



May 24, 2020

### **Statement from Mayor Ken Hewitt & Council**

For the numbers today go to:

<https://hnhu.org/health-topic/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Are we there yet? Remember the days of driving to Florida with your kids in the back seat asking “are we there yet?” before you had even crossed the border. You think to yourself, “this is going to be a long ride”.

Well, this pandemic is going to be long ride, akin to travelling across Canada and back. The amount of time this trip takes will be determined by the individual behaviours of people. Everyone has a role to play in this and while I continue to state the obvious, there are many out there still being selfish. That said, the majority of people in Haldimand should be applauded for their efforts, their commitment to ensuring the safety of the community and ultimately helping us reopen our local businesses.

Sacrifices that have been made are immeasurable by so many groups. In particular the youth, who have missed out on their school year, graduations, socialization, sporting activities and much more. I commend the parents for being vigilant, but the kids deserve our praise as they are the future. They will be tomorrow’s leaders and it is our duty to help guide them through today.

It is all of our responsibility to collectively drag ourselves out of this massive debt that has been created and while it will not be easy, we can do it. The only way through this is to inject ourselves where we can into the economy. Whether it is getting back to work or committing to that project that does employ someone, both activities will help turn the economy around.

Locally in Dunnville, the farmers market will be opening shortly; we just renewed the sidewalk patios bylaw for when the restaurants can re-open. Our local businesses today are enhancing both their daily service models and their online platforms to better serve you and the broader public.

Recently, we held a virtual economic business committee meeting and it was very productive with some important takeaways. I am excited that the County, through this committee, will be looking at some marketing and advertising programs for our communities including a Haldimand-branded business retention and expansion program, investing in PPE (where to locate and source), contagion free certification programs and much more to come. We will be reaching out to the BIAs and the Chambers of Commerce for participation and these groups will collectively help us put plans together for the remainder of 2020.

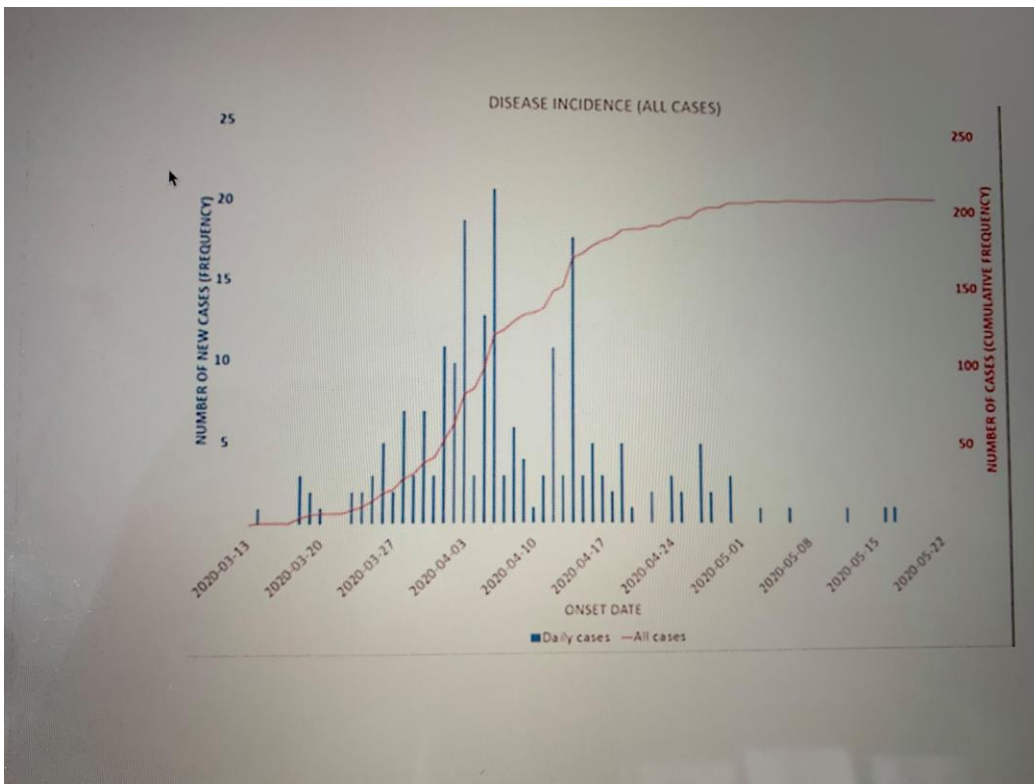
Shop local, shop local, shop local, shop local...



While we continue to navigate through this, my comments to any business asking, whether it is a trailer park, or a hair salon: once the provincial order allows for you to open, do not wait for a prescribed safety plan as every business is unique. We want you to establish a customized plan that meets your needs and over time you will perfect it along with input from your customers, the County or the Health Unit. Haldimand County WILL NOT be the obstacle to any successful re-opening.

If you are a business that can now begin to open under the new rules, the provincial website has a number of guidance documents from industry-specific health & safety associations: <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/health-and-safety-association-guidance-documents-for-workplaces-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>.

In our last meeting with our Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Nesathurai, he shared with us some data that shows the efforts here in Haldimand & Norfolk are working. The graph below suggests that the curve here locally is flattening, but we must still be cautious and take all steps necessary to protect ourselves, our families and our community.



“Success in this pandemic will always be judged as an overreaction.”

Stay Safe,

Mayor Ken Hewitt