

We're all in this together

Third Report from the Mayor's Economic and Social Impact and Recovery Task Forces
8 July 2020

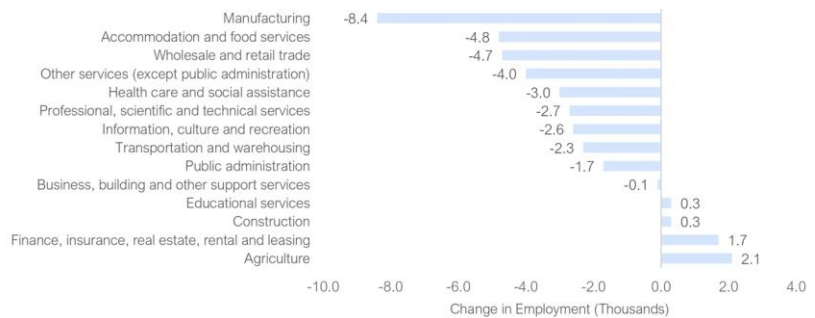
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Introduction

The scale of the social and economic impact of this pandemic, and the public health measures necessary to contain it, is unlike any of the recessions in recent memory (1981-82, 1990-92 and 2008-2009). To date, an estimated [2.2 million Ontario workers have been directly](#) affected by pandemic-related shutdowns, either through lost jobs or sharply reduced hours.

The impact is not even throughout the economy. The statistics confirm what you told us in our earliest discussions. Workers in manufacturing, accommodation and food services, and wholesale and retail trade have been particularly hard hit. Women were disproportionately affected by job losses in March, accounting for 62% of all jobs lost, and while the gap between women and men persists, it has narrowed somewhat in April and May. Young people, who typically hold many of the jobs in some of the most severely impacted sectors, and very recent immigrants (less than five years) have also been significantly impacted. Across all sectors, nearly one-third of workers in small businesses (less than 20 employees) have lost their jobs.

All parts of Ontario have now moved to [stage two of reopening](#), which allows for the opening of a significant list of businesses, including restaurant patios, hair salons and malls, along with splash pads, sports fields, and other amenities.



[Schools are scheduled to reopen in September](#), although in what fashion and to what extent is still to be determined by individual school boards. Making sure that London’s kids are able to learn safely, and that parents have access to childcare so they can return to work as the economy reopens, will be critical.

The gradual easing of COVID-19 restrictions and the re-opening of the economy presents both opportunities and challenges for employers and workers. Many of these opportunities and challenges are reflected in the results of our first-ever ‘Community Recovery Survey’ which is shared as part of this report. A total of 225 local businesses and organizations, across 15 different categories, including not-for-profits, were surveyed during mid-June in order to gauge how they view their ongoing, or in some cases future, recovery.

At its June 29th meeting, members of London City Council voted unanimously in favour of directing City staff to report back as soon as possible with a proposed model to continue the work we’ve been doing together over the past 100 plus days. The intent of such an approach is to build on the successes of both Task Forces while providing direct support from Civic Administration. As community needs turn from relief and re-opening towards recovery and rejuvenation, London must be well-positioned by having a sustainable mechanism to support these efforts. How we recover as a community will depend to a great extent on how we can work together to overcome the many challenges before us, not just in our own organizations but as a whole community. Thank you so much for the work you have done to get us to this point.

This third report builds on the [first report](#) and [second report](#), both of which have been shared with City Council, Civic Administration, our local Members of Provincial Parliament and Members of Parliament. This third report tracks progress on ideas that were included in the first two reports and attempts to synthesize what we have heard since then during our calls and in the Community Recovery Survey.

By identifying opportunities for action and providing feedback on policy implementation in near real-time, your insights over the past three months have been crucial in informing decisions that have been taken at the local, provincial and national levels. Thank you for making time to participate in these task force discussions as you are leading your own organizations through a very difficult time.

Regards,

Ed Holder
Mayor

Jesse Helmer
Deputy Mayor

Progress so far

This table tracks progress so far on the ideas that were outlined in our first two reports to the task forces. Thank you to City Council, Civic Administration and the Provincial and Federal governments for acting quickly on many of these ideas.

Number	Idea	Progress so far
1	Meet the immediate needs of people who have suddenly lost their income	Existing Ontario Works clients, as of March 1, 2020, and all ODSP applicants and recipients will have CERB income treated as partially exempt i.e. \$200 flat rate exemption + 50 per cent for each additional dollar. Measures will be put in place so no recipient will lose access to health benefits for March or subsequent benefit months as a result of receiving CERB.
1		Additional measures from the federal government: CERB expanded to cover people who have exhausted EI; people can earn up to \$1,000 per month while receiving CERB; and the program was extended from 16 weeks to 24 weeks; Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) of \$1,250 per month; temporary salary top-up for low-income essential workers earning less than \$2,500 per month.
2	Support for renters and landlords	Deputy Mayor wrote to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Minister of Finance regarding a temporary rent supplement.
3	More substantial property tax relief	In addition to waiving penalty and interest for taxes due March 31 for 60 days, City Council approved deferral of the final property tax due dates by 60 days with payments now due August 31st, October 30th, and December 15th; each due date results in approximately \$130 million of payments deferred.
3		Mayor wrote to and met with the Minister of Finance in June about the business education property tax cuts to move to a uniform rate across the province, which were temporarily frozen with the 2012 Provincial budget and would lower business education property taxes on London-area businesses.
4	Ensure our frontline workers supporting our most vulnerable have the equipment they need	Agencies connected to MLHU and regional planning table for PPE distribution to non-hospital community agencies.
4		On June 5, the Government of Canada announced a \$14

		billion aid package for provinces and territories that, when secured by bilateral agreement, is intended to include funding for PPE and other health and safety equipment.
5	Maximizing the experience and talents of our residents	Ontario has launched a Workforce Matching Portal to connect open positions with those with medical talent. Additional opportunities may exist to expand program to include foreign-trained students.
6	Closing the digital divide for students and families	Covering cost of Connected for Success Internet for LMCH tenants for three months approved unanimously by City Council.
6		The province has funded iPads with data plan being provided to students with support of Apple and Rogers.
7	Clearly communicate programs in plain language	The City of London has developed a number of simple to understand tools for residents and businesses.
7		The City of London has launched a Back to Business Initiative and Portal to help businesses receive speedy and flexible service in accessing City services.
8	Public health messaging for children and youth	
9	Ensuring women and kids at risk of domestic violence have a safe place to go	The Government of Canada announced \$50 million to support violence against women shelters and sexual assault centres
10	Aligning deferrals of rent, utilities, property taxes, mortgage payments	Canadian Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA) : 75% reduction in rent with 50% covered by provincial and federal government, 25% covered by landlords. Three months of April, May, June.
10		The Government of Canada intends to extend the CECRA for an additional month; federal officials are engaging provincial counterparts to secure agreements.
11	Minimizing layoffs by organizations without an immediate year-over-year revenue decrease	CEWS eligibility criteria adjusted by the federal government to accommodate other measures of revenue change.
11		Throughout May and June, the City of London has been required to temporarily lay off or defer start dates for approximately 1,500 part time, casual, seasonal and full time staff due to the financial impacts of COVID-19.
12	Increase wage subsidy from 10% to 75%	The federal government increased the proposed Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy from 10% to 75%.
13	Coordinating the delivery of fresh, healthy food to people who are quarantined or self-isolating	\$25,000 for this initiative supported unanimously at City Council.
13		Funds have been allocated to a number of community

		partners to scale up home delivery of fresh, healthy food to Londoners who are unable to leave their homes.
14	Meeting the basic needs of our most vulnerable	City staff and partnering agencies opened a hygiene facility on May 26. Since opening, the facility has received 205 visits, with an average of 8.5 visits per day.
15	Providing isolation spaces for people who are experiencing homelessness	The City of London received \$3,475,300 in the 2020-21 fiscal year through the Provincial Social Services Relief Fund. City staff have worked with emergency shelters to move people into 174 rooms in motels/hotels for various uses. Of those rooms, City staff and community agencies have established and staffed an isolation and monitoring space for those that have been tested for COVID or who have been in direct contact with someone that tested positive and therefor COVID probable.
15		Federal government approved Reaching Home funding by \$157.5 million for the City of London.
16	Increased support for crisis mental health and phone supports	The Province has invested \$12 million in additional funding to expand online and virtual mental health supports.
16		On June 18 the Province of Ontario announced \$10 million to hire additional mental health workers throughout Ontario's school system.
17	Benefits delivered through Ontario Works should be as flexible as possible	Eligible Ontario Works and ODSP recipients received a one-time Emergency Benefit of \$100 for individuals and \$200 per couple for March/April. This benefit subsequently became extended to an ongoing monthly Emergency Benefit for COVID related items each month for May, June, and July.
18	Where possible and safe, adapting essential public works projects to new mobility patterns	Essential construction projects awarded by council are proceeding. Construction-related meetings for core-area projects moving online. City staff, consulting engineers and contractors exploring opportunities to compress projects.
18		Province has allowed major essential public works projects to proceed under Stage 2 of the reopening framework.
19	Front-load grants and transfer payments as much as possible	Shared with local MPs and MPPs. City grant funding flows once grant agreements are signed.
20	A local clearinghouse matching needs for essential equipment and supplies and manufacturing capabilities	The London Chamber of Commerce is connecting businesses that have clean rooms with the London Region Manufacturers' Council.
21	Eliminate 30-day waiting period for work sharing program (already actioned)	30-day waiting period eliminated by the federal government.
22	Support of postal workers and	Shared with local MPs.

	Canada Post	
23	Continuation of public funding for arts, cultural events and festivals that have been cancelled	Major arts funding organizations like the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council are continuing to support organizations even when events are cancelled.
24	Accelerating Core Area Action Plan	City staff are supporting activations to improve streetscapes with closed businesses, such as murals on plywood boardings over businesses. Funding for supportive housing as part of the Core Area Action Plan, \$4.5 million for Indwell's building at 744 Dundas St, was supported unanimously by City Council.
24		The City of London has waived patio permitting fees across the core area to support local businesses.
25	Lowering the peak load on essential services like grocery stores	
26	Security staffing	Shared with local MPPs.
27	Emergency procurement processes	City procurement policy allows for procurement flexibility during an emergency.
28	Flexibility in loading/unloading and delivery times	Supported unanimously by City Council.
29	Grants rather than loans or deferrals for commercial rent	Deputy Mayor wrote to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Minister of Finance regarding a temporary rent supplement.
30	Pooling resources or collaborating to allow smaller organizations access to EAP services like counselling	Shared with local MPPs
31	Insurance companies should reduce premiums to reflect changes in economic activity and mobility	Shared with local MPPs.
32	Consider distributing funds through existing organizations like Regional Innovation Centres	The Government of Canada and Province of Ontario have announced funding for tourism and digital marketing through Regional Innovation Centres.
33	Deliver food on a regular basis to agencies that provide food to people and are running short	The City of London has invested in community programming that delivers fresh food to vulnerable populations. As of June 25, community partners have delivered over 600 boxes of fresh food to London families. Additional community programming is in development with a number of community organizations.
34	Maximize number of people receiving support through discretionary benefits	
35	Supporting physical distancing by	The City of London received \$3,475,300 in the 2020-21

	people who are living unsheltered	fiscal year through the Provincial Social Services Relief Fund. City staff have worked with community agencies, and emergency shelters to move people into 174 rooms in motels/hotels for various uses. Of those rooms, City staff and community agencies have established and staffed an isolation and monitoring space for those that have been tested for COVID or who have been in direct contact with someone that tested positive and are therefore COVID probable.
36	Communicate government programs via widely available print publications that are delivered	Currently, the London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), Small Business Centre (SBC) and the London Chamber of Commerce have developed a London Business COVID-19 Portal . This resource brings together helpful updates for the community.
37	Continuing transit service to make sure people can continue to move around the city for essential trips	The London Transit Commission is working to maintain as much service as is possible given the challenging financial environment. Additional details are available through LTC reporting .
38	Significant increases in funding for mental health for children and youth	Shared with local MPPs.
39	Clarify how psychotherapists can provide emergency counselling	Shared with local MPPs.
40	Broaden distribution of comfort stations to include Hamilton Rd	City staff continue to seek locations for a comfort station near Hamilton Rd.
41	Providing blankets to agencies working with people experiencing homelessness	Goodwill Industries has been supporting agencies serving the vulnerable sector such as Mission Services, London Cares and Youth for Christ distributing hand sanitizer, supplying face masks, pulling/supplying surgical scrubs from the donation stream and issuing food vouchers. In late April and early May, with the weather remaining cold, Goodwill distributed over 500 blankets to London Cares.
42	Expand the number of rent supplements provided by the city	Assessment growth funding of \$250,000 (ongoing) and \$516,000 (one-time) allocated to Homeless Prevention Housing Allowances in June 2020. This funding will allow for supports to be provided for rent supplements as well as providing rental stability and eviction prevention supports.
43	Creating more space to provide shelter	The City of London continues to follow the Public Health guidance set out by the Province related to all congregate living settings while maximizing all Provincial Social Services Relief Fund dollars to assist shelters in maintaining physical distancing requirements.
44	Connecting faith communities to support service agencies	Faith communities have been invited to contact UWEM to be connected to a social service agency to help with volunteering and other urgent needs. So far, LUSO and

		South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre have benefited from these connections.
45	Providing opportunities for public participation in committee meetings	On June 22, 2020, the City of London resumed the public practice of opening public participation meetings and other public meetings for members of the public to attend, in line with the provincial reopening framework.
46	Supporting the specific needs of international students	
Recovery Ideas		
47	Focused recovery plan for entertainment, culture, tourism and hospitality sector	On May 31, the Government of Canada invested \$30 million through FedDev Ontario to provide financial support to destination marketing organizations, including Tourism London.
48	Support for recovery of the airport	Announcements related to airlines have focused primarily on safety regulations, including mandating the use of face coverings and barring those displaying COVID symptoms from boarding flights. The sector continues to advocate for operations support from the other levels of government, beyond rent relief measures introduced in March.
49	Closing the digital divide in infrastructure	On June 3, the Province announced \$150 million for reliable broadband and cellular service as part of Ontario's Up to Speed program . This funding will support Ontario's rural, remote and underserved areas.
50	Shovel-ready infrastructure stimulus projects	Shared with local MPs and MPPs and part of provincial and federal advocacy efforts.
51	Rapid shift to office employees working remotely should be considered in long-term planning	
52	Consider waiving or deferring approved increases in building permit fees and development charges for 2021	Being considered by Civic Administration.
53	Sharing best practices for minimizing risks in different kinds of workplaces	The provincial COVID-19 resource page includes hundreds of tip sheets and other resources for businesses and other organizations.
54	Increased funding for mental health phone and virtual supports during the recovery period	Shared with MPPs.

Ideas for Action

We have organized the initial ideas proposed through the task force discussions into two time periods: **during the shutdown**, which started in mid-March; and **during the recovery**. These

ideas are new ones raised since the second report to the task forces. The numbering continues from that report.

During the recovery

55. Childcare and summer day camps

Employers in many sectors have stressed the critical importance of childcare. Many of their employees will not be able to return to work without childcare, which will limit the overall economic and social recovery. If physical distancing requirements raise the cost of each childcare spot, the provincial government should ensure that these increased costs are not born by parents. As of July 13, 2020 over half of London's licensed child care centres will open with reduced capacity due to health and safety protocols put in place. The remaining licensed child care centres will be opening gradually over the coming months. During the summer, making as many day camp spots available as possible, as long as they can be delivered safely, is similarly important (already actioned: city summer day camps have opened on a limited basis).

56. Flexibility and speed in allowing restaurants to open patios

The city should make it easy for restaurants to open patios in on-street parking spaces, parking lots and other locations to allow restaurants to seat customers outside while maintaining physical distancing. Fees for these patios should be waived or reduced (already actioned with all fees waived).

57. Group buying to lower costs for PPE

Smaller organizations such as non-profits and small businesses face higher costs for PPE because they do not benefit from the buying power of larger organizations. Group buying strategies may lower the costs for these smaller organizations.

58. Maintain or accelerate planned public works capital spending

Proceeding with approved and funded major capital projects will be essential in driving economic recovery in the construction and trades sector. The city, province and federal government should continue with major public sector capital projects. Opportunities to accelerate planned projects should be explored.

59. Commercial rent relief program should be changed

Uptake for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance program is lower than expected, as it requires landlords to apply and to forgo 25% of rent.

60. Concierge service for reopening

The city should create a concierge service for businesses that are re-opening to simplify the process and make it as easy as possible (already actioned: see city's [Back to Business](#)).

61. Lower fees by delivery apps

The Mayor should advocate for lower fees charged by delivery apps, which would help restaurants that are struggling (already actioned).

62. Lower fees on credit card transactions

As businesses move more sales to contactless transactions, the fees on certain kinds of credit card transactions are a significant cost.

63. Review commercial auto insurance regime

Taxi operators report significant increases in commercial insurance rates and limited competition among insurance providers. The provincial government should review the commercial auto insurance market to ensure it is competitive and fair.

64. Consider Innovative Public/Private Partnerships

The City and/or other levels of government should consider innovative public/private partnerships in order to maximize investments, while minimizing costs for new infrastructure projects and capital works.

Appendix A: List of Task Force Members

Mayor's Economic Impact and Recovery Task Force

The membership of the task force is evolving. If you are interested in being part of the task force, or have ideas for consideration, please email mayor@london.ca.

3M Canada	Leads Employment Services	RBC
Anderson Brewery	Libro Credit Union	RBC Place London
Argyle BIA	Liuna 1059	Sifton Properties
Avison Young	London Brewing Co-op	Small Business
Better Business Bureau	London District Construction	Centre
Bluestone Properties	Association	St. Joseph's Hospital
Boler Mountain	London and District Heavy	Start.ca
Canada Life	Construction Association	Sterling Marking
Diamond Aircraft	London Arts Council	Products Inc.
Digital Echidna	London Chamber of Commerce	Sun Life Financial
Digital Extremes	London Development Institute	Sunfest
Downtown London	London Economic Development	Sunripe
Drewlo Properties	Corporation	Sylvite
Dr. Oetker	London Health Sciences Centre	The Original Cakerie
Ealing Pharmacy	London Home Builders Association	TD Bank
Elgin Middlesex Oxford	London International Airport	TechAlliance
Workforce Development and	London St. Thomas Association of	Tourism London
Planning Board	Realtors	Tricar Developments
Fanshawe College	London Regional Manufacturers	Trillium Manufacturing
Farhi Developments	Association	Network
Gateway Casinos	Middlesex London Food Policy	U Need A Cab
GDLS-Canada	Council	Western Fair District
Goodlife Fitness	Media Sonar	Western University
Green Taxi	Nestle Canada	York Developments
Hamilton Road BIA	Old East Village BIA	Your Taxi
HCL Logistics	Old Oak Properties	
Heemans	Pathways	
Hyde Park BIA	Paystone	
InfoTech Research Group	Pillar Nonprofit Network	

We want to recognize all of the City Councillors as well as Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks Jeff Yurek (Elgin—Middlesex—London), MPPs Teresa Armstrong (London—Fanshawe), Terence Kernaghan (London North Centre) and Peggy Sattler (London West), and MPs Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre), Parliamentary Secretary Kate Young (London West), Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London) and Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe), who have listened in to task force discussions.

Mayor's Social Impact and Recovery Task Force

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519 Pursuit	London District Catholic School Board
Across Languages	London Food Bank
Anova	London Homeless Coalition
Ark Aid Street Mission	London Intercommunity Health Centre
Atlohsa Family Healing Services	London Middlesex Community Housing
Big Brothers Big Sisters	London Public Library
Boys and Girls Club	London Poverty Research Council
Centre of Hope	London Resource Centre
Centre for Research on Health Equity and Social Inclusion	London Youth Advisory Council
Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex	LUSO Community Services
CMHA Middlesex	Meals on Wheels
Cross Cultural Learner Centre	Merry Mount
Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre	Middlesex County
CSC Providence	Middlesex London Health Unit
CSC Viamonde	Middlesex London Food Policy
Culinary Foundation	Neighbourhood Legal Services
Fanshawe College	Ontario Student Nutrition Program
Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre	Pathways
Goodwill Industries	Pillar Nonprofit Network
Health Services for South West	Safe Space London
Healthline	Sisters of St. Joseph
Investing in Children	South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre
Life*Spin	Thames Valley District School Board
London Abused Women's Centre	United Sikhs
London Cares	United Way
London Community Foundation	Youth for Christ
	Youth Opportunities Unlimited

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