

## **BILD Toronto Chapter Members:**

Further to the e-mail updates below, at the upcoming May 28<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, the City Manager will bring forward [an information report](#) that provides:

- An update on the City's ongoing emergency response activities and a description of the status and plans to restart some City services and support the reopening of Toronto's businesses;
- an overview of the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild, its initial activities and the approaches City staff are taking to re-imagine how the City will conduct business and deliver service in the emerging context of the ongoing pandemic; and
- additional information on the pandemic's impact on processes and applications within City Planning, Committee of Adjustment and building permit processes, including details on plans to restart and address backlogs.

As noted within the report, development reviews, strategic city building initiatives and Committee of Adjustment are City Planning's three main focus areas for continuing priority services to support social and economic recovery. To activate these priorities, technology has been deployed to support 75% of City Planning staff working remotely (from 40%), with further expansion in progress. While staff have been able to make progress on a number of development reviews and approvals for residential and non-residential projects (see page 8 of the report for specific details), moving forward, City staff are focusing on the following:

- Work on other applications that require Council approval (e.g. a Zoning By-law amendment) is also taking place (e.g. submission of revisions and notices of Council decisions) where possible and practical. These projects are the next priorities to advance so they are positioned to be brought forward to Council when the Council and Committee cycle resumes.
- Acceptance of new rezoning applications is expected to occur by the end of May.
- City Planning is working with other divisions on virtual consultation best practices.
- The City's operational plan for the C of A is similar to those being implemented by other municipalities such as City of Kingston, which has held a virtual C of A hearing. The City's panel members support moving forward with the scheduling of virtual hearings and staff are implementing an alternative service delivery model for hearings so that minor variance and consent applications can be fully processed in the coming months.
- Toronto Building is continuing to identify and implement business processes in order to work safely and expeditiously under the circumstances, and has taken direct action in order to mitigate against a permit backlog. As of May 7, 2020, all permitting staff were equipped to work remotely. Toronto Building continues to actively receive and process permit applications so that construction projects are able to proceed when they are able.

Additionally, the report notes that the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild (TORR) will be responsible for developing recommendations which are actionable and implementable to support the recovery and rebuild of communities, organizations, partners and businesses. Initial activities of the TORR so far include:

- Developing a 3 phased Framework for Re-opening City Programs to support the City Manager and senior leadership's decision-making on services to restart in a safe and effective way
- Supporting service, policy and procedure reviews with divisions to identify long-term opportunities for new or adjusted operations in a COVID-19 context
- Supporting the acceleration of modernization activities towards the City becoming a digital government
- Working with City divisions to expedite programs such as:

1. online migration path for Counter Services starting with the 'big four' services: permits, licenses, applications and payments;
2. an evaluation of critical in-person services supporting equity seeking groups; and
3. an evaluation of specialized phone services and library branches with exclusive hours for specific equity seeking groups (seniors)

Many aspects of the report reflects the discussion and [presentation](#) that City Manager Chris Murray had with BILD and its members at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> In Conversation event. We will continue to engage City officials in conversations on how the industry can support Toronto's COVID-19 economic recovery efforts, and we thank all members in advance for information provided that assists with these efforts.

Members are strongly encouraged to review the City Manager's report for full details.