

Transcript: Mayor Burton on CP24 – June 15, 2020

Anchor: Good evening Mayor, how are you tonight?

Mayor Burton: Great and how are you Nick?

Anchor: Very good, thanks. This must be eagerly anticipated news for the Town of Oakville. I'm wondering, how you are getting ready for this after watching several municipalities across the province go into Stage 2 one week ago. What have you learned from that, what have you seen?

Mayor Burton: We decided weeks ago we would lean forward and be ready when the Province gives us a green light and when they held us back a week last week even though we met all their criteria to open. We just used that time to double down on our preparation, so we're looking forward to a very smooth reopening starting one minute after midnight on Thursday night.

Anchor: Do you really feel like Oakville and perhaps even Burlington should have opened a week ago?

Mayor Burton: We thought we should have. We met all their criteria. Our health unit is ace and tracing. Our hospitals are almost empty. The impact of the COVID-19 on our community has been very low. I say, our people have done a really great job of adapting and putting up with the restrictions. You know we were told the restrictions were necessary in order to buy time while we ramped up our health care capacity so that we could face the virus. And we ramped up our health care capacity, we had a huge improvement and build-out of healthcare capacity in Burlington, Oakville and the rest of Halton. And so we reached that day before last week and we're ready.

Anchor: Okay, from a town side and a region side that sounds very encouraging. I wonder what you're hearing from local businesses as well. Any concerns from them? Whether if it's around acquiring PPE or making sure they can properly physically distance their customers and clientele, things like that?

Mayor Burton: I started an economic recovery task force right at the start of this thing, working hand in glove with our businesses to make sure that we're ready. Our businesses are ready and raring to go. And I invite you if you are interested to join me Friday in Downtown Oakville in our beautiful downtown historic district and you can enjoy our patios in our new wider sidewalks.

Anchor: Yeah, that's going to be a big deal in a Town like Oakville. I wonder Mayor, you've been involved in these phone calls and Zoom calls, conferences, etcetera with the Big City Mayors across the GTA. We've heard it from Mayor John Tory, the concern about budget shortfalls in municipalities and I wonder what your feelings are as to whether the province and federal government are doing enough or giving enough reassurance to municipalities like yours about what's going to happen to budgets and what's going to happen with all this debt that's accumulating?

Mayor Burton: I am so grateful to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Steve Clark for the promise he gave Big City Mayors several weeks ago now. He said, "I want you to understand

that we are going to help you.” I’m a little bit anxious about seeing the help arrive but his promise was so sincere and so genuine that I believed him completely and I still do.

Anchor: Okay, well that’s encouraging news as well. Mayor Burton, thanks for your time and have a great time on those patios Friday.

Mayor Burton: Thank you, Nick.