

Town Crier, April 4, 2020

Stratford Town Crier

Public Information, Notices and Meeting Schedules

DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

To reinforce the serious nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential threat it poses to the community, Mayor Dan Mathieson declared a State of Emergency for the City of Stratford ON March 26, 2020.

"This declaration recognizes that the health, safety and welfare of Stratford residents is our top priority," said Mayor Mathieson, "and we want to ensure that we can dedicate all available resources to protecting ourselves against this virus."

The declaration of a State of Emergency is available to municipalities under Ontario's Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, and gives them additional flexibility to respond to an emergency, as well as access to funding if it becomes available. The Act requires that each municipality develop, implement and maintain an emergency management program and plan.

Stratford's emergency declaration was made:

- to help raise public awareness of the urgency of the COVID-19 situation
- to recognize the danger of community transmission of the coronavirus
- in co-operation with our neighbouring municipalities, with whom we share essential and emergency services

The County of Perth, the Townships of Perth South and Perth East and the Municipality of West Perth have also declared a State of Emergency today. The Town of St. Marys made its emergency declaration March 19.

The State of Emergency declaration represents the next step in the City of Stratford's carefully considered response to the COVID-19 outbreak. That response has included the closure of all City buildings and facilities to the public, and the reduction of some municipal services in order to limit the spread of the virus.

The City's Emergency Control Group was activated on Monday, March 16, 2020 and has met regularly by teleconference since that date to keep members informed and updated on local emergency planning.

The City continues to encourage residents to stay informed about COVID-19 and follow the guidance of health professionals, including Huron Perth Public Health (www.hpph.ca), to reduce the risk of infection.

HELP DO LOCAL GOOD SITE LAUNCHED

The City of Stratford has partnered with the United Way Perth-Huron on a "caremongering" initiative to bring those who have been most affected by COVID-19 together with those who are willing to lend a hand.

A new website has been launched at <http://helpdlocalgood.ca/> to provide information on how to help, and how to receive help.

There is a link on the site to donate to an Urgent Needs Fund that has been established to support to individuals and organizations who need assistance coping with the fallout from the COVID-19 outbreak.

The site also has a link to volunteer information for those who are able to contribute their time and energy to helping others in the community. For those who need help, the site provides links to community resources, including the 211 community information line.

And an associated Facebook group called Huron-Perth Covid 19 Resource Group - Help is Close to Home has been set up to provide information and support for people helping people during these challenging times. Those who do not use Facebook but want to help can contact reception@perthhuron.unitedway.ca or call 519-271-7730 to leave a phone number and briefly describe how and where you can help.

COVID-19 UPDATE – INITIATIVES TO ASSIST RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

At the April 1, 2020, Special Council meeting, Council approved the following initiatives to provide for the immediate relief and flexibility of residents and businesses in the City of Stratford:

- Waive penalty and interest related to the April 9th property tax installment due-date and stop all progressive collection activities until August 30, 2020,
- Waive penalties, interest, late payment charges and other fees related to water and sewer billing and suspend all progressive collection activities until August 30, 2020,
- Suspend any water meter disconnections until August 30, 2020,
- Suspend the transfer of overdue water accounts to the property tax account to assist landlords,
- Provide free parking until May 31, 2020 or the commencement of the Festival Theatre season,
- Waive interest on any general invoices from the City until May 31, 2020,
- Suspend the non-sufficient fund administration fee for returned payments until May 31, 2020,
- Provide credits or refunds for cancelled city-run community programs and services,
- Provide free transit until August 30, 2020;

Council also approved continuing with the requirement for paid bag tags for curbside collection. Bag tags can be purchased from any of the following locations:

- East End Variety, 231 Douro Street
- Festival Variety, 555 Downie Street
- Esso, 501 Ontario Street
- Mornington Variety, 231 Mornington Street
- Sobey's, 581 Huron Street
- 7-Eleven, 327 Erie Street
- Video 99 and Convenience, 332 Erie Street
- Zehrs, 865 Ontario Street
- Canadian Tire Gas Bar, 1101 Ontario Street
- Shell Station, 405 Huron Street
- Esso, 1041 Erie Street
- Giant Tiger, 477 Huron Street
- Joe's Variety, 760 Ontario Street
- Stratford Variety, 542 Downie Street
- Stratford Mini Mart/GoCo, 666 Ontario Street
- Ultramar, 269 Erie Street

NOTICE OF DEFERRAL OF PUBLIC MEETING

Z01-20- 677 Erie Street- Planner: Rachel Bossie

Please be advised that the public meeting scheduled to hear all interested persons regarding the Zoning By-law Amendment Z01-20 submitted for 677 Erie Street scheduled for Tuesday April 14, 2020 at 7:00pm in Council Chambers City Hall has been DEFERRED.

In light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, no date has been scheduled for the public meeting at this time. When the public meeting is scheduled notice will be provided.

Further information may be obtained by contacting the Development Services Division at 519-271-0250 ext. 5345 during normal business hours.

CITY FACILITIES – HOW THEY'RE IMPACTED BY COVID-19

As part of our ongoing efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, and in keeping with the Province of Ontario's declaration of a State of Emergency, the City of Stratford has closed its administrative buildings to the public, until further notice. **The City will continue to provide services to the community, including Social Services to our clients in Stratford, Perth County and St. Marys.**

Facilities that are **closed** to the Public:

- City Hall
- City Hall Annex
- Cemetery Office
- Stratford Landfill (remains open for curbside collection contractors and commercial customers only)
- Stratford Municipal Airport Office
- Stratford Fire Hall Offices
- Festival Hydro
- Stratford Tourism Alliance (Visit Stratford)
- Invest Stratford
- Stratford Perth Centre for Business
- Stratford Public Library
- All daycares and camps, including:
 - Anne Hathaway Daycare
 - March Break Daycamps
- All recreation facilities, including:
 - Stratford Rotary Complex (including arenas, walking track, community halls and meeting rooms);
 - Burnside Agriplex;
 - Dufferin Arena;
 - Allman Arena
 - Playgrounds, all-wheels skatepark

Facilities that are **open** to the Public

- Exterior washrooms at City Hall

MEETINGS, PROGRAMS, EVENTS – HOW THEY'RE IMPACTED BY COVID-19

Meetings, programs and events that have been CANCELLED until further notice

- Committee Meetings;
- Sub-committee meetings;
- Committee of the Whole In-camera Sessions;

- Advisory Committee meetings;
- Public meetings, open houses, and public consultations (including Municipal Accommodation Tax);
- Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association (SLAAA) programming;
- Swan Parade (April 5);
- Dairy XPO;
- Invest Stratford International Women's Day event;
- Farmers Market;
- Stratfords of the World Reunion, Ontario (postponed to 2021).

For updates, please visit our website at www.stratford.ca, email clerks@stratford.ca, or call 519-271-0250 during business hours.

RETAIL STORE CLOSINGS DURING EASTER HOLIDAY

Stratford's designated tourism season is May 1 to November 12 each year and does not extend to the Easter Holiday Season.

Shoppers and merchants are reminded that under the Retail Business Holidays Act, both Good Friday – April 10, 2020 and Easter Sunday – April 12, 2020, are among the designated holidays annually when most retail stores must be closed.

Minimum fines for opening businesses on prohibited days of retail operation are \$500 for the first offence, \$2,000 for a second offence and \$5,000 for a third or subsequent offence. Retail outlets may be fined up to \$50,000 or the total amount of gross sales for the holiday, whichever is greater.

Enforcement of the Retail Business Holidays Act in Stratford is the responsibility of Stratford Police Services.

For more information about retail shopping and closures under the Act, call the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services toll-free at 1-844-286-8404. For more information, visit www.ontario.ca/page/retail-business-holidays

GREEN BINS

The City of Stratford's green bin collection is scheduled to begin the **week of April 6th, on your regular garbage day**. This is a weekly collection. Clearly marked compostable plastic bags, paper bags or newspaper can be used as liners.



Telephone: 519-271-0250 www.stratford.ca TTY: 519-271-5241