residents, but the issue arose of large crowds congregating. Processes were put in place to control crowds and enforce the physical distancing directives. The Annual Tree and Menorah Lighting ceremonies moved to virtual platforms.

Vaughan experienced a continued rise in cases with the percentage rate of change consistently above 1%. With spikes occurring that were related to social gatherings and a rapid increase in new cases in long-term care facilities. The new cases rose at an alarming rate from 310 total cases from September to 2,757 for December.

On December 14, Vaughan was placed in the grey lockdown zone and as a result the following restrictions were implemented:

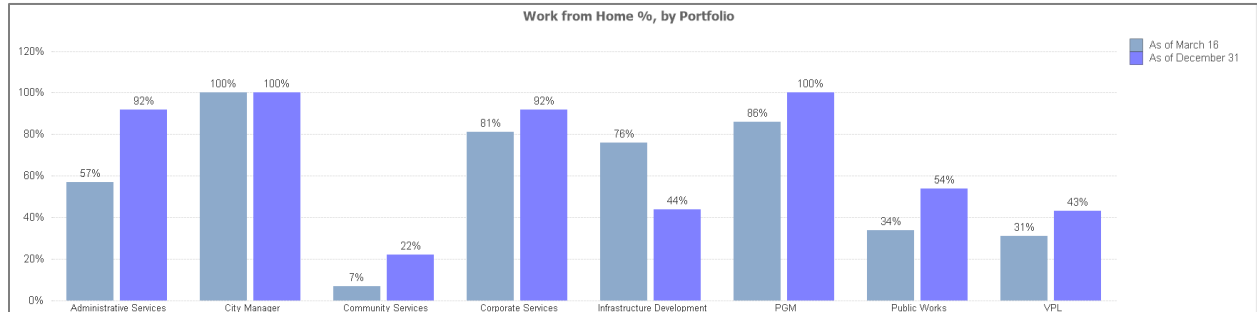
- Indoor gatherings were prohibited.

- Outdoor gatherings restricted to 10 people.
- Indoor dining prohibited, take out, drive thru and delivery only.
- Community centres were closed except for childcare/daycare and community agency outreach programs.
- Outdoor recreation classes limited to 10 people.
- Retail was curbside pick up and big box store restricted capacity to 50%.
- Personal care businesses were closed.

The decision was made to keep City Hall closed to the public until June 2021.

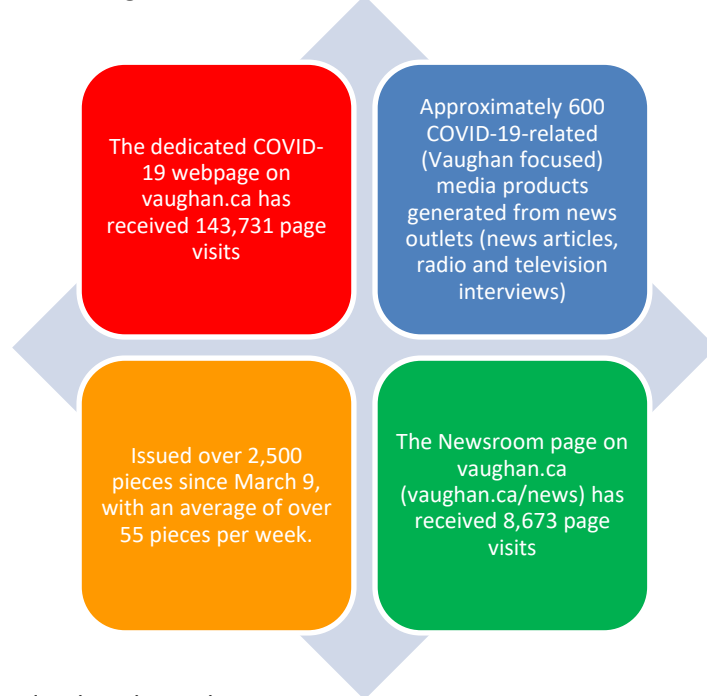
Key Indicators

Work from Home

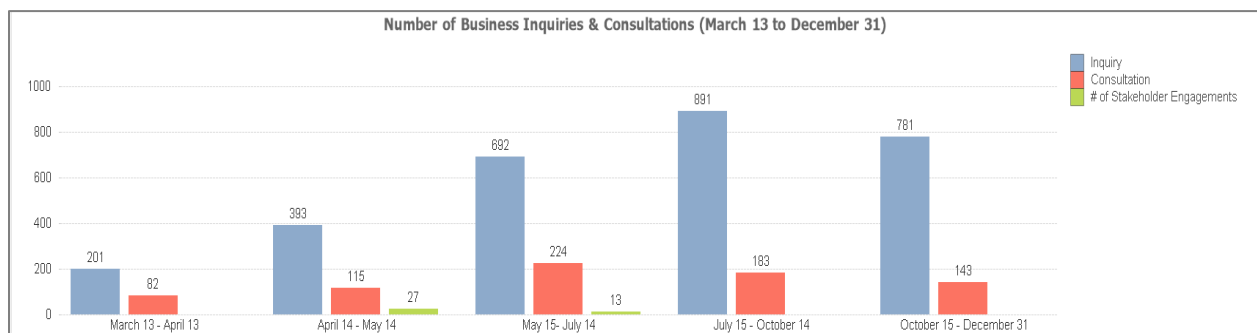


Comparing the start of the pandemic (March) to year end (December 31), a greater percentage of staff in each of the Portfolios (except for Infrastructure Development) are working from home.

Corporate and Strategic Communications



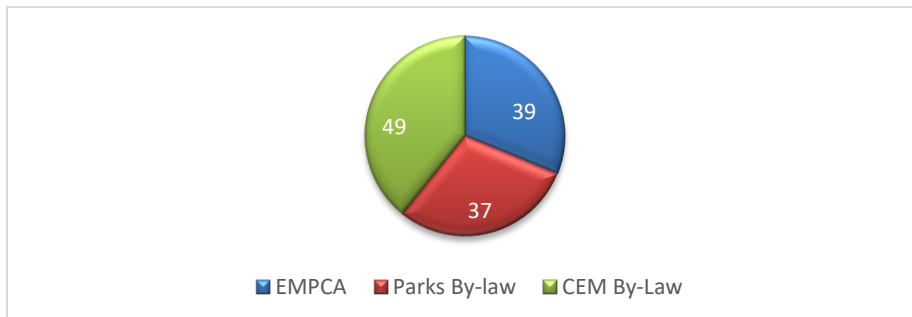
Economic and Cultural Development



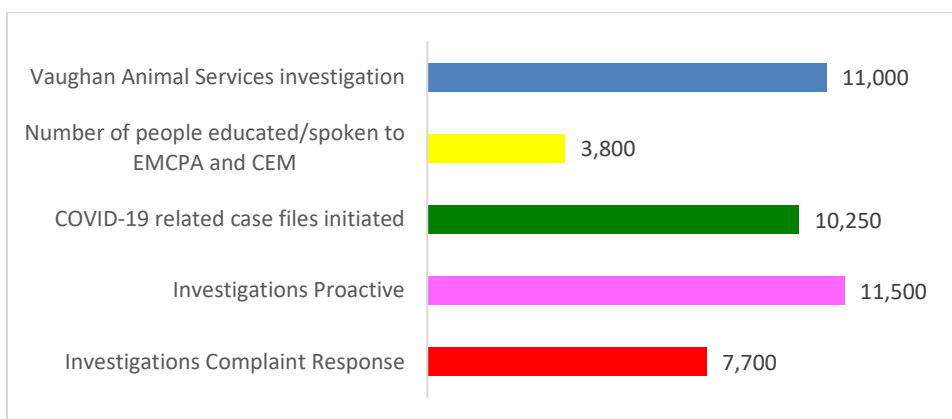
Received almost 3,000 business inquiries and conducted close to 750 consultations.

By-Law and Compliance, Licensing and Permit Services

Operation Guardian Charges Laid



Enforcement Services



Recreation Services

eNewsletter Active Subscribers

- 10,000+

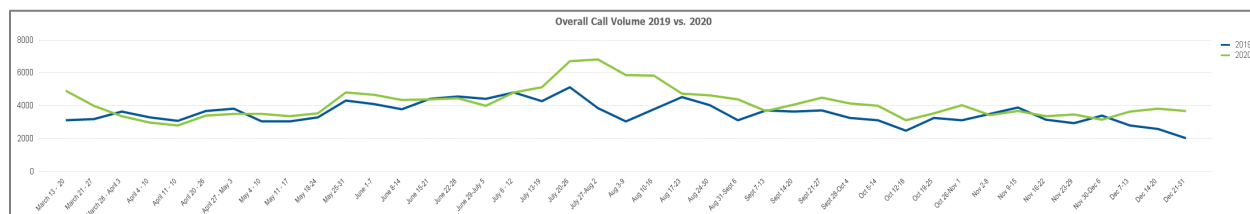
Instagram

- 4,800 online followers
- 1.8 million impressions
- 258,000 reached

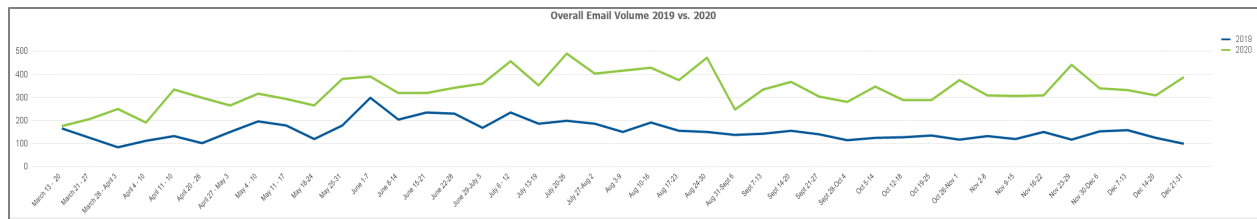
You Tube | launched June 15, 2020

- 264 videos
- 780 subscribers
- 27,000 views
- 345,000 impressions

Access Vaughan

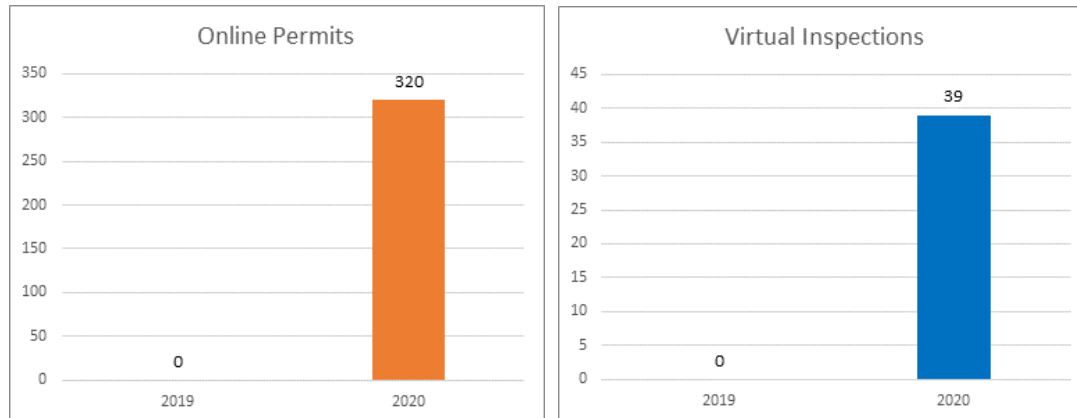


Cumulative call volume is up 14% overall from 2019 during the March to December time period.



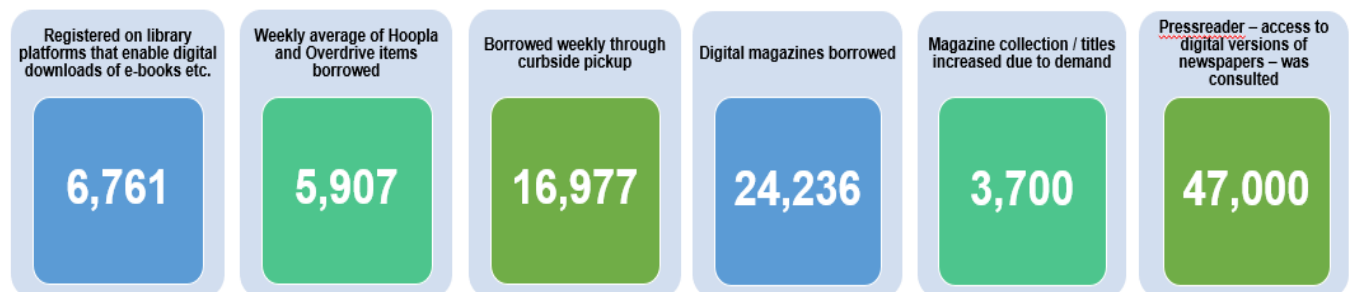
Cumulative email volume is up 53% overall from 2019 during the March to December time period.

Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service



Fire Prevention launched an online permits and inspections booking system.

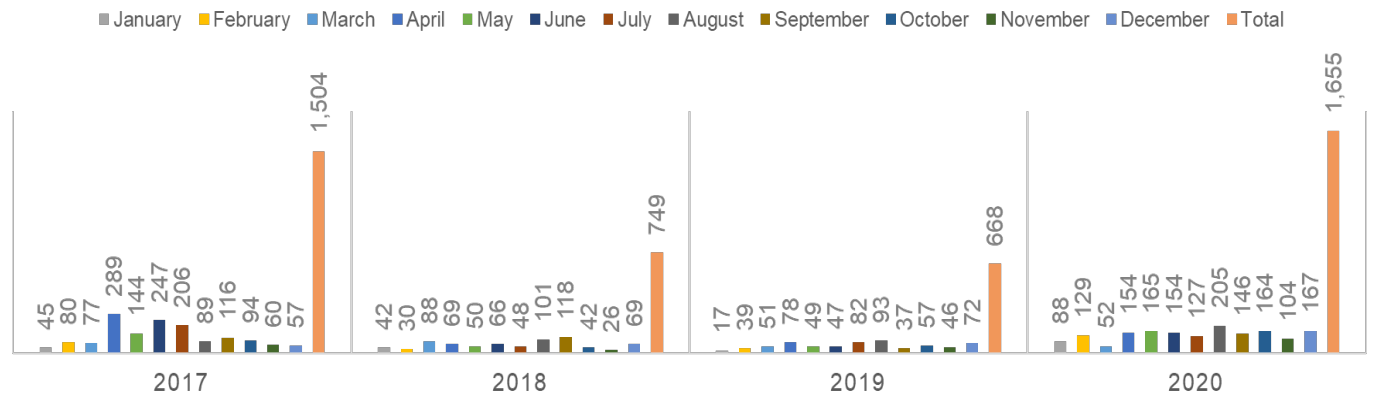
Vaughan Public Libraries



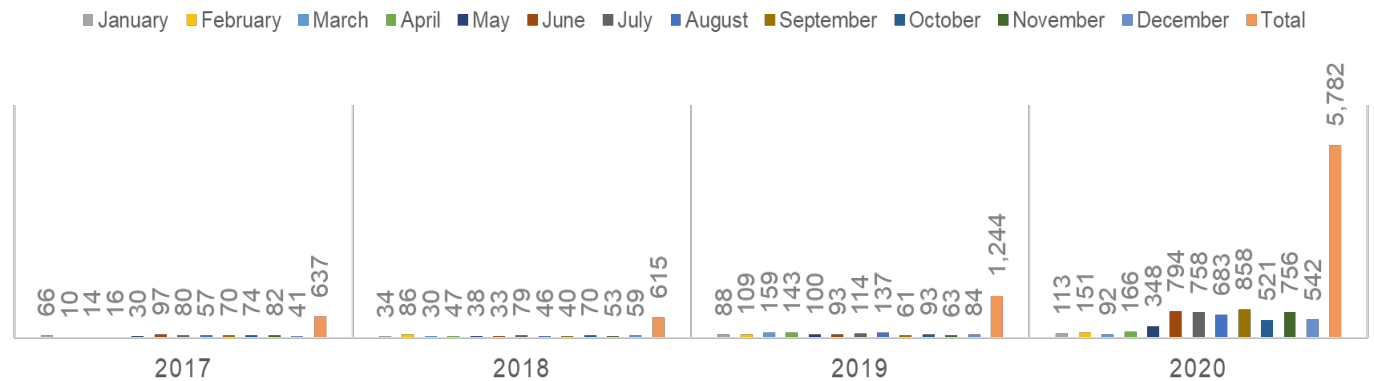
Planning and Growth Management (PGM) – Vaughan Metropolitan Centre



PERMITS ISSUED

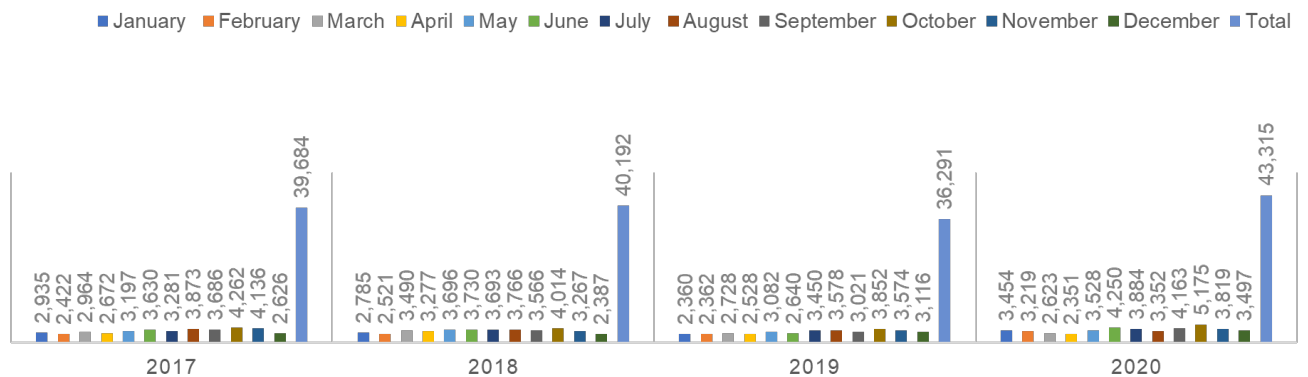


INSPECTIONS COUNT



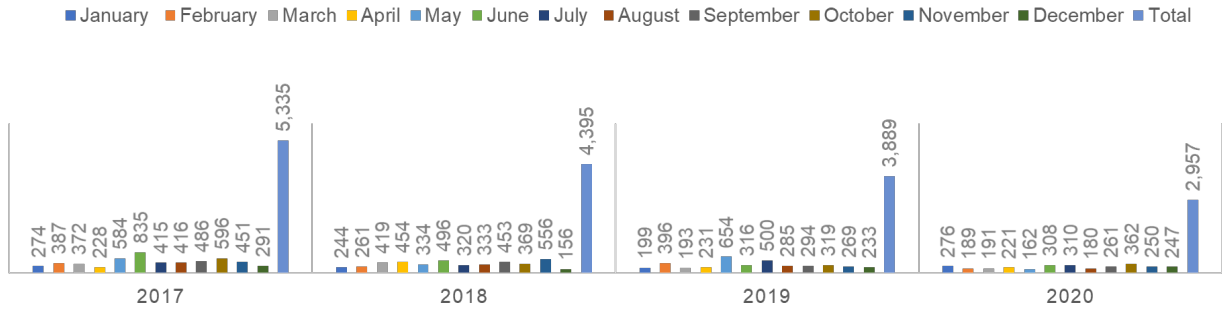
PGM Building Standards Department (BSD)

BSD INSPECTIONS



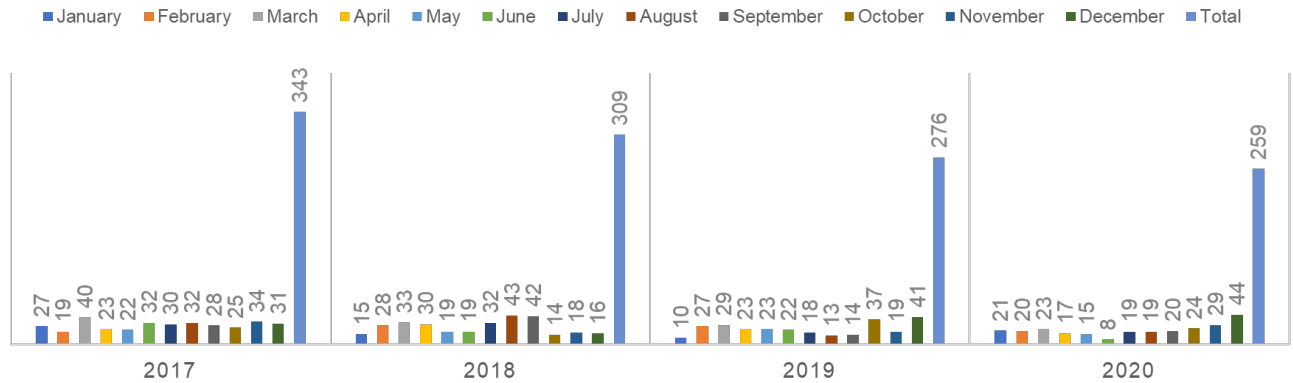
35,012 inspections since the State of Emergency on March 18, 2020.

BSD PERMITS ISSUED

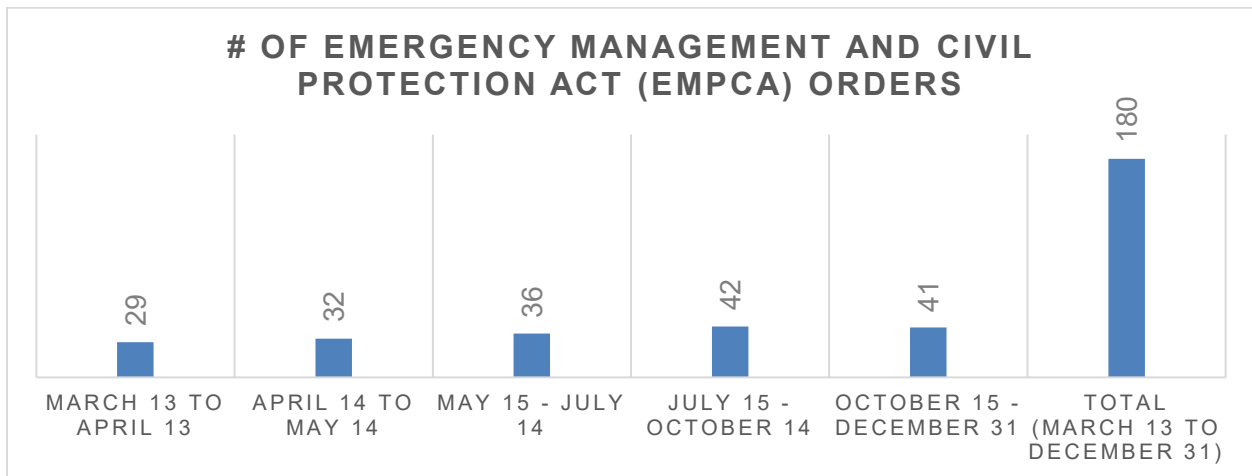


2,358 permits issued since the State of Emergency on March 18, 2020.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS COUNT



Legal and Administrative Services



Public Works

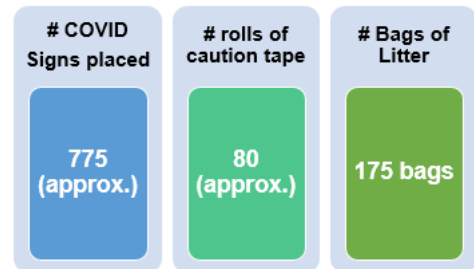
Reopening Strategy – Responsible & Measured Approach

- Opened park amenities with controls in place– sports fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, bocce courts, and splash pads.

- Reinstalled basketball hoops at 73 locations.
- Extended splash pads hours until 9 pm across 18 Splash Pads.

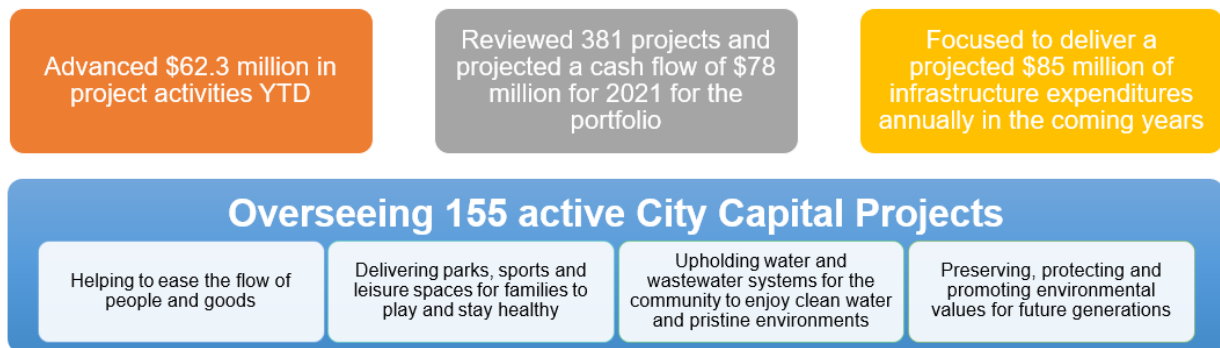
Keeping our City Clean

- Daily inspection & waste pickup at splash pads.
- Weekend coverage of waste pickup for high-use areas
- Completed 5th rotation of the boulevard litter and debris cleanup.
- Completed woodlot blitz - 28 woodlots/ wooded areas, total of 250.5 commercial bags of litter/debris collected.

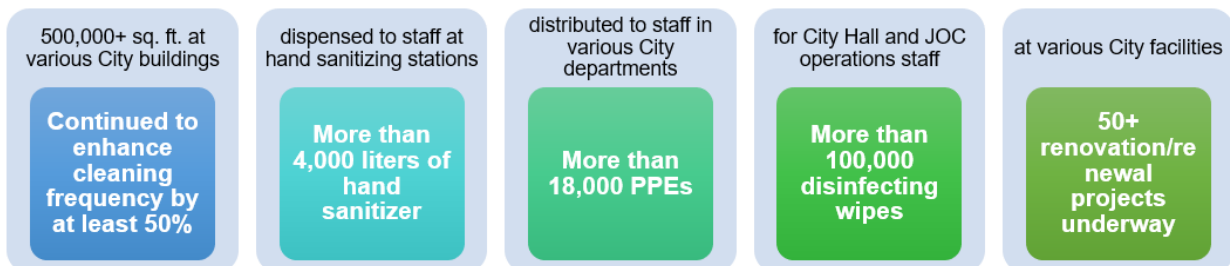


Infrastructure Development

Capital Projects



Facilities Management



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The Lessons Learned Team conducted three rounds of interviews with Senior Leadership Team members and surveyed staff to gain feedback on the City's response to COVID-19. Respondents indicated that as the pandemic progressed and restrictions eased, they shifted to business as usual mode but were prepared to pivot back into emergency response.

Business Continuity Planning

- Conduct annual reviews of Business Continuity Plans (BCP) that align with business planning process.
- Create a central electronic storage file for all department BCP's.
- All departments understand interdependencies through shared BCP portal.
- Coordinate with the Office of Transformation and Strategy to review BCP tool and process.
- Through the BCP process identify essential services and employees and develop a succession plan in the BCP.

Emergency Plan and Procedures

- Revise the Emergency Response Plan to include feedback from the debriefing sessions.
- Include Data Collection team in Strategy Section of the EMT.
- Include Lessons Learned team in the Emergency Response Plan for debriefing purposes.
- Develop a pandemic management appendix to the Emergency Response Plan.
 - Include protocols for a phased reduction of services.
- Revise virtual EOC procedures.
- Develop a recovery plan appendix to the Emergency Response Plan.
 - Include protocols for a phased approach for reopening.
- Provide support to departments on developing specific incident response protocols.
- Develop an emergency preparedness and resiliency strategy.
- Establish procedure for EMT to sign-off review of the Emergency Response Plan annually.
- Revise the situation report form and procedure.
- Create a decision record template.
- Provide logic, criteria and risk models behind decision-making in response to COVID-19.

Training and Exercises

- Conduct business continuity planning process training.
- Develop training modules on the emergency plans, the responsibilities of each department and the roles of each level of government in an emergency for staff.
- Conduct annual training on the EOC Dashboard and documentation for EMT members.
- Provide Council training on the Emergency Response Plan and procedures.
- Include issues faced in the pandemic in future exercises.
- Department-specific emergency scenario training.

Resources

- Coordinate with the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer to revise the staff skills inventory to include credentials.
- Coordinate with Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer to include staff skills inventory in Halogen.
- Consult with Logistics Section Chief, Finance Officers, Administration Section Chiefs on recommendation to establish an “emergencies fund” for disaster events.
- Coordinate with all EMT Sections to create a central inventory of all resources (equipment, vehicles, supplies etc.) in the City.
- Coordinate with Section Chiefs to identify resources to stockpile.
- Develop a weekly template for updates (Council memos, information requests, etc).

Policy

- In consultation with Legal Services develop a standing emergency measures by-law with delegated authority.

Conclusion

Through the course of the year, the City faced many new challenges with the pandemic and was able to adapt and innovate to maintain service operations while responding to the emergency. The City adopted a cautious approach to re-establishing services when restrictions were eased. As a hotspot for cases throughout the first and second waves, data, analytics and research on responses around the globe became important tools in decision-making on when to ease restrictions in the City. Understanding how the virus was spreading within the City and in the communities surrounding the City gave us a high level of situational awareness.

The restrictions imposed during the first wave flattened the curve, but the second wave resulted in a 367% increase in cases in the City. During the first wave adults over the age of 70 years were the highest demographic being infected. The onset of the second wave saw a shift to the 20 to 30 years and 50 to 60 years age groups becoming the demographic with the most cases. The pressure on the health care system became greater with the second wave with an increase in admissions and people requiring intensive care.

We were able to adapt our response and pivot our programs rapidly to continue to provide services to the community and facilitate City building. The processes implemented by all portfolios early in the response ensured mitigation of risk to the health and safety of staff, critical infrastructure and service delivery. The experience and knowledge gained from the first wave assisted with managing the second wave.

The reviews of our response at strategic points, provided us the ability to identify lessons learned and plan for continuous improvements to enhance our response capabilities to any emergency situation the City will face in the future.