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OUR
[SMALL]
BUSINESS
MIX

**State of Emergency in
Whitchurch-Stouffville**

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**The State of
Emergency**

**The Emergency
Response Benefit**

Monitoring Wuhan

**Alcohol Delivery
Relaxed**

**The Business Mix
in W-S**



**Monitoring Wuhan
may be the key
to small business
survival**



Town Declares State of Emergency



WHAT IS A STATE OF EMERGENCY?

Every level of government has the power to declare a state of emergency, including municipalities.

A state of emergency gives additional powers to protect the health and safety of all individuals, families and businesses as well as the vulnerable populations that we serve.

The Canadian cities and mayors who have charged ahead with emergency declarations often say they think that they're aware of and can respond to local conditions more quickly than provincial bureaucrats, who are dealing with crises on multiple broad fronts.

The declaration allows the town to access resources and funding it says is necessary to control the spread of COVID-19.

Most importantly, the declaration allows the Town to implement the Town's emergency plan and grants the power to protect volunteer emergency workers. The Town activated a partial Emergency Operations Centre last week and conducts daily meetings to assess the ever-changing COVID-19 situation.

According to my research, in Canada the Emergencies Act replaced the previous War Measures Act in 1988, allowing the government to implement "special temporary measures to ensure safety and security during national emergencies and to amend other Acts in consequence thereof."

In addition to providing emergency funds, the act allows authorities to prohibit or restrict travel, order evacuations, and regulate the distribution of essential goods and services.

Another interesting aspect of many EMAs is that they allow for citizens to be conscripted to help, much like when people are drafted to serve in a war. This may impact businesses, as they have critical employees such as emergency workers or snowplow drivers enlisted to help elsewhere.

"It is critical that we, as a community, play a role in helping stop the spread of COVID-19," said Mayor Lovatt. "Declaring a state of an emergency is not to incite panic, but to make people aware that they have a large role to play in stopping it in its tracks." [1](#)

David Tuley, Editor | david.tuley@townofws.ca

Mayor Iain Lovatt's Facebook Speech (Mar. 24)

Hey, everyone, it's Iain Lovatt here. It is Tuesday, March 24th, and Council just finished our first virtual council meeting. I just wanted to update you on a couple of things. Today, I am declaring a State of Emergency in the town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. The reason I'm doing that now is to be consistent with York Region and the advice of the medical officer of health. Yesterday afternoon, York Region declared a State of Emergency. And I have said consistently all along that we want to be in alignment with the Region and on the advice of our Medical Officer of Health and Dr. Kurji advised the Chairman yesterday that he should do that in the Region. And so, we are following suit.

We're activating our Emergency Operations Center effective tomorrow. And we'll be monitoring the situation of COVID-19 in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Also, in the Council meeting, Council

passed a resolution wanting to benefit the residents and businesses in our community.

“ We are authorizing staff to extend a grace period to defer interest and penalties until May 29, 2020 with regard to upcoming Town tax and water bills in the event of non-payment. ”

It has been a question that has continually come up over the last few days, certainly seeing after upper-tier municipalities like Toronto

and Ottawa have made decisions to defer payments. Our treasurers in the region are all meeting tomorrow with the Regional treasurer to talk about the regional portion.

I know that a lot of municipalities have reached out to the Province asking about a deferral for the education component of our taxes. Stay tuned. There may be some more information coming this week regarding those two items, but you can count on the fact that interest and penalties will be deferred until May 29.

There's been some questions regarding garbage collection. I just want to let you know in which it's still well, it is status quo. Our contractor will still be doing regular pickups for garbage on the schedule that's posted in the calendars that you should have received in the mail at the end of last year. So, no changes there.

One change that we are making with the State of Emergency is we are officially closing all parks and turning the lights off at all courts and playgrounds. So that's something that you're going to see. The signage is going to change. These parks are not monitored. They're not disinfected. And so we still want you to continue to not use them. We wanted to encourage you to be staying at home with your family, only going out for exercise and to get groceries, limit contact with your neighbors and anyone else in the community as much as you possibly can.

So that's it for now. Just a quick update today. Thank you so much for all that you're doing to bend the curve with COVID-19. We're going to get through this and. Thanks again. Take care.

Mayor Lovatt

* transcript is subject to errors in the video-to-text deciphering process.

The Government Introduces **EMERGENCY** Response Benefit to help Workers and Businesses

March 25, Ottawa.

The Government of Canada is taking strong, immediate and effective action to protect Canadians and the economy from the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic. No Canadian should have to choose between protecting their health, putting food on the table, paying for their medication or caring for a family member.

To support workers and help businesses keep their employees, the government has proposed legislation to establish the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). This taxable benefit would provide \$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who lose their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CERB would be a simpler and more accessible combination of the previously announced Emergency Care Benefit and Emergency Support Benefit.

The CERB would cover Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures. The CERB would apply to wage earners, as well as contract workers and self-employed individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI).

Additionally, workers who are still employed, but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work situation due to COVID-19, would also qualify for the CERB. This would help businesses keep their employees as they navigate these difficult times, while ensuring they preserve the ability to quickly resume operations as soon as it becomes possible.

The EI system was not designed to process the unprecedented high volume of applications received in the past week. Given this situation, all Canadians who have ceased working due to COVID-19, whether they are EI-eligible or not, would be able to receive the CERB to ensure they have timely access to the income support they need.

(continued far-right)

MONITORING WUHAN MAY BE THE KEY TO SMALL BUSINESS SURVIVAL

China has the second-largest economy in the world and has accounted for one-third of world economic growth in recent years. Its export of minerals, textile, chemical/pharmaceutical ingredients, and electronic/automobile parts support 30 to 50 percent of the global supply chain. China also imports about the same percentage of goods from the global market. The coronavirus epidemic in China can, therefore, affect both the demand and the supply sides of the world economy.

The decision to lock down Wuhan on January 23, was made three days after the government accepted the fact that the outbreak was fueled by person-to-person transmission. On January 28, 16 more cities in the same province (Hubei) were under a similar lockdown policy. Most of the highways, railroads, and flights in China were shut down, and people were asked to stay home as much as possible. All tour groups were canceled. In rural areas, most villages in China closed to traffic and set entrance checks.



Jiangnan Road Pedestrian Street in Wuhan

Now, China has announced it will lift the lockdown on Wuhan, the city at the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic, on April 8, marking a significant milestone in its battle against the deadly outbreak. The date comes more than two months after the city was first sealed off from the outside world.

Starting from Wednesday, people in Hubei, except for Wuhan, will be allowed to leave the province if they have a green QR code on their mobile phones. (Hubei has previously ordered all its residents to obtain the color-based QR code -- which comes in red, yellow and green -- and acts as an indicator of people's health status).

The colors are assigned according to the provincial epidemic control database: people who have been diagnosed as confirmed, suspected or asymptomatic cases, or people with a fever will receive the red color code; their close contacts will receive the yellow code; and people without any record in the database will get the green code - meaning they're healthy and safe to travel.

The easing of travel restrictions follows a significant reduction in new infections in Hubei, with new cases dropping to zero for five consecutive days from March 19 - down from thousands of daily new cases at the height of the epidemic in February.



Health workers ride smart self-balancing scooters as they control a robotic disinfectant sprayer in a residential compound in Wuhan

Reopening the Economy

COVID-19 prevention readiness is a criterion in reopening: local governments will review business reopening applications, with a focus on assessing whether the business has met the COVID-19 prevention requirements, monitoring the business on its implementation of the disease prevention methods, and helping the business make a plan for emergencies. Second, business reopening is happening in waves. Instead of letting all businesses open at one time, priority is given to the businesses high on the local government's list.

Several weeks into an epidemic that brought the country to a standstill, Chinese officials and economists are increasingly worried about the devastation wrought on a crucial part of the economy: restaurants and retailers, karaoke halls and family-owned factories — countless small and midsize businesses that collectively employ 80 percent of China's workers and produce 68 percent of the country's business revenue.

For now, only 30 percent of small and medium businesses nationwide have resumed work. How severe is it? A nationwide survey led in February by Peking University found half the country's small businesses will run out of cash within three months, and 14 percent were not expected to survive past mid-March.

Beyond that, experts say, policy options are limited when swaths of the country are effectively under lockdown and a cloud of anxiety. People simply do not want to go out and spend. China has rolled out no less than 30 policy measures, many of which specifically target "small and micro" businesses, to ensure a quick rebound.

The most likely scenario is a V-shaped curve, which means a decline in economic activities followed by rapid recovery, with the total economic impact relatively contained. The coronavirus hit at a time when many Chinese banks were already wobbling with bad loans and households and businesses were burdened by massive levels of debt. China's leaders are trying to straddle between having an economic meltdown and crashing the banks. They may rather let some businesses go belly up than watch banks collapse. The real problem is that commercial banks are unwilling to lend to small and micro-companies. In the past, the non-performing loan ratio from those companies reached 10%.

The ability for small businesses to recover in Wuhan and other places in China will be educational for us to watch. We have at least an 8-week lead time, with which we can learn and adjust policy as needed. (1)

EMERGENCY Response Benefit cont.

Canadians who are already receiving EI regular and sickness benefits as of today would continue to receive their benefits and should not apply to the CERB. If their EI benefits end before October 3, 2020, they could apply for the CERB once their EI benefits cease, if they are unable to return to work due to COVID-19. Canadians who have already applied for EI and whose application has not yet been processed would not need to reapply. Canadians who are eligible for EI regular and sickness benefits would still be able to access their normal EI benefits, if still unemployed, after the 16-week period covered by the CERB.

The government is working to get money into the pockets of Canadians as quickly as possible. The portal for accessing the CERB would be available in early April. EI eligible Canadians who have lost their job can continue to apply for EI here, as can Canadians applying for other EI benefits.

Canadians would begin to receive their CERB payments within 10 days of application. The CERB would be paid every four weeks and be available from March 15, 2020 until October 3, 2020.

This benefit would be one part of the government's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, to support Canadian workers and businesses and help stabilize the economy by helping Canadians pay for essentials like housing and groceries, and helping businesses pay their employees and bills during this unprecedented time of global uncertainty. (1)

ONTARIO allows alcohol delivery

March 26. Restaurants and bars in Ontario will temporarily be allowed to sell alcohol with food takeout and delivery orders as part of new measures meant to help businesses and residents weather the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new rule applies to bars and restaurants that already have a liquor licence, and takes effect immediately. It will remain in place through the end of the year.

Beer, wine and liquor can also be sold for takeout or delivery through a third party, such as a food delivery service or app, as long as it is acting on behalf of a licensed establishment, the commission said. (1)

PART 1
The Business Mix in
Whitchurch-Stouffville

York Region recently released 2019 Employment Survey results. “It has always been a useful resource for job and business numbers,” says David Tuley, Economic Development Officer for the Town. “But now, it is also useful if we are looking for an industry involved in critical processes - processes that can be converted for the development of medical supplies or hand sanitizer.”

The Survey results pointed to some favorable trends, with an Employment Growth of 6.6% (see below). Additionally, it provides great insight into our business mix and business size (see right).

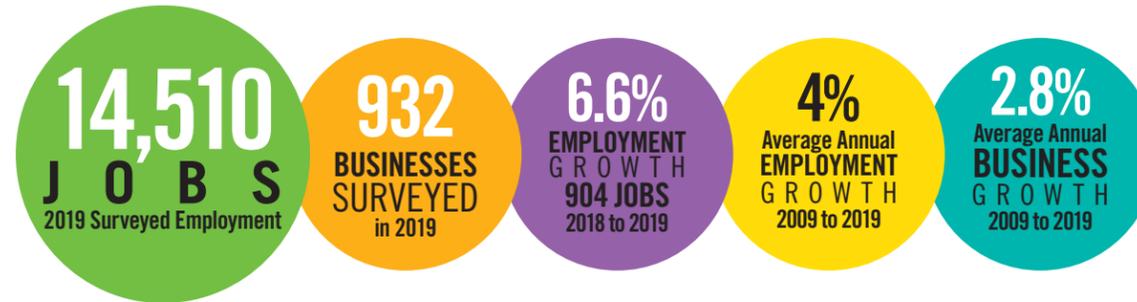
97% of the businesses in Whitchurch-Stouffville have less than 100 employees, while 82% have less than 20 employees. According to StatsCan, any business with less than 100 employees is considered a “Small Business”.

Therefore, Whitchurch-Stouffville’s economy is overwhelmingly being driven by small business enterprises. 75% of these businesses are involved in the “services-producing” sector, which is higher than the York Region average of 22%.

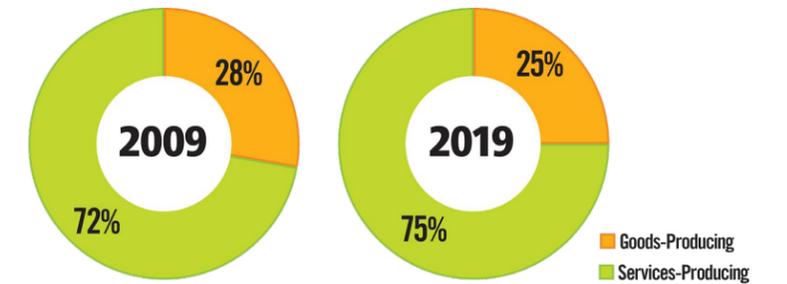
Collectively, the world is starting to assess the potential economic impact as we dig deeper into the COVID-19 economy. Certain business sectors and size classes will be more hard-hit than others. Right now, preliminary literature points to small businesses in the retail and restaurant sectors being the hardest hit. Other studies have indicated that enterprises run by female entrepreneurs are more highly leveraged, and will be duly more vulnerable.

It is important to study the projections and trends, as these should fuel public advocacy, policy and assistance programs. We will return to this subject in future issues of OTR Digital. 

2019 Stats at a Glance



Share of Employment by Services-Producing and Goods-Producing Sectors, 2009 and 2019



W-S Businesses Classed by Size

