



## The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Chief Administrative Officer

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Margaret Misek-Evans, Chief Administrative Officer

**Date to Council:** July 14, 2020

**Report Number:** CAO-2020-04

**Subject:** Town Hall Reopening

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### Recommendations

It is recommended:

**That Report CAO-2020-04, Town Hall Reopening be received.**

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the planned Town Hall reopening process set to commence on July 20<sup>th</sup>. A phased approach is outlined in the report for a gradual reopening that also accommodates the timeline for completion of the Town Hall renovation project.

### Background

On March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization and shortly thereafter, declarations of emergency were issued by the Province of Ontario and locally by Mayor McNamara. Measures taken to protect Town staff and the community included closing Town Hall to direct public interface on March 18. Additionally, alternate work arrangements were made to ensure physical distancing of staff in order to protect their safety. These arrangements include limiting the number of workers per Town truck, spacing out work stations, working from home, alternate work hours and the like. Protocols have been put in place to ensure workplaces are regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Technology and communications have been adapted to permit alternate work arrangements, accommodate remote meetings, including Council meetings, and facilitate on-line service delivery where feasible. Administration has reported regularly to Council on these measures as

well as measures taken to implement Provincial Orders necessitating changes in service delivery and cancelation of many events and activities. Council authorizations have been sought accordingly and some authorities have been delegated to the Chief Administrative Officer and other Senior Management members to enable timely response to changing Provincial orders and directives.

While a state of emergency remains in effect at both Provincial and local levels, the Town has entered Phase 2 of the Ontario government's plan to reopen the Province. Accordingly, some of the closures of municipal facilities that have been in effect are now being reversed with the reopening of certain facilities under Public Health and Ontario Health guidance for safe operations. Reopening of many private businesses has also occurred and the Town has taken measures to support these where possible, such as extending rules for patio operations in the hospitality sector. Changes in facility openings and supports to business have been and continue to be reported to Council as they arise.

As Public Health and Ontario Health have now issued guidance on how to safely return to an open state for public services, Administration is making plans to reopen Town Hall in a gradual and staged approach. The purpose of this report is to outline how these plans will unfold in the coming months, barring any changes in circumstances locally and/or Provincially with respect to the pandemic.

## **Comments**

Other municipalities in Windsor-Essex have reopened to the public while some are in the planning stages for reopening or delivering services with a modified public interface. In communications with regional CAO's, we have shared information to help each other with our planning processes and learned from the experience of those who have already opened. The Senior Management Team has worked on the reopening plan together and conferred with affected Customer Service staff and Union Executive.

Note that while Town Administration is planning a return to in-person services, this will not preclude continued on-line, drop box and phone service delivery. These modes of service delivery will be continued, encouraged and expanded over time, maintaining a high standard of service delivery.

Due to the current renovation project at Town Hall, our reopening will be phased in to accommodate the room needed by the contractors to complete the project under their new COVID-19 operating environment. As the contractors will also be undertaking new carpeting and painting throughout the existing parts of Town Hall, this also warrants keeping our occupancy low to permit them to complete that work without undue impediments. Accordingly, the phasing plan allows for continuation of alternate work arrangements, maintaining a building occupancy of about 50%. Repopulating Town offices will be deferred until the Town Hall renovation is completed, which is currently estimated at October 1, 2020. Prior to staff returning to work at Town Hall, measures will be taken to ensure safe physical distancing, including development of a return to work plan with the Joint Health & Safety Committee. An update will be provided to Council as we get closer to that time.

The Town of Tecumseh plans to initially open doors to the public on July 20. The following table outlines the first phase of the plan for resumption of in-person services:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Re-Opening Particulars</b>
July 20 forward	Open Town Hall and Arena Customer Service areas to the public for in-person, drop-in traffic during the hours of 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday
July 20 forward	Open Town Hall to the Public for scheduled in-person appointments, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday
July 20 forward	Return to limited in-person meetings in board rooms and offices when safe physical distancing (2 metres) protocol can be observed
September 11	Re-evaluate open hours for public in-person, drop-in traffic and the screening method
To September 30	Remain at approximately 50% Town Hall staff occupancy to allow extra space for building renovation to be completed

Limiting the hours for in-person, drop-in traffic to half days will permit Customer Service staff to remain current with the phone, on-line and drop box service delivery interface that has grown in volume over the past few months and is expected to continue. We wish to ensure continuance of high quality remote service delivery to reduce the need for in-person service. This adds to convenience of service access for the public and maintains a state of readiness in the event that a second wave of COVID-19 cases might indicate the need for closure once again. Accordingly, Customer Service staff are also developing a list of services that will be available at the counter. All other services will be by appointment or by phone, on-line or drop-box.

Attachment 1 provides a diagram showing the flow of drop-in traffic in the current Customer Service area at Town Hall (Council Chambers). As indicated in the diagram, a maximum of 10 people can be safely cued while waiting for Customer Service at the counter. Staff who schedule an in-person appointment will be responsible to attend at the Customer Service area to meet the party and escort them to a meeting room. Staff who do not have any form of barrier protection, i.e. plexi-glass screen, will be required to wear a face covering/non-medical mask when greeting the public.

Also shown in the diagram is a station for a Screener who will intercept the public as they enter the building. The Screener will monitor the number of visitors to the building, conduct active screening for COVID-19 and maintain a state of order. Following on the experience of LaSalle, we will initially engage a security guard for this purpose. Arrangements are underway to contract with the Commissionaires to provide this service initially whilst we gauge the volume of visitors and establish our new practices. Re-evaluation of this arrangement will be done in

early September when we also expect that Customer Service will move back into renovated quarters with better access and egress for the public.

Prior to reopening on July 20<sup>th</sup>, the following measures will be put into effect:

- Installation of plexi-glass barriers at Customer Service counters to provide for a physical barrier between staff and the public
- Reconfiguration of Customer Service area to provide cue space and space for pre-screening in-person, drop-in and appointment-based visitors (Attachment 1)
- Provision of hand sanitizer at the entry door
- Screening service engaged
- Installation of appropriate signage and decals indicating entry rules: maximum of 10 people permitted at once, 2 m separation distances, requiring hand sanitizing and mandatory face covering/non-medical mask and reporting to the Screener to self-identify
- Active health check pre-screening questions based on Public Health and Ontario Health guidance to be used by the Screener for all public who attend either for drop-in or appointment-based service
- A reference sheet will be available with local and Provincial resources for distribution by the Screener to those who screen positive
- One washroom clearly marked for public use only
- Continuation of twice daily cleaning of surfaces (in addition to the nightly cleaning) in Customer Service areas
- Continuation of supply of cleaning supplies to staff (hand sanitizer, wipes, etc.)
- Prepare meeting rooms for use by posting maximum capacity, ensuring 2 m separation distance between chairs and stocking with hand sanitizer
- Guidance on safe handling of cash and conducting monetary transactions as well as public communications to discourage the use of cash
- Finalize SOPs for hand washing, equipment use, vehicle cleaning, work station cleaning; facility cleaning, two people per vehicle and in-person meeting
- Active health check pre-screening questions based on Public Health and Ontario Health guidance for employees

## **Consultations**

All Departments

## Financial Implications

Financial implications associated with engaging an external service for screening, access control and general security purposes will be \$23.92/hour plus applicable taxes, sourced through the Commissionaires.

An update on the financial implications of COVID-19 will be included in the upcoming second quarter variance report to Council at the Regular Council Meeting of August 11, 2020.

## Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2019-22 Strategic Priorities
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- Make the Town of Tecumseh an even better place to live, work and invest through a shared vision for our residents and newcomers.
- Ensure that Tecumseh’s current and future growth is built upon the principles of sustainability and strategic decision-making.
- Integrate the principles of health and wellness into all of Tecumseh’s plans and priorities.
- Steward the Town’s “continuous improvement” approach to municipal service delivery to residents and businesses.
- Demonstrate the Town’s leadership role in the community by promoting good governance and community engagement, by bringing together organizations serving the Town and the region to pursue common goals.

## Communications

Not applicable

Website       Social Media       News Release       Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared and Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachment  
Number**

**Attachment  
Name**

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Town Hall Reopening Floor Plan