

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury Council Meeting – April 7, 2020

Town of BWG to provide multiple forms of support to local businesses

Council approved a \$250,000 package of relief programs for businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary aim is to assist businesses through the short-term financial crunch, as well as to help them apply for funds from other levels of government and to support them in their shift to working virtually and/or providing online services.

The program consists of three components:

1. Deferral of DCIP loan repayments for one year:

The Downtown Community Improvement Plan (DCIP) offers a loan component under the 'Building, Restoration, Renovation and Improvement Program'. Businesses that have been approved for this incentive will have their loan repayments deferred for one year. No action or application is required to take advantage of this deferral, and affected businesses may continue to make their loan payments on the regular schedule if they prefer.

2. Free business consulting and assistance with government programs:

Free consulting services are available now through a partnership with Nottawasaga Futures. Specialized consultants can assist business owners to find available funding programs and prepare applications. They can also help businesses adapt in order to work more efficiently during the pandemic, including improving online service delivery, converting to e-commerce platforms and learning to use various communications technologies. This program is already in effect and will be scaled up to meet the expected increase in demand.

3. BWG Emergency Business Sustainability Fund:

This program will allow local small businesses to apply for one-time funding. Complete eligibility criteria are being developed; the amount they can apply for is based on the size and type of business:

- Businesses including independently owned franchise operations, as well as sole proprietorships, partnerships or corporations (where the applicant will be the majority shareholder), can apply for \$5,000
- Home-based businesses operating full time can apply for \$2,500

The entire intake and approval process will be undertaken by Nottawasaga Futures.

Details regarding all of these programs can be found on the Economic Development website: www.gotobwg.ca/covid-19-business-resources/.

Town updates capital project priorities in light of COVID-19

Council endorsed the reprioritization of capital projects in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Capital projects mainly involve either purchasing assets (like vehicles, equipment and computers) or constructing assets (such as roads and buildings). Since the supply chain and vendor marketplace has been significantly disrupted by the pandemic, and non-essential work is currently on hold, the schedule of capital projects has been adjusted to prioritize essential work. The detailed plan can be seen here: <https://bit.ly/2VeDcPN> Staff will provide a status update again in August.

Lion's Park Community Garden flourishing under BWGCI

The Town's first community garden was established in Lion's Park in 2014. The non-profit group Bradford West Gwillimbury Community Initiatives (BWGCI), was instrumental in working with the Town to set up the program, and was appointed to serve as the committee overseeing the administration, maintenance and operation of the Lion's Park garden.

After five successful years, the Community Garden program has been given approval to continue indefinitely under the administration of BWGCI.

Please note that community gardens are temporarily closed due to COVID-19.

BWG Community Initiatives is a non-profit community organization whose mandate is to make healthy and affordable food available to all residents of BWG. The group provides the Community Meal out of the Bradford United Church, serving an average of 40 people a hot meal on Friday evenings at no charge. BWGCI is entirely funded through donations from local churches, service groups and individuals.

Town supports Bill to expedite mental health support for youth

BWG Council supported a request from the Township of Essa to send a message to the Province of Ontario supporting Bill 63 and urging the Province to expedite the final reading of the Bill. Bill 63 would enact the *Right to Timely Mental Health and Addiction Care for Children and Youth Act, 2019*. The Bill received second reading on February 21, 2019, but has yet to receive the third reading, which is required in order for it to move forward.

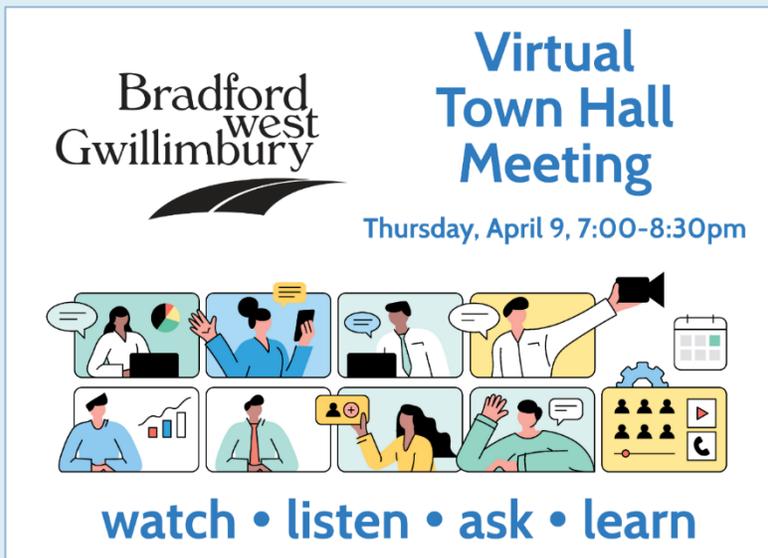
Drinking water continues to meet and exceed quality standards

Each year, the Town is required to report on the performance of the drinking water system and the quality of drinking water in BWG under the provincial *Safe Drinking Water Act*.

The 2019 reports show that water quality continues to meet and/or exceed drinking water regulations, and demonstrate the continued high performance of BWG's drinking water system, which is subject to strict regulations implemented by the Province of Ontario to keep drinking water safe.

Council approved all Committee of the Whole decisions from March 3, 2020.

Announcements:



Watch the livestream [on the Town's YouTube channel](#).

- **Hear updates and ask questions** of: BWG Mayor Rob Keffer, York-Simcoe MP Scot Davidson, Town of BWG CAO Geoff McKnight, South Simcoe Police Chief Andrew Fletcher, BWG Fire Chief Kevin Gallant, Simcoe County Paramedics Chief Andrew Robert
- **Questions must be submitted by email** to clerk@townofbwg.com (either in advance or during the meeting).

Find support during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **Emergency financial assistance:**
The Town has provided funding to be distributed by CONTACT Community Services to residents in need of one-time financial assistance for basic needs. To find out if you qualify, call Lacey deBeer at CONTACT: 905-778-9058 ext. 110
- **Town of BWG taxpayer relief:**
visit www.townofbwg.com/covid for details
- **Social service directory:**
visit www.211Ontario.ca or call 2-1-1 to find out what support is available locally to meet your needs, including financial, mental and physical health and more
- **Mental health support:**
visit www.BigWhiteWall.com to use the free online support portal
- **Federal support for individuals, businesses and industries:**
information including how to apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html