

Appendix to Report No. ADMIN-2021-0023



COMMUNICATIONS

MARCH 2020 - MARCH 2021

SOCIAL MEDIA



Facebook

Follower growth	+29.6%
Views	-15.2%
Engagements	-11.2%

Numbers reflect trend towards platforms with more short form content



Instagram

Follower growth	+67.8%
Views	+107%
Engagements	+89.7%



Twitter

Follower growth	+20.1%
Views	+15.4%
Engagements	+90.6%



LinkedIn

Views	+271%
Engagements	+229%



Public engagement program continued per usual practice

Active Projects
27

Total Visits
22,900



MEDIA RELATIONS

Releases Issued
111

E-NEWSLETTERS

ECDEV



Subscribers
547 +40.5%
Total Issues
27

THE CURRENT

Subscribers
684 +29.6%
Total Issues
27

TOWN HALLS

10 Town Halls



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Followers: Individuals that subscribe to a social media account and receive notifications and updates.

Engagements: Any interaction a fan has with your social media content.

Views: The number of times a post is displayed in individual feeds.

Recreation and Parks Department COVID-19 Response Summary

New program delivery methods

Developed new program delivery methods such as livestream fitness classes, curbside lending library and meal programs, virtual recreation and summer camp programming, youth outreach and older adult mental health supports, virtual and curbside fundraising events, new aquatic and recreation programming standards (e.g. lane swims, recreational skating), and neighbourhood activator programs.

Enhanced community group supports

Established Community Support Action Team to engage volunteers and donations (e.g. support to Food Banks), supported development of return to play protocols for sport groups, supported event organizers navigating public health regulations, provided rate relief for sports leagues, lease holders and partners like Hillsview due to impacted registration levels during COVID, deferred loan payments totalling more \$170,000 to local sport group and organizations financially impacted by COVID, issued over 3000 registered program cancellations, refunds and revised schedules resulting from each Provincial announcement impacting program delivery and facility closures

Expanded park capacity

Introduced ambassadors to supplement enforcement staff outreach at skate parks, splash pads, sportsfields and outdoor rinks, engaged with community volunteers for an expanded outdoor natural rink program, extended winter pathway maintenance in three community parks to increase outdoor walking options, opened park facilities like courts and washrooms earlier than the regular season to promote outdoor use of spaces.

Modifications to facilities for customer service

Modified customer service counters, workspaces, signage in facilities per COVID physical distancing protocols, carried out enhanced deep cleaning protocols per Region Health standards, implemented of screening protocol across all Town locations, worked with sports groups for return to play scheduling and protocols, provided training video for coaches on how to access the facility during COVID.

Service excellence

Reduced hydro, water and gas usage to minimum levels to sustain core building function but not waste energy, shifted to a complete digital guide for recreation programs and services substantially reducing print and distribution costs and improving resident access to information during COVID, enhanced recreation website pages and presence on social media, discontinued non-essential staff training and mobilized on-line training resources to maintain core services and certifications (e.g. first to have aquatic supervisory course approved by Lifesaving Society).

Planning COVID-19 Response Summary

The work of the Planning Department continued throughout the past year utilizing technology to hold meetings and responding to over 585 inquiries via email and telephone.

Development Applications

Staff continued to accept new and revised development applications through an informal electronic submission process which ensured that development review by staff continued seamlessly in a work from home environment. Regular, bi-weekly Development Review Committee meetings were held via Zoom resulting in the processing of 57 applications and 110 development applications were processed over the last year with 31 approvals issued.

Advancing Projects Technology-enabled meetings ensured that work continued. In July 2020, the Committee of Adjustment began holding meetings via Zoom; Heritage Halton Hills also held meetings virtually to continue work on heritage related matters.

Work on the Scoped Glen Williams Secondary Plan review continued and Zoom was utilized to facilitate Steering and Technical Advisory Committee meetings as well as public outreach programs.

The Halton Hills Premier Gateway Phase 2B Secondary Plan review began and utilized Zoom to facilitate Steering and Technical Advisory Committee meetings as well as public outreach programs.

Staff engaged key consultants, legal counsel and the Region virtually to secure Regional approvals of the Vision Georgetown Subwatershed Study Addendum, the Vision Georgetown Secondary Plan and the Halton Hills Premier Gateway Phase 1B Secondary Plan.

Staff continued to participate in Halton Area Planning Partnership & Halton Area Development Managers meetings via Zoom and continued to participate and comment on the Regional Official Plan review.

Library COVID-19 Response Summary

Virtual Programs

The Library responded quickly to the different Provincial requirements and subsequent frameworks throughout the pandemic. With its initial closure, Halton Hills Public Library was recognized as one of the first library systems to launch virtual programs. Within days, staff offered a wide range of story times, and within weeks offered book clubs, author talks, trivia nights and Escape Rooms. Public engagement was high, and Library social media channels grew approximately 30%. With these new skills, Library staff assisted community partners to transition their respective programs and services to a virtual format. Program resources, such as online scavenger hunt software was shared with other Town departments.

The Library promoted its access to eBooks and increased other digital resources from the onset. Virtual tutorials were created to support access to these resources, and late fines on materials were suspended. With increased demand on Wi-Fi to Go devices, the Library expanded this collection to respond to the technology needs of this community.

Online Chat

The Library has always provided reference services and book recommendations by phone, and these services were leveraged. An online chat service was added to the website, along with homepage and calendar modifications to increase access. The Library launched Library Connect, a service to provide regular calls to help reduce social isolation. Over 300 patrons took advantage of this service in 2020.

Behind the scenes, significant Library network enhancements were made to ensure stability of staff workflows and support work from home.

Processes & Service Levels

When the Library was able to offer physical items again, it developed new processes to provide curbside pickup. Value-added services such as Binge Bundles of movies, Book Bundles, and Grab and Go kits with engaging crafts and activities for different age groups were created and remain popular today. Service levels continue to be modified with each Provincial update.

In summary, while the circulation of physical materials is down approximately 40%, eBooks and digital media is up 51%. Virtual programming has been a shining example of adaptability, creativity, and high engagement with program attendance up 160% from 2019. Branch visits are down significantly due to the various closures and restrictions. When permitted, computer use, Wi-Fi and study space remain in high demand.

Transportation & Public Works COVID-19 Response Summary

Capital Projects – Design/Studies: No significant impacts. Staff & consultants continued worked remotely with limited in-person meetings (PPE and social distancing). Utilized virtual public engagement tools as required. Field investigations and inspections conducted with appropriate PPE and social distancing.

Capital Projects - Construction: No significant impacts. Town, contractor(s) and consultant(s) procedures/policies modified for COVID-19 (Limited in-person meetings with no meetings indoors, practiced social distancing and no facility access). Utilized virtual public engagement tools as required.

Ontario One Call Locates: No impact on service. Staff working remotely.

Development Engineering Reviews & Permits: No significant impacts. Staff & consultants continued to work remotely with limited in-person meetings (PPE and social distancing). Adopted new technologies and procedures to support electronic plans review. Field investigations and inspections conducted with appropriate PPE and social distancing.

Transportation Studies: No significant impacts. Staff & consultants continued to work remotely. Utilized virtual public engagement tools as required.

Traffic Operations: No significant impacts. Town, contractor(s) and consultant(s) procedures/policies modified for COVID19 (PPE and social distancing).

ActiVan: Adjusted vehicle capacities to maximize social distancing. Utilized driver PPE and enhanced cleaning of fleet. Administration staff rotation to provide separation.

Public Works: No significant impacts. Training sessions modified to accommodate social distancing requirements. Field work, investigations and inspections conducted with appropriate PPE and social distancing.

Building: Staff continued to work remotely with limited in-person meetings (PPE and social distancing). Adopted new technologies and procedures to support electronic plans review. Field investigations and inspections conducted with appropriate PPE and social distancing.