

# **Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson Scarborough Centre Virtual Town Hall 6 May 21, 2020**

I would like to thank everyone who participated in my Virtual Town Hall on Thursday May 21. Thanks for sharing your COVID-19 related questions, concerns, and ideas to keep our community safe, healthy and clean. Sincere thanks to MP Salma Zahid and MPP Christina Mitras for joining as our special guests to provide useful information on Federal and Provincial responses to COVID-19. Here are some of the questions/concerns raised by residents and the responses:

**Question: Please consider reopening the Bermondsey and the Scarborough Transfer Station to the general public. Surely, an organized process could be in place to accommodate the general public. I understand that transfer stations are open in many other communities.**

**Response:** Bermondsey and Ingram Drop-off Depots are now open to the public on weeknights for drop-off of recycling, garbage, and yard waste. Hours of operation are as follows:

- Bermondsey: Monday to Thursday from 6 p.m. to midnight and 12:30 a.m. to 6 a.m., Fridays from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Ingram: Monday to Friday from 6 p.m. to midnight and 12:30 am to 6 a.m.

In addition, Bermondsey, Ingram, as well as Scarborough Drop-off Depots will be open to the public on Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for drop-off of recycling, garbage, and yard waste, as well as household hazardous waste.

Compost pickup will not be available at any Drop-off Depot and all other Drop-off Depots remain closed to the public.

**Question: There are so many different programs for housing and rent (Rent Geared to Income, Housing Stabilization Fund, and Portable Housing Benefit). I've never applied before and I don't know if I'm eligible or what's best for my situation.**

**Response:** Housing Help Centre offers advice on housing supports:

Website: <https://www.shhc.ca/housing-help-toronto>

Address: 205-2500 Lawrence Avenue East Scarborough, ON, M1P 2R7

Phone: 416-285-8070

**Question: I would like to access a Dog Off-Leash area in Scarborough for my dog. I use a mobility device and require an accessible entrance to the dog park at preferably Thomson Memorial Park. Due to the closure of parking lots, I'm unable to drive to the dog park. Would it be possible to open up accessible only parking at Thomson Memorial Park?**

**Response:** The parking lot at Thomson Memorial Park has been reopened as of yesterday. Parks staff are in the process of reopening parking lots in parks that had been closed to residents across the City. They should be open within the next coming days.

**Question: Are all summer camps cancelled for this year?**

**Response:** Yes, All City-run camps currently scheduled are cancelled. Staff are developing CampTO, a new camp program that incorporates public health measures designed to reduce the risk of virus spread. If and when Provincial restrictions are lifted and public health conditions allow, CampTO will provide a high-quality camp experience for Toronto kids, with smaller group sizes to allow for physical distancing, but with the same traditional camp activities kids know and love. Registration details for CampTO will be announced as soon as the Province removes restrictions on day camps and an estimated four weeks will be required to prepare camps to start.

**Question:** My Question today is towards the office rental application Emergency Fund. I would like to know where I can locate the online form and when will funds be available

**Response:** Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) provides relief for small businesses experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19. It offers unsecured, forgivable loans to eligible commercial property owners to:

- reduce the rent owed by their impacted small business tenants
- meet operating expenses on commercial properties

Property owners must offer a minimum of a 75% rent reduction for the months of April, May and June 2020. The application portal is opening on May 25, 2020. Visit [Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca) for more information.

**Question: If schools are cancelled for the rest of the year, how can you help kids who do not have internet access and a reliable computer to join these online classes?**

**Response:** The Ontario government announced that they will be distributing iPads with free wireless data plans to students who may not have access to the province's online learning tools as schools remain closed due to the COVID-19. More than 21,000 iPads were being "deployed" by school boards.

The Government is offering direct financial support to parents while Ontario schools and child care centres remain closed as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The new Support for Families initiative offers a one-time payment of \$200 per child 0 to 12 years of age, and \$250 for those 0 to 21 years of age with special needs.

This one-time funding will allow parents to access additional tools for our kids to use while at home and studying remotely

**Question: Am I allowed to travel across the Canada-U.S. border?**

**Response:** The Canada-U.S. border will remain closed for at least another 30 days. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the agreement to extend the closure during his daily news conference a few days ago. Both countries reached an agreement in March to temporarily close the border to non-essential travel, meaning no recreational visits while keeping it open to commercial traffic and essential workers who cross for work. That agreement was extended in April by 30 days, and it was set to expire on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May. The Province expressed a clear desire to keep the border closed because of the threat of COVID-19 cases moving north.

**Question: I heard that the Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) will be expanded. Please tell us what the expansion include?**

**Response:** Federal government announces expansion to eligibility criteria for Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA). The changes to the CEBA will allow more Canadian small businesses to access interest free loans that will help cover operating costs during a period when revenues have been reduced, due to the outbreak.

**Question: I registered and paid for two senior exercise classes. Could those of us who signed up in the spring for programs please be informed via the Parks & Recreation website or via the City of Toronto as to when we can expect a refund?**

**Response:** Refunds for cancelled spring programs and summer camps will be automatically given. Please allow up to four weeks for processing.

Although the customer service call centres are currently closed, questions can be sent to [pfrcustomerservice@toronto.ca](mailto:pfrcustomerservice@toronto.ca).

**Next Virtual Town Hall- May 28, 2020**

The Virtual Town Halls will be held this and every Thursday from 7:00 pm- 8:00 pm (until further notice), to discuss how we can stay safe and play our part in keeping each other healthy and our strong. This is also an opportunity for you to voice your concerns, provide feedback and share your ideas.

Residents are encouraged to submit their questions or any pressing issue/s via email at [councillor\\_thompson@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_thompson@toronto.ca) or by Instagram at @councillor\_thompson or Twitter @Thompson\_37, no later than the Wednesday before each meeting at 5:00 PM.

To join the meeting, register on Eventbrite @deputymayorvirtualtownhall and you will receive the WebEx link and meeting ID. If you do not receive the link by Wednesday evening at 5:00pm of each week, please contact my office at 416-397-9274 or by email at [councillor\\_thompson@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_thompson@toronto.ca).