

Advocacy Update

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June 2021

Message from the Chair



There is good news and signs of hope all around Peel Region. We have made great strides in tempering the impact of the pandemic in our communities, recognizing that these achievements are a shared success with you, our provincial and federal partners. We know the job is not done. COVID-19 challenges continue and, with it, ongoing disruption to the high quality of life enjoyed by Peel residents.

Investment in recovery and plans for reopening are bringing clarity on the path forward. Our Mass Vaccination Program continues to reach thousands of Peel residents every day and the situation in Peel is showing steady signs of improvement. But we can't let up; defeating COVID-19 will require our full attention and continued unprecedented levels of cooperation from which we've all benefitted during this crisis.

With that in mind, I am pleased to share with you the latest edition of our Advocacy Update newsletter. It includes an

update on the **COVID-19** situation in Peel; the tremendous progress we are making and the challenges ahead. We also highlight the crucial role of **Child Care and Early Years** during the pandemic, and the critical need for support post-COVID-19. The Region has started preparing for the annual **AMO conference** in August, during which the Region looks forward to once again meeting with provincial decision-makers. Key among the Region's priorities are the challenges associated with COVID-19, including the significant resources needed for our Mass Vaccination Program. The Region also remains focused on many of the other shared priorities between all levels of government, including our commitment to effective and efficient **Waste Management**.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of our positive working relationship and we look forward to carrying forward this momentum together as we emerge from COVID-19 on the road to recovery.

Sincerely,

REFERRAL TO
RECOMMENDED

DIRECTION REQUIRED

RECEIPT RECOMMENDED ☒

Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer

COVID-19 Update

There are signs of significant improvement in Peel Region in the battle against COVID-19. As one of the hardest hit communities during the pandemic, declining daily cases is welcomed news. While the end of the pandemic is coming more clearly into view, now is not the time to let up.

Peel's success, while still fragile, has been attributable to several factors. Trends continue to decline due to widespread compliance with strong public health measures, decreased mobility, robust contact tracing and increased vaccine allocation received in early May. This increased allocation has supported Peel in achieving more than 75 per cent first-dose coverage in the adult population through the Region's Mass Vaccination Program – a local and targeted plan, which considers the unique features of Peel. For more information, visit the Region's dedicated [website](#) to see how the planning



Ontario Premier Doug Ford (centre) tours the Doses after Dark vaccination clinic with (L-R) Paul Sharma, Mass Vaccination Program, Region of Peel; Regional Chair Nando Iannicca; Dr. Lawrence Loh, Region's Medical Officer of Health and Deepak Anand, MPP for Mississauga-Malton. The clinic was a 32-hour, overnight event organized by the Region of Peel at which approximately 5000 doses were administered to residents.

Story continues on the next page

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Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair and
Chief Executive Officer

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 **Region
of Peel**
working with you

COVID-19 Update

and implementation is happening and how the vaccine will be given to residents in the coming months.

Peel was pleased to learn earlier this month the Province will provide communities in Delta variant areas of concern with additional vaccine allocation to support accelerated delivery of second doses where they are needed most. Peel has one of the highest proportions of the Delta variant in the province and data confirms, this new variant will soon become the dominant strain. The pandemic continues to disproportionately impact Peel communities and accelerating second doses can slow the spread, protect healthcare capacity and save lives. We know that vaccinating those who are most at risk is one of the critical factors in helping to drive down cases during the third wave, and it will be equally important as part of the Region's efforts to control transmission of the Delta variant to ensure Peel, and all of Ontario, avoid a fourth wave.

Innovation, compassion and dedication are driving the Region's efforts to vaccinate as many of Peel's 1.5 million residents as possible. As more people are fully vaccinated and uptake increases, maintaining a focus on equity is critical. The contributions of Peel's multi-sector Community Equity and Engagement Advisory Table has provided critical direction and advice to the Region's vaccination strategy since the beginning. Meanwhile, Doses After Dark, the Homebound Program, mobile and community vaccination clinics have also yielded positive results.

The Region will continue needing the support of its partners in the provincial and federal governments to keep the momentum of our vaccination program going. Collaboration through all levels of government will help ensure Peel has sufficient vaccine to advance second dose vaccinations and avoid a fourth wave, as we cautiously move through the reopening framework.



Ontario Premier Doug Ford with Deepak Anand, MPP for Mississauga-Malton (left) and Regional Chair Nando Iannica (right) before a tour of the 32-hour marathon Doses after Dark vaccination clinic held at the International Centre in Mississauga on May 15 and 16.



Peel's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Lawrence Loh (3rd from left) with dignitaries at the CAA vaccination centre. The site opened to the public in late May, and will have delivered nearly 50,000 doses in 17 clinic days between May 26 and June 30.

Region of Peel preparing for annual AMO Conference

The Region looks forward to meeting with Peel's elected representatives in the lead-up to this year's event to discuss ongoing challenges associated with the pandemic, as well several of our other key priorities, including:

- COVID-19 costs
- Infrastructure stimulus
- Payment in lieu of taxes (PILT)
- Affordable housing support
- Enhanced supports for seniors
- Early Years and Child Care

At the conference, the Region's delegation expects to meet with several cabinet ministers to advocate for these priorities. These meetings present an important platform to discuss ongoing challenges, shared opportunities and continued municipal-provincial cooperation.

The current crisis has demonstrated the critical importance of intergovernmental collaboration to ensure support reached impacted residents and businesses during all three waves of COVID-19. A similar approach can provide the foundation for a rapid and strong recovery.

Peel's Recent Advocacy Initiatives

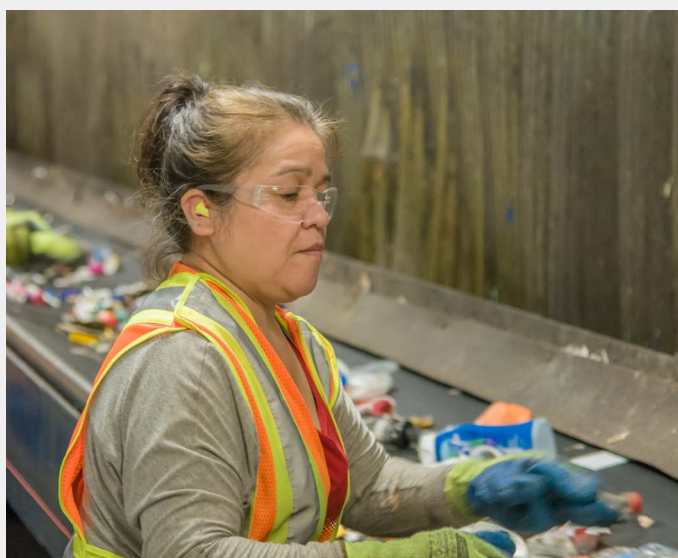
Supporting a federal single-use plastics strategy

Norm Lee, Director of Waste Management, presented the municipal and the Peel-specific perspective on single-use plastics to the federal Environmental Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development (ENVI) on April 28.

The Region has a target of 75 per cent diversion by 2034 and continues making significant investments to reach that target. However, one of the most significant waste management challenges faced by municipalities today is the recycling of plastic packaging, which is becoming lighter and more complex, making it more difficult and more expensive to manage.

The Region of Peel supports the use of an evidence-based approach to assess problematic single-use plastics. The use of compostable plastics and plastic-like materials as an alternative to single-use plastics will be problematic unless the following measures are put in place:

- National certification standards that ensure materials marketed as 'compostable' can be composted in practice and at scale.
- National labeling and advertising standards to reduce consumer and resident confusion.
- Producer responsibility programs for compostable products and packaging, preferably in accordance with national standards or guidelines.
- Federal programs to support investment in processing infrastructure for compostable products and packaging.
- Mandatory recycled content requirements that are sufficiently high and enforceable



Moving forward with Blue Box transition

The Region of Peel was pleased to see the provincial government release the final Blue Box regulation earlier this month. This regulatory change has been a priority for municipal governments for over a decade and the Region looks forward to the transition from municipally operated programs to a producer-led Blue Box system. The final regulation confirmed the transition date for Peel municipalities as October 1, 2024, which matches Peel's Council-endorsed preferred transition date.

The Region is responsible for the collection and processing the approximately 500,000 tonnes of waste produced by residents. As Peel continues to grow, the amount of waste produced will increase. To responsibly manage this waste, Peel must continue the shift to greater resource recovery, which means ensuring that recyclable and compostable materials are diverted from landfills and used to produce other materials.

Moving the Blue Box program to full producer responsibility will result in significant efficiencies, and Peel could realize up to \$15 million per year in net savings and avoided costs, post-transition. These freed-up funds will be used to offset the costs to operate the Region's new anaerobic digestion facility – expected to be operational in 2024. These initiatives are part of Peel's ambitious plan to divert 75 per cent of waste from landfills and the Region looks forward to ongoing discussions and collaboration with its federal and provincial partners in order to continue meeting the needs of Peel residents, while reducing the negative impacts of waste.



Early Years and Child Care key to recovery planning

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the critical need for this sector, both in supporting parents who have continued working to deliver essential services and for the vital and ongoing development of children.

The current crisis continues to impact the early years and child care sector, including reduced demand for child care spaces and high turnover among Registered Early Childhood Educators. As a Service System Manager, Peel distributes provincial funding and sets priorities, and the Region is encouraged that support for early years and child care is recognized as a key component of recovery planning. However, the sector will be facing serious challenges in the months and years ahead. Provincial and federal funding helped keep the sector viable, but without sufficient ongoing support, many child care providers may be forced to close their doors, resulting in a lack of child care spaces for Peel families once the pandemic is over.

The Region's Role

Peel Regional Council has invested in core service levels, including fee subsidies that allow lower-income families to benefit from licensed child care. Although the Region doesn't directly deliver child care, we support both centre-based and home child care. Peel is unique from other regions in that we have proactively partnered with for-profit child care businesses to ensure families have choice and access to quality child care.

By providing oversight of the system, the Region helps create positive outcomes for children and families in both EarlyON centres and in licensed child care settings.

Affordable Child Care as a catalyst

There has been strong recognition that availability of affordable child care is a catalyst for a robust economy and that child care will be a critical component of Ontario's phased reopening this summer and beyond. This will also require a sufficient supply of qualified staff, and, as a Service System Manager, the Region is committed to collaboration to advance a provincial recruitment and retention strategy for Registered Early Childhood Educators.

The Region also looks forward to continued support from Peel's MPs and MPPs to secure predictable, flexible, multi-year funding and encourages our upper-level partners to continue working toward finalizing details of a national child care plan. Accessible and affordable care is critical to a fast-growing region, such as Peel. It provides important financial support for parents and empowers more women to join the workforce.

Each dollar invested in this sector returns \$3 to \$10 in savings and benefits. Taken in combination with the diverse make-up of Peel, and the fact 2 in 10 children live in poverty – it is critical that support for child care in Peel continues.



Government Relations Committee

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Michael Palleschi
Brampton (Ward 2)

Karen Ras (Vice-Chair)
Mississauga (Ward 2)

Rowena Santos
Brampton (Wards 1 and 5)

Paul Vicente
Brampton (Wards 1 and 5)

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*Commissioner of Digital & Information
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Nancy Polisinelli,
Commissioner of Health Services

Janice Sheehy,
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