

Overview:

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 virus to be a global pandemic. Since that time, the Province of Ontario has declared an emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. As a result of this declaration and its associated orders the Province has placed limits on the operations of a wide range of businesses and services.

While these global and provincial changes have been taking place the Township of Douro-Dummer has been actively working mitigating risk for the Township ratepayers and staff.

Actions that have Taken Place Since March 13, 2020:

- March 13, 2020 – First planning meeting took place to discuss severity of the pandemic and business continuity plans. Discussions took place regarding closing the recreation facilities, limiting service at the front counter. Recreational facilities and the Public Library were closed to the public.
- March 16, 2020 – Front counter services were closed to the public but staff remained working in the office
- March 17, 2020 – Special Emergency Council meeting was held to deal with urgent business and to put a Delegation By-law in place providing the Mayor and Temporary C.A.O. the power to make decisions on business continuity issues and to provide staff the ability to work on capital projects that had been presented as part of the draft budget
- March 19, 2020 – Notice was provided to staff regarding risk mitigation and ability to work from home, multiple staff took up the offer to work from home, additional safety measures for staff in all locations were put into place
- March 20, 2020 – Notices were posted at Hall's Glen Transfer station to mitigate risk and limit the use of the transfer station
- March 23, 2020 – Signs are posted to close Township owned playgrounds and media releases are sent out regarding the continued closure of the Municipal building to the public, the closure of the Hall's Glen Transfer Station and that staff will be available via email and phone for services to the public
- March 24, 2020 – Majority of non-Public Works staff begin working from home, a media release is sent out to provide an update on closures to the public
- March 25, 2020 – First Emergency Operations Centre meeting takes place.
- March 25, 2020 – The Township of Douro-Dummer declares an emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act
- April 2, 2020 – Closure of Outdoor amenities such as parkland, public wharfs, gazebos, baseball diamonds and other structures takes place
- April 2, 2020 – Special Electronic Council meeting is held
- April 3, 2020 – Township wide Burn Ban put in place
- April 6, 2020 – Media Releases were sent out regarding waiving of interest on taxes

All of the notices that have gone out have been circulated to Council, staff and the public through a variety of methods such as emails, the Township website and the Township Twitter account.

Conclusion:

While this state of emergency for the Township and the Province have been taking place, staff have been adapting to new methods of work to mitigate risk and ensure that services are still being delivered to the residents of our Township.

Systems have been put in place so that residents experience as little disruption as possible to the services they expect. The goal has been to have business as usual along with risk mitigation for staff and the public. Below is a short list of strategies that have been put in place:

- All staff except Public Works and a few administrative staff are currently working from home
- All staff are responding to requests and correspondence via email and phone calls
- The central voicemail system is checked multiple times a day and calls are routed and returned
- Managers have put work plans in place for their staff to ensure that routine operational tasks are being completed along with special projects
- The Service Delivery and Organizational Review project is ongoing, interviews were moved to teleconference and surveys have been sent out to Council and Staff members.
- Additional cleaning at the Municipal Office and the Public Works Depots has been implemented along with physical distancing measures
- All meetings with ratepayers and stakeholders are being held via teleconference and all travel has been cancelled.
- The hiring for summer student positions is on hold and returning part-time staff have been assigned to the Public Works Department

Staff are actively working on re-opening the Transfer Station with enhanced safety protocols such as debit transactions, limited the number of visitors at a time and enhanced traffic protocols.

At this time the work plans for each Department are evolving as new orders are released from the Province. The Emergency Control Group is meeting on a weekly basis, Management Team Meetings have increased in frequency and updates to Staff and Council are happening on a constant basis. Staff are actively involved in County-wide discussions on how to best manage this situation and are working with other municipalities, stakeholders and agencies to find and implement the best solutions and protocols to ensure business continuity takes place.

Recommendation:

That the C.A.O.-2020-13 report, dated April 14, 2020 regarding Municipal Services Update – Covid-19 Pandemic be received for information.

Financial Impact: Unknown at this time.

Strategic Plan Applicability: To ensure and enable an effective and efficient municipal administration.

Sustainability Plan Applicability: N/A