

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, March 24, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.

By video conference – The meeting will be live streamed on YouTube at the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCx9vXkywflJr0LUVkKnYWQ>

Land Acknowledgement Statement

We would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that Dufferin County resides within the traditional territory and ancestral lands of the Tionontati (Petun), Attawandaron (Neutral), Haudenosaunee (Six Nations), and Anishinaabe peoples.

We also acknowledge that various municipalities within the County of Dufferin reside within the treaty lands named under the Haldimand Deed of 1784 and two of the Williams Treaties of 1818: Treaty 18: the Nottawasaga Purchase, and Treaty 19: The Ajetance Treaty.

These traditional territories upon which we live and learn, are steeped in rich Indigenous history and traditions. It is with this statement that we declare to honour and respect the past and present connection of Indigenous peoples with this land, its waterways and resources.

Roll Call

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest by Members

PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

To submit your request to ask a question please contact us at info@dufferincounty.ca or 519-941-2816 x2500 prior to 4:30 p.m. on March 23, 2022.

REPORTS

1. GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES – March 24, 2022 – ITEM #1
2021 Health and Safety Review – Annual Report

A report from the Director of People and Equity, dated March 24, 2022, to provide an update on the health and safety activities for the year 2021, as well as 2019 and 2020.

Recommendation:

THAT the report of the Director of People & Equity, dated March 24, 2022, regarding the 2021 Health and Safety Review Annual Report, be received.

2. GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES – March 24, 2022 – ITEM #2
Development of International Aid Donation Relief Policy

A report from the Director of People and Equity, dated March 24, 2022, to discuss the process, considerations and next steps required for the County of Dufferin to develop an International Aid Donation Relief policy.

Recommendation:

THAT the report of the Director, People & Equity, titled Development of International Aid Relief Donation Policy, dated March 24, 2022, be received;

AND THAT staff be permitted to take the necessary steps to prepare a draft policy to be presented at the May 2022 meeting of the General Government Services Committee.

3. GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES – March 24, 2022 – ITEM #3
Vacancy Rebates and Reductions

A report from the Manager of Corporate Finance, Treasurer, dated March 24, 2022, to provide Council with additional information related to vacancy rebates and vacancy reductions.

Recommendation:

THAT the report of the Manager of Corporate Finance, Treasurer, dated March 24, 2022, regarding Vacancy Rebates and Reductions, be received.

4. GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES – March 24, 2022 – ITEM #4
SARS CoV2 (COVID-19) Pandemic After Action Report

A report from the Manager – Preparedness, 911 & Corporate Projects, dated March 24, 2022, to present the after-action report into the community wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendation:

THAT the report of the Manager – Preparedness and 911, dated March 24, 2022, with respect to SARS CoV2 (COVID-19) Pandemic After Action Report, be received.

5. GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES – March 24, 2022 – ITEM #5
Compensation Policy for Public Members on Advisory Committees

A report from the Clerk, dated March 24, 2022, to approve an amendment to Policy No. 1-2-02 – Committee Structure and Mandates to include compensation for public members of advisory committees.

Recommendations:

THAT the Report from the Clerk, dated March 24, 2022, titled Public Committee Member Compensation, be received;

AND THAT the amendments to Policy No. 1-2-02 – Committee Structure and Mandates be approved.

6. GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES – March 24, 2022 – ITEM #6
Community Grant & Food For Thought Grant Allocation Recommendations

A report from Headwaters Communities In Action, dated March 24, 2022, to recommend allocation of the Dufferin County Community Grant funds and Food For Thought Grant funds.

Recommendations:

For consideration of Council.

Next Meeting

Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 11:00 a.m.

Video Conference

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and Members of General Government Services Committee

From: Rohan Thompson, Director of People and Equity

Meeting Date: March 24, 2022

Subject: **2021 Health and Safety Review – Annual Report**

In Support of Strategic Plan Priorities and Objectives:

Good Governance – ensure transparency, clear communication, prudent financial management

Service Efficiency & Value – determine the right services for the right price

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the health and safety activities for the year 2021, as well as 2019 and 2020.

Background & Discussion

In an effort to keep Council aware of the initiatives being taken by the County in relation to health and safety, this report will summarize training, Joint Health and Safety Committee activities, incidents and injuries, and special projects that took place in 2021. In addition, it will outline objectives for 2022.

Training

In 2021, 276 county and municipal staff attended training in-person or via an e-learning platform. See Figures 1, 2 and 3 for a breakdown by training course. In 2020, 287 staff received training, and 553 received training in 2019. Individual municipal training records are available on the Health and Safety SharePoint, as provided by each municipality to the Health and Safety Advisor. Health and Safety Orientation and WHMIS training is provided to all new county and municipal staff.

Figure 1: Health and Safety Orientation Training Completed by Organization

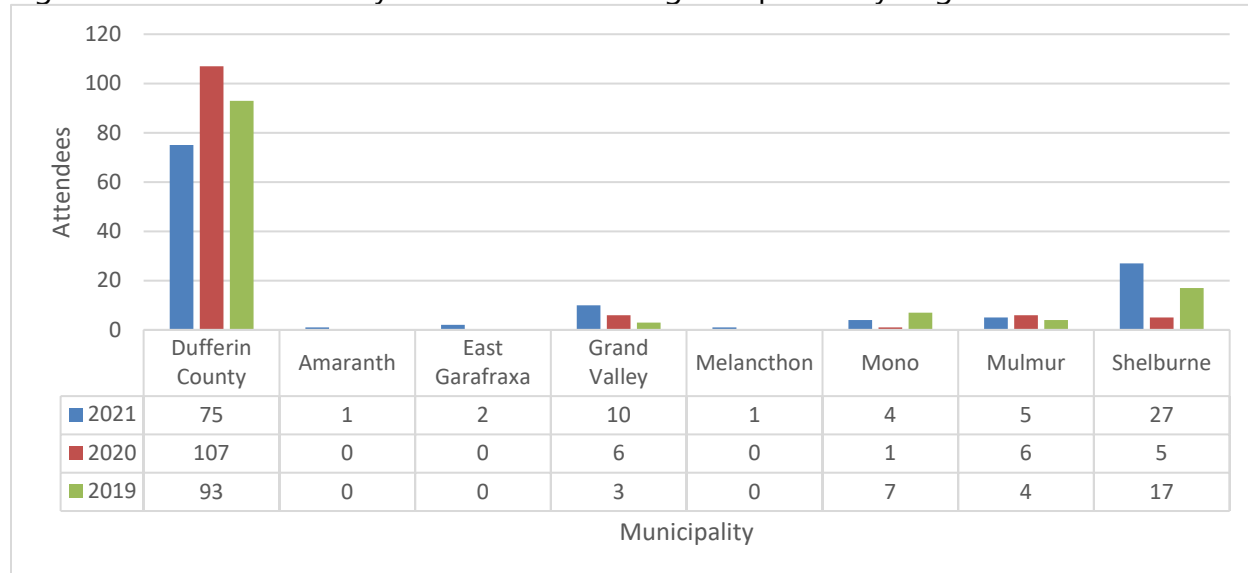
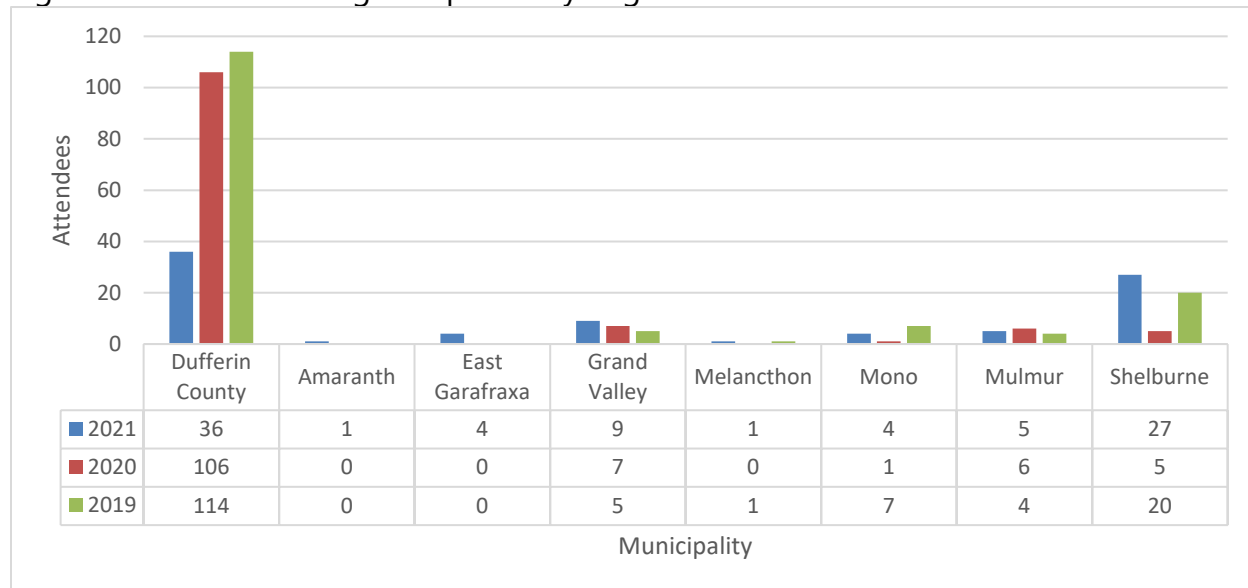


Figure 2: WHMIS Training Completed by Organization



It should be noted that Dufferin Oaks manages parts of their industry specific training on a separate platform, and in 2021 they moved their WHMIS training to that platform. Dufferin Oaks continues to use the county platform for the Health and Safety Orientation.

The following chart shows the breakdown of training by course. Numbers include both employees of Dufferin County and the member municipalities.

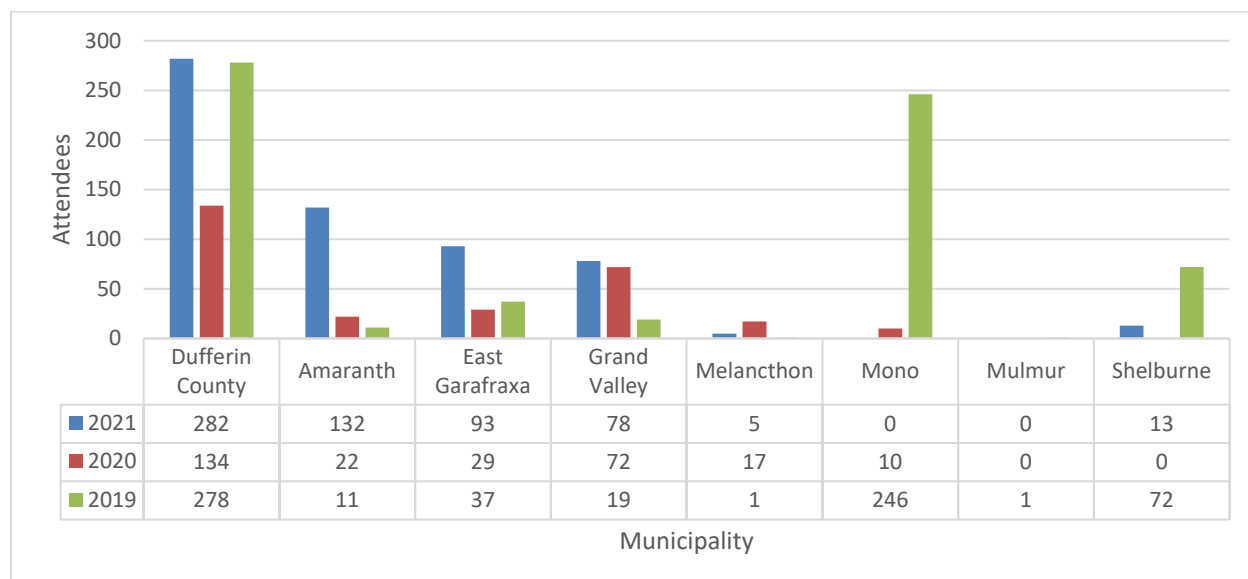
Figure 3: Health and Safety Training Breakdown by Course

Training Course	2021	2020	2019
Basic Chainsaw	0	2	0
Confined Space Entry	0	2	0
Ergo - Office	0	0	36
Ergo -JHSC ID Hazards	0	0	15
Ergo Managing Hazards	0	0	16
Ergo Staff Training (MMH, Vehicle)	0	0	37
First Aid Full Course	28	1	50
First Aid Recertification	3	0	5
Health and Safety Representative	1	5	0
Incident Reporting Investigation	0	1	0
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations	0	3	0
JHSC – workplace specific	0	3	3
JHSC Pt 1	0	1	1
Knife Safety	0	0	2
Lifts Truck Certification	8	0	0
Propane	0	0	10
Roadway Management	0	0	2
Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness	4	1	3
Thompson Steamer	0	0	10
Traffic Protection	0	0	11
Worker Health and Safety Awareness	15	18	44
Working at Heights Refresher	5	0	0
Workplace Violence	0	0	33

Safety Talks

In 2021, there were 603 recorded attendees at Safety Talks throughout Dufferin County and the lower tier municipalities. In 2020, there were 284, and in 2019 there were 665 attendees. The breakdown by municipality is shown below. A wide array of topics were chosen as appropriate by the supervisors or health and safety representatives leading the Safety Talks for each division. Individual records for Dufferin County and member municipalities can found on SharePoint.

Figure 4: Completed Safety Talks by organization



Joint Health and Safety Committees

The County has two separate committees, one focusing on Dufferin Oaks, and the other, a multi-site committee, focusing on all remaining County workplaces. Both committees have put an effort into maintaining the workplace inspection program for their respective workplaces.

County Multi-Site Committee

In 2021, the multi-site committee completed 84 inspections, with 38 hazards noted. The most common hazards identified were safety hazards involving the equipment, materials, or procedure in use. There are 3 outstanding hazards from 2021 and workplace inspections were conducted each month.

Dufferin Oaks

Dufferin Oaks Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) completed 10 inspections, as scheduled for 2021. From those inspections, 101 concerns were noted with 14 outstanding at the end of 2021 related to capital budget. These items remain with senior management for future capital budget consideration.

Incidents and Injuries

County-wide, there were 132 incidents reported to the Health and Safety office in 2021. Of those 132 incidents, 127 of them occurred in Long Term Care and 5 occurred in the

remaining County departments. It is important to note the incidents identified in both Long Term Care and other municipal departments vary due to the nature of the work and the associated hazards. The most frequently reported type of incident in Long Term Care involve injuries due to 'resident action'. These incidents occur when a resident injures a worker by actions such as grabbing, pinching, punching, or scratching staff, and pose the most significant challenge to mitigate.

In 2021, no critical incidents were reported and investigated by the County Multi-Site Joint Health and Safety Committee (MJHSC). One field visit was done by Ministry of Labour in 2021 with no orders issued. One critical incident was reported and investigated by the Dufferin Oaks JHSC. Recommendations were made to management as a result of the investigation and corrective action was implemented.

Amendments to Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)

The amendments to the WHMIS Regulation came into effect on January 21, 2019. Ontario has completed the transition from WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015. We updated all of our training in line with WHMIS 2015.

COVID-19

In early 2020, the SARS-CoV-2 virus created unprecedented challenges for Health and Safety systems around the world. Hazard analysis and risk assessments were completed for all departments, and appropriate personal protective equipment was sourced as required. A safety plan was created in compliance with O. Reg. 641/20 and the Province of Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework, which included information and resources on awareness, screening, controlling the risk of transmission, procedures to follow if workplace exposure is identified, management of new risks, and regular review. Some County staff were temporarily redeployed, and following provincial guidelines, many were able to begin working remotely.

The County of Dufferin created an Infection Prevention and Control Policy, and associated procedures concerning cleaning and sanitizing, physical distancing, personal protective equipment, screening, and reporting. An Employee Toolkit was created to help employees understand the County's internal strategy and protocols. The document included several key areas of focus, including health and wellness information and community supports, the new virtual health and safety board, and site-specific measures. Five COVID-related safety talks were created and delivered to staff.

COVID protocols remained in place through the entirety of 2021. In October 2021, the County of Dufferin implemented a vaccination policy requiring all employees to be fully vaccinated.

Achievements

The following is a list of other notable achievements by the County and member municipalities with respect to the Health and Safety program:

- Promoted and developed employee wellness initiatives including #WellnessWednesday posts on SharePoint, and lunchtime yoga hosted weekly over zoom
- Tracking of training documents, incidents, and inspections as received
- Policies were reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with legislative requirements
- New hires were provided with health and safety training modules to complete
- Fire Safety Plan Training was provided to all County staff

2022 Goals

The following is a list of some on-going and planned initiatives for the County and its member municipalities with respect to the Health and Safety program in 2022:

- Continue with Risk Analysis process
- Continue Fire Safety Plan approvals from fire departments
- Draft new policies and review and update existing policies
- Review training matrix to determine gaps, analyse position requirements, and facilitate required training and recertifications
- Familiarize with and support the county and the member municipalities operations and responses to the pandemic

Financial, Staffing, Legal, or IT Considerations

There are no financial, staffing, or legal impacts resulting from this report.

Recommendation

THAT the report of the Director of People & Equity, dated March 24, 2022, regarding the 2021 Health and Safety Review Annual Report, be received.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Rohan Thompson
Director of People & Equity

Prepared By:
Kira Gowanlock
Health and Safety Advisor

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and the Members of the General Government Services Committee

From: Rohan Thompson, Director of People & Equity

Meeting Date: March 24, 2022

Subject: **Development of International Aid Donation Relief Policy**

In Support of Strategic Plan Priorities and Objectives:

Good Governance – ensure transparency, clear communication, prudent financial management

Sustainable Environment & Infrastructure – protect assets both in the natural and built environment

Inclusive & Supportive Community – support efforts to address current & future needs for a livable community

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to discuss the process, considerations and next steps required for the County of Dufferin to develop an International Aid Donation Relief policy. County of Dufferin Council recognizes that although the responsibility to respond to international disasters, conflict and crises lies with the Federal government and international aid organizations, there may be instances where it is appropriate for the County of Dufferin to provide a donation or aid of some kind to support relief and humanitarian efforts.

Background & Discussion

In March of 2022, Russia mounted an attack, which has been deemed by the global community as an act of war against the sovereign county of Ukraine. Many governments, businesses and international organizations have condemned Russia's attack on Ukraine and have called for the Russian invasion to end. The County of

Dufferin has added its voice to the many that are calling on Russia to end its illegal occupation of the Ukraine.

At the March 10, 2022, County Council meeting a motion was made and approved, that the County of Dufferin make a financial donation totalling \$20,000 to the Canadian Red Cross and GLOBALMEDIC. It was discussed that County Council should develop a policy that provides a framework to inform how decisions to make international aid donations should be made. This will help to ensure consistency, fairness and transparency in decision making and that the County is making equitable decisions on this topic.

Staff have been directed to develop an International Aid Donation policy and bring forward a policy for County Council to consider for approval.

Next Steps

Staff will conduct an environmental scan and see what other municipalities have by way of policy on this topic. We will also consult other levels of government and aid organizations to ensure that our policy is in line with and supports coordinated efforts of the Canadian international aid community. Staff will return to the General Government Services Committee with a draft policy no later than May 26, 2022.

Policy Considerations

Here are some considerations that should help to inform this policy:

- Policy framework
- Scope
- Definition of key terms and concepts
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Guiding principles
- Types of approaches to international aid relief
- Policy alignment with higher order levels of government
- Criteria
- Protocols for assessment and determinations
- Monitoring and evaluation

Financial, Staffing, Legal, or IT Considerations

At this time, it is difficult to assess what the financial, staffing, legal and IT considerations will be for the development, implementation and monitoring of this policy. The following departments may play a role to support the policy development as well as the implementation:

- CAO's office
- Senior Management Team
- Emergency Management
- Communications
- People & Equity
- Information & Technology
- Clerks

Recommendation

THAT the report of the Director, People & Equity, titled Development of International Aid Relief Donation Policy, dated March 24, 2022, be received;

AND THAT staff be permitted to take the necessary steps to prepare a draft policy to be presented at the May 2022 meeting of the General Government Services Committee.

Respectfully submitted

Rohan Thompson
Director, People & Equity

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and Members of General Government Services Committee

From: Aimee Raves, Manager of Corporate Finance, Treasurer

Meeting Date: March 24, 2022

Subject: **Vacancy Rebates and Reductions**

In Support of Strategic Plan Priorities and Objectives:

Good Governance – ensure transparency, clear communication, prudent financial management

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with additional information related to vacancy rebates and vacancy reductions.

Background & Discussion

Vacancy Rebates and Vacancy Reductions are two separate matters. Per Section 364 of the Municipal Act, 2001, vacancy rebates are application based and provide relief to property owners when their commercial or industrial property was either partially or fully vacant. Section 313 of the Municipal Act, 2001, refers to subclass tax reductions. This section permits rate reductions or discounts on vacant commercial and industrial property subclasses, namely land awaiting development.

In June 2019, staff presented the attached report to Council related to vacancy rebates and discounts otherwise known as reductions. Council subsequently approved the following motion:

THAT the Report, Vacancy Rebates and Vacant Land Discounts, form the Treasurer, dated June 27, 2019, be received;

AND THAT the policy for Vacant Unit Rebates be amended, so that Rebates are discontinued commencing in the year 2020;

AND THAT staff be directed to follow the requirements in the legislation to implement this change.

Per the approved motion, the County and local municipalities subsequently discontinued the vacancy unit rebate program beginning in 2020. The subclass tax rate reductions or vacancy reductions were not recommended nor approved for discontinuation, thus the Tax Ratios by-law as presented is accurate.

Financial, Staffing, Legal, or IT Considerations

Ontario Regulation 580/17 was amended to allow municipalities to remove rate reductions for both excess and vacant lands subclasses. There are a number of Municipalities that have already removed these rate reductions or are in the process of phasing them out. Staff intend to review property tax policy in consultation with the local municipalities over the next year. At which time the subclass tax rate reductions can be considered. Upon review any changes will be presented to Council for approval.

Recommendations:

THAT the report of the Manager of Corporate Finance, Treasurer, dated March 24, 2022, regarding Vacancy Rebates and Reductions, be received.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Aimee Raves, CPA, CMA
Manager of Corporate Finance, Treasurer



REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and Members of General Government Services Committee

From: Alan Selby, Treasurer

Meeting Date: June 27, 2019

Subject: Vacancy Rebates and Vacant Land Discounts

In Support of Strategic Plan Priorities and Objectives:

Good Governance: 3.3.2 Review and update current policies and procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to review existing tax policies for vacancies on commercial and/or industrial properties in Dufferin County.

Background and Discussion

The Town of Orangeville has asked the County, through a Town Council motion passed in May, to “consider opting out of the Vacancy Tax Rebate Program”.

Vacant Unit Rebates (called VU-Rebates in this report) apply to commercial and industrial buildings that were entirely vacant, or where the building was partially vacant, was unused and was clearly delineated or physically separated from the used portions of the buildings. The VU-Rebate program is governed by Section 364 of the Municipal Act, and by Ontario Regulation 325/01.

The cost of VU-Rebates are treated as tax write-offs, and are shared between the local municipality, the County and the School Boards. Property owners must apply to the local municipality for a rebate. This requires administrative time for the municipality to process rebate applications.

VU-Rebates were intended to assist property owners in times of economic downturn, to reduce full tax liability whether or not their property was tenanted. In some cases, the program has led to speculative holding of property, and absentee landlords, with no interest to improve the standards of their buildings. Incentives to revitalize core business sectors, and promote employment growth at the local level, were needed. The Province responded with Ont. Reg. 581/17 to give municipalities flexibility to tailor the rebates program to meet community needs, effective with the 2017 tax year.

The Town of Orangeville has indicated in its motion that it has multiple properties that have applied for VU-Rebates for two or more consecutive years.

The rebate program is a tax policy, and all tax policies are established by the County. County Council must approve any changes to policy. Changes to the vacancy rebate policy can be limited to specific local municipalities, but not others. The County must submit details of proposed changes to the Minister of Finance, along with a Council resolution. The Ministry will notify affected municipalities when the regulation implementing the requested changes is enacted.

Finally, by way of background, there is also a program for undeveloped raw land. There are property sub-classes for such properties, and they receive Discounts (as opposed to Rebates) on their taxes, under Municipal Act section 313(1). These Discounts do not require an application process, and they are not a part of the Town's request. Vacant Land Discount policy could also be amended by the County. However, that would lead to a tax shift away from those sub-classes, and mostly to the Residential class of property. Changes to the Discount policy for vacant land is not recommended.

Financial, Staffing, Legal and IT Considerations

There is a multi-step process to be undertaken in order to respond to the Town's request. The County must decide upon its intention to alter the VU-Rebate policy for 2020, and if so, would the rebates be phased-out, or fully eliminated. The County should also consider if the changes are to be part of a multi-year strategy (that is, to remain eliminated beyond 2020).

Many municipalities have either immediately discontinued their VU-Rebates (Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill, Newmarket), while many others have chosen to phase-out theirs. Other jurisdictions have done a 30%, 20%, 10%, Zero phase-out (Caledon, Mississauga) or a 30% to 15% to Zero phase-out (London, Oakville, Ottawa, Toronto). These examples all began their phase-outs with the 2017 or 2018 year, with rebates discontinued in all cases by the 2020 year.

Orangeville advises that the County's share of rebate-driven tax write-offs in 2017 was \$35,426. Financial impact to the Town, for the Town share, was \$78,774 and \$76,492 to the School Boards. (on 31 properties)

Next, each member municipality should be consulted to determine whether or not the VU-Rebate ought to apply to their municipality. The County of Wellington, for example, has altered or eliminated the VU-Rebate program for four of its local municipalities.

The Province provides a Checklist to follow. The municipal Checklist steps were covered above, but there is also some mandatory Business Community Engagement required.

The Province requires that the County includes, as part of the application to the Province for a change in policy, the answers to these questions:

- Have you engaged the local business community?
- Can you provide details on how, and when, you have engaged the local business community?
- Have you considered the potential impacts the proposed changes may have on local businesses?
- Have you communicated potential impacts of proposed changes to the business community?
- Has Council been made aware of the potential impacts on businesses?

Methods for doing this community engagement include:

- Meeting with Dufferin Board of Trade
- Advertising in local newspapers to notify property owners
- Posting details of County proposals on the County website
- Circulating a Notice to local municipalities, with a request to place the Notice as correspondence on their Council Agendas

Notices should explain the intended changes, the reasons for the changes, and what the changes mean for the taxation of certain properties. There could also be a method put in place for property owners to, if they so desire, express their concerns, and provide their comments to local Councillors.

Once all local Council responses come back, and business community input reviewed, County Council would pass the necessary resolution to specify the proposed changes. Then the County would send its application to the Province.

All these steps would be necessary prior to the annual setting of tax policies.

Strategic Direction and County of Dufferin Principles

Responding to local municipality requests for specific changes to Tax Policies is an identified action in support of the strategic objective to review and update current policies and procedures. It adheres to the County of Dufferin Principles:

1. We Manage Change – by responding to requests to consider amending tax policies;
2. We Deliver Quality Service – by being open to making changes to the status quo, after examining the impacts of policy changes;
3. We Communicate – by informing all affected entities of any proposed changes, after they have come through discussions with Council;
4. We Make Good Decisions – by recognizing changing circumstances that indicate the need to improve existing policies.

Recommendation:

For consideration of Committee.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Alan Selby, CPA CGA
County Treasurer

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and Members of the General Government Services Committee

From: Steve Murphy, Manager – Preparedness, 911 & Corporate Projects

Date: March 24, 2022

Subject: SARS CoV2 (COVID-19) Pandemic After Action Report

In Support of Strategic Priorities:

Good Governance (GG) - ensure transparency, clear communication, prudent financial management

Sustainable Environment and Infrastructure (SEI)- protect assets both in the natural and built environment

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the after-action report into the community wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background & Discussion

On March 26, 2020, the County of Dufferin declared an emergency in accordance with the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act to respond to the threat posed by the SARS CoV2 pandemic. This emergency declaration remained in effect until March 1, 2022. During that time more than 4,000 Dufferin County residents contracted COVID-19 and 54 died.

In accordance with By-law 2013-54, an after-action review is required following all significant incidents. Given the magnitude of this emergency a consulting firm was retained to conduct a series of after-action interviews and prepare a final report for the Emergency Management Program Committee. On February 23, 2022, Plannix Operations presented their findings to a meeting of the Joint Emergency Management Program Committee.

Included in the report are a total of 93 recommendations divided into the following 10 categories:

- Plans & Procedures
- Incident Management System
- Coordination & Governance
- Long-Term Care, Retirement & Congregate Living
- Virtual Workplace/Information Technology
- Resources & Logistics
- Communications
- Training & Exercises
- Recovery
- General Observations

Of the 93 recommendations presented in the report, many were to continue current practices or procedures. This is a testament to the ability of all of the various stakeholder groups to come together for the well-being of the community.

Staff are currently reviewing the recommendations to identify priority items and determine what resources will be required to implement the necessary improvements. These priority items will be presented to the Emergency Management Program Committee and will form the basis of future preparedness projects.

The full after-action report is attached.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact arising from this report.

Recommendation

THAT the report of the Manager – Preparedness and 911, dated March 24, 2022, with respect to SARS CoV2 (COVID-19) Pandemic After Action Report, be received.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Murphy
Manager – Preparedness, 911 & Corporate Projects

Reviewed by: Sonya Pritchard, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment: COVID-19 Debriefing of Municipal Partners Summary Report



COVID-19

Debriefing of Municipal Partners

Summary Report



Photo courtesy Dufferin County

Prepared by: Plannix Operations

February 23, 2022

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Executive Summary

In December 2019, a newly detected coronavirus (COVID-19) was reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) China Country Office. By March 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 viral disease a pandemic. Over the period from early 2020 to present day (January 2022), Ontario experienced 5 waves of COVID variants differing in their transmissibility and severity but all causing significant adverse effects on the health and wellbeing of residents and their communities. Public health measures such as mandatory masking in indoor settings, stay-at-home orders and working from home were instituted, phased out, and then reintroduced depending on the severity of the variant. Fortunately, vaccines were discovered and introduced and their strong protective effects have significantly reduced the risk of severe illness, hospitalization and death from the virus. The fifth wave of the Omicron variant is still ongoing resulting in an unprecedented number of new daily hospital admissions that exceeded maximums over the past week.¹

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments, businesses, and society have experienced massive transformational change in all aspects of life. Municipalities had to develop new service delivery models and adapt operations and protocols to adhere to evolving public health and workplace safety measures while ensuring the health and safety of their residents, staff and external partners. To respond to and manage this escalating situation, Dufferin County activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on March 10, 2020. By March 17, the County was largely operating remotely from home with the exception of essential services such as Fire, Dufferin County Paramedic Services, child services, public works and senior management. The County of Dufferin declared an Emergency in accordance with the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* on Thursday, March 26, 2020.

Following any significant incident or emergency or during a prolonged incident or emergency, municipalities and agencies usually conduct a formal debriefing with key stakeholders to discover strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvements. As the pandemic has been active for a prolonged period, the County of Dufferin felt that the fall of 2021 was an opportune time to review and reflect upon the many actions taken and lessons learned to date. Consulting firm Plannix Operations was engaged to undertake this review. In-person and virtual debriefings were held with municipal stakeholders that the County stipulated.

Based on the discussions with the stakeholders, the following general themes were identified:

- Plans and Procedures
- Coordination and Governance
- Incident Management System (IMS)

¹ Omicron wave may have peaked, but ICU numbers still rising steeply, says Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, CTV News, January 23, 2022

- Virtual workplace/Information Technology
- Resources and Logistics
- Communications
- Training and Exercises
- Recovery

While the health sector had existing pandemic or outbreak plans to help coordinate their responses, because much was unknown about COVID and the scope and duration of the pandemic, the various agencies had to be flexible and agile to adapt. The need to regularly review and update these plans has been recommended, along with necessary training of staff.

Similarly, the current Dufferin County Emergency Response Plan was a strong tool for organizing and coordinating the County's response to the pandemic. It was key for bringing all of the stakeholders together in an organized manner. Years of relationship building by the County's Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) with the stakeholders, including regular training and emergency exercise participation was highlighted by all who were interviewed as being supremely beneficial in the well-coordinated response. This high level of trust, collaboration and cooperation among the multi-faceted and diverse agency representatives had been built and nurtured over the years. These excellent working relationships served as a critical pre-condition for achieving an effective, nimble and resilient emergency response that is still ongoing. It is recommended that working groups for congregate living, emergency social services, health and agriculture be formalized to ensure ongoing situational awareness and relationship building. Furthermore, continued efforts to maintain existing and build new relationships amongst the stakeholder agencies who support the community are strongly recommended.

The general consensus from the stakeholders who participated in the debriefings was that the COVID pandemic is so broad with such enormous impacts on society that not one plan could have effectively managed and governed the response.

While some of the stakeholder agencies did have Business Continuity Plans (BCP) or Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) prior to the onset of the COVID pandemic, no plans were capable of managing the massive disruption to day-to-day operations. Key amongst the issues was the need to adopt virtual workplace (work-from-home) strategies for almost all functions, save for those that required in-person services (e.g. healthcare, long-term centres, retirement homes, congregate living, emergency services) or that were primarily outdoor work without direct contact with other people (e.g. public works). For staff who lived in rural areas, broadband internet service was either poor or non-existent, presenting greater challenges to undertaking work-from-home.

The Incident Management System (IMS) is a standardized approach to emergency management used in Canada, the United States and other parts of the world to bring personnel, facilities, equipment, procedures and communications together within a

common organizational structure. While the Incident Management System worked well for managing the pandemic emergency in the healthcare sector, staff turnover and inexperience in an Emergency Operations Centre environment did present some struggles. Some municipalities noted that they had more success with IMS than others, especially the smaller ones with fewer staff. A greater emphasis on Emergency Operations Centre and Incident Management System training, coordinated communications and Continuity of Operations planning are recommended.

Governance was challenging for the County, local area municipalities, the Medical Officer of Health, the Wellington/Dufferin/Guelph Health Unit, the Dufferin/Caledon/Peel/Halton Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN), hospitals, public and private long-term care and retirement homes, congregate settings, shelters and other external stakeholders. Key amongst this was the sentiment that Provincial coordination was disjointed, confusing and lacking. Established channels and protocols were not used, new guidance and information (at times, conflicting) were continually being provided to responding agencies, often with little notice, no consultation, confusion, and negligible time to pivot for implementation. For the municipalities, it was reported that the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) of Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) seemed to be missing from the coordination and response despite the exceptional efforts of the Bruce Sector Field Officer. In particular, the relationship between the PEOC and the new top-driven “Command Table” is not defined nor does it reflect past emergency planning and response practices, operations and training.

Another issue that arose was that during the COVID pandemic, the province introduced a new system (COVAX) for Public Health Units (PHU) to use that, it appears, duplicates existing systems. Public Health Units in Ontario already use a variety of established information systems for managing outbreaks and health issues. Consequently, the mid-stream introduction of a new system presented a new challenge, as PHU personnel suddenly had to undertake new training in the midst of an ongoing emergency.

The long-term care (LTC), retirement homes and congregate living sector were particularly challenged by the COVID pandemic. The LTC’s focused on outbreak management and meeting staffing shortages throughout the duration of this emergency. Two privately run facilities in Dufferin County experienced significant outbreaks and a high rate of resident fatalities early in the pandemic.

For retirement homes, the lack of mandatory requirements for regulated professional nurses to provide care for residents resulted in Personal Support Workers (PSW) having to meet those needs. This included providing medical supports such as drug dispensing. With limited integration and coordination in the province of the various ministries and regulations for the retirement home sector and uneven oversight and enforcement, the potential for gaps in resident care exists.

As has been widely reported, the ability to sustain staffing levels in long-term care (LTC) facilities during the pandemic was increasingly difficult. A provincial mandate that

Personal Support Workers (PSWs) could no longer work in more than one facility plus the need for staff to isolate if they had been exposed or contracted COVID put a further strain on an already stressed system. To manage the care of LTC residents, staffing schedules were constantly being adjusted and management personnel stepped in to support the care.

At the onset of COVID, it appears that the congregate living sector was not sufficiently considered and guidance and support fell through the cracks. Consequently, one of the worst outbreaks in Dufferin County occurred in such a facility. To help relieve this issue, the Wellington-Guelph-Dufferin Public Health Unit working with Dufferin County support, established a focused team to help address the outbreaks in congregate care.

Stakeholder agencies and sectors reported that at the beginning of the pandemic the sudden increase in requirements to provide staff with personal protective equipment (PPE) proved to be a significant challenge. Existing stockpiles had expired and were not sufficiently replenished. To best manage the demand, in Dufferin County, the Ontario Health Team assumed a coordinating role as the PPE conduit while Dufferin County assumed the logistics role for centralized PPE sourcing. Headwaters Health Care Centre had a stockpile and a reliable supplier and they centralized the storage of the stockpile. Stakeholders collaborated on a PPE plan for best use/value for PPE supply and distribution.

With new guidance continually being provided to all sectors, the need to keep staff up-to-date was an ongoing challenge. Various tactics were employed to keep everyone informed as best as possible. Public information needed to be timely and accurate to successfully implement public health measures and maintain day-to-day government services. In Dufferin County, in-person Council meetings were moved to virtual, a first for Ontario. Once the County had approval to proceed virtually, they found that the response was positive and that greater resident participation occurred.

Communicating to constituents by elected officials is a critical role. It was found during the pandemic emergency that Dufferin Council was not very familiar with what an emergency declaration entails and specifically what powers the declaration bestows. Providing additional guidance to Council as well as establishing appropriate communication protocols is recommended.

As the COVID pandemic continues for over 2 years now, exhaustion and compassion fatigue has become an ongoing concern, especially in the healthcare sector. Staff in all of the stakeholder groups have been fairly resilient, but there is no indication when pressures will start to decrease. The vast majority of stakeholders however, displayed tremendous team work, comradery and good will to serve the betterment of the community.

Generally, the stakeholders felt that the overall response at the community level in Dufferin County has been fairly successful given all of the unknowns, disruptions and changes. County staff should be commended for their professionalism, unwavering

commitment to performing their duties and serving the public, and for demonstrating flexibility and resilience during an uncertain and at times frightening emergency which is not yet over.

Appendix B summarizes all of the recommendations contained throughout the body of this report.

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1. Introduction

Following any significant incident or emergency or during a prolonged incident or emergency, municipalities and agencies usually conduct a formal debriefing with key stakeholders to discover strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvements. The County of Dufferin has undertaken this review in response to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency that began in late 2019 and is continuing to this date. As the pandemic emergency has been underway for over two years now, Dufferin County felt that the fall of 2021 was an opportune time to review and reflect upon the many actions taken and lessons learned. This report consolidates these actions and lessons into one document to inform next steps and further the continuous improvement journey for County staff and community agencies.

2. Background

Winter 2020

Infection Protection and Control Canada reported on December 31, 2019 that the World Health Organization (WHO) China Country Office was informed of three people with pneumonia connected to a cluster of acute respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. Like SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV, the newly detected coronavirus (SARS CoV-2) has a zoonotic source, however, human to human transmission had been confirmed.

On March 11, 2020 the WHO declared COVID-19 viral disease a pandemic. The Director-General of the World Health Organization held a media briefing on March 11, 2020 reporting that *“in the past two weeks, the number of cases of COVID-19 outside China has increased 13-fold, and the number of affected countries has tripled.... There are now more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries, and 4,291 people have lost their lives.... We have therefore made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic... We have never before seen a pandemic sparked by a coronavirus. This is the first pandemic caused by a coronavirus”*².

A small number of Ontario residents began testing positive for Covid-19, mostly those returning from international travel. On February 11, a 77-year-old male became the first known person to die of COVID-19 in the Province of Ontario. Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health announced the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Dufferin County on March 16, 2020.

Shortly after, the Toronto Medical Officer of Health recommended that all residents who travel outside Canada should self-isolate for fourteen days. March 16 brought restrictions to long-term care homes, allowing essential visitors only³.

² WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 11 March 2020

³ “What Ontario got right- and wrong – in Covid 10 battle”, the Toronto Star, July 18, 2020

First Province of Ontario Emergency Declaration

On March 17, 2020, based on the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and other leading public health officials, the Province of Ontario declared an emergency under section 7.01 (1) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. Under the Act, an emergency "... means a situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise."

Emergency orders were then issued by the Province of Ontario to protect the health, safety and welfare of Ontarians. This declared provincial emergency was in effect for 129 days, ending on July 24, 2020. Forty-seven emergency orders were issued and amended as needed to protect Ontarians to address challenges in the following 5 areas:

- limiting spread of COVID-19
- supporting continuity of critical services
- supporting business
- supporting vulnerable sectors
- providing cost relief to Ontarians

On April 27, 2020, Ontario released *A Framework for Reopening our Province* outlining the criteria the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts would use to advise the government on loosening of public health measures. It also established guiding principles, such as a stage-by-stage approach for the safe, gradual reopening of places of business, services and public spaces that had been required to close or limit their services.

This emergency declaration remained in effect until June 24, 2020 when the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*, was introduced.

Although the emergency was terminated, The *Reopening Ontario Act* provided the Ontario government with flexibility to address the ongoing risks of the pandemic by allowing the government to amend, extend or revoke existing emergency orders under sections 7.0.2 and 1.2 of the Emergency Act. On October 30, 2020, 34 of approximately 50 initial orders remained in effect subject to extensions of 30 days at a time⁴. The orders under Reopening Ontario remained in force until January 20, 2021.

Second Province of Ontario Emergency Declaration

On January 12, 2021, the Province of Ontario declared a second provincial emergency in response to the doubling of COVID-19 cases in two weeks, the threat of collapse in the hospital system and the alarming risk posed to long-term care homes due to high transmission rates. A Stay-at-Home provincial-wide emergency order was also issued

⁴ COVID-19 Preparedness and Management, Special Report on Emergency Management in Ontario – Pandemic Response, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, November 2020, pg. 2-3.

on January 14, 2021 requiring everyone to remain at home with the exception of essential purposes such as groceries or health care services, for exercise or for essential work. Businesses were also required to ensure that employees work from home wherever possible⁵.

Thirty-five emergency orders were issued in addition to those remaining in effect under the *Reopening Ontario Act* and were designed to respond to the rapid increase of COVID-19 cases and to address concerns associated with the new COVID-19 variants of concern. The declaration remained in place until February 9, 2021.⁶

Third Province of Ontario Emergency Declaration

In response to the rapid increase in COVID-19 transmission and risks posed by variants of concern and the pressure on hospital capacity, the Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) declared a third provincial emergency under section 7.0.1 of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA) on April 7, 2021.

This declared provincial emergency enabled Ontario to introduce emergency orders to introduce new public health and workplace safety measures to respond to the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ontario Government also issued a province-wide Stay-At-Home Order in effect Thursday, April 8, 2021 for a four-week period. These new orders were in addition to those remaining in effect under the *Reopening Ontario Act* and the two emergency orders made during the second provincial emergency.

The declaration remained in effect for a 56-day period ending on June 2, 2021 given the downward trend in COVID-19 case numbers and steady improvement in hospital system capacity. The Province introduced the *Roadmap to Reopen*, a three-step plan to safely and cautiously reopen and gradually ease public health and workplace safety measure in effect⁷.

Ontario Moves to Step Three of Roadmap to Reopen

The Ontario government moved the province into *Step Three of the Roadmap to Reopen* on July 16, 2021 when key public health and health care indicators continued to improve and the provincewide vaccination rate surpassed initial targets.

Step Three focused on resuming additional indoor services with larger numbers of people and reduced public health and restrictions. Ontario's epidemiological data identified the Delta variant as the dominant strain necessitating the continued use of

⁵ News Release, Ontario Declares Second Provincial Emergency to Address COVID-19 Crisis and Save Lives, January 12, 2021, Office of the Premier

⁶ Report on Ontario's second Declared Provincial Emergency from January 12, 2021 to February 9, 2021

⁷ Report on Ontario's Third Declared Provincial Emergency from April 7, 2021 to June 2, 2021, Ontario.ca, June 7, 2021

face coverings in indoor public settings and physical distancing. The Chief Medical Officer of Health continued to evaluate these requirements on an ongoing basis.

Mandatory Vaccinations to Access Certain Businesses and Settings

To further protect Ontarians as the province continued to confront the Delta-driven fourth wave of the COVID-19, the Province required people to be fully vaccinated and provide proof of their vaccination status to access certain businesses and settings starting September 22, 2021. Requiring proof of vaccination in these settings reduced risk and is an important step to encourage every eligible Ontarian to get vaccinated, which is critical to protecting the province's hospital capacity and supporting businesses with the tools they need to keep customers safe and minimize disruptions.

Ontario Further Strengthening Response to Omicron

On December 17, 2021, the Ontario government applied additional public health and workplace safety measures including capacity and social gathering limits in response to the rapidly-spreading and highly transmissible Omicron variant. To reduce opportunities for close contact as vaccination acceleration efforts increased, Ontario introduced a 50 percent capacity limit in indoor public settings including restaurants, bars and other food and drink establishments, personal care services, personal physical fitness trainers, retailers, shopping malls, and indoor recreational amenities.

Ontario Temporarily Moving to Modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen Omicron Variant

In response to the recent Omicron variant trends showing an alarming increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations, the Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, temporarily moved the province into *Step Two of its Roadmap to Reopen* with modifications that acknowledge the province's successful vaccination efforts. These measures include reducing social gathering limits to five people indoors and 10 people outdoors, requiring businesses and organizations ensure employees work remotely as much as possible, closing indoor dining, concert venues, theatre, cinemas along with numerous other restrictions. These time-limited measures are thought to help blunt transmission and prevent hospitals from becoming overwhelmed as the province continues to accelerate its booster dose rollout.

Unlike other variants, Omicron appears to be less severe but its high transmissibility has resulted in larger number of hospital admissions relative to intensive care unit admissions. Also, staff absenteeism is rising and affecting operations in workplaces across Canada due to Omicron infection and exposure. The supply chain for goods and services is strained and hospital and laboratory testing systems are largely overwhelmed in Ontario and most of Canada.

As part of the Province's response to the Omicron variant, starting January 5, 2022, students pivoted to remote learning with free emergency child care planned for school-

aged children of health care and other eligible frontline workers. In person learning at school resumed the week of January 17, 2022.⁸

At the time of this report's writing, these measures are scheduled to be rescinded on January 26, 2022. The next section presents a statistical overview of pandemic cases and vaccinations in Ontario.

Ontario/Canada Snapshot View of Cases and Vaccines

On January 17, 2022, the Ontario government COVID-19 (coronavirus) web site reported:

- Ontarians aged 18 or older with a booster dose - 46.6%
- Hospitalized - 3,887
- In ICU due to COVID-related illness - 578
- Ontarians aged 5 or older fully vaccinated - 82.4%
- Ontarians aged 5 or older with at least one dose - 88.2%
- Ontarians aged 12 or older fully vaccinated - 88.7%
- Ontarians aged 12 or older in 2021 with at least one dose - 91.4%
- Total doses administered - 29,522,313
- New daily cases - 8,521

The Government of Canada web site on COVID-19 daily epidemiology reported on January 19, 2022:

- Total Canadian Covid-19 cases – 2,868,862
- Total Resolved Cases – 2,538,133
- Total Canadian deaths – 32,220
- Deaths today – 212

According to Professor Livio Di Matteo, Professor of Economics at Lakehead University, “in 2020, 11 percent of Canada’s COVID-19 cases, and more than 70 percent of COVID-19 deaths, were in long-term care facilities. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, while Canada’s overall COVID-19 mortality rate was relatively low compared with rates in other Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, we had the highest proportion of LTC deaths”.⁹

3. Debriefing Process

To undertake the COVID-19 response review, Plannix Operations was engaged to facilitate the debriefing process and prepare a summary report. A survey (see Appendix A) was prepared and issued to stakeholders identified by Dufferin County. To

⁸ News Release, Office of the Premier, January 03, 2022

⁹ Among countries that should’ve known better, Canada’s virus response was abysmal”, Globe and Mail, May 26, 2021

accommodate all of the stakeholders, two in-person debriefing sessions were held on November 23 and 24, 2021. The consultants prepared an agenda and a series of questions that was emailed to the participants to initiate discussion on what practices worked well, what didn't work well, and to identify opportunities for improvement. Follow-up debriefing sessions were conducted virtually in December 2021 and January 2022 with several stakeholders who were unable to attend the in-person sessions.

The debriefings were limited to the stakeholders that Dufferin County stipulated. The review of the COVID response did not examine individual agencies' internal actions or the Provincial responses, however where the Province's actions affected the participating stakeholders, the correlating impact on stakeholder responses were noted. The federal governments actions were not examined in this review. Debriefings with individual physicians and elected officials were also outside of the scope of this assignment.

3.1. Stakeholders

3.1.1. Health Sector

With a public health emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Sector has played, and continues to play, the lead role in the public response. In Dufferin County, these agencies include:

- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH)
- Ontario Health Team (OHT)
- Dufferin Area Family Health Team
- Headwaters Health Care Centre
- Dufferin County Paramedic Services
- Home and Community Care Support Services

All of the Health Sector groups had significant roles responding to the pandemic, with the WDGPH taking the lead on:

- monitoring outbreaks in the community
- tracking and tracing COVID exposures
- establishing and enforcing public health measures
- providing COVID-19 information and direction to the media, residents, businesses, local government and agencies, and the healthcare sector in the community
- coordinating vaccine management and establishing and operating vaccination clinics
- liaising with the Ministry of Health and provincial agencies, as required
- coordinating local community medical resources (family health teams, hospitals, etc.)
- fulfilling the legislative mandate of the Medical Officer of Health as outlined in provincial legislation

- coordinating on preventing human health risks in shelters, including areas of food preparation, infection prevention and control, water quality and sanitation

As the pandemic unfolded, with the WDGP leading the vaccination efforts, the Health Sector, the County of Dufferin and the local municipalities had an active role in supporting the health response efforts to the pandemic.

3.1.2. Municipal Sector

Dufferin County is the upper-tier municipality that is comprised of four towns: Mono, Orangeville, Shelburne and Grand Valley and four rural townships: Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon and Mulmur.

The County seat is located in the Town of Orangeville (the largest of the eight municipalities).

The County of Dufferin Emergency Response Plan "...facilitates a controlled and coordinated response to any type of emergency occurring within or affecting the Municipality. The aim of the plan is to provide key officials, agencies and the municipal departments with an overview of their collective and individual responsibilities in an emergency. This plan also makes provisions for the extraordinary arrangements and measures that may have to be taken to safeguard the health, safety, welfare and property of the inhabitants of the Municipality".

The Emergency Control Group is responsible for initiating, coordinating and implementing the emergency response plan through the use of the Incident Management System at both lower and upper tiers. It is responsible for coordinating municipal operations prior to, during and after the emergency; prioritizing municipal operations and supporting the response to the emergency.

The Emergency Response Plan applies to the County of Dufferin and each of the eight member municipalities. The Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) for the County of Dufferin is appointed as the primary CEMC for each member municipality.

As most of the towns have small operations, Dufferin County manages the emergency management programs for them, with one Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC), a County employee.

3.1.3. Long-Term Care/Retirement Homes

In the early waves of the pandemic, the sector that was most severely impacted across the province was the long-term care (LTC), retirement homes and congregate living sector. Due in part to the factors that exasperated the COVID outbreaks such as age, underlying health conditions, close living quarters, and staff movement among multiple locations, COVID related illnesses and mortality most heavily affected this sector. The congregate living sector was further challenged by limited or non-existent outbreak

plans and protocols, limited access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and fragmented oversight and regulation.

In Dufferin County, one long-term care home is owned and operated by the County: Dufferin Oaks Long Term Care. All other LTC, retirement and congregate living facilities are in the private or not for profit sectors.

Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities focused on outbreak planning and meeting staffing shortages. Management and staff willingness to be flexible and nimble greatly assisted their operation voluntarily flexing their schedules to ensure 7-day on-site Management support for their teams

Fortunately for Dufferin Oaks, it does not have 4-bedded rooms which helped contain the COVID-19 spread. It was easier to separate residents in a 2-bedded environment. Restrictions were put in place to prevent staff from working in multiple locations.

As of February 2, 2022, Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health reported four fatalities at Dufferin Oaks, twenty at Shelburne, two at Headwaters Health Care Centre, five at Bethsaida and one at Avalon Long Term Care. County-wide, forty-six individuals in long term care settings have died.

3.1.4. Congregate Living Settings

The congregate living settings (CLSs) entails a broad spectrum of types of facilities generally supporting vulnerable clientele, but can include:

- Supportive housing;
- Supported developmental services/Intervenor residences;
- Emergency homeless shelters;
- Mental health and addictions congregate settings;
- Homes for special care and community homes for opportunity;
- Violence against women (VAW) shelters;
- Anti-human trafficking (AHT) residences;
- Children's residential facilities; and
- Indigenous Healing and Wellness Facilities.¹⁰

3.1.5. Emergency Services

Residents and businesses in Dufferin County are serviced by seven fire departments, depending on location:

- Town of Orangeville Fire Services
- Shelburne and District Fire Department
- Rosemont District Fire Department
- Mulmur-Melancthon Fire Department

¹⁰ Ministry of Health, COVID-19 Guidance: Congregate Living for Vulnerable Populations

- Town of Caledon Fire and Emergency Services
- Town of Erin Fire & Emergency Service
- Dundalk Fire Department

All of the fire services are either volunteers or composite (full-time and volunteer) operations.

Residents in Dufferin County who require emergency medical response are serviced by Dufferin County Paramedic Services. The Headwaters Health Care Centre is the license holder for this service.

3.1.6. Other Community Support

Food insecurity throughout the world is growing, including in Dufferin County. The Orangeville Food Bank was established in 1991 to help the hungry in the community. Its vision is “A community without hunger.” Clients are “people in transition including:

- those experiencing job loss or reduction in work hours
- those experiencing a recent family breakdown
- those with unexpected emergencies
- single parents
- the working poor
- residents on income support
- seniors with low pension income
- people with physical injuries or disabilities
- people with mental illness¹¹”

The Orangeville Food Bank is a non-governmental organization (NGO) managed by an Executive Director and a Food Manager. It is staffed by approximately 150 volunteers and relies primarily on food and financial donations from businesses and the community. Dufferin County provides a donation to help the Food Bank.

4. Observations and Themes

Following a review of the survey results and the debriefing sessions, several general themes were identified:

- Plans And Procedures
 - Pandemic Plans
 - Emergency Response Plans
 - Business Continuity Plans
- Incident Management System (IMS)
- Coordination, Governance
- Virtual Workplace/Information Technology

¹¹ Orangeville Food Bank website, January 2022

- Resources And Logistics
 - PPE
 - Staffing
- Communications
- Training And Exercises
- Recovery

5. Plans and Procedures

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Pandemic Plan

The existing WDGPH Pandemic Plan is based on all-hazards risk assessment approach and focused on preventative measures and vaccination. The plan was too complicated to implement given the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the COVID response and did not sufficiently address the need for stringent public health measures and communications. It did however, provide a good foundation for cooperation, collaboration and innovation.

Recommendation:

1. Review and update the WDGPH Pandemic Plan to reflect the need for managing new, potentially non-preventable viruses and increased emergency response scalability.

Headwaters Health Care Centre Pandemic Plan

The Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) had an established Pandemic Plan that they were able to activate at the onset of the COVID-19 emergency. The plan included outbreak policies and procedures and a strong focus on infection prevention and control (IPAC). As with many of the other agencies, the plan was a strong starting point but given the high uncertainty and unknowns about the virus especially in the early days and the sheer scope, spread and duration of the pandemic necessitated a high degree of flexibility and adaptation to effectively manage and respond to changing circumstances.

Recommendation:

2. Review and update HHCC Pandemic Plan to reflect the need for managing new, potentially non-preventable viruses and increased emergency response scalability.

An advantage that HHCC had was that at the onset of the pandemic, it already had established relationships and contacts with other stakeholders. This optimally positioned HHC to respond.

Recommendation:

3. Regularly review and update stakeholder contact information.

Dufferin Oaks Long Term Care Outbreak Plan

The Dufferin Oaks Long Term Care facility already had established outbreak plans and protocols in place. Consequently, when COVID struck, these were used as a starting point for minimizing spread. As more was being learned about COVID, Dufferin Oaks staff displayed flexibility and nimbleness and were thus able to adapt appropriately.

Recommendations:

4. Review and update plans and protocols regularly.
5. Provide training on the outbreak plans and protocols to new staff.
6. Conduct regular refresher training for existing staff.

Municipal Emergency Response Plans

In Ontario, municipalities are mandated by the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and *Ontario Regulation 380/04* to have an emergency management program and an emergency management (a.k.a. response) plan. In Dufferin County, one Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is in place for the County and the local municipalities. The ERP was prepared as an “all hazards” plan that is designed to address most emergency situations but not any one hazard specifically. It lays out the concept of operations, coordination, roles and responsibilities. In Dufferin, the ERP organizational structure is based on the Incident Management System (IMS), which lays out the different coordinating “functions” (Command, Finance and Administration, Logistics, Operations and Planning).

When the COVID-19 pandemic started, the Dufferin County ERP was activated to respond to the emergency. A key strength of the plan was that it brought all of the stakeholders together in an organized manner. As the emergency continued, the plan helped to build and strengthen these partnerships. While there have been some concerns with the Incident Management Plan (IMS) model overall which is covered in a subsequent section, the ERP did what it was designed to do.

Recommendations:

7. Annually review and/or update the Dufferin County Emergency Response Plan to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the County, local municipalities and stakeholders.
8. Continue to build and strengthen relationships and partnerships with stakeholder groups. Formalize Working groups for congregate living, emergency social services, health and agriculture sectors with the stakeholders identified in this report to meet regularly to discuss emerging issues, maintain situational awareness and foster working relationships.

Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Plans

While Dufferin County has an Emergency Response Plan (ERP), the impact of the COVID pandemic emergency was so great, broad-reaching and enduring that no plan could completely manage it. One of the greatest impacts to day-to-day operations for the County, the local municipalities and all Ontarians were the public health requirement to minimize or eliminate in-person business. Consequently, office staff were directed to work-from-home (WFH).

Given that working from home on this scale is unprecedented in Ontario, most business continuity plans do not plan for such an eventuality. Any existing Continuity of Operations (COOP)/Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) had minimal strategies to support the maintenance of services when facilities and offices could not be used and no plans were prepared for the scope of this effort nor the duration. During the initial stages of the emergency, the planning horizon was kept relatively short as little was known about the magnitude of the pandemic or the cascading challenges that it would present. With the ever-increasing duration and the uncertainty this caused, stakeholders found that maintaining alternate work arrangements was challenging.

Note, where face-to-face services to residents had to be maintained, health and safety measures were introduced to limit any possible exposures between staff and residents.

For **Community Care Support Services (CCSS)**, contingency plans were in place but the changing and dynamic nature of the pandemic emergency required flexible and nimble planning. The organization was accustomed to dealing with episodic emergencies which focused on identifying the particular risk level for individual patients. CCSS had to pivot to adapt to the increased health and safety protocols, Public Health guidance, and reduced in-person support to patients.

Two of the biggest challenges with the new work-from-home strategy was the sourcing and provision of personal computers for those staff who did not have access to one and reliable internet connectivity in the homes of staff. In rural parts of the County, internet service is poor or even non-existent, creating yet additional challenges to maintaining services.

Throughout the pandemic, the **Orangeville Food Bank** did not have a Business Continuity Plan to guide it through the changes and disruptions. As a member of Feed Ontario, they were provided with a template for a plan, however no additional details or guidance were given. Consequently, changes in how the Food Bank operated were constantly evolving, often to comply with Public Health guidelines for businesses. The Food Bank was not recognized initially in the same manner as grocery stores and with frontline workers, making it more difficult to deliver services to the community in the normal manner.

To better help meet the community's needs and comply with Public Health direction, the Orangeville Food Bank established a drive-through food service. The other food banks

in Dufferin County (except for Shelburne) agreed to collaborate on this drive-through operation, allowing all of them to continue providing food distribution service while consolidating their operations, temporarily closing their local service. While the drive-through service worked well, transportation for a number of clients to the site proved to be a challenge. To help these clients, a delivery model was established. As Public Health guidelines continued to change, the food banks returned to their normal in-person food services. Due to the growth of the new COVID variant Omicron, at the end of December 2021 the drive-through service resumed.

When province-wide lockdowns were first implemented, closing restaurants and other facilities, commercial food suppliers experienced a glut of food products, especially chicken (popular in the restaurant industry). In turn, the Orangeville Food Bank was fortunate to receive large donations of perishable food from the food service industry and suppliers. To properly store this, a 53-foot large refrigerator trailer (i.e. “reefer”) was leased and funded by Dufferin County for the Food Bank.

Recommendations:

9. For those agencies who currently do not have one, develop and implement a Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Program.
10. As part of the Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Plans, address equipment, technology, personnel and resource needs in the event of a disruption.
11. Review and update Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Plans to address poor or non-existent internet connectivity for staff who must work from home in rural areas such as establishing cellular hotspots wherever possible.
12. Review and update notification, escalation and Emergency Operations Centre contact information for County staff and key partners and agencies.

6. Incident Management System

The Incident Management System (IMS) is a standardized approach to emergency management used in Canada, the United States and other parts of the world to bring personnel, facilities, equipment, procedures and communications together within a common organizational structure. This enables responders and partners from different organizations and jurisdictions to interact and work well together in all types of incidents and emergencies.

While most incidents are managed at site by Incident Commanders, larger emergencies, like the COVID-19 pandemic, require the establishment of an Emergency Operations Centre to support multiple site activities and to manage non-site activities.

The County of Dufferin Emergency Control Group is responsible for initiating, coordinating and implementing the emergency response plan through the use of the Incident Management System in the Emergency Operations Centre.

The Emergency Operations Centre serves as the established and recognized point of authority, providing capacity for the Emergency Control Group to ensure:

- effective policy and strategic direction to the emergency
- support of emergency operations at the site(s)
- consequence management
- resource management to support the emergency site(s)
- coordination of management links to other Command/Departmental Operations Centres, external agencies and the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre
- providing information to the public and the news media and
- maintaining business continuity for the rest of the County.

An Emergency Operations Centre that operates under the principles of IMS is organized around the five major functions of Management, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance and Administration to execute these core responsibilities. These functions are scalable and flexible as smaller incidents like a house fire may only require one or two functions whereas larger emergencies usually require activation of all the functions.

The Province of Ontario has developed an Incident Management System (IMS) that provides standardized organizational structures, functions, processes, and terminology for use at all levels of emergency response in the province. Provincial Ministries, Dufferin County, Headwaters Health Care Centres, Ontario Health teams, police and fire services, local area and neighbouring municipalities and a host of external agencies and partners across Dufferin County are mandated to use IMS.

While the Incident Management System worked well for managing the pandemic emergency in the healthcare sector, staff turnover and inexperience in an Emergency Operations Centre environment did present some struggles. Some municipalities noted that they had more success with IMS than others, especially the smaller ones with fewer staff.

The Town of Orangeville supported the continued use of IMS for emergencies but other municipalities, including the County, feel that some modification to the system would make it easier to implement. Some aspects of the municipal organizations were felt to not “fit” easily into the IMS model (Command, Finance and Administration, Logistics, Operations, and Planning).

Emergency response organizations, fire services, health care, businesses, the military and other organizations customize and build their IMS structures based on the following concepts and principles. They are:

1. Accountability- all functional areas and jurisdictions remain responsible for their own actions at all times during the emergency.

2. Applicability –IMS may be applied in small, simple, or large complex emergencies.
3. Comprehensive Resource Management – IMS provides processes for categorizing, ordering, dispatching, tracking and recovering resources.
4. Consolidated Incident Action Plan outlines emergency response goals, objectives, strategies, tactics and safety, communications and resource management information.
5. Designated Incident Facilities as required.
6. Information Management processes to acquire, analyze, and disseminate information to internal and external audiences.
7. Integrated Communications to ensure that all jurisdictions and partners communicate and transmit incident information in a timely manner across jurisdictional lines.
8. Interoperability is the ability of responders from numerous organizations to interact and work well together including technological and virtual interoperability.
9. Inter-Organizational Collaboration means defining roles, relationships and a framework of accountability.
10. Management by Objectives means determining operational objectives and directing all efforts toward achieving them.
11. Modular and Scalable Organization in terms of structures and processes which can be expanded or contracted without losing their distinct functions.
12. Simplicity & Flexibility means that only required components are activated to provide needed functions as the situation evolves.
13. Standardization in structure and functions allows diverse stakeholders to work together using a common approach and understanding.
14. Standard Terminology for organizational elements like functions, facilities and resources.
15. Sustainability will depend on organizational capacity and available resources.
16. Span of Control refers to the optimal number of subordinates reporting to a supervisor. The optimum span of control is 5:1.
17. Unity of Command. The command structure is based on the function to be performed and expertise of incident management staff, rather than rank, organization or jurisdictions.¹²

It is important that proposed changes to the IMS structure reflect these concepts and principles to maximize multiagency interoperability as organizations that plan together, train and exercise together are in a better position to effectively respond to emergencies.

¹² Source: "Incident Management System 200 Student Manual," Office of Emergency Management, City of Toronto, Printed August 2012

Recommendations

Emergency Operations Centre

13. Continue efforts to implement a scalable and flexible IMS structure in the County of Dufferin based on the 17 concepts and principles.
14. Review the application of the Incident Management System in municipalities and scale and adjust the structure to better suit their organizational needs and capacities.
15. Continue to provide IMS training to help staff better understand the scalability and flexibility afforded by the IMS model.
16. Designate an IMS instructor.
17. Establish an EOC Management Team briefing cycle at the onset of an emergency for internal updates to senior management and modify as the emergency evolves. These briefings are held to share current information, operational activities, priorities and challenges to facilitate a common situational awareness and action plan.
18. Assess and review EOC documentation relating to Position Checklists, Position Logs, Status Reports, Situation Reports, IMS Incident Updates, the Major Event Log, the EOC Action Plan, the EOC Organizational Chart and Electronic Information Displays to better align with operational needs.
19. Consider adopting the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management's six key measures to assist organizations in implementing incident management systems:
 - a. Raise awareness within your organization through presentations, communications and online;
 - b. Support and endorse IMS within your organization;
 - c. Adopt IMS into emergency plans, policies and procedures;
 - d. Use IMS in emergency exercises to help plan and prepare;
 - e. Respond to real incidents and planned events using IMS;
 - f. Develop a long-term sustainability plan.¹³
20. The County should develop a multi-year work plan to further these key measures for Dufferin County staff and external partners and agencies.

¹³ Emergency Management Ontario website, February 2022

Virtual Emergency Operations Centre

21. Develop an Emergency Operations Centre Manual to train staff on how to operate a virtual Emergency Operations Centre with adequate technological and telecommunications abilities similar to the legal requirement to establish a physical EOC with a backup site for use by the municipal emergency control group in an emergency.

Notification and Activation

22. Develop an Emergency Level Emergency Support Function that defines initial notification and activation procedures to ensure that staff understand their operational roles and information requirements.

7. Coordination and Governance

Overview of the Province of Ontario Emergency Response Organization

According to the Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) web site, “EMO leads the coordination, development and implementation of prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies to maximize the safety, security, and resiliency of Ontario through effective partnerships with diverse communities.”¹⁴

Some emergencies are large, complex, or impact a number of jurisdictions. In these cases, there is a need for a coordinated response from the many provincial organizations that are responding. The provincial emergency response organization (provincial ERO) is the organization that is formed during multi-jurisdictional emergencies to conduct Ontario's coordinated response.

The provincial ERO is made up of all of the provincial organizations that are actively involved in an emergency response operation. The specific organizations that are active in the provincial ERO can vary, depending on the requirements of the emergency.

The Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) is the central coordinating hub of the provincial ERO and is a fully equipped facility maintained by Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) that can be activated in response to, or in anticipation of, emergencies. The PEOC is staffed with appropriate representatives from ministries that have been delegated responsibilities for those emergencies as well as EMO staff. It serves as an initial point-of-contact for the affected municipality and federal interests.

Other components of the provincial ERO connect to the PEOC as needed in order to facilitate provision of the appropriate services. In this way, the organization is flexible and adaptable to the needs of the current situation and all hazards.

All Ontario government ministries and agencies/boards/commissions are also considered part of the provincial ERO. These organizations connect to the PEOC as

¹⁴ Emergency Management Ontario website, February 7, 2022

needed in order to ensure coordinated provision of support to the emergency response operation, including sharing information, resources or coordination support, generally through a staff liaison.

Strategic leadership of the provincial ERO is the responsibility of elected and appointed government officials, including the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC), the Premier, The Cabinet Committee on Emergency Management, the Solicitor General, and the Commissioner of Emergency Management.

Overview of the County of Dufferin Emergency Management Response Organization

According to section 2.4 of the draft *Dufferin County, Emergency Response Plan*, the Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) for the County of Dufferin is appointed as the primary CEMC for each member municipality during the COVID-19 emergency. The CEMC monitors potential and impending threats that may impact the health, safety or economic stability across Dufferin County.

The Community Emergency Management Coordinator acts as an advisor to the Senior Municipal Official, municipalities, departments, groups and agencies on matters of emergency response and recovery by:

- Providing expertise regarding the implementation of the emergency response plan
- Fulfilling any role within the Emergency Operations Centre as needed
- Providing guidance, direction and/or assistance to any emergency or support personnel at the Emergency Operations Centre, and/or incident sites
- Assisting the Incident Commander as needed
- Coordinating post-emergency debriefings

The Province of Ontario has established a number of criteria to guide municipalities when making a decision about declaring an emergency. The County of Dufferin experienced several of these criteria:

- Is the situation an extraordinary event requiring extraordinary measures?
- Does the situation require a response that exceeds or threatens to exceed the capabilities of the municipality for either resources or deployment of personnel?
- Does the situation create sufficient strain on the municipal response capability in areas within the municipality that may be impacted by a lack of services?
- Is it a consideration that the municipal response may be of such duration that additional personnel and resources may be required to maintain the continuity of operation?

As a result, the County of Dufferin declared an Emergency in accordance with the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* on Thursday, March 26, 2020. “Due to

the rapidly changing conditions, it became necessary for the County Warden to declare an emergency to address resident needs in a more timely manner.”¹⁵

All of the local area municipalities also declared emergencies as follows:

2020-03-19 Town of Shelburne
2020-03-20 Town of Orangeville
2020-03-27 Township of Amaranth
2020-03-27 Township of E. Garafraxa
2020-03-27 Town of Grand Valley
2020-03-30 Township of Mulmur
2020-03-31 Township of Melancthon
2020-03-31 Town of Mono

All of these emergency declarations remain in effect to date.

Dufferin County responded to and managed the Covid-19 emergency through the following activities:

- Activated the County Emergency Operations Centre for 701 days (as of 22/02/03) and pivoted it to a virtual operations centre for the first two quarters of 2020 to coordinate short- and long-term response and recovery strategies including economic recovery
- Coordinated weekly briefings of the Municipal Control Group or as necessary
- Ensured ongoing coordination of information between internal and external stakeholders
- Directly supported the COVID-19 Assessment Centre at Headwaters Health Care Centre, Headwaters Health Care Centre Incident Management Team, the Ontario Health Team Emergency Operations Centre and Dufferin Food Share
- Provided logistical, emergency information and situational awareness support to Headwaters Health Care Centre.
- Created informal working groups to bring together congregate living and emergency social service partners to maintain a common operating picture and address operational issues and evolving challenges
- Facilitated an “Agricultural Roundtable” with a variety of agricultural sector representatives
- Supported Headwaters Health Care Centre and Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health as they assisted Shelburne Residence Dufferin County
- Provided logistic support to the Health Care sector to source, receive, store, and distribute supplies

¹⁵ County of Dufferin.ca/news, February 7, 2022.

- Assumed the lead Logistical role in acquiring scarce resources and supplies for the County and community partners
- Supported Dufferin County Paramedic Services deployment to the Covid-19 Assessment Centre
- Supported business continuity operations including planning to address staff shortages and resource management issues
- Supported two emergency childcare centres for children of emergency workers.
- Liaised with Emergency Management Ontario and other provincial agencies
- Partnered with Headwaters Health to conduct COVID-19 Assessment Centre Exercise on March 28, 2020
- Provided essential County services to the residents
- Ensured continuity of municipal operations through Council and committees

A participant in one of the debriefing sessions astutely commented that “Change Happens at the Speed of Trust”. This comment aptly applies to the efforts of the Emergency Control Group, the Emergency Operations Centre and the Community Emergency Management Coordinator in discharging their considerable duties and decisions throughout the pandemic emergency. A high level of trust, collaboration and cooperation among the multi-faceted and diverse agency representatives had been built and nurtured over the years. These excellent working relationships served as a critical pre-condition for achieving an effective, nimble and resilient emergency response that is still ongoing.

Growing and maintaining the professional working relationships and collaborative networks is key to effective emergency response and can be fostered by planning, training and exercising together and formalizing working groups and linkages.

Recommendation

23. Continue to build and strengthen relationships and partnerships with stakeholder groups. Formalize Working groups for congregate living, emergency social services, health and agriculture with the stakeholders identified in this report to meet regularly to discuss emerging issues, maintain situational awareness and foster working relationships.

Emergency Declarations & Councillor Liaison

One of the roles of elected officials is to communicate to residents about emergencies and any direction that they should take. It was found during the pandemic emergency that Dufferin Council was not familiar with what an emergency declaration entails, specifically what powers does the declaration bestow.

Recommendations:

24. Provide greater guidance to Council on what powers an emergency declaration permits.

25. Establish protocols for communication and Councillor's roles during incidents and emergencies such as leveraging formal and informal community networks to disseminate information to help the community and how to report urgent matters to the County for escalation to appropriate parties.

Headwaters Health Care Centre advised that in a municipally declared emergency, some labour relations clauses were able to be overridden to meet operational needs.

Recommendations:

26. Consider adding the hospital's abilities during an emergency declaration regarding collective agreements to the County's Emergency Declaration Checklist.

Overview of Public Health Ontario

According to the Public Health Ontario website, their Vision is internationally recognized evidence, knowledge and action for a healthier Ontario.

The Mission is to enable informed decisions and actions that protect and promote health and contribute to reducing health inequities.

The Mandate:

- provide scientific and technical advice and support to clients working in government, public health, health care, and related sectors
- build capacity, assemble expertise and guide action through advice, consultation and interpretation
- continuing education and professional development
- health emergency preparedness
- information management
- knowledge and best practices generation
- laboratory services
- library services
- research, ethics and evaluation
- support to policy and program development
- surveillance and population health assessment.

In meeting this vision, mission and mandate, Public Health Ontario's primary clients include Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and other ministries, local public health units, health system providers and organizations across the continuum of care. Other partners include academic, research, not-for-profit, community-based and private sector organizations and government

agencies working across sectors that contribute to Ontarians achieving the best health possible.¹⁶

Province of Ontario's Enhanced Response Structure

Anecdotal information from the Dufferin Health Sector stakeholders reported that they felt the Province of Ontario didn't seem to use existing emergency and pandemic plans and the IMS structure for responding to and coordinating the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the Minister of Health announced a new response structure comprised of a number of tables with specific mandates on March 2, 2020.

The new response structures entailed:

- A new Command Table as the single point of executive oversight, leadership and strategic direction to guide Ontario's response. The Command Table reports to the Minister of Health and is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Health, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario Health's President and Chief Executive Officer and representatives from Public Health Ontario, the Ministry of Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.
- Five Regional Planning and Implementation Tables, led by Ontario Health with support from local public health units are responsible for reviewing regional plans to ensure local readiness and implementing provincial strategies for assessment, testing and care, supplies and equipment, surveillance and communications.
- The Ministry of Health Emergency Operations Centre will provide situational awareness and overall coordination among the components of the response structure.
- A Scientific Table, led by Public Health Ontario to support provincial and regional components with evidence, scientific and technical advice to inform planning and response.
- An Ethics Table, led by University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics to provide ethical guidance and representation at both provincial and regional tables to support decision-making
- Sector or Issues Specific Tables to support local case and contract management as well as sector-specific coordination such as paramedic services, First Nations health partners and others as needed.
- A Collaboration Table with members from key health sector organizations to advise the Command Table¹⁷.

Dufferin County Health Sector

It is clear that the new enhanced response structure was outside of the existing framework that all Public Health Units, provincial ministries and municipalities had

¹⁶ Public Health Ontario website, January 7, 2022

¹⁷ News Release, Ontario Implementing Enhanced Measures to Safeguard Public from COVID-19, March 02, 2020

adopted and been trained in (IMS). This resulted in a lack of clarity on the respective roles and responsibilities of the agencies, made for difficult interoperability and caused much confusion during an already tumultuous emergency.

At the best of times healthcare in Ontario has complex hierarchies, with multiple agencies and ministries responsible for delivering services to the public with limited integration. COVID-19 amplified what was already broken with respect to health care, social services, mental health, addictions, poverty, equity and accessibility and social justice. While those in the healthcare sector were aware of these issues, the pandemic highlighted the silos, lack of cross-coordination and chronic underfunding issues.

A further issue with provincial coordination was that the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) of Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) seemed to be missing from the coordination and response. There was (and continues to be) minimal open and transparent coordination between provincial agencies, ministries and municipalities despite their primary legislative authority for emergencies. The PEOC did not perform their normal emergency coordination, collaboration and communication role during a declared provincial emergency. There did not appear to be standard briefings, operational periods, status or situation reports, or defined Liaison relationships with key community agencies. Additionally, the relationship between the PEOC and the new top-driven “Command Table” is not defined nor does it reflect past emergency planning and response practices, operations and training.

These observations are corroborated in the report prepared by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario. “The established provincial emergency response structure was not followed for the COVID-19 pandemic, and a new structure was developed during the emergency. The initial meeting of key parties involved in this new structure was held on April 11, 2020, more than three weeks after the provincial emergency declaration was made.”¹⁸

Health care representatives from numerous agencies also reported that the province tended to release complex media releases and bulletins on late Friday afternoon putting out contentious new directions. This timing often made it very difficult for public health and municipal efforts to interpret and implement this information in a timely fashion. It also exacerbated staffing requirements on the weekend for teams that were already considerably stretched.

Stakeholders felt that at the beginning of the pandemic the province was making reasonable decisions based on sound recommendations from the provincial Science Table. As the emergency progressed, it seemed that public health recommendations became increasingly politicized in the Fall of 2020.

¹⁸ COVID-19 Preparedness and Management, Special Report on Emergency Management in Ontario-Pandemic Response, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, November 2020

The general sentiment from the health and municipal organizations was that they felt disconnected from the Province of Ontario and that Provincial leadership was weak. There were differences among the province and local health units respecting the interpretation of directives and guidance.

Again, this observation was supported by the provincial Office of the Auditor General who stated that “There was a lack of engagement of EMO and its partners at emergency operation centres. The usual best practice during an emergency is to have key emergency management staff from various ministries and other impacted stakeholders work out of the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (EMO Centre) for the duration of the emergency. This facilitates collaboration and the easy sharing of information. This best practice was not followed during COVID-19, as most of the EMO Centre staff worked remotely, and the EMO Centre was a stand-alone operation, even though the EMO Centre is large enough to allow for physical distancing. Of particular concern was the fact that Ministry of Health staff were not stationed at the EMO Centre or connected virtually, and similarly EMO staff were not connected with the Ministry of Health Operations Centre to provide help and support. This also prevented them from being kept fully updated and apprised of unfolding events.”¹⁹

Another issue that was raised repeatedly was that geographic boundaries for the various health services are not aligned. The result of this was that, at times, healthcare sector agencies, businesses and the public were receiving differing and potentially conflicting messages and direction. An example of this was that hospital admitting protocols, COVID-positive protocols and other standards differed between Dufferin County Paramedic Services and Peel Region Paramedics resulting in operational challenges at Headwaters Health Care and other admitting facilities.

It should be noted that all participants in the debriefings felt that the Dufferin response was unique compared to other municipalities due to the strong and cooperative working relationships that were in place combined with cultures that promoted flexibility and nimbleness to change roles and adapt as necessary.

Recommendations:

27. Consider encouraging Public Health Ontario (PHO) and Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) to return to the established provincial response framework (IMS) that Ministries and municipalities have implemented, trained and exercised.
28. Consider encouraging EMO/PEOC to begin communications and coordination with the Health Sector, ministries and municipalities.

¹⁹ Ibid.

29. Consider encouraging the Province to move towards greater integration of all health services to better align with the public's need for a seamless, one-window delivery model.
30. Consider encouraging the Province to prioritize scientific/medical information when preparing public health directions and guidance.
31. Consider encouraging the Province to assess the various healthcare services sector geographic boundaries to better align with each other.

Assessment Centres

The need for the establishment of COVID-19 assessment centres was recognized early in the pandemic. Members of the public who either showed symptoms or were asymptomatic but may have been exposed to COVID needed to be tested to determine whether they were infected. Unfortunately, the responsibility for setting up and operating assessment centres was not clearly identified (Public Health or hospital). In Dufferin County, ultimately that task fell upon the Headwaters Health Care Centre.

To set up the assessment centres, Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) first established a small stakeholder group that included representation from Dufferin County. Key criteria for the assessment centre were scalability, accessibility, location, and staffing. A drive-through centre was determined to best fit these needs and was established on HHCC property. The County leveraged its ability to secure physical materials (tents, trailers, barriers, signage, etc.). Dufferin County Paramedic Services provided managerial support to the Assessment Centre from the pandemic's onset until August 2020. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) assisted with traffic control on site. At the time that the assessment centre was being implemented, funding for the costs were uncertain. Nevertheless, all parties proceeded with the establishment of it as this was a priority for the community.

Shortly after the launch of the assessment centre, the Province directed all agencies who established them to develop and implement a booking system for residents. The direction came late on a Friday with the mandate to have it operating by the following Tuesday. This new requirement and the extremely short timeline added additional burden and stress on all parties involved. Information Technology (IT) staff from the County and HHCC collaborated through the weekend to have a system operational by Monday morning. To assist with the launch, Dufferin County loaned staff and a facility (the Emergency Operations Centre) to HHCC for the assessment booking call centre. Over time, this function was transferred entirely to HHCC.

Recommendations:

32. In future pandemic plans, clearly define roles and responsibilities, including establishment, operation and funding for assessment centres.

Food Banks

The Orangeville Food Bank has enjoyed a strong, collaborative relationship with Dufferin County for many years. This proved beneficial as the County was able to provide support and guidance to the Food Bank throughout the pandemic. Part of this success is the personnel involved. The Executive Director of the Orangeville Food Bank is a former politician who is well-versed in how municipal government works and knows where to turn to get the supports they need. Unfortunately, the smaller Food Banks in the County do not have this experience or familiarity with government and often struggle to get what they need.

While the relationship between the Orangeville Food Bank and Dufferin County is not formal, the Food Bank does make an annual presentation to Dufferin Council on the community needs and the Food Bank activities and the County provides some funding.

Recommendations:

- 33. Provide government services awareness training for Food Banks in Ontario, possibly through either the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) or Feed Ontario.
- 34. Formalize the relationship between Dufferin County and the Orangeville Food Bank and other local area food banks.

The Orangeville Food Bank noted that they are often a window into the broader social services needs of their clients. Unfortunately for those clients, they must work with many different agencies and providers. With limited or no access to transportation or technology, clients often struggle to find or get the supports they need.

Recommendations:

- 35. Consider encouraging social service providers to develop a “one-window” approach to community supports.

8. Long-Term Care/Retirement Homes/Congregate Living

In the early waves of the pandemic, the sector that was most severely impacted across the province was the long-term care (LTC), retirement homes and congregate living sector. Due in part to the factors that exasperated the COVID outbreaks such as age, underlying health conditions, close living quarters, and staff movement, COVID related illnesses and mortality most heavily affected this sector. The congregate living sector was further challenged by limited or non-existent outbreak plans and protocols and limited access to PPE.

Long-Term Care/Retirement Homes

In Dufferin County, one long term care home is owned and operated by the County: Dufferin Oaks Long Term Care. All other LTC, retirement and congregate living facilities are in the private sector.

Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities focused on outbreak planning and meeting staffing shortages. Management and staff willingness to be flexible and nimble greatly assisted their operations.

Fortunately for Dufferin Oaks, it does not have 4-bedded rooms which helped with the containment of the COVID-19 spread. It was easier to separate residents in a 2-bedded environment. Restrictions were put in place to prevent staff from working in multiple locations.

Early in the pandemic, the Shelburne Long-Term Care Centre experienced a significant outbreak and 50% of the residents passed away. The Bethsaida Retirement Home also experienced a major outbreak and, while a smaller facility with approximately 50 residents, it had a 3-4% fatality rate. Observations from emergency service providers found that Bethsaida had substandard care, inadequate resources and poor Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) protocols.

In an effort to assist the Shelburne LTC and Bethsaida Retirement Home, the Paramedic Services base hospital (Hamilton Health Sciences) was engaged and provided recommendations for patient care and response. Two local physicians attended the Shelburne facility and provided direct patient care.

It should be noted that in Ontario, there currently is no requirement for retirement homes to have regulated professional nurses on site to provide care for residents. Consequently, resident care fell primarily to Personal Support Workers (PSW), including medical supports such as drug dispensing. As noted previously, healthcare in Ontario has limited integration and coordination. Furthermore, oversight of this sector appears to be uneven, resulting in poor enforcement of standards in the homes.²⁰

Recommendations:

36. Consider encouraging the Province to make regulated professionals such as nurses mandatory in all long-term care and retirement homes.
37. Consider encouraging the Province to increase inspections and enforcement of standards and regulations in all long-term care and retirement homes.
38. Consider encouraging the Province to require long-term care homes and retirement homes to have current outbreak plans and protocols with adequate staff training and exercises.

²⁰ Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission Final Report, April 2021

39. Consider encouraging the Province to ensure that long-term care homes and retirement homes have a current stockpile of PPE at all times.

Congregate Living Settings

The various congregate living settings fall under a variety of different legislation and regulations. The absence of formal clinical oversight on hostels, rooming house, emergency shelters and other congregate settings presented numerous challenges. There were inadequate mechanisms to funnel information to these unregulated sectors particularly in Peel Region who displayed little knowledge or understanding on the importance of hand sanitizing, masking and droplet precautions.

At the onset of COVID, unfortunately it appears that this sector was not sufficiently considered and guidance and support fell through the cracks. Consequently, one of the worst outbreaks in Dufferin County occurred in such a facility. In an effort to remedy this, the Wellington-Guelph-Dufferin Public Health Unit working with Dufferin County support, established a focused team to help address the outbreaks in congregate care. Ongoing communications, training and support (including provision of PPE) has been provided to the operators of these facilities.

Community Care Support Services (CCSS) found it challenging coordinating and implementing directives that were sometimes contradicting each other from four Public Health Units that oversee the congregate settings within the CCSS geographic boundaries. For instance, the Caledon congregate setting used difference guidance than the WGD PHU.

Of the four Public Health Units (Wellington-Dufferin Guelph Health Unit, Peel Public Health, Toronto Public Health, York Region Public Health Services) that operate in Dufferin County, the Dufferin CCSS felt that the Wellington-Guelph-Dufferin Health Unit provided superior accessibility, engagement, receptivity and regular communications. They felt that WDGP were very responsive, helpful and open to CCSS's concerns and helped to leverage the right people and decisions when needed.

Recommendations:

40. Continue to provide coordination and support the congregate living sector in Dufferin County.
41. Consider encouraging congregate living settings to develop outbreak plans and procedures.
42. Seek stricter regulations and accountability mechanisms from the Province to better protect congregate living and retirement homes.
43. Consider encouraging Province to consolidate legislation and regulations governing the congregate living sector.

44. Consider encouraging the Province to align the Public Health Units into seamless geographic boundaries.

Another observation from CCSS was that more emphasis should have been placed on improving environmental controls, like ventilation, housekeeping and dietary controls in congregate settings to mitigate outbreaks.

Recommendations:

45. Consider encouraging congregate settings operators to assess environmental controls in congregate settings to identify areas for improving outbreak mitigation.
46. Consider encouraging congregate settings operators to establish plans for improving environmental controls in their facilities.

9. Virtual Workplace/Information Technology

When direction was issued to workplaces to minimize in-person work environments, most of the stakeholders implemented a work-from-home strategy. For many, the technical IT challenges proved to be considerable given the poor rural or non-existent internet connectivity in parts of the County, lack of appropriate hardware (laptop PC's), IT security, and, for some, limited technological skills of staff to easily shift to remote work.

Public Health

Public Health Units in Ontario regularly use a variety of established information systems for managing outbreaks and health issues. During the COVID pandemic, the province introduced a new system (COVAX) for PHU's to use that, it appears, duplicates existing systems. This presented a new challenge, as PHU personnel suddenly had to undertake new training in the midst of an ongoing emergency.

Recommendations:

47. Unless absolutely warranted, do not introduce new systems that duplicate existing systems during outbreaks or emergency situations.

Municipalities

Internet connectivity in parts of the County presented challenges for implementing the work-from-home strategy. Mobile hubs were implemented where possible and cellular hotspots were also used. Furthermore, with many staff utilizing their personal/home computers for work, the risk to system security increased. To help mitigate this risk, County IT staff introduced strengthened measures and protocols. No security breaches have occurred with the municipalities to date, however Headwaters Health Care Centre did experience a ransomware attack.

One aspect that helped in the need to implement the work-from-home strategy, including serving residents, was that more services had started to be digitized prior to COVID. The current plan is that over time, more services will be digitized.

Recommendations:

- 48. Consider encouraging the Federal and Provincial governments to help facilitate the expansion of broadband internet into rural communities.
- 49. Continue to monitor and introduce IT security measures.
- 50. Continue to transition government services to digital where possible.

In part due to the Public Health direction to minimize in-person work and the adoption of a work-from-home strategy, Dufferin County established a virtual Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to manage the pandemic emergency. All Emergency Control Group (ECG) members had access to the necessary technology to be able to work remotely. Situational awareness was maintained via emails and virtual meetings, as were Operations Cycle briefings. While this approach was not the same as an active EOC with in-person communications and meetings, the County did find that this strategy has been successful for them to continue to manage the emergency.

Recommendations:

- 51. Evaluate success of virtual EOC with ECG members and stakeholders.
- 52. Include option for virtual EOC for future emergency activations.
- 53. Develop an Emergency Operations Centre Manual to train staff on how to operate a virtual Emergency Operations Centre with adequate technological and telecommunications abilities similar to the legal requirement to establish a physical EOC with a backup site for use by the municipal emergency control group in an emergency.

Community Care Support Services

Dufferin County Community Support Services (DCCSS) “provides services to assist seniors and disabled adults to remain in the familiar surroundings of their own homes.”²¹ With the introduction of public health measures to limit the spread of COVID, a remote workplace strategy was implemented but proved to be challenging. The issue of poor or non-existent internet connectivity in rural areas made it difficult for some staff to easily transition to remote work. Another challenge was that many staff normally worked with older model desktop computers, limiting their ability to adapt to mobile or remote computing. Lastly, there were staff who did not possess the necessary technical skills to easily switch to remote work.

²¹ Dufferin County website January 2022

To overcome the poor internet access, mobile hotspots connected to phones were established. DCCSS prioritized the acquisition of laptop PCs for those staff who needed them and provided digital education and training of staff to be able to work remotely.

Recommendations:

- 54. Consider acquiring laptop computers for all staff when existing desktop computers reach end of lifespan and need to be replaced.
- 55. Develop strategies for remote work for those staff who are unable to access the internet from their alternate (e.g. home) workplace.
- 56. Provide information technology training for staff.

Orangeville Food Bank

As the Orangeville Food Bank is a non-governmental organization primarily run and staffed by volunteers, it has limited information technology resources. Many of the PCs that they use are greater than 10 years old with outdated software. This has forced the Food Bank to rely on staff and volunteers' personal computers. Furthermore, they have no technical support should an issue arise.

Similarly, the Food Bank has only one phone line to reach them so personal cell phones are used often. Unfortunately, both of the computer and phone dependencies run the risk of increased privacy and security issues for clients, donors, volunteers and staff.

Recommendations:

- 57. Seek technology support from external sources such as local businesses or Dufferin County.
- 58. Identify technology needs for the Orangeville Food Bank and seek donations of equipment.

10. Resources and Logistics

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The sudden increase in need for PPE for staff in many of the agencies and sectors in Dufferin was a huge challenge at the onset of the pandemic. In the months prior to the COVID pandemic, the provincial SARS hospital stockpile of PPE had expired and was donated to other countries.

The **Ontario Health Team** assumed a coordinating role as the PPE conduit while Dufferin County assumed the logistics role for centralized PPE sourcing. Headwaters Health Care Centre had a stockpile and a reliable supplier and they centralized the storage of the stockpile. Stakeholders collaborated on a PPE plan for best use/value for PPE supply and distribution. This helped the agencies to work in a safe manner but

illustrated an earlier limitation of having each agency manage their own stockpile of PPE.

With infection protocols wavering on whether COVID-19 was aerosolized or not, **Paramedic Services** staff struggled in the early days. They did not have a huge PPE supply and masks were limited in the early phase. As a result, N-95 respirators were locked up and strictly supervised.

The need for PPE in the long-term care facilities was crucial for the health and safety of residents and staff. Provincial PPE shortages were serious as supply and emergency stocks were inadequate. The **Dufferin Oaks Long Term Care** facility was fortunate as they had learned years earlier from the SARS outbreak that having a ready stockpile of PPE was critical. While their PPE supply did not run out, their contingency plan would have been to source needed PPE from either the hospital or the Province. Nevertheless, Dufferin Oaks was able to maintain a supply and was quite well stocked. The County's logistical support proved helpful in coordinating the distribution of PPE to stakeholders.

Recommendations:

- 59. All agencies/sectors should examine their needs for PPE for possible future health emergencies and establish a stockpile.
- 60. Examine establishing a central procurement team for PPE for the Dufferin County municipalities and stakeholder groups.
- 61. Continue to maintain a supply of PPE at Dufferin Oaks.
- 62. Regularly inspect PPE supply to ensure that it is current/useable. Rotate PPE stockpiles among agencies where practicable.

Staffing

The need to sustain staffing levels in the long-term care homes during the pandemic (and at all times) is necessary for the care and well-being of LTC residents. With the Province mandating that Personal Support Workers (PSWs) could no longer work in multiple facilities, the strain on having the appropriate coverage in the LTC grew. Furthermore, with school students relegated to virtual learning, some staff were not able to attend the workplace as they had to stay with their younger children and access to daycare was sometimes problematic. Additionally, existing staffing shortages, especially in the regulated fields, became more acute. To combat these issues, staffing schedules were constantly being adjusted and management staff flexed their schedules to ensure 7-day on-site support to LTC staff.

Recommendations:

- 63. Work to secure additional funding to address LTC staffing shortfalls.

Fire Services found that call volumes declined by roughly 30% during the early periods of the pandemic. Nevertheless, to best manage staffing with the public health requirements for physical distancing, Fire Services stopped jointly responding to most health emergency calls, leaving those to Paramedic Services.

The **Orangeville Food Bank** also experienced a loss of staff (volunteers) when schools moved to virtual classes as many volunteers now had to remain at home. Furthermore, as many volunteers were seniors with possible health issues, more than 40 resigned to reduce their risk of COVID exposure. To combat these personnel shortages, a call for volunteers went out to the community with a great response (more volunteers than needed). With the increased demand for services and large number of new volunteers, one-on-one training was not possible. Consequently, the Food Bank prepared position descriptions for the volunteers.

Recommendations:

64. Maintain a volunteer pool for the Food Bank for possible future disruptions.

65. Regularly review and maintain Food Bank volunteer position descriptions.

In the municipalities, one gap that became evident during this emergency was limited team depth in management. As the emergency continued to draw out, management staff had few staff members who could step in to relieve them.

Recommendations:

66. Establish cross-training for all municipal staff.

67. Undertake succession planning for non-management municipal staff.

As with many businesses in the broader community and industry, IT staff turnover at the County during the emergency presented a challenge. Management found it difficult to bring in and train new staff who were not familiar with the County and its services.

Recommendations:

68. Assess hiring process and develop enhanced “on-boarding” strategies for new IT staff.

In the Dufferin Paramedic Services, during the pandemic, they experienced one retirement, eight medical leaves, a few resignations due to burn-out and one termination. This is presenting staffing challenges for management as the province-wide demand for paramedics is great.

Recommendations:

69. Maintain an active recruitment strategy for new paramedic hires.

70. Support employee well-being programs to help minimize burn-out by paramedics.

71. Examine staffing schedules to assess whether any opportunities for increased time-off for paramedics can be incorporated.

11. Communications

During an emergency, timely and accurate information is critical for both the public and internal staff. Public information needs to be clear and relevant to help minimize confusion, mistrust and misinformation. With the COVID pandemic, much information and direction were being disseminated by both the federal and provincial governments. Critical to this was the need for WDG Public Health Unit, County of Dufferin, and the local municipalities to interpret this information and determine how it impacts their community. Subsequently, WDG PHU, the County and the local municipalities would then issue appropriate information to their audiences. A challenge that crept up though, was that often the province would issue information/direction late on Friday afternoons, leaving little time for staff to interpret and release relevant information.

One issue that was raised was with limited staffing resources in Communications, the constant need for updated information strategies and tactics (e.g. media releases, website updates, social media, etc.) proved challenging and, at times, overwhelming.

Recommendations:

72. Assess current Communications staffing levels and develop strategy for managing communications surge needs.

Generally, the debriefing stakeholders felt that they were able to deliver information to residents well.

Situational Awareness – Internal

County of Dufferin

Internal (staff) communications initially had some challenges, such as not all County and Municipal staff having access to email (i.e., no email addresses) or poor/non-existent internet connectivity. Early in the emergency the lack of email addresses was rectified. Poor rural internet connectivity though, continues to be an issue.

To ensure that County staff were aware of what information was being released to residents, media messages/releases were shared with staff prior to issuing. This helped alleviate potential issues of not having the same information as the public in the community. Furthermore, a SharePoint site was established for all County staff to access various COVID resources. Lastly, it should be noted that as the emergency continued, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for Dufferin County began preparing videos for staff to provide regular updates. These were well-received by staff.

Paramedic Services

Paramedic Services continues to try to keep staff informed, but have found that the frequent changes in guidance have been difficult to adequately communicate. They found that many staff do not regularly read their emails. To counter this, weekly virtual meetings were held but attendance by staff was poor.

A positive change that was expedited by the pandemic was the introduction of text messaging to paramedics about emergency calls they are responding to. This was in process prior to COVID but is now in place for Dufferin Paramedic Services.

Recommendations:

73. Ensure that all staff have a corporate email address or alternate tactics to receive communications.
74. Look to alternate tactics for disseminating information to internal staff and stakeholders.

Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC)

With frequent changes in direction from the Province, to keep staff informed, the Headwaters Health Care Centre sent out daily emails to staff. Information included items specific to the hospital, local issues, and provincial and national guidance. Links to relevant information were included in the emails. It was found though, that in the early days staff appreciated the information but as time went on, they felt overwhelmed. HHCC adjusted by reducing the frequency of the emails and provided more information through staff huddles.

Recommendations:

75. Throughout an emergency situation, monitor staff response to situational awareness and information sharing and adjust as necessary.

Situational Awareness - Province

As noted previously, Provincial coordination with the health sector and municipalities was felt to be weak. Regular Situation Reports from the PEOC to municipalities were virtually non-existent. The first Incident Status Summary was issued March 26, 2020 and the last was sent July 31, 2020. No other status updates were issued by the PEOC to municipalities. There were, however PEOC, Ministry and Municipal coordinated videoconferences, however these were halted in June 2021. No explanation was given as to why these were terminated.

Early in the pandemic, the Headwaters Health Care Centre established a COVID Assessment Centre however they were not invited to participate in provincial briefings. It was not clear if the Headwaters Health Care Centre Emergency Operations Centre received any guidance from the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre.

Provincial directives from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care were inconsistent and contradictory resulting in the need to constantly cross reference documents. Front line staff needed to decipher mixed messaging and inconsistent direction with respect to testing, screening and visitation requirement in congregate settings.

The Ontario Health Teams were well connected to the provincial Ministry and this greatly helped Community Care Supports Services to be well informed. At the time, Community Care was part of the Ontario Health Teams organizational structure; this is no longer the case.

Paramedic Services, however, found that weekly Chiefs' meetings that had been established with the Ministry of Health (with Deputy Minister representation) were helpful.

Recommendations:

- 76. Establish regular situational briefings and issuance of Situation Reports from the PEOC to municipalities.
- 77. Include all COVID Assessment Centres in the provincial briefings from the Assessment Emergency Operations Centre.
- 78. Continue with the weekly Ministry of Health meetings with Paramedic Services Chiefs in the province.

Public Information

Timely information and direction to residents was critical to successfully implementing public health measures and maintaining day-to-day government business services. Traditional tactics such as media releases and interviews were used, and the websites of the stakeholder agencies were updated regularly. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) were added to the County's website for residents to access. Some elected officials also created "coffee chats" for residents, allowing them to have a forum for sharing information and answering concerns. Communications staff monitored social media for issues and misinformation and would quickly respond to correct these.

Recommendations:

- 79. Continue with timely and relevant information for residents using multiple tactics.
- 80. In all emergency situations, monitor mainstream media and social media for possible issues or misinformation.

With restrictions on public gatherings, Council meetings had to be moved to be conducted virtually. Dufferin County was the first to encourage the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) to revise regulations to allow meetings to no longer be "in-person". Once the County had approval to proceed virtually, they found that the response was positive and that greater resident participation occurred.

Recommendations:

81. Examine options for continuing with virtual Council meeting or implementing a hybrid option (in-person and virtual) once public health restrictions on gatherings are lifted.

For Headwaters Health Care Centre, their website and social media were kept current throughout the pandemic to provide relevant information for the public. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) were posted to help the public and family members of patients. When appropriate, media releases were also provided. Despite a call centre that had been established with the County, they found that their switchboard was overwhelmed with calls from the public.

Recommendations:

82. Throughout any emergency, monitor public inquiries and adjust communications tactics and resources as necessary.

12. Training and Exercises

Annual emergency management training and exercises for municipalities are mandated by the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA) and Ontario Regulation 380/01. Dufferin County has been compliant with this requirement and, during the pandemic emergency, enhanced the training by providing regular “Disaster School” to all staff. This program proved popular and had a big uptake by staff and stakeholders, both internal and external.

Stakeholders noted that all of the training and exercises over the years prepared them to better deal with the pandemic. Additional tabletop exercises for stakeholders and “What-if Wednesdays” for senior County staff (impromptu calls with a specific scenario) further prepared them for managing the response to the pandemic.

More than one stakeholder exclaimed that the collaborative relationship that was fostered by the County was foundational to the response.

Recommendations:

83. Continue with a regular training and exercise program.

One gap that became evident during this emergency was limited team depth in management. As the emergency continued to draw out, management staff had few staff members who could step in to relieve them.

Recommendations:

84. Establish cross-training for all staff.
85. Undertake succession planning for non-management staff.

With Community Care Support Services, infection prevention and control (IPAC) training was introduced, especially since Care staff enter patients' homes and work in close proximity with them.

Recommendations:

86. As more is learned about COVID and the new variant, Omicron, IPAC training should continue to be updated and delivered to staff.

Fire services who participated in the debriefings noted that COVID-19 physical distancing restrictions posed challenges as their training rooms are not large enough to accommodate the voluntary firefighters for required training. Adjustments were made to help facilitate the training activities.

13. Recovery Phase

The Recovery Phase generally takes place after an emergency is over, however planning and actions for recovery can start any time. This phase is generally defined as those actions that will help restore an organization, community, etc. to its pre-emergency state. While COVID still ongoing at the time of this report, observations of critical areas that will require recovery actions have started.

Community Care Support Services

Overall, Community Care Support Services staff have been fairly resilient but this is proving to be challenging particularly given the Omicron variant setback. Fatigue is an ongoing concern with no indication of when pressures will decrease. CCSS has been encouraging staff to access virtual wellness programs and personal counselling.

Observations of patient and resident care is that the mental health of the population is worsening. With ongoing delays to accessing primary care, cognitive impairments are increasing, placing additional pressure on Community Care Support Service team. The Care Coordinators are often the only agency directly and physically supporting residents' needs. "Compassion fatigue" is becoming a concern.

With less Personal Support Worker and nursing services available, family members are straining to pick up the slack. The shutting down of respite and adult day services denies vulnerable populations and their families the direct hands-on supports that they need resulting in hardship and compassion fatigue.

More emphasis should have been placed on improving environmental controls, like ventilation, housekeeping and dietary controls in congregate settings to mitigate outbreaks.

Recommendations:

87. Continue to monitor and support staff well-being and encourage their use of wellness programs.

88. In outbreak situations, an early adoption of enhanced environmental controls for patients should be emphasized.

A Nurse Practitioner program coordinated by the Dufferin Area Family Health Team was helpful in supporting the Community Care Support Service team with patient care, however this was not introduced until later in the pandemic.

Recommendations:

89. Utilize the Nurse Practitioner program early when patient support and visitation become stressed due to emergency situations.

Supply Chain

With the impact of COVID on global supply chains, Paramedic Services, Public Works (and others) are finding it increasingly difficult to purchase new vehicles, equipment and parts for their fleet due to lack of supply. It is expected that in time, this situation will improve but for the moment replacement of existing fleet vehicles or acquiring specialized equipment cannot be achieved.

Recommendations:

90. Continue preventative maintenance on existing fleet of vehicles and equipment.

14. General Observations

With the adoption of a virtual workplace/work-from-home strategy, staff have indicated that they are feeling burn-out from participating in too many virtual meetings. Where under normal workplace conditions, personnel could easily meet or have impromptu discussions, under the remote workplace strategy, there has been an increase in having to schedule more “formal” virtual meetings.

In initial COVID days, Paramedic Services call volumes plummeted by roughly 50% as the public was afraid of attending hospitals. To minimize potential exposure, Fire Services did not respond to medical calls.

One opportunity resulting from the pandemic is the increasing support for paramedic community medicine. The province has approved funding for a Dufferin community paramedic program. Minimum standards will need to be established.

Recommendations:

91. Proceed with the establishment of a Dufferin community paramedic program.

92. Consider encouraging the province to establish standards for the community paramedic program.

It was noted by stakeholders that the Ontario Works (OW) support program does not provide sufficient funding for recipients, especially compared to what CERB offered.

Some OW clients who incorrectly felt that they could apply for CERB and received the benefits are now being advised that they have to pay it back. Furthermore, these recipients who are already living marginally no longer receive OW funds if they had received CERB.

The pandemic provided for one-time funding for social services (housing) however this will not be ongoing. Unfortunately, the increased funding has raised client expectations that might not be possible to meet in future years.

Recommendations:

93. Consider encouraging province to increase base funding for social services.

APPENDIX A: COVID-19 Response Debriefing Questionnaire

County of Dufferin

COVID-19 Response Debriefing Questionnaire

Dufferin County is undertaking a debriefing of the response to the COVID-19 emergency. To help prepare for upcoming debriefing sessions, the following questionnaire is being circulated to stakeholders. Please answer questions as best you can. *No comments will be attributed to anyone completing this form.*

Name (optional):	
Municipality/Agency/ Department/Partner/ Stakeholder:	
Briefly describe your regular position or role in Dufferin County.	
What positions/roles did you perform during the emergency?	

Where noted, please rate on scale of 1 - 5 with 1 being insufficient and 5 being superior.

1. Were adequate plans, procedures, protocols, or supports in place for the emergency?						
Emergency Response Plan?	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Business Continuity/Continuity of Operations Plan?	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Pandemic Plan?	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Communications Plan?	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Psychosocial (mental health supports);	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Health & Special Needs	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Financial Assistance	1	2	3	4	5	n/a

1. Were adequate plans, procedures, protocols, or supports in place for the emergency?						
Emergency Social Services	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Food & Clothing	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Transportation	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Lodging & Shelter	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Multi-Culture and Language	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Animal Care	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Other?						
Comments:						

2. Were resources (staff, technology, facilities, PPE, other) available for the response and for you to perform your duties?						
Staff	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Technology	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Facilities	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
PPE and safety	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Other? (list)						
Comments:						

3. Did staff have necessary training to respond to this pandemic emergency?						
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments: 						

4. Rate the general level of cooperation that you experienced among the departments, municipalities, agencies, partners & stakeholders that you interacted with to perform your duties.						
Coordination	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Governance	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Information sharing	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Coordinated Communications	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Clarity of Direction	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Efficient and Effective Program Delivery	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
Comments: 						

5. Were sufficient resources available for communications?						
Internal (i.e. staff) communications	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
External (i.e. public) communications	1	2	3	4	5	n/a

Comments:

6. Was communications messaging clear and informative?

Internal (i.e. staff) communications	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
External (i.e. public) communications	1	2	3	4	5	n/a

Comments:

7. General Comments: please feel free to share your insights and recommendations on any aspect of the emergency response.

Comments:

APPENDIX B: Summary of Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations
7. Plans and Procedures
<i>Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Pandemic Plan</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and update the WDGPH Pandemic Plan to reflect the need for managing new, potentially non-preventable viruses and increased emergency response scalability.
<i>Headwaters Health Care Centre</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Review and update HHCC Pandemic Plan to reflect the need for managing new, potentially non-preventable viruses and increased emergency response scalability. 3. Regularly review and update stakeholder contact information.
<i>Dufferin Oaks Long Term Care Outbreak Plan</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Review and update plans and protocols regularly. 5. Provide training on the outbreak plans and protocols to new staff. 6. Conduct regular refresher training for existing staff.
<i>Municipal Emergency Response Plans</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Annually review and/or update the Dufferin County Emergency Response Plan to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the County, local municipalities and stakeholders. 8. Continue to build and strengthen relationships and partnerships with stakeholder groups. Formalize Working groups for congregate living, emergency social services, health and agriculture sectors to meet regularly to discuss emerging issues, maintain situational awareness and foster working relationships.
<i>Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Plans</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. For those agencies who currently do not have one, develop and implement a Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Program. 10. As part of the Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Plans, address equipment, technology, personnel and resource needs in the event of a disruption.

11. Review and update Continuity of Operations/Business Continuity Plans to address poor or non-existent internet connectivity for staff who must work from home in rural areas such as establishing cellular hotspots wherever possible.
12. Review and update notification, escalation and Emergency Operations Centre contact information for County staff and key partners and agencies.

8. Incident Management System

Emergency Operations Centre

13. Continue efforts to implement a scalable and flexible IMS structure in the County of Dufferin based on the 17 concepts and principles.
14. Review the application of the Incident Management System in municipalities and municipalities and scale and adjust the structure to better suit their organizational needs and capacities.
15. Continue to provide IMS training to help staff better understand the scalability and flexibility afforded by the IMS model.
16. Designate an IMS instructor
17. Establish an EOC Management Team briefing cycle at the onset of an emergency for internal updates to senior management and modify as the emergency evolves. These briefings are held to share current information, operational activities, priorities and challenge to facilitate a common situational awareness and action plan.
18. Assess and review EOC documentation relating to Position Checklists, Position Logs, Status Reports, Situation Reports, IMS Incident Updates, the Major Event Log, the EOC Action Plan, the EOC Organizational Chart and Electronic Information Displays to better align with operational needs.
19. Consider adopting the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management's six key measures to assist organizations in implementing incident management systems:
 - a. Raise awareness within your organization through presentations, communications and online.0;
 - b. Support and endorse IMS within your organization;
 - c. Adopt IMS into emergency plans, policies and procedures;
 - d. Use IMS in emergency exercises to help plan and prepare;
 - e. Respond to real incidents and planned events using IMS;
 - f. Develop a long-term sustainability plan.

20. The County should develop a multi-year work plan to further these key measures for Dufferin County staff and external partners and agencies.
<i>Virtual Emergency Operations Centre</i>
21. Develop an Emergency Operations Centre Manual to train staff on how to operate a virtual Emergency Operations Centre with adequate technological and telecommunications abilities similar to the legal requirement to establish a physical EOC with a backup site for use by the municipal emergency control group in an emergency.
<i>Notification and Activation</i>
22. Develop an Emergency Level Emergency Support Function that defines initial notification and activation procedures to ensure that staff understand their operational roles and information requirements.
9. Coordination, Governance
<i>County of Dufferin Emergency Management Response Organization</i>
23. Continue to build and strengthen relationships and partnerships with stakeholder groups. Formalize Working groups for congregate living, emergency social services, health and agriculture with the stakeholders identified in this report to meet regularly to discuss emerging issues, maintain situational awareness and foster working relationships.
<i>Emergency Declarations & Councillor Liaison</i>
<p>24. Provide greater guidance to Council on what powers an emergency declaration permits.</p> <p>25. Establish protocols for communication and Councillor's roles during incidents and emergencies such as leveraging formal and informal community networks to disseminate information to help the community and how to report urgent matters to the County for escalation to appropriate parties.</p> <p>26. Consider adding the hospital's abilities during an emergency declaration regarding collective agreements to the County's Emergency Declaration Checklist.</p>
<i>Dufferin County Health Sector</i>
27. Consider encouraging Public Health Ontario (PHO) and Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) to return to the established provincial response

<p>framework (IMS) that Ministries and municipalities have implemented, trained and exercised.</p> <p>28. Consider encouraging EMO/PEOC to begin communications and coordination with the Health Sector, ministries and municipalities.</p> <p>29. Consider encouraging the Province to move towards greater integration of all health services to better align with the public's need for a seamless, one-window delivery model.</p> <p>30. Consider encouraging the Province to prioritize scientific/medical information when preparing public health directions and guidance.</p> <p>31. Consider encouraging the Province to assess the various healthcare services sector geographic boundaries to better align with each other.</p>
<i>Dufferin County</i>
<i>Assessment Centres</i>
<p>32. In future pandemic plans, clearly define roles and responsibilities, including establishment, operation and funding for assessment centres.</p>
<i>Food Banks</i>
<p>33. Provide government services awareness training for Food Banks in Ontario, possibly through either the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) or Feed Ontario.</p> <p>34. Formalize the relationship between Dufferin County and the Orangeville Food Bank and other local area food banks.</p> <p>35. Consider encouraging social service providers to develop a "one-window" approach to community supports.</p>
10. Long-Term Care/Retirement Homes/Congregate Living
<i>Long-Term Care/Retirement Homes</i>
<p>36. Consider encouraging the Province to make regulated professionals such as nurses mandatory in all long-term care and retirement homes.</p> <p>37. Consider encouraging the Province to increase inspections and enforcement of standards and regulations in all long-term care and retirement homes.</p> <p>38. Consider encouraging the Province to require long-term care homes and retirement homes to have current outbreak plans and protocols with adequate staff training and exercises.</p>

39. Consider encouraging the Province to ensure that long-term care homes and retirement homes have a current stockpile of PPE at all times.
<i>Congregate Living Settings</i>
40. Continue to provide coordination and support the congregate living sector in Dufferin County.
41. Consider encouraging congregate living settings to develop outbreak plans and procedures.
42. Seek stricter regulations and accountability mechanisms from the Province to better protect congregate living and retirement homes.
43. Consider encouraging Province to consolidate legislation and regulations governing the congregate living sector.
44. Consider encouraging the Province to align the Public Health Units into seamless geographic boundaries.
45. Consider encouraging congregate settings operators to assess environmental controls in congregate settings to identify areas for improving outbreak mitigation.
46. Consider encouraging congregate settings operators to establish plans for improving environmental controls in their facilities.

11. Virtual Workplace/Information Technology
<i>Public Health</i>
47. Unless absolutely warranted, do not introduce new systems that duplicate existing systems during outbreaks or emergency situations.
<i>Municipalities</i>
48. Consider encouraging Federal and Provincial governments to help facilitate the expansion of broadband internet into rural communities.
49. Continue to monitor and introduce IT security measures.
50. Continue to transition government services to digital where possible.
51. Evaluate success of virtual EOC with ECG members and stakeholders.
52. Include option for virtual EOC for future emergency activations.
53. Develop an Emergency Operations Centre Manual to train staff on how to operate a virtual Emergency Operations Centre with adequate technological and telecommunications abilities similar to the legal requirement to establish a physical EOC with a backup site for use by the municipal emergency control group in an emergency.

<i>Community Care Support Services</i>
<p>54. Consider acquiring laptop computers for all staff when existing desktop computers reach end of lifespan and need to be replaced.</p> <p>55. Develop strategies for remote work for those staff who are unable to access the internet from their alternate (e.g. home) workplace.</p> <p>56. Provide information technology training for staff.</p>
<i>Orangeville Food Bank</i>
<p>57. Seek technology support from external sources such as local businesses or Dufferin County.</p> <p>58. Identify technology needs for the Orangeville Food Bank and seek donations of equipment.</p>

12. Resources and Logistics
<i>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</i>
<p>59. All agencies/sectors should examine their needs for PPE for possible future health emergencies and establish a stockpile.</p> <p>60. Examine establishing a central procurement team for PPE for the Dufferin County municipalities and stakeholder groups.</p> <p>61. Continue to maintain a supply of PPE at Dufferin Oaks.</p> <p>62. Regularly inspect PPE supply to ensure that it is current/useable. Rotate PPE stockpiles among agencies where practicable.</p>
<i>Staffing</i>
<p>63. Work to secure additional funding to address LTC staffing shortfalls.</p> <p>64. Maintain a volunteer pool for the Food Bank for possible future disruptions.</p> <p>65. Regularly review and maintain Food Bank volunteer position descriptions.</p> <p>66. Establish cross-training for all municipal staff.</p> <p>67. Undertake succession planning for non-management municipal staff.</p> <p>68. Assess hiring process and develop enhanced “on-boarding” strategies for new IT staff.</p> <p>69. Maintain an active recruitment strategy for new paramedic hires.</p> <p>70. Support employee well-being programs to help minimize burn-out by paramedics.</p>

71. Examine staffing schedules to assess whether any opportunities for increased time-off for paramedics can be incorporated.
13. Communications
72. Assess current Communications staffing levels and develop strategy for managing communications surge needs.
<i>Situational Awareness – Internal</i>
<i>County of Dufferin, Paramedic Services</i>
73. Ensure that all staff have a corporate email address or alternate tactics to receive communications.
74. Look to alternate tactics for disseminating information to internal staff and stakeholders.
<i>Headwaters Health Care Centre</i>
75. Throughout an emergency situation, monitor staff response to situational awareness and information sharing and adjust as necessary.
<i>Situational Awareness - Province</i>
76. Establish regular situational briefings and issuance of Situation Reports from the PEOC to municipalities.
77. Include all COVID Assessment Centres in the provincial briefings from the Assessment Emergency Operations Centre.
78. Continue with the weekly Ministry of Health meetings with Paramedic Services Chiefs in the province.
<i>Public Information</i>
79. Continue with timely and relevant information for residents using multiple tactics.
80. In all emergency situations, monitor mainstream media and social media for possible issues or misinformation.
81. Examine options for continuing with virtual Council meeting or implementing a hybrid option (in-person and virtual) once public health restrictions on gatherings are lifted.
82. Throughout any emergency, monitor public inquiries and adjust communications tactics and resources as necessary.

15. Training and Exercises

- 83. Continue with a regular training and exercise program.
- 84. Establish cross-training for all staff.
- 85. Undertake succession planning for non-management staff.
- 86. As more is learned about COVID and the new variant, Omicron, IPAC training should continue to be updated and delivered to staff.

16. Recovery Phase

Community Care Support Services

- 87. Continue to monitor and support staff well-being and encourage their use of wellness programs.
- 88. In outbreak situations, an early adoption of enhanced environmental controls for patients should be emphasized.
- 89. Utilize the Nurse Practitioner program early when patient support and visitation become stressed due to emergency situations.

Supply Chain

- 90. Continue preventative maintenance on existing fleet of vehicles and equipment.

17. General Observations

- 91. Proceed with the establishment of a Dufferin community paramedic program.
- 92. Consider encouraging the province to establish standards for the community paramedic program.
- 93. Consider encouraging province to increase base funding for social services.

APPENDIX C: Consultant Profile

COMPANY PROFILE – Plannix Operations

Plannix Operations was engaged by the County of Dufferin to facilitate the debriefing of municipal partners on the COVID-19 response. For this project, Plannix Operations partnered with sub-consultant Loretta Chandler.

Plannix Operations was established in 2017 with the goal of providing expert emergency management, business continuity (continuity of operations) planning, training, exercising, support activities and risk assessments, including ISO 9001:2015. Nick Buczynsky, ABCP, is the President of Plannix Operations and sole proprietor providing services to municipalities, provincial agencies, emergency services, non-governmental organizations and businesses in Ontario.

Nick brings over 40 years of practical and operational experience in emergency management, business continuity, traffic operations, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and policy development. His experience working for local, regional and provincial governments is highlighted by his early adopter status of the DisasterLAN emergency management software. Nick was one of the first people in Canada to utilize the program and realize its practical application in emergency operations centres; he has subsequently provided training to hundreds of municipal and provincial personnel, first responders and supporting agencies.

Nick is a certified Associate Business Continuity Professional (ABCP) through the Disaster Recovery Institute Canada (DRIC). He is also a certified trainer in Basic Emergency Management (BEM) and the Ontario Incident Management System (IMS) program.

Hands-on experience with significant incidents and emergency situations include the 2013 Ice Storm, 2015 Pan-Am Games contingency planning, the 9-11 terrorist attack, the 2003 Power Outage, major GTA traffic incidents and numerous other events. Nick's ability to see the big picture and integrate services is evident through his successful coordination of staff and agencies during planning and preparedness activities as well as emergency response and recovery initiatives.

Over the years, Nick has been called upon numerous times as a subject matter expert, delivering dozens of presentations to community groups, businesses, and industry.

BIOGRAPHY – Loretta Chandler

Former Director, Office of Emergency Management (Retired)
City of Toronto

Loretta Chandler has performed many diverse roles in her 34 years of public service with the City of Toronto, York Region Emergency Management and the Ontario Public Service.

Loretta joined the Office of Emergency Management, City of Toronto in November 2009 in the new position of Director to provide strategic leadership and direction to the City's Emergency Management and Business Continuity programs.

As a member of Senior Management Team, she effectively promoted a high level of operational emergency preparedness in cooperation with emergency services, internal and external stakeholders, public and private sector partners and other levels of government; building and strengthening these relationships has also been her top priority.

Loretta strengthened the City's ability to mitigate, prepare, respond and recover from emergencies by leading the implementation and customization of the Incident Management System, a standardized approach to emergency management within the City's Emergency Operations Centre.

Under Loretta's leadership, the Office of Emergency Management created the emergency response structure, developed supporting plans and protocols and conducted annual training and exercise programs including debriefings and preparing After-Action Reports. These efforts have been instrumental in making the City of Toronto a leader in Incident Management System implementation at the municipal level.

She has served as the Emergency Operations Centre Director for nineteen activations of the Emergency Operations Centre including the 2010 G20 Summit, the 2013 Severe Flooding and Ice Storm, the 2015 Pan/Parapan American Game and the 2017 Toronto Island Flooding.

Loretta successfully led the program development and integration of the Emergency Social Services team with the Office of Emergency Management to provide an organized response to the urgent needs of residents who are displaced as a result of an emergency.

Loretta has a Masters Degree in Public Policy and Public Administration from the London School of Economics, an Honours Degree in Political Science from York University, a Masters Certificate in Municipal Leadership, Schulich School of Business and the Certified Municipal Manager III Emergency Management Professional designation.



REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and Members of General Government Services

From: Michelle Dunne, Clerk

Meeting Date: March 24, 2022

Subject: Compensation Policy for Public Members on Advisory Committees

In Support of Strategic Plan Priorities and Objectives:

Good Governance - ensure transparency, clear communication, prudent financial management

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for an amendment to Policy No. 1-2-02 – Committee Structure and Mandates to include compensation for public members of advisory committees.

Background & Discussion

In June 2021, the Chief Administrative Officer recommended that Council compensate public members of committees and advisory groups with honorariums on a per meeting basis. Honorariums of \$100 per meeting for public members of advisory committees was approved as part of the 2022 budget.

Staff have developed the following procedures for issuing the honorarium to advisory committee members.

1. Public members on advisory committees will receive an honoraria of \$100 per meeting attended, to a maximum amount of \$1,200 annually.

2. The honoraria is not intended for members who serve on advisory committees as representatives of organizations or businesses which they own or at which they are employed.
3. There is no additional honoraria for public members who serve as chair or co-chair.
4. The honoraria is not paid for attendance at sub-committee meetings or events.
5. Members must be in attendance at the meeting to receive the honoraria.

Compensation will be paid to all public members on the committees listed below:

Advisory Committee	Public Members	Anticipated No. of Meetings Per Year
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Community Advisory Committee	8 - 10	12
Dufferin County Forest Advisory Team	5	1
Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee	3 - 5	10
Tourism Advisory Group	7	8

This procedure would replace the current remuneration section listed in Policy No. 1-2-02 – Committee Structure and Mandates (attached).

Financial, Staffing, Legal and IT Considerations

Compensation for public members of advisory committees was approved as part of the 2022 budget.

Recommendation

THAT the Report from the Clerk, dated March 24, 2022, titled Public Committee Member Compensation, be received;

AND THAT the amendments to Policy No. 1-2-02 – Committee Structure and Mandates be approved.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Michelle Dunne
Clerk

Report Prepared by:
Rebecca Whelan, Deputy Clerk

Attachments:
Policy No. 1-2-02 – Committee Structure and Mandates

POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

SECTION	COUNCIL RELATED POLICIES	POLICY NUMBER	1-2-2
SUB-SECTION	COUNCIL PROCEDURES	EFFECTIVE DATE	January 1, 2020
SUBJECT	Committee Structure and Mandates		
AUTHORITY	General Government Services – November 26, 2020 Council – December 10, 2020		

PURPOSE:

To determine the appropriate number of Committees, their membership, terms of reference and reporting practices.

STATEMENT:

The business of the Council of the County of Dufferin is conducted through Standing Committees. There are currently four standing committees that report to Council. As well, there are ad hoc committees struck to deal with a specific matter with a start and finish time. Statutory committees are also required by statute from time to time such as the Accessibility Advisory Committee and Planning Advisory Committee.

PROCEDURE:

Most matters appear before committee prior to Council unless they are time sensitive or do not fit into a specific committee function. The committee structure and the mandates are outlined below.

Community Development and Tourism

Composition: 6 to 8 members plus the Warden

Quorum: Majority of Members

Considers matters pertaining to: Building, Land Use Planning, Tourism (including Museum)

General Government Services

Composition: 6 to 8 members plus the Warden

Quorum: Majority of Members

Considers matters pertaining to: C.A.O.'s office, Clerk's, Emergency Management, IT, Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, Property

Infrastructure & Environmental Services

Composition: 6 to 8 members plus the Warden

Quorum: Majority of Members

Considers matters relating to: Climate Change, County Forest, Facilities, Roads & Bridges, and Waste Management

Health & Human Services

Composition: 6 to 8 members plus the Warden

Quorum: majority of members

Considers matters pertaining to: Accessibility, Dufferin Oaks Homes for Seniors, Senior Services, Social Services (Childcare, Housing and Ontario Works), Land Ambulance, Public Health

Statutory Committees

Where required by legislation, Council shall appoint, by resolution, members to a committee which is fully funded and financed through the County.

There is currently a statutory committee, the Accessibility Advisory Committee legislated by the *Ontarians With Disabilities Act*. The County has a Joint Committee with the Town of Orangeville, administered through the Town. The committee considers matters relating to accessibility for those with disabilities and reports through the Human Services Committee.

Advisory Committees /Teams with Public Members

Council may strike advisory committee/teams for specific functions of the County. An advisory committee/team is often long term, has no power to make decisions and generally approaches its advisory role by identifying certain issues, investigating and discussing them, and proposing solutions and recommendations.

Ad Hoc Committees

Council may constitute an Ad Hoc Committee to consider and report on a specific subject, project or undertaking. When an ad hoc committee has been appointed by Council, a mandate shall be established. When an ad hoc committee has completed its work and made its final report to Council, the ad hoc committee will be dissolved.

Remuneration

No remuneration will be paid for committee members; however, mileage and travel expenses will be covered.

Schedules:

A: Agriculture Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference

B: Diversity, Inclusivity and Equity Committee – Terms of Reference

C: Dufferin Forest Advisory Team – Terms of Reference

D: Economic Development Committee – Terms of Reference

E: Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee – Orangeville and Dufferin County - Terms of Reference

Schedule A

Agricultural Advisory Committee of Dufferin County Terms of Reference

Guiding Principles:

This committee provides coordination of and communication between organizations providing an agriculture function. The Agriculture Advisory Committee acts as the voice of the agricultural community at the Dufferin County table. The Agricultural Advisory Committee will have the opportunity to provide comments from an agricultural lens on new policy or existing issues that may have impact on the agriculture industry within Dufferin County. In one of the fastest growing areas in Ontario, Dufferin County strives to ensure that the agriculture industry continues to not only be supported but flourish amidst rapid population growth.

Term of Committee: The term of the committee will run concurrent with the term of council or until successor members are appointed.

Appointment of the Chair: A chair will be appointed at the first meeting.

Appointment of a Vice-Chair: A Vice- chair will be appointed at the first meeting. The Vice-Chair will assume the duties of the Chair when the Chair is not available.

Frequency of Meetings: The committee will meet on a bi-annual basis, with any pressing matters sent out via email for comment.

Term of the Chair: the term of the Chair will run concurrent with the term of council or until the new committee is appointed. The Chair shall not be a member of County Council.

Composition of Committee:

Number of Voting Members	Representing
3	Commercial Livestock Producers (dairy, hog, beef, poultry)
1	Cash Crop
2	Ag Business Owner (Grain Bin, Custom Work, Agronomist)
2	Farm Gate Sales
1	Commercial Fruit / Vegetable Farmer (potatoes, spinach, etc.)
1	Dufferin County Economic Development Officer
1	OMAFRA Representative
1	Member of County Council
12	Total

The committee may set up sub-committees as required

Note: Any municipality with an economic development committee is entitled to appoint a member to this committee.

Staff Support: Economic Development staff to provide staff support.

Meeting Rules: The County of Dufferin Procedural By-law will apply to this committee.

Quorum: Majority of Members.

Budget: The committee will submit its budget request no later than August 1st of each year.

Purpose:

The main purpose of the Agriculture Advisory Committee is to provide comment and recommendations to County Council on ongoing matters associated with the agriculture sector as a whole. The committee will compliment and support economic development and planning initiatives pertaining to agriculture.

The committee will focus on areas of planning and economic development such as:

- New Provincial and County policy proposals
- Agriculture business attraction and retention strategies
- Promotion and education of agriculture and related business and industry
- Promote normal farm practices and the right to farm
- Protect the County's prime agricultural areas from fragmentation, development and land uses unrelated to agriculture.

Strategies:

Development and Maintenance of:

- A plan to attract and retain agriculture businesses
- A plan to promote the agriculture industry and related businesses
- A plan of what ideal community growth looks like in respect to saving prime agriculture land
- Awareness of the Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Initiatives that stimulate a positive climate for agriculture industry growth
- Identify and promote a range of agriculture- related uses and on-farm diversified use

Schedule B

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Community Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Mandate:

The mandate for the committee will be to advise County Council, make recommendations and provide a monitoring and measuring role to help ensure that the County applies a diversity, equity and inclusion lens to its policies, services and programs.

1. Provide insight, advice, and make recommendations to County Council relating to the following:
 - emerging equity or diversity issues or trends arising in the community;
 - initiatives to combat racism, acts of prejudice or hate in the community;
 - identifying systemic barriers faced in accessing county services, information, programs and facilities;
 - identifying systemic barriers to participation in public life and achievement of social, cultural and economic wellbeing of residents;
 - strategies for building connections and fostering a deeper sense of inclusion and belonging especially for marginalized groups;
 - proposed County of Dufferin initiatives, services, and policies to meet changing needs of a diverse community;
 - employment and employee awareness policies, initiatives, and programs.
2. Liaise with organizations and stakeholders, particularly those from marginalized groups including but not limited to Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, and LGBTQ+ community members to facilitate discussions that promote broader understanding and engagement between residents of diverse backgrounds and abilities.
3. Provide recommendations on opportunities for education and awareness programs on anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion in consultation with the County Administration and within the budget allocated by County Council.
4. Provide advice and recommendations on the development and contents of a new Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy which shall include an annual work plan with clear actions and measurable goals and objectives that move to identify and eliminate systemic discrimination and create an inclusive organization.
5. In cooperation with County Staff Diversity and Inclusion Committee provide regular updates to County Council that monitor and measure the County's success in applying a diversity, equity and inclusion lens resulting in implementing real changes to policies, services, and programs.

Composition:

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is composed of the following members:

Role	Member
Committee Chair	To be selected annually from within the committee
Community Members	8-10 members appointed from the community
Council Representation	2 members of Council
County of Dufferin Staff Liaison (non-voting)	2 members from the Staff Diversity and Inclusion Committee
Support Staff (non-voting)	Support staff as required

Selection Process:

Community Members will be selected through an application and interview process. The interview panel will include the appointed Council members and a staff representative. Committee members will have the skills, knowledge, and experience to contribute effectively to the committee's mandate. Committee members must be a County of Dufferin resident, business owner or stakeholder who has an understanding of the impacts of racism and systemic discrimination on marginalized people and meet the following general qualifications:

- be familiar with overall community issues
- have demonstrated knowledge around diversity, equity and inclusion
- be able to build meaningful relationships and connections within the community

Council shall strive to ensure Committee membership reflects the diversity of the community with particular focus given to marginalized groups who have traditionally faced systemic discrimination including but not limited to Blacks, Indigenous peoples, people of colour, and people who identify as LGBTQ+.

Subcommittees and Working Groups:

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Community Advisory Committee may form subcommittees and working groups within its membership as may be necessary to address specific issues within its mandate. Subcommittees shall draw upon members of the Committee and the Chair of the subcommittee shall be a voting member. Subcommittees may also invite community volunteers and stakeholders to participate in specific initiatives.

Remuneration & Expense Reimbursement:

Committee members shall serve without receiving remuneration. Reimbursement for mileage or transportation costs to meetings will be provided in accordance with County policy.

Term of Office:

The Committee members shall be appointed for the Term of Council (4 years).

Meetings:

The committee will meet a minimum of 4 times per year or at the call of the Chair.

Quorum:

Committee quorum requires that the majority of voting members be present. If quorum is not attained within the first 10 minutes, the formal meeting cannot proceed and the support staff member is not required to remain and/or provide notes. If members present choose to remain, they may do so for an information exchange only.

Conflict of Interest:

Members should be cognizant of perceived conflicts in terms of issues which may serve to benefit them personally. Members shall not use their status on a Committee for personal or political gain.

Schedule C

Dufferin County Forest Advisory Team Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The purpose of the Dufferin County Forest Advisory Team (DCFAT) is to:

- provide community input and advice to County staff regarding the Dufferin County Forest Management Plan and Dufferin County Forest Recreational Use Policy and;
- assist County staff in communicating plan and policy revisions.

Dufferin County Forest Goal:

To protect the quality and integrity of ecosystems in the Dufferin County Forest, including air, water, land and biota; and, where quality and integrity have been diminished, to encourage restoration or remediation to healthy conditions; while providing a variety of social and economic benefits to the public.

Assumptions:

- recreational pursuits in the forest are a privilege, not a right;
- the Dufferin County Forest is not parkland, preserve or for single-use, however, some areas may not be suitable for all activities and;
- the Dufferin County Forest is owned and managed by the Corporation of the County of Dufferin, and is not Crown land.

Criteria for Analysis of Recreational Activities/Events:

- activity must have minimal environmental impact;
- activity must not have significant impact upon other forest users;
- activity must be compatible with forest management activities;
- activity must not pose significant liability concerns to the County and;
- activity should not require significant County staff intervention for administration or policing.

Membership:

Representation will be solicited from the general public to coincide with the new term of County Council, or as required to replace or add members. Five members will be selected according to the following criteria:

- commitment to advancing the purpose of the Dufferin County Forest Advisory Team;
- interest and respect for a broad range of issues regarding the management of the Dufferin County Forest;
- respect for the procedures agreed to by the members;
- willingness to serve as a volunteer on the Advisory Team;
- aged 18 or over; and
- resident of Dufferin County.

In addition, one member of the Community Services/Dufferin Oaks Committee will be appointed to the Dufferin County Forest Advisory Team.

Structure:

The Advisory Team will meet at least once annually to discuss items relevant to its purpose. The County Forest Manager or his/her designate will attend all meetings and assist as required. The Advisory Team may choose to obtain feedback from recreational users and the broader public when deemed necessary.

Term of Office:

The Committee members shall be appointed for the Term of Council (4 years).

Schedule D

Economic Development Committee Terms of Reference

Guiding Principles:

This committee provides coordination of and communication between organizations providing an economic development function. A level of trust must be fostered and maintained with the recognition and acknowledgement that investment and economic development growth in any area of Dufferin County is of benefit to the entire County.

Term of Committee: The term of the committee will run concurrent with the term of council or until successor members are appointed.

Appointment of the Chair: The seat of Chair will be filled by the member of County Council.

Appointment of a Vice-Chair: A Vice- chair will be appointed at the first meeting. The Vice-Chair will assume the duties of the Chair when the Chair is not available.

Frequency of Meetings: The committee will meet on a quarterly basis, with any pressing matters sent out via email for comment.

Term of the Chair: the term of the Chair will run concurrent with the term of council or until the new committee is appointed. The Chair shall not be a member of County Council.

Composition of Committee:

Number of Voting Members	Representing
1	Grand Valley Economic Development Committee
1	Mulmur Economic Development Committee
1	Orangeville Economic Development Committee
1	Shelburne Economic Development Committee
1	Workforce Development Board
1	Hills of Headwaters Tourism
1	Education Sector
1	Dufferin Board of Trade
1	Director of Planning, Economic Development and Tourism
1	Dufferin Federation of Agriculture
1	Member of County Council
11	Total

Number of Voting Members	Representing
1	Grand Valley Economic Development Committee
1	Mulmur Economic Development Committee
1	Orangeville Economic Development Committee
1	Shelburne Economic Development Committee
1	Agriculture, Food and Beverage Business
1	Creative Industries Business
1	Health and Wellness, Wellbeing and Recreation Destinations Business
1	Tourism Business
1	Manufacturing Business
1	Professional, Engineering, Information Technology and Financial Services
1	Director of Planning, Economic Development and Tourism
1	Member of County Council
12	Total

The committee may set up sub-committees as required

Note: Any municipality with an economic development committee is entitled to appoint a member to this committee.

Staff Support: Economic Development staff to provide staff support.

Meeting Rules: The County of Dufferin Procedural By-law will apply to this committee.

Quorum: Majority of Members.

Budget: The committee will submit its budget request no later than August 1st of each year.

Purpose:

The main purpose of the Economic Development Committee is to provide comment and recommendations to County Council on ongoing matters associated with economic development. The committee will compliment and support economic development initiatives.

The committee will focus on areas of economic development that relate to the Dufferin County Economic Development Strategic Plan such as:

- Business retention and expansion strategies
- Marketing of Dufferin County as a place to live and do business
- Workforce development
- Natural gas and high-speed internet expansion across Dufferin County
- Foster entrepreneurship in key sectors (agriculture, food and beverage; creative industries; tourism; professional, engineering, information technology and financial services; manufacturing; and finally health and wellness, well-being and recreation destinations.)

Schedule E

Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (Orangeville and Dufferin County)

Date Approved by Council: March 9, 2020

Mandate:

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee will be a joint committee between the County of Dufferin and the Town of Orangeville.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee shall,

Duties of the Joint Committee (Section 29 (4)) (a)

- (a) advise the respective councils about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which the council may seek its advice under subsection (5) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
- (b) review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects; and
- (c) perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations.

Duty of the councils (Section 29 (5))

The council shall seek advice from the committee on the accessibility for persons with disabilities to a building, structure or premises, or part of a building, structure or premises,

- (a) that the council purchases, constructs or significantly renovates;
- (b) for which the council enters into a new lease; or
- (c) that a person provides as municipal capital facilities under an agreement entered into with the council in accordance with section 110 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

Supplying site plans

When the committee selects site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the Planning Act to review, the council shall supply them to the committee in a timely manner for the purpose of the review.

The Committee may also provide advice on matters Council is considering which affect persons with disabilities, seniors and other citizens with access issues, and report to Council or to another Committee designated by Council for that purpose.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Orangeville Accessibility and Seniors Advisory Committee shall,

- (a) advise the council about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which the council may seek its advice under subsection (5) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;
- (b) review in a timely manner the site plans and drawings described in section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects; and
- (c) perform all other functions that are specified in the regulations.

The Committee may also provide advice on matters Council is considering which affect persons with disabilities, seniors and other citizens with access issues, and report to Council or to another Committee designated by Council for that purpose.

The Committee may also direct or monitor volunteer community working groups participating in specific projects or initiatives in its work plan and budget.

Goals/Objectives:

The Goals of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee are to encourage and facilitate accessibility on behalf of all persons by:

1. Soliciting feedback from the community on issues relating to people with disabilities and other citizens with access issues, and bring to the relevant Council matters identified by the Committee as requiring action by the municipality.
2. Working with both Councils for the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of its accessibility plan.
3. Working cooperatively with municipal Departments, Boards, Commissions and Committees whose activities affect access issues, including to:
 - (a) provide advice and information on directions for future planning of municipal services, programs and facilities; and
 - (b) monitor municipal services, programs and facilities to ensure full participation of all citizens; and
 - (c) evaluate the progress of accessibility activities.
4. To inform citizens of the existence and mission of this Committee and to work with them to

identify existing social and physical barriers to access and participation.

5. To work with Council and staff to increase public awareness of the issues of accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities and all citizens.
6. To work with local government to change policies, as required, as they pertain to people with disabilities.

Reporting to Council:

- circulation of monthly minutes to Town of Orangeville and County of Dufferin Council
- presentations/delegations as necessary

Chair:

The position of Chair shall be a Town of Orangeville appointed member.

Budget:

The budget will be determined by the respective Councils. Matters with regard to expenditures of Orangeville funds will be voted on by the Orangeville Council appointed members only.

Enabling Legislation, By-Law or Staff Report:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 Ontario Regulation 191/11
Integrated Accessibility Standards

Committee Composition:

As required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, a majority of the members of the committee shall be persons with disabilities.

1. The Committee shall be comprised of a maximum of thirteen (13) members.
2. A minimum of three (3) and a maximum of five (5) members will be appointed by the County of Dufferin to represent areas outside of the Town of Orangeville.
3. The Committee membership shall be a combination of persons with disabilities, service providers familiar with accessibility issues and members of the general public.

Skills Requested:

- passion for accessibility/barrier free community
- background in one or more areas of focus, including persons with disabilities, barrier free access and or inclusive communities.

Administration Section:

Department Linkage:

Staff Support:

Clerk's Assistant – Orangeville or Committee Coordinator – Dufferin

Technical Expertise Community Services staff, as needed

County Representative Emergency Management/Accessibility Coordinator

Meeting Frequency:

Monthly or at the call of the Chair

REPORT TO

GENERAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

To: Chair Creelman and Members of the
General Government Services Committee

From: Headwaters Communities In Action

Meeting Date: General Government Services Presentation March 24
Report to Council April 14

Subject: Dufferin County Community Grants - 2022

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III. Conclusion

I. Executive Summary

A. Introduction and Background

Headwaters Communities In Action (HCIA) has served Dufferin County and its communities since its inception in 2004 and has a strong record of fostering action on priority issues, providing backbone support, facilitating community connections and multi-sector collaborations in support of community well-being.

Since 2018, HCIA has supported Dufferin County in meeting its strategic priorities by managing the Community Grant Program process. We perform this service on behalf of the General Government Services Committee. HCIA provides a comprehensive assessment of the applications as well as the end-to-end process, working with County staff to ensure a smooth experience for applicants and optimal use of community funds.

The Community Grants program supports not-for-profit or charitable organizations to complete a project or provide programming that benefits the residents of Dufferin County, and which serves one or more of the County's priority areas. The amount of funds available varies each year depending on the budget.

The Food For Thought grants support organizations in providing direct food services to Dufferin residents. Dufferin County allocates a minimum of \$10,000 to this stream each year.

The 2022 iteration of HCIA's involvement continues to refine the application process. This year, applicants used a new digital application form via Join In Dufferin in an effort to streamline the submission process as well as the assessment process. In future, County staff and HCIA will work together to investigate funding alternatives to respond to the needs of ongoing programs.

B. Processes

1. Application Process

2022 grant applications were accepted from December 23, 2021 to February 4, 2022.

A new digital application form was implemented using Join In Dufferin, with branching logic that directed applicants to the appropriate questions for each stream depending on the amount requested for Community Grants (+/- \$1K) or Food For Thought (≤ \$3K).

Instructions and criteria were kept essentially unchanged from previous grant cycles.

Mandatory requirements:

1. Applicants must be a registered not for profit or charitable organization, or partnered with one, and not a municipality. If partnering, a letter of support from the partner not-for-profit/charity was required, supplying their registration number.
2. The project or organization cannot already be supported by the County of Dufferin.
3. Funding requests are limited to one application per organization.
4. Projects must benefit Dufferin County residents. This must be clearly demonstrated in the application.

2. Assessment Process

Team Selection: A team of 2 HCIA Leadership Council (Board) members and 3 citizens were invited to form the HCIA Grant Assessment Team. Citizens were invited on the basis of having had experience in community issues (volunteering, municipal councils, managing community events), and/or experience in assessing grant applications. In cases where there was any possibility of conflict, the committee member recused themselves from assessing or participating in the discussion for that application.

Please see the separate attached file **DC Grant Assessment Team Bios 2022**, for the information of Council - not to be distributed publicly or included with the circulated agenda package.

Governance: The Terms of Reference document was reviewed and initialled to ensure that everyone was clear on their obligations and to ensure transparency.

Grant process refinement: The team notes observations and makes suggestions for the next grant cycle. These will continue to be refined in subsequent discussions with County staff in advance of the next grant cycle.

Review Process Steps:

1. The team conducted a kickoff meeting confirming the qualifying criteria, scoring, and weighting.
2. Each committee member assessed the applications individually to determine scores and allocate appropriate amounts within the provided guidelines.
3. An assessment meeting was held to compare and calibrate scores, discuss as a group, and arrive at final recommendations.

3. Reporting Process:

Report of recommendations: The Assessment Team's final recommendations are compiled into this report of recommendations, and submitted to the General Government Services Committee, to be presented at their next meeting. The Committee's recommendation then goes to the County Council at their next meeting. Following Council's final decision, the approved grants are distributed and applicants notified.

Recipient reports: After project completion, or by November 30, 2022, grant recipients must publish or submit a report sharing the story of how the Dufferin County Grant benefited the community, with a photo and a minimum of 250 words outlining the program, impacts of the project and grant, quotes from beneficiaries and coordinators of the program, and contact information. View grant stories from the March 2021 grant recipients at the following link:
<https://headwaterscommunities.org/community-grants/>

Grant recipient stories from the second (fall) round for 2021 will be collected and included along with the 2022 stories in October/November 2022.

Organizations may also be subject to a project review, and required to submit invoices and proof of payment for goods and services. They are required to keep these records on hand.

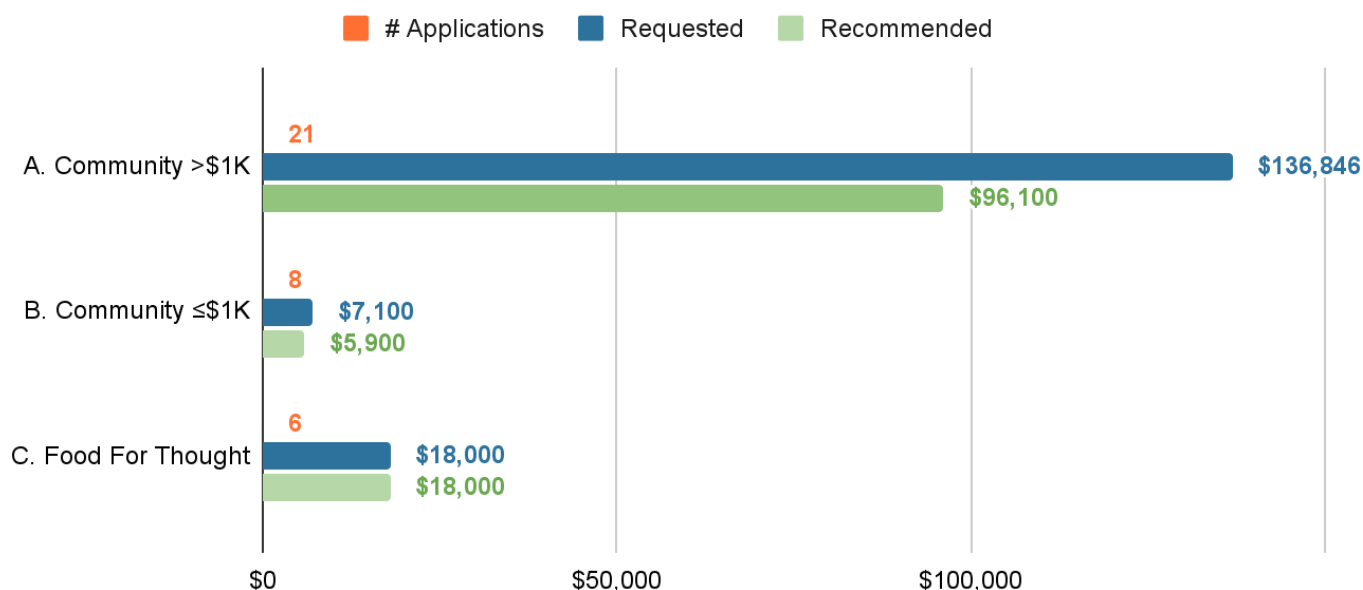
C. Project Summary Tables and Charts

The following tables and charts summarize the applications received and grant recommendations for 2022. Charts show the distribution of funding recommendations based on stream, project type, benefit category and by organization within each stream.

Summary Table 1

Available funds	# Applications received	Total funds requested	# Grants recommended	Total funds recommended	Funds remaining
\$120,000	35 Total Community >\$1,000: 21 ≤\$1,000: 8 FFT: 6	\$161,946.44 Community: \$143,946.44 FFT: \$18K	33 Total Community >\$1,000: 20 ≤\$1,000: 7 FFT: 6	\$120,000 Community: \$102K FFT: \$18K	\$0

\$ Requested vs. recommended by stream

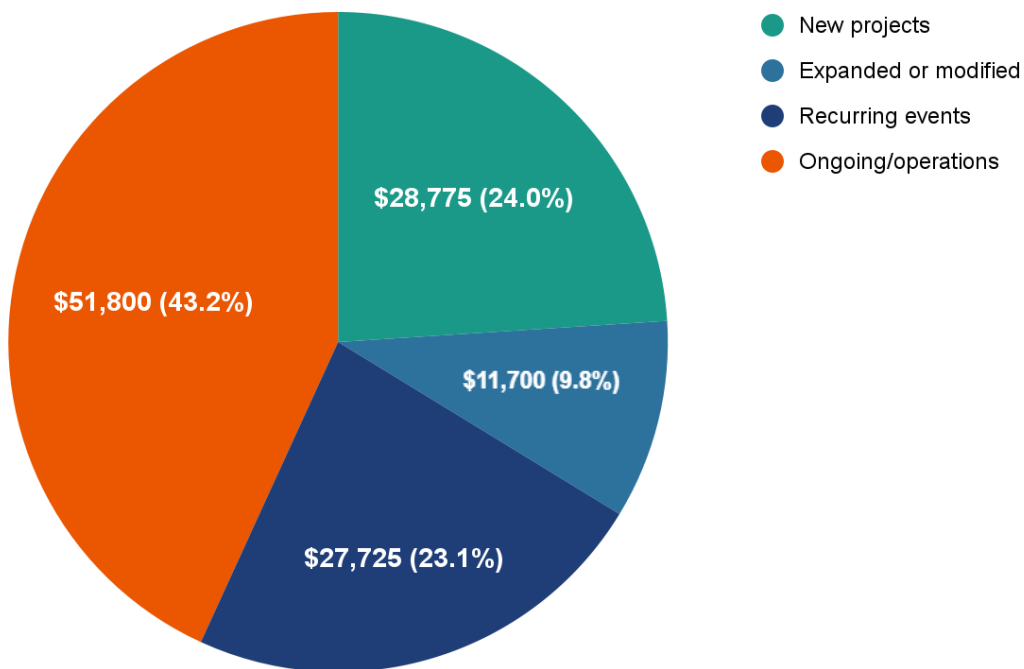


Summary Table 2

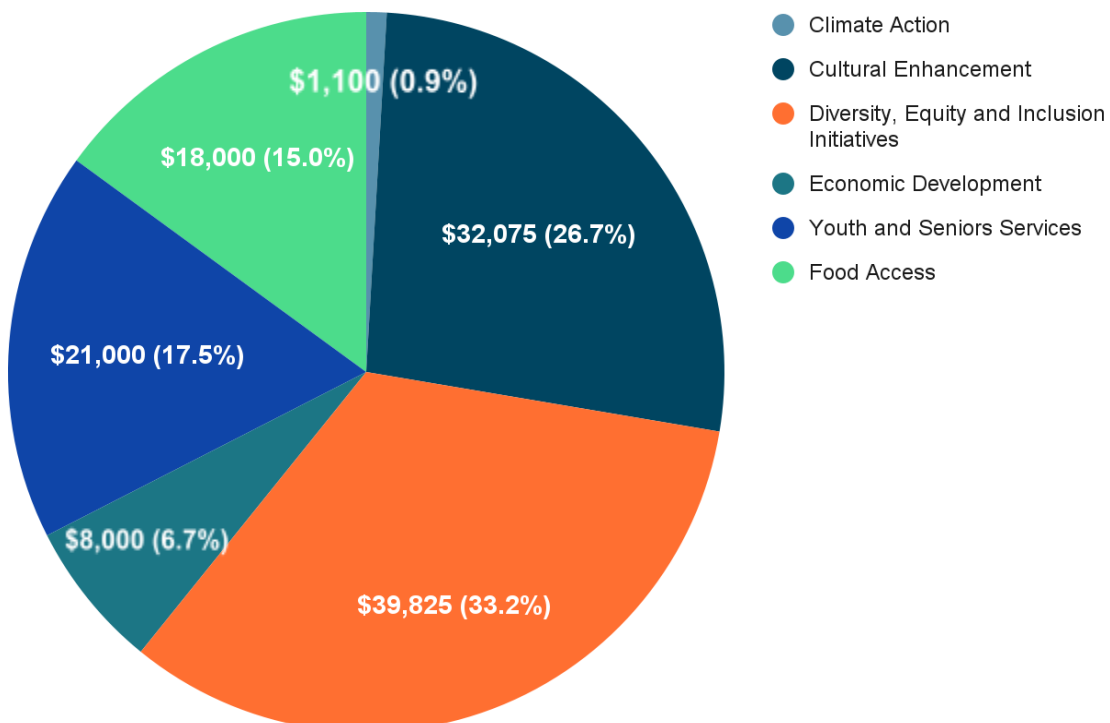
Grant Stream	Applicant	Requested	Recommended
A. Community Grants >\$1,000			
A.1.	164 Shelburne Air Cadets	\$ 6,000	\$ 4,000
A.2.	Bethell Hospice	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
A.3.	Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Dufferin and District	\$ 15,000	\$ 5,000
A.4.	Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services	\$ 5,225	\$ 5,225
A.5.	Career Education Council Guelph Wellington Dufferin	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,900
A.6.	Celebrate Your Awesome (Community Living Dufferin)	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,925
A.7.	Dufferin Board of trade	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
A.8.	Dufferin County Canadian Black Association	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,300
A.9.	Dufferin Parent Support Network	\$ 15,000	\$ 12,000
A.10.	Fiddlehead Care Farm	\$ 4,850	\$ 4,850
A.11.	First Line for Syria (Shelburne Primrose Pastoral Charge)	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
A.12.	Headwaters Arts	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,500
A.13.	Highlands Youth for Christ – Shelburne, Grand Valley & Orangeville	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,500
A.14.	Hockley Historic Community Hall	\$ 8,271	\$ 4,500
A.15.	Music in The Hills (CMHA Waterloo Wellington)	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000
A.16.	Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival	\$ 3,000	\$ -
A.17.	Rotary Club of Shelburne	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
A.18.	Shelburne Cricket Club	\$ 19,000	\$ 8,200
A.19.	Streams Community Hub	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,700
A.20.	Telecheck	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
A.21.	Theatre Orangeville	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
TOTAL A.		\$ 136,846	\$ 96,100
B. Community Grants ≤\$1,000			
B.1.	Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club	\$ 500	\$ 500
B.2.	Dufferin Town & County Farm Tour	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
B.3.	Island Lake Rowing Club (National Sport Trust Fund-Ontario)	\$ 1,000	\$ -
B.4.	Orangeville Community Band	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
B.5.	Shelburne and District Horticultural Society	\$ 600	\$ 600
B.6.	Orangeville & District Senior Citizens Centre	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
B.7.	St. John Ambulance	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
B.8.	Unicamp	\$ 1,000	\$ 800
TOTAL B.		\$ 7,100	\$ 5,900
C. Food For Thought Grants ≤ \$3,000			
C.1.	Caledon Meals on Wheels	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
C.2.	Children's Foundation of Guelph & Wellington/Food & Friends	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
C.3.	Everdale	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
C.4.	Orangeville Food Bank	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
C.5.	Primrose Elementary School	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
C.6.	Shepherd's Cupboard Foodbank	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
TOTAL C.		\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000
GRAND TOTALS		\$ 161,946	\$ 120,000

Recommendations: Distribution by project type

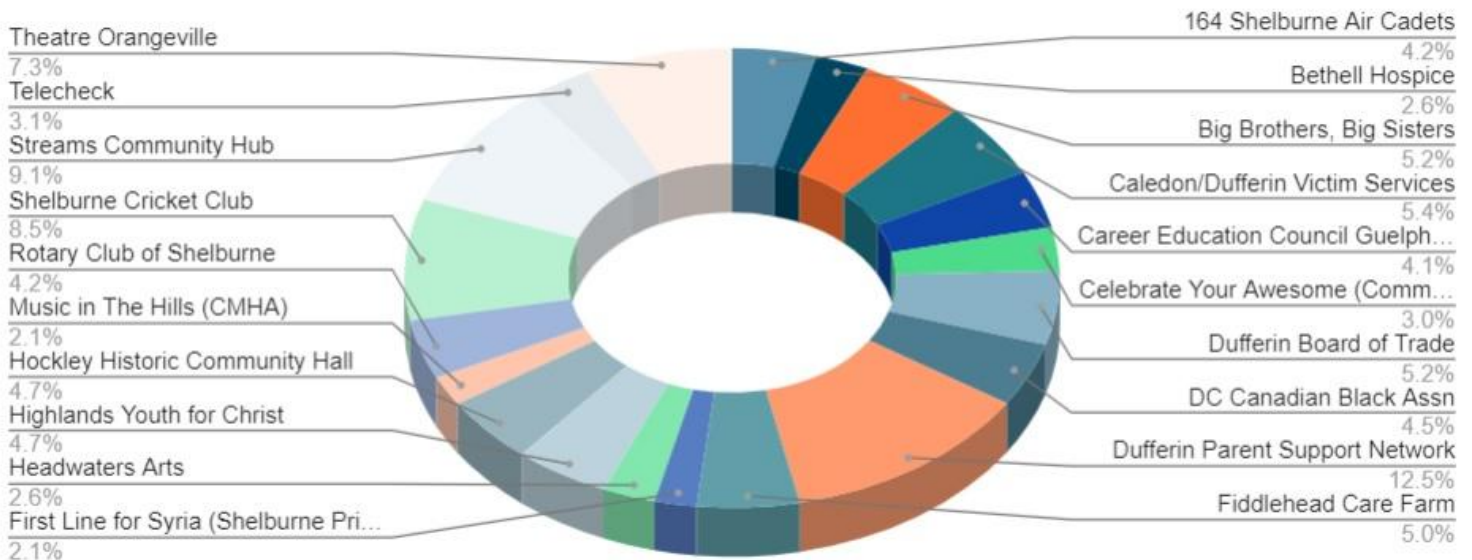
as determined by Assessment Team based on application contents



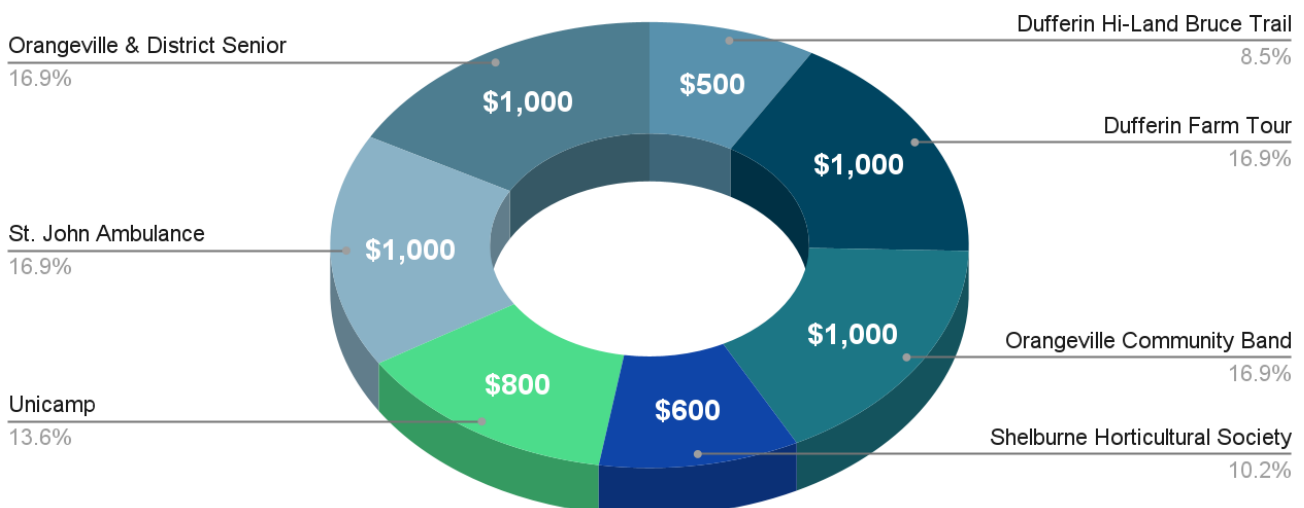
Recommendations: Distribution by primary benefit category



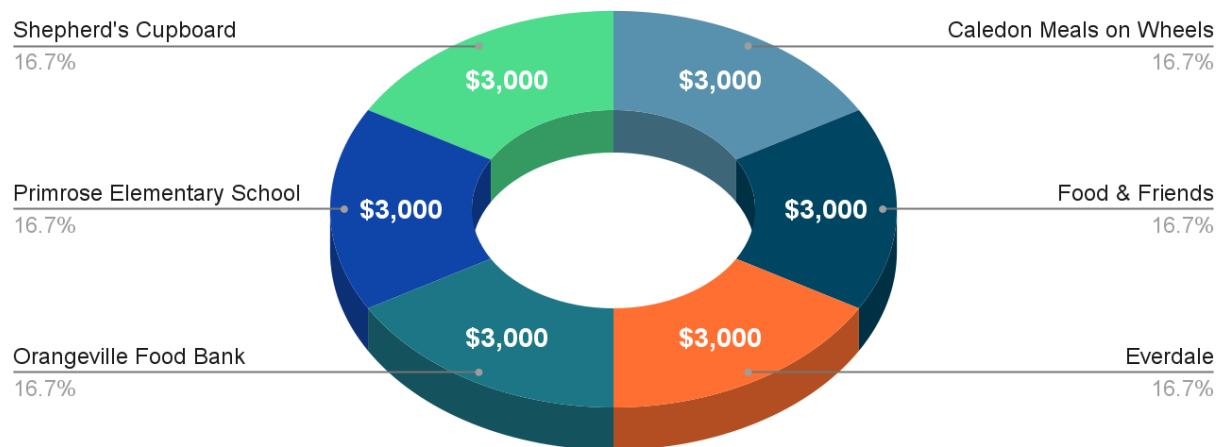
Recommendations: A. Community Grants >\$1,000



Recommendations: B. Community Grants ≤ \$1,000



Recommendations: C. Food For Thought ≤ \$3,000



II. Grant Assessment

Assessment Summary

All applications were assessed for their alignment to the stated Dufferin County strategic priorities. The County has identified the following as its 2022 strategic priorities, or benefit categories, for the purposes of the grants:

- Climate Action
- Cultural Enhancement
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives
- Economic Development
- Youth and Seniors Services

Applications were scrutinized for completeness, accuracy in answering the questions and compliance with eligibility criteria. Other considerations:

- **Competition:** This is a competitive process. Funding requests may be recommended in full, in part or declined, at the discretion of the assessment committee. Decisions were made after careful consideration of all factors as well as the overall mix of projects and distribution of funds, making side-by-side comparison of applications on specific criteria impractical. 2022 requests exceeded available funds by 35%.
- **Partial or no funding:** When recommending partial or no funding, consideration was given to:
 - competing requests (see above)
 - eligible items listed in the budget
 - organization and mandate alignment with priority areas
 - uniqueness of the program for the population served
 - perceived or demonstrated need and impact
 - likelihood of availability of other funding sources
 - overall fit with criteria
- **Improving future applications:** Several applicants were identified as potentially benefiting from an information session to review the requirements of the Community and Food For Thought Grant applications and how assessments are made. Applicants are also welcome to reach out to HCIA in writing for individual feedback about their applications to improve them in future rounds.
- **Priority:** These grant streams have traditionally been intended to support one-time funding opportunities/projects, with priority given to:
 - One-time funding for new projects
 - Expanded or modified existing programs, with new features or new beneficiaries
 - Events that are not fundraisers (i.e. sponsorship)

Questions

The Assessment Team recommends that all applicants be notified that they are invited and welcomed to contact HCIA with any questions about these recommendations and the outcome of their application.

What we heard: Exploring alternatives to meet ongoing program needs

At the January 27, 2022 meeting of the General Government Services Committee, on behalf of the Grants Assessment Team, HCIA Executive Director Jennifer Payne proposed that the Committee consider allowing some operational funding (also referred to as “sustainability”, “longer term” or “ongoing” funding), potentially through a separate funding mechanism outside of the Community Grant Program. As evidenced by the types of requests the team has seen in recent years, and the fact that some organizations request the same amount every year, with only slight differences in the substance of the proposed activities, it appears that these applicants appear to be more in need of support for their regular programming or operations than for new, one-time projects, which was not the original intention of the Community Grant Program. This year in particular, due to ongoing impacts of COVID-19, exceptions may be expected for organizations having difficulty covering regular programming or operations costs, who may be reluctant to embark on new projects. The Committee expressed general support for the Assessment Team using discretion this round, while ensuring that funding priority was reserved for eligible one-time projects. A motion was passed directing staff to work with HCIA to investigate options for sustainable funding going forward. This work is in progress and has not resulted in policy or criteria changes for this round.

On the 2022 form, the following question was added:

“Would you like to be recommended for longer term, sustainable funding rather than one-time project funding? This recommendation would be made at the committee’s discretion and is subject to Council approval.”

Of the 35 applications received, 26 applicants replied “Yes” to this question. Their combined 2022 application requests total \$136,446. After an initial pass, and considering the organizations’ history with the grant program, the types of proposed activities, the uniqueness of the service they provide and alignment with priority benefit categories, the list was narrowed down to 10 prospects, representing \$58,675 from 2022 requests. This identifies an initial list of organizations that the Assessment Team may recommend to the GGS Committee for consideration under an alternate funding model in future.

This is provided as information and is not intended to recommend those organizations for ongoing funding in this report. Rather, it is offered to help quantify the level of need for this type of support that we are seeing through this program, and to inform the discussion on future criteria or funding stream options.

The next step would be to develop and adopt a policy for this mechanism for Council’s consideration. HCIA and County staff will continue to work together following the 2022 grant process to draft a proposal for GGS and Council to consider, presumably following the October 2022 municipal election. After that, the list of prospective organizations to consider for longer term support will be submitted.

A. Community Grants greater than \$1,000

A.1. 164 Shelburne Air Cadets

Mission, purpose and objectives:

To promote and encourage the nation's youth to develop and maintain an interest in aviation, leadership and citizenship, in partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces and other organizations.

Project Description:

The purpose in which we are requesting the funds is for: cadet training, activities, spirit wear, increasing flying opportunities, enhancing programs such as music and effective public speaking, and enhancing recruitment to youth in the community (ages 12-19)

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$3,000 - \$6,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$4,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project

A.2. Bethell Hospice

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Bethell Hospice Foundation exists to raise funds to ensure the ongoing operation of Bethell Hospice in the Caledon community. Unlike many other local charities, Bethell Hospice depends on the generosity of donors simply to remain in operation. Government funding through the Ontario Ministry of Health contributes only to direct care medical staffing costs at Bethell Hospice. Every other cost – from food, medication and the resident hospice building, to community bereavement and outreach programs – is funded directly from donations.

To keep the doors of Bethell Hospice open and all programs and services available at no cost to residents, community clients and their families, Bethell Hospice Foundation must raise over \$1,500,000 each year. Every gift makes a meaningful difference that directly impacts many lives, and brings comfort at a difficult time. Thousands of people have benefitted from Bethell Hospice community programs and residential hospice care.

Project Description:

Objective: To host a successful 2022 Hike for Bethell Hospice community event that ensures fundraising targets are met to sustain the needs of Bethell Hospice, while also supporting family members and community participants who have lost a loved one through programs like the Children's Art Therapy, and Family & Friends Support Group.

Goal: Our goal is to raise \$250,000 at the 2022 Hike for Bethell Hospice, contributing to the \$1.5M needed to keep the doors of Bethell Hospice open and all programs and services available for our resident and community clients, at no cost.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Youth and Seniors Services

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$2,500	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$2,500
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)
- Request includes an event that also fundraises - recommendation is to support this as a community event, and not as fundraising proceeds

A.3. Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Dufferin and District

Mission, purpose and objectives:

At Big Brothers Big Sisters we enable life-changing mentoring relationships to ignite the power and potential of young people.

Project Description:

The objective of our project is to match more children who live in Dufferin County and who face adversity with a caring Big Brother or Big Sister. The purpose of our project is to help set these children on a more positive path in life as a result of their relationship with a caring Big Brother or Big Sister.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Youth and Seniors Services

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$15,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$5,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities, which, as noted with previous recommendations, is not the intent of these grants. There is general recognition of the importance of this organization and their work. This situation is under consideration between HCIA and Dufferin County staff, and will be discussed for future recommendations to Council.
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.4. Caledon\Dufferin Victim Services

Mission, purpose and objectives:

CDVS supports victims of crime, abuse, and tragedy, enabling the continuum of recovery. We do this through rapid response, informed referrals, and community partnerships. Our mission is to ensure that those who encounter crisis can cope with their current circumstances. CDVS aims to achieve its goals by:

- A. Liaising with and assisting the police to develop and maintain a service to respond to victims.
- B. Recruiting, training and coordinating a pool of community volunteers.
- C. Providing emotional support, information and practical assistance to victims to reduce the trauma of victimization.
- D. Developing and maintaining the capacity to disseminate accurate information and refer victims to appropriate community services; and
- E. Enhancing the ability of police to meet the immediate needs of victims by increasing their awareness of CDVS and its benefits and resources

Project Description:

CDVS is requesting funds for a new diversity, equity & inclusion project that will:

- Research, explore & connect with current diversity, equity & inclusion initiatives in Dufferin County to identify emerging issues/trends; explore & connect with other agencies & individuals working to combat racism, hate & violence faced by BIPOC or marginalized individuals in our community.
- Liaise with, create & strengthen connections with marginalized communities and identify agencies working to serve them.
- Provide educational awareness for CDVS staff & crisis responders on new learnings and strategies to welcome, support and serve underserved and marginalized individuals and communities.
- Update CDVS client resource binder and crisis responder training resources to include agencies and materials that address diversity, equity and inclusion's support for both victims and the CDVS responders who provide support & services.

- Create CDVS outreach materials & a comprehensive media campaign highlighting services tailored to the unique needs of underserved & marginalized individuals/communities in Dufferin to increase the likelihood of utilization of police & victim services when and if required.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$5,225 **Grant recommendation:** \$5,225

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes a new project

A.5. Career Education Council Guelph Wellington Dufferin

Mission, purpose and objectives:

The Career Education Council is a registered charity dedicated to providing meaningful opportunities for experiential learning, career exploration and skill-development. Our regional focus allows us to take a tailored approach to programs, events and resources that closely align with the changing landscape of community needs, economic development, and employment. We aim to enable employers and community partners, taking an active role in engaging their future workforce, with a shared vision of supporting diverse and thriving communities, enriched by people engaged in meaningful work.

Project Description:

The proposed project centres around the continuing development of Dufferin-focused resources for the Career Exploration Portal (CEP). The CEP is a virtual hub for career exploration resources, community contacts, and training programs. The portal provides ongoing connections between local employers and their future workforce, despite the current challenges and uncertainties that the Career Education Council (CEC) faces during the Covid-19 pandemic. This virtual program has proven to be an asset to employers, high school co-op and Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs, and local job-seeking youth, who faced limited in-person training resources in 2020-2021.

The purpose of this project is to extend the CEP's programming, scope, and efficiency, so that more youth, employers, and schools may be serviced in the arenas of career resources, skills training, employment opportunities, and community partnerships in the Dufferin region. Expanding the portal's resources is essential towards meeting virtual training demands brought on during the pandemic. The CEC will continue to keep a pulse on the changing needs and

priorities of Dufferin employers, to ensure that the CEP is able to accurately support and represent their needs. The CEP will continue to support Dufferin teachers who are eager for additional virtual resources due to in-person restrictions on events, workplace tours, career speakers and other important experiential opportunities, that would traditionally allow youth to connect and gather valuable insights, and networking skills, towards local career pathways and possibilities.

The objectives of the project centre around resources required to reach out to new community partners, facilitating resources for Dufferin businesses to join and utilize the CEP, and providing training modules, programs, and certifications within the specific area of Innovation, Creativity, and Information (ICE) challenges. The project will be divided into three main areas:

1. Funding six new activations for Dufferin business not currently involved in the CEP portal, specifically those who have faced financial challenges due to the pandemic. Involvement with the CEP portal helps to extend local business' resources in the fields of job training, youth career pathways, and youth mentorship. (6x activations for \$1500) The CEC will provide the following services to six local businesses:
 - a. Workplace tour videos, with a priority given to in-demand sectors and skilled trades. Videos help to highlight opportunities for co-op, employment, future careers, whilst dispelling myths and common misconceptions about specific lines of work. Editing and camera kits will be provided.
 - b. Career Profiles/Career Videos, which will be added to the CEP's growing library of videos aimed towards youth, highlighting mentorship towards career pathways, specific to individuals and businesses working in Dufferin. Equipment, as well as training and support towards creating dynamic videos, will be provided by the CEC.
 - c. Adding individuals from these businesses into the CEC's Community Career Speaker Database, so that they can speak virtually in classrooms about topics such as work experience, career paths in Dufferin, or specific industries.
 - d. A place on the CEP's Career Page the CEC's database of local employers with video or logo links that lead directly to their career/employment pages.
2. Funding one 'Gold' status activation, for a local business, in a relevant and in demand sector, that is in financial need (value of \$2000). This includes all of the above, as well as: -Sponsoring ten additional activations for Dufferin employers in the CEP Portal - Sponsoring five community career speakers and mentors for the CEP -Logo recognition on monthly CEC newsletter sent to educators, community partners, and other businesses
3. Funding to implement programs and modules around ICE Challenges on the CEP (\$1500). The ICE section of the CEP will allow Dufferin employers to identify specific challenges in their workplaces where they would benefit from the insights of local youth. This will allow Dufferin businesses and youth to form connections, and gain training in the areas of problem solving, prioritizing tasks, creative and collaborative

solutions to systems and business operations, and more. The CEC will facilitate resources and networking for this program via the CEP.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Economic Development

Amount Requested: \$5,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$3,900

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.6. Celebrate Your Awesome

Mission, purpose and objectives:

At Celebrate Your Awesome, our vision is to create a family-friendly, safe and inclusive space that allows people to celebrate pride and diversity.

Project Description:

The main objective of our event this year is to continue to promote inclusivity in our community. This year's event will focus on fun, bringing people together and fostering a space for education and learning. Our hope is that people will take the time to learn about each other and what makes each of us unique rather than allowing our differences to divide us.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement
- Secondary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives

Amount Requested: \$5,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$2,925

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.7. Dufferin Board of Trade

Mission, purpose and objectives:

The Dufferin Board of Trade (DBOT) is a non-profit community building organization that builds up the community by helping the local businesses within it thrive. Our mission is to be the frontline resource for regional businesses and community partners to ensure a prosperous and innovative business environment in Dufferin County, through:

- networking, promotion and communication;
- advocacy and industry liaison;
- partnership facilitation;
- business intelligence/analysis;
- growing membership.

Project Description:

After hosting a successful Think Local Market last summer, we noticed we had quite a few young vendors participating under the age of 25. Two of which were donating a portion of their sales to local charities. After seeing this, we wanted to encourage more young business entrepreneurs to follow their dreams and have started the Dream Big Market. Our objective is to showcase the talent that Dufferin youth has to offer and provide them with an opportunity they may not be given considering their age and experience.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Economic Development
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$5,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$5,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)

A.8. Dufferin County Canadian Black Association

Mission, purpose and objectives:

To work with community partners, businesses and all levels of government to support the Black community in Dufferin County through civic engagement, education, scholarships and advocacy. DCCBA will be a central hub for resources, tools and programs that are unique to the needs of the Black community. Through DCCB's Outreach Team, the organization will work with schools, organizations and businesses to provide educational training on Anti-Racism, Anti-Black Racism, Equity and Systemic Discrimination to ensure that Dufferin County is welcoming to all.

Project Description:

DCCBA is the only organization in Dufferin County specifically designed to serve and cater to the needs of the Black community. DCCBA was created to provide a safe space for members of the Black community and other racialized groups to access and have their voices heard by way of advocacy and amplifying their voices. The main objective of DCCBA is to allow the growing Black community in Dufferin County to be seen, heard and feel valued. In particular, DCCBA wants to support Black and other racialized groups in their educational pursuits through speaking engagements, volunteer opportunities, job opportunities, programs and scholarship opportunities. DCCBA is keen on working with our community partners to support their initiatives on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The specific objective of the funding request is to provide programs, workshops and services that will provide value to the community through education and training so that individuals will be able to advance their skills, and have additional opportunities for success and in return to benefit the overall Dufferin County community.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement
- Secondary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives

Amount Requested: \$5,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$4,300

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities
- Request includes recurring event(s)
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.9. Dufferin Parent Support Network

Mission, purpose and objectives:

To encourage, educate, and support parents of school-aged children and youth by providing opportunities to build positive parenting skills, strong family relationships, and healthy community connections. Through more effective parenting, children and youth will become all that they can be. They will develop emotional and physical well-being. They will be nurtured to believe in themselves, will be better able to handle life's challenges, and will make healthy choices.

Project Description:

The purpose of DPSN's group education program is to support parents and strengthen family connections to help children and youth develop to their full potential. A wide body of research demonstrates that parenting styles and practices affect children's behaviour and outcomes.

Ineffective parenting is known to be a strong predictor of behavioural problems. Effective parenting can be learned, and when parenting practices change, so does children's behaviour, leading to better outcomes.

DPSN's parenting workshops improve parenting knowledge, skills and problem-solving abilities. This helps build strong families and promotes protective factors against adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). These protective factors include nurturing and attachment, parenting competencies and resiliency (both in parents and their children).

As a result of the lockdown measures imposed to fight the pandemic, parents are facing increased challenges, including isolation, schooling from home, and concerns about mental and physical health. The lack of structure, uncertainty and inability to plan have led to disruptions in sleep routines, eating patterns, energy levels, and guilt, according to a 2020 CAMH Toronto study. About 30% of parents with children under 18 still living at home reported being depressed—fully 10% more than adults without children. Statistic Canada's 2020 study concluded that "Results on the impact of the measures to counter COVID-19 suggest that balancing child care, schooling and work during the pandemic raises high levels of concerns for parents and that there may be mental health consequences for those who feel additional stress related to family responsibilities." Nearly three quarters (74%) of parents reported feeling very or extremely concerned about balancing child care, schooling and work. Nearly two-thirds were very or extremely concerned about managing their children's behaviour, and 50% reported concerns about having less patience, raising their voices, scolding, or yelling. Clearly parents need support—and their children need them to receive it. An important takeaway from a study published in December 2021 in the Journal of Affective Disorders is that parental stress and depression is a key contributor to the development of children's mental illness. DPSN's services ensure that parents aren't alone.

Whatever the problem, DPSN provides a community of support and facilitators with effective solutions, as well as referrals to local services that can provide additional support.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$15,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$12,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities, which is not the original intent of these grants, although there is general recognition of the importance of this organization and their work. This situation is under consideration between HCIA and Dufferin County staff, and will be discussed for future recommendations to Council.
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.10. Fiddlehead Care Farm

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Fiddlehead Care Farm (FCF) is a non-profit, accessible Care Farm in Mono, Ontario, which serves people of all ages and abilities. FCF's mission is to provide clinical and therapeutic services to children and young adults with unique needs through animal-assisted Care Farming. FCF's activities are built around Care Farming, an evidence-based practice of using "farms, agriculture and natural landscapes as a base for promoting mental and physical health" (Social Farms and Gardens UK, <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/>). Although Care Farming is well established in other countries, FCF is the first care farm in Canada.

Project Description:

At Fiddlehead Care Farm, skilled therapists currently use nature-based ecotherapy and animal-assisted interventions to support children and youth facing barriers such as developmental, physical, emotional, and behavioural needs and/or mental health concerns. Most clients are not effectively served in other clinical or school settings and make significant gains in FCF's goal-directed, strength-based programs.

With the generous assistance from the Dufferin Community Grant, FCF plans to offer land-based education targeted at children, youth and young adults. Land-based education focuses on "learning from the land and understanding our connection to it. Understanding our connection will give life to what the land can teach us, how it communicates with us and how it looks after all life upon it." (<https://learningtheland.ca/>). Although all of FCF's programs involve a component of nature-based therapeutic programming, it currently lacks specific and accurate land-based teaching. This is an extremely important part of the therapeutic process in accurately educating the Dufferin County community.

This land-based education pilot project will focus more specifically on using an environmentally-focused approach to encourage a deep, physical, mental, and spiritual connection to the land. According to the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, Land-Based Learning is important for "building community connectedness and resilience, improving mental, physical, and spiritual wellness and advancing reconciliation." Being connected to the earth, such as digging in the dirt with bare hands or walking through the forest in bare feet, provides a sense of gratitude in life and appreciation towards nature, both important components in decreasing rates of childhood anxiety.

These 1:1 teachings and small group sessions will be a place where children can experience the energy of the land, be exposed to place-based stories, circle learning, and the cultural and spiritual teachings of Elders and Knowledge keepers. Sessions will be run by FCF's therapists and invited Knowledge Holders (Culture/Language/Medicine) who will help to enrich the children, families and staff's knowledge about their culture, land and protocols. This project will give children and families in Dufferin County increased access to supportive, structured,

educational and therapeutic land-based experiences and teachings. Outcomes of the program will be measured through pre/post surveying. As a result of this project, it is anticipated that participants will report a deeper understanding and connection to the land on a physical, mental and spiritual level.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$4,850 **Grant recommendation:** \$4,850

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes a new project

A.11. First Line for Syria, partnered with Shelburne Primrose Pastoral Charge

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Mission/Vision of First Line for Syria We are a group of neighbours who envision a world where refugees are welcomed into the local community and appropriately supported to build a dignified life free from persecution, violence and war. It is our mission to sponsor Syrian refugee families, who have very little opportunities in their current state or location, and support their settlement in Canada. We aim to reunify families separated by war.

THE VALUE OF SANCTUARY - Trinity United Church, Shelburne Primrose Pastoral Charge We desire to be a sanctuary for compassionate care and spiritual nourishment by creating fully integrated community hubs partnering, both virtually and actually, with all those who desire, as we do, to extend grace into this world, contributing to the neighbourhood community in a spirit of radical, generous hospitality. We engage the spirit through enlightened education and nourish the spirit through creative engagement with a wide variety of art forms. We offer compassionate care locally to the immediate community by accompanying them through the various stages of life. We extend that same care into the wider world through socially active initiatives that deem all people to be of infinite value.

THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS We are currently partnered in some capacity with ten local community initiatives, two other faith traditions as well as a multi faith group, five international collectives and the ongoing support of EDGE, Embracing the Spirit and Community Innovation Hub.

Project Description:

The purpose of First Line for Syria is to help families who face violence, persecution and war escape those conditions and settle in Canada. Where possible we aim to reunite families divided by circumstances beyond their control due to war. It is our purpose to support the settlement of newcomer families into our community.

Objectives outline:

- Gather all required documentation for the refugee application and submit. Obtain support from and maintain communication with our Sponsorship Agreement Holder (United Church of Canada).
- Privately fundraise and apply for funding opportunities to support settlement - Support settlement of refugee/newcomer family through securing housing for newcomer family, furnishing home, setting up utilities and communication, enrol children in school, ensure the family has access to healthcare, including eye and dental care and access to specialists as needed, introduce family to the community through shopping, meeting people, accessing services etc.
- Support the family financially for the first year while the adults take time to learn English, do job training, learn to understand and manage their own finances in a new country, learn to drive as they desire, etc.
- First Line for Syria maintains the objective that by the end of the first year in our community the newcomer family will be independent and feel safe and supported in their new life in Canada.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Economic Development

Amount Requested: \$2,000

Grant recommendation: \$2,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project

A.12. Headwaters Arts

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Mission: Headwaters Arts exists to bring together artists and supporters to promote the development, appreciation, and enjoyment of all arts in the Headwaters region (Dufferin County, Town of Orangeville, Town of Caledon, Town of Erin).

Vision Statement: We want to be able to state with confidence that:

- Headwaters Arts is a widely recognized centre for artistic excellence.
- Location of choice for artists seeking a nurturing, collaborative community. - Home to residents and businesses that value, support and participate in the arts.
- Renowned destination for tourists seeking high-quality – and fun – arts experiences.

Project Description:

The purpose of the Project is to upgrade Headwaters Arts computer and associated hardware to support an enhanced marketing strategy in response to COVID related reductions in visitors to the gallery and planned events.

Objectives:

- To celebrate the visual arts and the importance of it in our lives through enhanced marketing strategies.
- To promote an active, healthy living for families, art lovers and people of all ages in the community by engaging them in the arts.
- To advance the careers of our local artists by offering them the opportunity to show and sell their work to a wide audience of art lovers.
- To build the Headwaters region as a desirable destination for visitors to explore both for the arts and other area attractions.

Overview: Due to COVID protocols over the last two years, Headwaters Arts (HA) has had to embark on a new marketing strategy focused on enhancing our digital presence in order to support our member artists and better connect with the arts community, visitors and patrons.

The marketing strategy required a new and improved website capable of supporting enhanced features, including:

- a more visually appealing website reflective of the creativity of Headwaters Arts member artists; • ability to incorporate on-line virtual tours of gallery shows through new software; • the ability to store/archive the virtual tours on our website thereby making past shows available for a period of time for public viewing and potential sales;
- ability to have podcasts to increase website traffic and promote the artists;
- incorporation of on-line point of sales through the website for art shown in the virtual tours, at the gallery or through proposal shows;
- provide digital links to other resources including other cultural venues within the Headwaters region as well as links to our sponsor's and member artist's websites;
- additional software for creating volunteer scheduling for shows (Signup); and • Implementation of software to facilitate the application process for HA art shows.

Through the implementation of our enhanced marketing strategy, it became apparent that our existing computer and related hardware has limited capacity and requires upgrading to a more powerful computer in order to support the increased demands of new software. Therefore, the request is for the replacement of the HA existing computer system. (See Budget)

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement
- Secondary: Economic Development

Amount Requested: Up to \$5,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$2,500

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.13. Highlands Youth for Christ – Shelburne, Grand Valley & Orangeville

Mission, purpose and objectives:

We exist to see every young person living to their full potential. We provide a safe, supervised environment -- in-person and on-line -- where relationships are formed between youth and caring staff and volunteers. We encourage discussion about what's important to them including school, relationships, current issues, career, as well as their hopes and dreams for the future. We desire to see them establish stability in character, build healthy relationships, form a strong sense of identity, discover a clear sense of purpose and direction in life, as well as inspire a willingness to help others. Everything we do is carefully designed to mentor and guide youth toward productive and healthy lives.

Project Description:

We operate physical and virtual youth centres in three communities within Dufferin County. Our "brick and mortar" centres form our base of operations in each community. However, COVID significantly restricted our ability to connect and remain connected with youth over the past couple of years. We moved connections as much as possible to an on-line format with some success. We were also able to continue in-person in some communities due to the nature of those programs (including mental health and food security support). Indeed, we will continue to utilize this model going forward where it makes sense.

As we enter 2022, we are hopeful that we can engage more widely this year as the health risks and restrictions of COVID recede, including restarting our programming in some of the communities which fell dormant. Grand Valley is one such community. The funding we are seeking through this application will help us restart & enhance our programming in Grand Valley.

The funds we are seeking will help us:

1. install two or three internet connected computers in our facility
2. update signage as well as fund advertising and promotion and
3. help with the ongoing costs of operating the facility.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$5,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$4,500

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes a new project
- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project
- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.14. Hockley Historic Community Hall and Church

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Mission from our Constitution and By-Laws:

The Hockley Historic Community Hall & Church (HHCHC) will be a fiscally sound, not-for-profit corporation and charitable organization which will maintain and preserve the historically significant community hall and church buildings in Hockley, dating back to 1894 and 1869 respectively, as gathering places in the community. This includes preserving the sacredness and integrity of the church building and commemorating the rich past of both buildings for public benefit.

Vision: Increase community awareness, advance education and appreciation of the historical significance of the buildings by hosting occasional events, such as our annual strawberry Pancake Breakfast & Silent Auction in June, Community Carol Service in December, dinners, concerts, euchre, exercise classes, etc.

Prepare displays and performances that highlight the history and role of the HHCHC within the community, for example, preparing and participating in a community display for the Town of Mono Winterfest every January. Preserve archival documents related to the history of both the Hockley Community Hall and Church buildings under the guidance and supervision of the Museum of Dufferin. Ensure the community hall and church buildings remain available to the public and community, thereby continuing and advancing the historical tradition as vibrant gathering places, and a community and cultural hub. They will be available for rent.

Project Description:

Our main objective is to maintain the Hockley Community Hall & Church buildings in the Village of Hockley. As a member of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS), this goal has a few pillars.

1. To maintain the two buildings and associated property while preserving the history of the two buildings at 125 and 150 years old and counting.
2. Provide a meeting space for both public and private events in order to bring the community together and continue to ensure a gathering place in the Town of Mono.
3. Host events throughout the year to celebrate the history of the community together and continue to ensure a gathering place in the Town of Mono.
4. Recreational opportunities are provided for residents who rent our facilities for activities such as yoga, Zumba and Tai Chi.
5. Partner with other non-profit organizations to provide a space for them to meet to further strengthen our community.

Unfortunately, our buildings have been closed since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health measures. HHCHC has not been able to open during the pandemic as:

- Public Health states HHCHC is not responsible if an attendee at our facility contracts COVID, but HHCHC is responsible to ensure everyone follows Public Health rules.
- HHCHC, who are all volunteers, must manage rentals for the entire duration of events (ensure mask wearing, vaccine passport verification, social distancing, contact tracing, capacity limits, etc.).
- Insurance will not cover COVID-19 liability at this time.
- We have no constant and reliable revenue stream, however, we still have expenses such as insurance, heat, hydro.

HHCHC is a fiscally responsible and proactive organization. Our buildings are well used and were embraced by the community prior to the pandemic. The financial impact of the pandemic has severely affected us. All grant opportunities have been explored and sadly, we qualified for very few. We are hopeful that we will be able to re-open safely in 2022, but that depends on the status of the pandemic, the direction of our Public Health unit and our financial situation.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$8,271.44 **Grant recommendation:** \$4,500

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding and maintenance. Insurance is not being requested as an expense for this application.
- Recommended as one-time funding, to help keep an historic property and community gathering place from closing until they can resume pre-COVID fundraising activities.
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.15. Music in The Hills, partnered with CMHA Waterloo Wellington

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Envisioning a community that values and supports the well-being of youth, where they can self determine their future with proper support systems.

Project Description:

To provide funding to local charitable organizations that support at risk youth to support joy, well being, physical and mental health.

OBJECTIVE: Organize the Music in the Hills Mulmur Benefit Concert to be held on June 24th 2022 at the Mansfield Ski Club. This is a live, outdoor event featuring 3 up and coming artists and their original music. There will also be a Rising Star Contest that will showcase local talents of youth ages 5 to 25 with a Celebrity Judge panel. The event is organized entirely by volunteers, made up of a Board of Directors, supported by up to 30 volunteers. The event is being organized with adherence to all COVID restrictions and regulations that will be in place on the day of the event, with a recognition that the situation is fluid.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Economic Development
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$3,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$2,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)
- Request includes an event that also fundraises - recommendation is to support this as a community event, and not as fundraising proceeds
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.16. Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival

Mission, purpose and objectives:

OUR MISSION The Orangeville Blues & Jazz Festival is a non-profit organization that promotes an appreciation of the art of blues and jazz by hosting an annual festival and related events.

OUR VISION To Promote, educate and celebrate the art of the blues and jazz music. Organize an annual community festival accessible to all, that enhances the quality of life. Provide opportunities and recognition for volunteers. Create opportunity and establish exposure for local

emerging and established blues and jazz artists. Provide economic benefit to the local and regional stakeholder. Ensure a financially self-sustaining not-for-profit organization. Be responsible to our community through proper financial accountability. Partner with other community based organizations.

Project Description:

The Festival is seeking funding to help in the presentation and showcasing of local performers as part of the Festival. The opportunity for local artists to participate in the Festival provides them with an ideal professional development opportunity to establish their performance experiences and credentials with a wide audience. This helps emerging and established performers in reaching new audiences and future engagements. The focus of booking and showcasing local talent is a corner-stone of the Festival's commitment to community engagement. Also, this grant from Dufferin County will help support the marketing and communication efforts of the Festival. The Festival is recognized as one of the region's major cultural and community events attracting over 35,000 attendees annually. The Festival represents over \$1.2M of economic impact to the region over the course of the three-day Festival.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement
- Secondary: Economic Development

Amount Requested: \$3,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$0

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.17. Rotary Club of Shelburne

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Rotary is an international organization whose stated purpose is to bring together business, community and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian service and to advance goodwill and peace around the world. It is a non-political and non-religious organization open to all people regardless of race, colour, creed, religion, gender, or political preference.

Project Description:

Usually on the weekend that this event is scheduled to take place, the Rotary Club of Shelburne holds the Heritage Music Festival. Due to uncertain times of planning indoor activities this event will be a separate outside event that will keep the tradition of music in Shelburne alive and bring our ever-growing, diverse community together safely to enjoy music, food and fun in our town

park. Rotary theme for 2022 is "Serve to Change Lives" and this event will serve our community with an outdoor event to lift our spirits and bring us together as a community. If provincial restrictions allow, we will welcome participants to meet as a group but the event will also be set up to allow for a "Drive-in" option. It is hoped that this event will attract a diverse crowd of all ages and ethnicities and will please music and food lovers of all tastes.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement

Amount Requested: \$4,000

Grant recommendation: \$4,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)

A.18. Shelburne Cricket Club

Mission, purpose and objectives:

We are working for a game of Cricket in the Town of Shelburne and in Dufferin County to create opportunities for Cricket lovers to come together and grow the game of Cricket in Shelburne and its surrounding areas. We promote diversity and multiculturalism by bringing people together for the love of cricket regardless of their age, gender, or ethnicity. We strive to provide a safe and healthy environment for our youth to play and socialize with like-minded individuals. Our club stands on the basic principles of displaying best behavior, inspiring success, confidence & discipline.

Project Description:

With the requested funds, we can start a local umpiring/coaching program. This program will help us to train local residents interested in the game of Cricket to take a crash course and certification on umpiring/coaching from the registered body of Cricket Canada. Once certified we will pay them to umpire each game instead of requesting and paying the umpires from the GTA to come. This will result in individuals earning while enjoying what they love and the money stays and flows in Dufferin County.

To start this umpiring/coaching program we need equipment such as sports cameras to teach and show techniques, ball speed monitors for bowling practices, a portable batting cage to coach batsmen, etc. With the requested funds, we can buy ground equipment to have a professional game of cricket like a boundary rope, crease marker, sight screen, and a scoreboard, etc. By having the said equipment, we will elevate the club from recreational level to competitive club level. We are also looking to buy a cricket kit (playing equipment: Bat, Gloves, Pads, and helmets, etc.), which our members can share once it is properly sanitized. Even the basic cricket equipment is expensive and most of the youth are not able to afford it.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives
- Secondary: Economic Development

Amount Requested: \$19,000

Grant recommendation: \$8,200

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes a new project
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

A.19. Streams Community Hub

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Streams Community Hub is an arts-centered, youth-focused registered charity. Founded and based in Shelburne, Ontario, we serve the region of Dufferin County. Over the past four years, through the provision of seasonal creative arts camps and experiences, we have served over 350 children. We are on a mission to ignite learning, inspire youth, and enrich the community through the arts.

Project Description:

This Spring (tentatively April 18), building on the work of last year, we hope to open submissions for the second annual Word of Mouth Monologue Competition, presented by Streams Community Hub. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to make inperson programming and events difficult and in many cases impossible. This competition provides an exciting opportunity for children and youth aged 8–17 from Dufferin County to be engaged, develop and express their creative voices, and showcase the work of diverse Canadian playwrights. They will also have the opportunity to win some significant cash prizes.

Our plan is to make the event mostly virtual, with the hope of an in-person, filmed final event, where the winners will be selected. Between the launch date and the close of submissions, interested participants in two age categories (8-12 and 13-17) will choose from a list of curated monologues. They will film their performances according to our guidelines and submit them online through our website. The public will be engaged to vote for their favourite performances in each category, resulting in two "people's choice" awards. A panel of judges, consisting of actors, teachers and playwrights (such as David Nairn, Artistic Director of Theatre Orangeville) will select 3-5 finalists from each category for the (hopefully) live (no crowd) final. Finalists will present their monologues live, after which winners will be crowned.

This project is designed to accomplish several objectives:

1. Youth engagement, excitement and inspiration
2. Youth exposure and education about Canadian playwrights with diverse storytelling experiences
3. Community engagement in supporting and encouraging young and aspiring artists
4. Frankly, fun. It's been a challenging year, and we all need an outlet of expression and something to make us smile and keep us encouraged.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$9,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$8,700

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial funding.

A.20. Telecheck

Mission, purpose and objectives:

One Community Caring Together "TeleCheck is a free, confidential check-in service to support adults 55+ living independently."

Project Description:

TeleCheck is designed to improve safety, independence, and quality of life through companionship and meaningful connection; "friendly visiting" on the phone. Covid-19 changed the direction of our program from being a physical call centre to working remotely. Our volunteers and staff had to quickly adapt by using their personal messaging apps to communicate. We are seeking a communication system that is built for mobility, with remote work apps that offer secured communication for the whole team. With an enhanced communication system our team would be able to connect with one another more effectively and efficiently creating a secure synergy in real time within the team.

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Youth and Seniors Services

Amount Requested: \$3,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$3,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes a new project

A.21. Theatre Orangeville

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Theatre Orangeville is a charitable organization that began its journey in 1994, bringing the magic of live professional theatre to the Town of Orangeville and Dufferin County. Our artistic vision guides every aspect of our company and through our commitment to enrich the community with a theatre experience, that showcases the development of new Canadian works; to provide youth opportunities to transform their lives through the performing arts; to provide creative opportunities that grow the cultural experience through community partnerships; and to nurture diversity, promote acceptance and celebrate all abilities.

Through our commitment to creating a safe and welcoming environment, we serve adults and youth of all ages, races, ethnicity, ability, and income level. Every year we produce mainstage productions that are 100% Canadian content, created by Canadian playwrights and delivered by Canadian actors. We provide over 250 youth unique mentoring opportunities to transform their lives through our grassroots Youth Academy programs including after school, performance choir and Young Company. Approximately 5000 school-aged children come to watch live theatre through our Education on Stage program.

We are proud to offer skill and performance-based programming to members of our neuro-diverse community through longstanding partnerships with Community Living Dufferin, Branching Out Support Services, Kerry's Place, and Dufferin Child and Family Services. We know for many that attending the theatre is often not affordable. Our Theatre for Young Audiences brings the wonder of theatre directly to Dufferin-area elementary schools, reaching over 5500 students annually, at no cost to students.

Project Description:

Theatre Orangeville believes all youth deserve the opportunity to access the transformative power that Performing Arts can have on our lives. This positive impact is exceptionally demonstrated through the Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) program which focuses on helping elementary school students learn how to cope with and address socially based issues that can dramatically impact them at different stages in their development such as bullying, self-identity and family conflict, to name a few.

Under the patronage of our Youth Academy programming, TYA uses storytelling through live performances to explore the influence of these issues & discover ways to manage and minimize their impact. Scripts are chosen or commissioned based on different themes, and how they can support educators in fulfilling the Ontario Elementary Curriculum beyond arts education. The program aims to help youth develop their understanding of different ways to approach & normalize these issues; encouraging open dialogue while providing teachers and parents with the tools to support their students while they learn. We establish a safe environment for discussion and expression, aiding in the healthy development of young minds & community ties.

Under non-pandemic circumstances, the TYA program is performed in-person, performing live in schools' gymnasiums. However, due to continuing uncertainty of government restrictions, the 2022 program will once again be presented through the virtual stage. The performance will be available to teachers through a private online link and streamed in classrooms or shared remotely if students are not in class. For those with difficulties streaming, we will provide an alternate format to ensure accessibility. The performance is followed by a live Q&A session, led by the actors, where students are asked about their interpretation of the performance, specific characters, and key messages. These sessions provide the opportunity for open discussion, without fear of judgement, around the issues highlighted in the performance.

A Study Guide provided to teachers assists them in planning curriculum related activities and discussion with their students before and after viewing. The guides also include a parent package to help families with resources to assist in answering questions their children may have brought home. The TYA program also helps schools to meet their need for more arts programming as laid out by the Ontario Curriculum. Bringing theatrical performances to schools makes art programming more accessible and helps teachers approach the material in an engaging way.

For 2022, we have commissioned a script titled Self-Defence written by John Daniel, which will be performed by three young actors, in an accessible and entertaining way that elementary students can easily understand and relate to. The production focuses on the importance of instilling autonomy in all people, especially young learners. Self-Defence explores this through a storyline that focuses on friendship, teamwork, communication, learning to navigate authoritative relationships, and ultimately realizing one's own self-worth. The performance speaks directly to components of the Ontario curriculum expectations in Drama (Reflecting, Responding, and Analysing), Health and Physical Education (Social Emotional Learning/Healthy Living), Science (Energy and Technology Innovations) and Language Arts (Oral Communication/Media Literacy).

Community Benefit Category:

- Primary: Cultural Enhancement
- Secondary: Youth and Seniors Services

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$7,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$7,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project.

B. Community Grants \$1,000 or less

Note: Benefit Categories are not required to be identified for grants requesting \$1,000 or less, however the projects recommended were deemed to align with the County's strategic priority areas.

B.1. Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club

Mission, purpose and objectives:

The Mission Statement of the Bruce Trail Conservancy, of which we are one of 10 clubs, is “to preserve a ribbon of wilderness forever”

The Bruce Trail is a remarkable footpath along the unique and precious Niagara Escarpment. It is explored by thousands of visitors every year who seek a connection with nature in Southern Ontario. However, Many people don't realize that the Bruce Trail is not permanently secure and that roughly one-third of the Bruce Trail corridor is still vulnerable to development.

The BTC is working to fill in the gaps, to secure a home for the Bruce Trail and preserve a ribbon of wilderness along the Niagara Escarpment through the acquisition of land and the creation of BTC-managed protected natural areas. As one of Ontario's largest and most active land trusts, we have been responsible for the preservation of over 17,000 acres of land. We add new protected land to the Bruce Trail's conservation corridor each year and care for these special places through our Land Stewardship Program.

These nature reserves protect a diverse array of habitats including wetlands, karst topography, open meadows, caves, towering scarp edges and lush forests - all within the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO World Biosphere.

Project Description:

Earth Day 2022, and so much to do!

We are a local club with a long history of bringing people together to celebrate our most precious resource here in Dufferin County, our beautiful landscape. While we as a county prosper and grow, we also put pressure on this scarce commodity with new development and more and more people all seeking to get outside and enjoy this wonderful area. Without question, we are the custodians of something really special. This is why the Bruce Trail Conservancy has focused on our area to purchase land with the mission statement of “preserving a ribbon of wilderness forever”. The latest action has been to purchase land adjacent to the Pine River Fishing Area. Familiar to visitors from near and far, this lookout location has been loved by many, but mistreated by some for decades. Heavy equipment was needed to begin the restoration last summer, and heavy barricades were placed to prevent further damage by off road enthusiasts,

but also common litterers. Items still on the property include discarded boat parts, agricultural equipment and years of beer cans, glass and other waste. The land was a dump. We plan to fix this.

With the help of this grant, we intend to rent a large bin and raise a small army of volunteers. Not just the tried and true members of our club, but also reach out to our community for help. It is in this way that we will show those in the area - new and old, that action can be taken. This remediation effort will have a long lasting and wider spread effect than just to toss our trash. People who are involved with this effort will feel some connection to this spot and know that families can make memories right in our backyard, and gain a sense of ownership that all volunteers involved with our club and mission share.

But why can this be considered a climate initiative?

This comes down to one of the big reasons why we are conserving land. Properties that are protected do much more work than to provide recreational areas, they function as an oasis for the plants and animals which support our ecosystem. Not merely a carbon sink, green space and conserved land will be one of our most important tools to combat climate change as time moves forward. Those who participate in our restoration and remediation day will feel empowered to participate in similar conservation efforts, get involved, take action, and make a difference!

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$500	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$500
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes a new project

B.2. Dufferin Town & County Farm Tour

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Connecting the public with the farmers of Dufferin County's diverse agricultural community.

Project Description:

We showcase 5 to 6 working farms within Dufferin County focusing on food and fibre production. We highlight the diversity of agriculture and the economic value and importance of farming to our County.

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$1,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$1,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)

B.3. Island Lake Rowing Club, partnered with National Sport Trust Fund-Ontario

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Island Lake Rowing Club is an inclusive volunteer organization that inspires health and fitness and builds community through the sport of rowing. We welcome experienced and aspiring rowers of all abilities from Orangeville and surrounding areas.

Project Description:

The "Regatta Transportation Project" aims to provide safe transportation of rowing equipment to regattas on up to eight days over the rowing season, from May through October. It will ensure that the club-owned boat trailer is towed with a safe, licensed and insured vehicle, specifically, a pickup truck with hitch and towing capacity to meet the specifications of the trailer. Typically, there are up to four one- or two-day rowing regattas per season which youth and adult club members may choose to attend. The club provides volunteer coaches, boats, oars and sundry equipment. Volunteer coaches transport these to and from regattas. Rowers provide their own personal transportation. The club owns a 2004 model pick-up truck which historically has towed the trailer. The club's operating budget funds its insurance and ongoing maintenance. In 2019, the last season of competitive rowing before the COVID-19 Pandemic, the truck broke down returning from a regatta and the club borrowed a member's own vehicle to tow the trailer back to the club. The club's truck had minor repairs and it was returned to storage at Island Lake Rowing Club. It has remained there since then. It is now in winter storage in our boathouse and is inaccessible until Spring 2022. The truck will require repairs to be recertified for licensing and insurance. The club will be getting an estimate of needed repairs once the boathouse is opened and it can be accessed.

Amount Requested: \$1,000

Grant recommendation: \$0

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

B.4. Orangeville Community Band

Mission, purpose and objectives:

The Orangeville Community Band (OCB) serves the entire Dufferin community by teaching and performing music suitable for all ages. Bringing concert band music to seniors' homes, Royal Canadian Legions, hospitals, schools, and town festivals, as well as to the public at large, provides the members with an active and rewarding playing season.

We strive to provide an adult example for our youth in music and to provide teaching and mentorship for the support of younger players. Promoting the interests and welfare of the Town of Orangeville and County of Dufferin, as well as modelling good corporate citizenship will have long term benefits for both band and town.

Project Description:

The OCB hopes both itself and the Beginners Band will return to regular rehearsals to perform a series of performances during 2022. These include outdoor concerts for long term care facilities, educational performances at schools, the Blues and Jazz festival, Remembrance Day, and holiday concerts. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation, costs to keep band members and audiences safe have increased. These include increased rehearsal and performance space costs, sanitizers, and instrument masks. Alongside or in lieu of live events, the OCB may pay for the rights to record and publish performances virtually in order to abide by public health guidelines. Each season, the OCB purchases new music in order to provide a variety of engaging and entertaining pieces for members and audiences to enjoy. These purchases constitute the bulk of the OCB's expenses for a season. Promotional materials such as posters, tickets, and programs would be purchased and distributed to advertise OCB activities and performances. The OCB is currently funded entirely through member and community charitable donations. This is largely because live concerts have been disrupted and the OCB has not been able to raise funds via ticket sales. The 2022 season will be coordinated by the OCB Executive made up of volunteer members of the band.

Amount Requested: \$1,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$1,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project

B.5. Orangeville & District Senior Citizens Centre

Mission, purpose and objectives:

The Orangeville Senior Centre is a non-profit Senior Active Living Centre offering social, recreational and volunteer opportunities for older adults (55+) in Orangeville and Dufferin County. Our programs encourage seniors to remain active and independent in their own homes in their own communities.

Project Description:

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced us to alter the way we offer programming for seniors in our community. The Age-Friendly Needs Assessment & Strategic Action Plan final report 7/31/2019 revealed that more than half of our seniors have no access to online programs. This is a huge challenge for an important sector of our community. Having access to the internet and knowing how to access resources is an important part of reducing social isolation and maintaining a safe

and healthy environment to live. We have been able to secure some funds in the past year to assist with our own learner focused cyber senior program. Many of our seniors who do not have access to technology and low income and do not have funds to pay for internet service or iPads, android tablets and phones.

We have begun to offer a program where seniors are mentored on the use of the device of their choice, we offer them access to WIFI within the Centre and have been able to purchase a few devices for their hands-on learning. While we have been able to purchase a few devices, the demand is great and we would strengthen our program by offering more devices with data and technological support to set them up. The program will be staffed by Senior Volunteers with the assistance of the Administrator of the Centre.

Amount Requested: \$1,000 **Grant recommendation:** \$1,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project

B.6. Shelburne and District Horticultural Society

Mission, purpose and objectives:

To promote conservation and protection of the environment, encourage planting of native trees and flowers, arrange field trips and promote the circulation of horticultural information.

Project Description:

The funds will be used to help pay for Horticultural speakers for our monthly meetings. We cover a variety of topics that help inform people of how to plant and care for many different cultivars. Allowing them to beautify their properties and support the bees and butterflies that provide pollination. Many of our members are seniors, the meetings give them opportunities to connect with others that have the same interest. We have been unable to do our regular fundraising due to Covid. We are a volunteer organization.

Amount Requested: \$600 **Grant recommendation:** \$600

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes recurring event(s)

B.7. St. John Ambulance

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Orangeville Medical First Response Service – Specially trained volunteers that provide first aid services at public events in Dufferin County. Volunteers, mobile first aid posts and first aid supplies are provided to events to ensure the safety of the participants.

Project Description:

St. John Ambulance is the primary provider of first aid services in Peel Region and Dufferin County. Many of our clients are non-profits, which cannot afford the expense of private first aid services. Without our services, these non-profits would not be able to raise the funds they need through public events, restricting their ability to provide their services to the Dufferin community. St. John Ambulance volunteers save lives, prevent injury and promote recovery through their immediate and expert first response to illness and injury.

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$1,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$1,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities

B.8. Unicamp

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Unicamp is a Unitarian Universalist camp that is committed to providing a safe and welcoming seasonal camp and spiritual retreat for our diverse community. Unicamp's high quality UU values-based programs and activities enable this community to demonstrate a respect for our natural assets, for each other, and for the interdependent web creation.

Project Description:

Unicamp was founded in 1969 to teach and mentor children. Since then, we've honoured this origin concept by focusing on supporting our children and youth! As an employer, Unicamp is well-suited to help youth build skills today to help them have a better future tomorrow. Elders amongst the staff, volunteers, and campers are naturally drawn to encouraging and supporting our youth. When the Youth shows an interest in or potential for a role at camp, they are connected to those with the most experience to share. As the Youth age out of our Kid's programming, there are a few options for them: taking part in the Counsellor-in Training program or joining the Staff/Volunteer Team. This year, after putting our Mentorship & Training program on hold due to the Pandemic, we are excited to bring it back, with a focus on welcoming youth from outside the general Unicamp community. There are two facets of this potential program: In our Maintenance-in-Training program, lwd by our two Property Managers and supported by and

other skilled workers from the community, the youth will learn job skills such as maintenance of buildings, septic systems, environmental protection, collaboration, and leadership. A kitchen-in-training program is being developed, to offer similar hands-on training for those who would like to work in kitchen environments. Mentorship is a natural part of the Unicamp community; by running these programs, we set intentions for both the facilitators and participants to use the time to gain skills that will come in handy throughout their lives, way beyond our campground. In both these programs, we mentor the youth and help them develop skills related to communications, decision making, time management and relationship building. These programs will run for a maximum of four weeks in May-June, as our budget allows.

Amount Requested: \$1,000

Grant recommendation: \$800

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes new or modified activities in an ongoing project
- See Assessment Summary on page 11 for more information regarding partial or no funding.

C. Food For Thought Grants up to \$3,000

C.1. Caledon Meals on Wheels

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Caledon Meals on Wheels mission and mandate is to provide a range of programs and services in Caledon, Orangeville and the surrounding areas that promote nutrition, wellness, and social interaction. We believe in a community where individuals can enjoy healthy, independent and connected living at any age.

Project Description:

The purpose of the Subsidized Meal Program (formerly known as the Benevolent Fund) is to provide access to hot and/or frozen prepared meals with additional subsidies (up to 100%) to ensure that all who are financially challenged are able to access the nutrition they need to maintain their health, wellbeing and independence.

Target population: Seniors and people with disabilities living in Orangeville and the surrounding areas (within Dufferin County) who are facing barriers to accessing and cooking nutritious meals for themselves. These individuals typically are living in poverty and are unable to afford the client fees associated with hot or frozen meals. Seniors/people with disabilities who face extraordinary situations (eg. financial abuse by a family member; living alone with dementia and unable to arrange payment of bills) may also be eligible for the Subsidy Program despite having the funds to pay for the meals.

Objective: A minimum of 428 meals will be provided; A minimum of 6 unique individuals served.

The Meals on Wheels & Security Check programs are funded by Ontario Health, donations and through client fees. Fundraising and donations are the only source of revenue for the Subsidy Program. Staff employed through the Meals on Wheels & Security Check programs are the ones who coordinate intake, client preferences, meal delivery and volunteer recruitment as well as who conduct the in-home financial assessments to determine eligibility for the Subsidy Program. Volunteers living in Orangeville and surrounding areas are utilized to deliver the meals. Clients needing the additional subsidy can either self refer or be referred by another community support service or individual. A financial assessment will be conducted, additional community resource information is provided and referrals are often made to other local supports when appropriate.

Community Benefit Category:

- Food Access

Amount Requested: \$3,000

Grant recommendation: \$3,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities

C.2. Children's Foundation of Guelph and Wellington/Food & Friends

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Our Vision A community where every child and youth have the opportunity to participate, learn, and grow to reach their full potential.

Our Mission: We empower children and youth by connecting families with opportunities to build hope for lifelong change and break the cycle of poverty.

Project Description:

Like many in Dufferin, Wellington and Guelph, the Children's Foundation is working towards continuing our support of the most vulnerable in our community despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are especially concerned about the children and youth who rely on our Food & Friends student nutrition programs. The Food & Friends Program brings healthy food to hungry minds. Breakfast, morning meal, snack and lunch programs are offered throughout Dufferin schools (elementary and secondary) and provide an atmosphere of social inclusion amongst students who may otherwise feel marginalized. Students have decreased disruptive behaviours in the classroom, learn healthy eating habits and build strong social skills.

Our community partners include agencies, organizations and private sector companies who support us in our mission, principals, and beliefs. Major donors are the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Breakfast Club of Canada and the Grocery Foundation. The program is staffed by one Program Director, one full time Student Nutrition Program Manager and two part time Student Nutrition Program Managers. The program is also supported by a CEO, Senior Director of Development, Finance & Volunteer and Events Manager.

Community Benefit Category:

- Food Access

Amount Requested: \$3,000

Grant recommendation: \$3,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities

C.3. Everdale

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Everdale is a place for people to become change makers and food leaders. Together we build healthier connected communities where we all have access to healthy food. Our purpose is to help build a sustainable equitable food system in our region.

Project Description:

Everdale is a community based farm that has a purpose to reduce the number of food insecure people in the region, specifically the Counties of Dufferin and Wellington through a program called The Good Food Project. Currently, each county has a higher than average number of citizens who can not afford healthy food, which is on average 13% higher than the Canadian national average. Everdale grows food for the food banks and emergency food providers (through the Good Food Project), which is distributed by our partners to the people that need it the most.

- Good Food Project Model: Everdale grows food, Everdale raises funds to pay for the food, Everdale works with food providers to determine good fit, crops and quantity, Food is held at Everdale and distributed to providers on a needs basis.
- Community harvest days: These days give clients the opportunity to have agency in becoming part of the solution. Clients come to the farm in different capacities to help grow and harvest the fresh food.
- Program staff: the program operates in conjunction with Everdale's farm production team, machinery and systems to allow for maximum yields and efficiencies.
- Metrics: In 2019, Everdale grew 40,000lbs, in 2020, Everdale grew 65,000lbs and in 2021, Everdale grew 100,000lbs of food for emergency food distribution. Funding for the Good Food Project comes from Corporate event days, sponsorships, private funding and Grant writing. Currently Everdale has funding from the City of Guelph to supply SEED with produce and some funding

Community Benefit Category:

- Food Access
- Food Nourishing

<u>Amount Requested:</u>	\$3,000	<u>Grant recommendation:</u>	\$3,000
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Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities

C.4. Orangeville Food Bank

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Our Vision: A community without hunger

Our Mission: Neighbours helping neighbours care for our community

Project Description:

The Orangeville Food Bank supports 700+ community members monthly through our emergency drivethru model and delivery service. Last year we increased the amount of food distributed by 28%. In addition, we also offer support to other community agencies sharing 5,000 pounds of food on average per month. We are almost strictly donor-funded and rely heavily on the generosity of our community members and grants such as this one.

We currently have 4 full-time staff, our Executive Director in charge of operations, our Food Manager in charge of food in and out, a Volunteer Coordinator working on client services, and an Office Administrator to handle all the pieces in between.

Community Benefit Category:

- Food Access

Amount Requested: \$3,000

Grant recommendation: \$3,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities

C.5. Primrose Elementary School

Mission, purpose and objectives:

We strive to provide a school community where every child and youth has the opportunity to participate, learn, and grow to reach their full potential by being fully nourished and prepared for their learning every single day.

Project Description:

The purpose of our program is to provide healthy and nutritious food for each and every student in our building. Life can be challenging when there is barely enough to cover basic human essentials like housing and proper nutrition. For many families in our Primrose Community, the reality is that they have 'just barely enough' to look after basic needs. Life is also an opportunity. Positive and rewarding experiences during key developmental years in childhood and

adolescence can shape a child's future and help break cycles of hardship. Students can only succeed when they are ready to learn and our Breakfast Program provides them with a healthy start to every day so that they can focus on their success at school and not the rumble in their tummy.

Our program is run exclusively on donations by local community agencies and partnerships. It is run by our Educational Assistants and an amazing volunteer. They spend countless hours each week shopping for healthy food options and packing it up every single morning in cooler bags for all of our 22 classes.

Students walk in every morning to a cooler bag that is stocked with one grain, one dairy and one fruit option. There are about 20 items in every class bag to ensure that all students have access to the program. Students are welcome to take items from the bag at any point in the morning that it is needed. Our EA team then collects these bags after our second nutrition break so we will be prepared and ready to greet our students with new fresh items the next day. Our students thoroughly enjoy and benefit from this program.

Community Benefit Category:

- Food Access
- Food Nourishing

Amount Requested: \$3,000

Grant recommendation: \$3,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of an ongoing program

C.6. Shepherd's Cupboard Foodbank

Mission, purpose and objectives:

Our vision is to ensure that all people, all cultures and all ages are able to have access to healthy food options. That all of our community members never have to go hungry. To provide ongoing support, to allow our registrants the ability to concentrate on making positive changes, to try and live independently.

Project Description:

We are a food bank in Shelburne, that serves ours and surrounding communities. We provide monthly groceries and personal hygiene products for people in need of help. We aim to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry or is without food. We are hoping to be considered for the Food For Thought Grant. We serve members of our community in all different cultures and ages, from infants through to seniors. People qualify for our service based on various factors. Once registered, they provide details as to the amount of people in their homes and they are given groceries accordingly. They attend the foodbank to receive their food and personal hygiene products. We currently are funded through the generosity of our community in private

donations, as well as apply for various grants and programs through the public sector. Our program is run entirely by volunteers, so we can maximize the amount of money put back into our community.

Community Benefit Category:

- Food Access
- Food Nourishing

Amount Requested: \$3,000

Grant recommendation: \$3,000

Notes from the Assessment Team:

- Request includes operational funding of ongoing activities

III. Conclusion

This round reveals some cautious optimism from applicants who are planning events and in-person activities again, along with some continuing struggles to recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The Assessment Team feels confident that their recommendations represent a good balance of project types and priority areas, and that they will all be of benefit to Dufferin in various important ways. All applicants are providing important services to the community, and if it were possible to recommend them all to their full requirement, the Assessment Team would certainly wish to do so. We wish all the recipients well in carrying out their activities and look forward to sharing their stories in the fall.

On behalf of the Assessment Team and the Leadership Council of HCIA, we would like to thank Dufferin County Council for its continued confidence in our management of the assessment process for its granting programs, and for entrusting this important task to us. We also thank County staff for their guidance and partnership in continuously improving the application process. We look forward to the next steps of sharing grantee stories to show the impact of this valuable work in our communities, and planning improvements to the process for 2023.

Prepared by:

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