Date       July 14, 2020       Report No. 2020-307
To        Mayor and Members of City Council
From      Brian Hutchings
          Chief Administrative Officer

1.0 Type of Report

   Consent Item  
   Item For Consideration [X]

2.0 Topic    CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 07.14.20

3.0 Recommendation


   B. THAT a reduction of certain field rental fees for the remainder of 2020 as outlined in Appendix C BE APPROVED; AND

   C. THAT the necessary By-law to amend Schedule 12 of the By-law 210-2019, being a By-law to Fix Fees and Charges to be collected by The Corporation of the City of Brantford for 2020, BE PRESENTED to City Council for adoption.

4.0 Purpose and Overview

Emergency Operations Centre decisions and actions to date;

Decisions that have been made by the Emergency Group as outlined in the COVID-19 Delegation of Authority By-law;

Decisions that are being recommended to Council by the EOC; and

Provincial policy changes that may impact the City of Brantford.

5.0 Background

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared coronavirus (COVID-19) a global pandemic. To prevent the future spread of COVID-19, all levels of government have taken immediate emergency action.

The Emergency Management Planning Committee (EMPC) first met on March 12, 2020 to coordinate the Emergency Management Program. On March 15, 2020, community partners were pulled together to launch the Unified Emergency Operations Centre. On March 17, 2020, the Ontario Government declared a state of emergency under s 7.0.1 (1) the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. The City of Brantford followed with a municipal declaration of a state of emergency on March 19, 2020. On March 20, 2020, the City activated its Emergency Operation Centre (EOC).

Due to the ongoing need for emergency coordination and management, Council passed a resolution on April 16, 2020 that approved an extension of the emergency declaration until the Mayor, in consultation with the EOC, determined that the emergency was over.


The most recent update outlined in Report 2020-282 “CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update” highlighted the City’s reopening plans, and the impact of the Provincial announcement of a regional approach to moving into Stage 2.
6.0 Corporate Policy Context

Emergency Management

7.0 Input From Other Sources

Emergency Operations Centre

Public Works – Parks Services

Facilities Management & Security

Economic Development & Tourism Services

Health and Human Services

8.0 Analysis

On June 24, 2020, the Province of Ontario extended the Declaration of Emergency until July 15th. The provincial emergency declaration allows the government to maintain and adjust emergency orders to project the health and safety of the public during the reopening of the Province. On June 27th, the Province extended the emergency orders to July 10, 2020. Most health regions are now currently in Stage 2 of the provincial reopening plan with the exception of certain areas of the Windsor – Essex region, which include Leamington and Kingsville. This region is a hot-spot for the spread of COVID-19, and continues to be a concern for health authorities. The increase in cases in these areas is largely due to outbreaks at large agri-farms that house many migrant farm workers in congregate living situations.

Due to the relative success the Province has demonstrated in managing the epidemic, the Province announced that entry into Stage 3 of the reopening plan may be a reality for certain communities in the coming weeks. The majority of health regions have been in Stage 2 for over three weeks, and data from public health units shows that the virus remains largely contained. The specifics of what would reopen in Stage 3 remain unclear, but the Provincial Framework states that all workplaces could reopen responsibly and that there could be further relaxing of the restrictions on public gatherings. Large gatherings such as concerts or sporting events would remain prohibited for the foreseeable future. Entering Stage 3 does not have a major impact on the City’s reopening plan. The City will continue to work towards slowly and safely reopening in-person services, amenities and programs.
Nationally, on June 29, the Canadian government released a new epidemiological and modelling update on COVID-19\(^1\). The update provides information on the state of the COVID-19 across Canada, and highlights how the pandemic has impacted some regions more so than others: Quebec, Ontario, and parts of Saskatchewan have been more impacted than the rest of Canada for example. In Ontario, Peel and Windsor-Essex regions were identified as COVID-19 hotspots and remain a concern for health authorities. Localized outbreaks are often due to larger groups of (often vulnerable) individuals living or working in crowded settings such as long-term care homes, correctional facilities, meat processing plants, homeless shelters, or agricultural farms and facilities.

Even in consideration of the local hot spots, the epidemiological data outlined below (Figure 1) indicates that, nationally, there has been a slow but steady decline in cases, and that the epidemic is bring brought under control. Canada has flattened the curve faster than other countries such as Italy, the UK and the United States.

**Figure 1:**

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Despite the successes that Canadians have had in controlling the virus, COVID-19 remains a serious threat and strong public health measures are essential in order to prevent a resurgence of cases. Figure 2 outlined below shows that while Canada moves towards lifting population-based measures such as stay at home requirements and business closure, the likelihood of an epidemiological rebound is highly likely unless other controls are put in place such as personal public health practices, contract tracing, and quick detection and isolation of cases.

Figure 2:

- Dynamic models show lifting population-based measures (e.g., business and school closures, stay-at-home requirements) without strengthening other controls (e.g., personal public health practices, detect and isolate cases, trace and quarantine contacts) will likely cause the epidemic to rebound

As we move towards Stage 3 and the reopening of social spaces and permitting larger gatherings, it becomes more challenging to control the spread, and detect and trace cases. This information reminds Canadians that continuing to practice public health measures such as minimizing number of close contacts, limiting exposure to high risk (crowded, indoor) spaces, wearing masks, maintaining physical distancing, practicing good hygiene, and staying home if you have any symptoms will help to control the spread of the virus. These reminders are critical as Ontario moves towards the reopening of businesses, services and public spaces.

For the full details of the Public Health Agency of Canada’s COVID-19 update report, see appendix A.
8.1 Operational Decisions of the Emergency Operations Actions

As highlighted in Report 2020-282 from June 23, 2020, the EOC is focused on reopening and recovery efforts. As noted in the last report, the Ontario government announced that a number of restrictions would be lifted as part of Stage 2 of the reopening plans for the Province and the City of Brantford responded accordingly.

The EOC approved the reopening of the following additional amenities and services, with public health restrictions and controls in place:

- Farmers Market successfully reopened on June 22nd, and moved to twice weekly service (Fridays & Saturdays) beginning July 3rd
- Skate Park at Brant’s Crossing reopened on June 29th
- Splash pads reopening July 3rd Harmony Square, Bridlepath Park, Mohawk Park (15-person maximum, 15-minute time limit per turn)
- Cricket Pitch at Rotary Centennial Waterworks Park reopened on July 3rd
- The Woodman Park Pool will reopen on July 10
- Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre Pools (select) will reopen on July 13

With regard to municipal pools, there will be a reduced pool capacity and online or phone reservations will be required. Swimmers will register for 45 minutes of swim time, and there will be cleaning and disinfecting in between sessions. The number of swimmers will be restricted to 10 individuals or 5 families per session at Woodman and 16 swimmers spread over 8 lanes at WGSC. Once safety guidelines are observed to be adhered to, the number will increase to 24 swimmers spread over 8 lanes.

Municipal administrative services also continue to be available to residents; most services still remain largely available online, over the phone, and some select services are reopened for in person appointments.

- City Hall is open for Marriage licenses by appointment, and will soon be open for additional licensing services.
- There will be two wedding ceremonies held in July at City Hall, with physical distancing and public health protocols in place. Staff are
identifying additional possible locations to hold wedding ceremonies in future.

- The childcare centre at TB Costain reopened on June 29th
- The Provincial Offenses Court reopened for ticket payments only (not courts) on July 6th
- The Tourism Centre reopened for visitors on July 6th (no blue box pick up)
- The Business Resource Centre reopened by appointment only on July 6th
- The main library reopened for appointments on July 8th for computer access only

Other EOC decisions and updates have centered around preventative and contact tracing measures. COVID-19 tests were conducted at the shelters locally, with no positive cases, and long term facilities will continue to perform retesting to ensure cases remain controlled. Face coverings and masks continue to be a point of discussion at the EOC. At this time, the City of Brantford encourages the public to wear masks in public spaces, in particular, where it is difficult to maintain physical distancing. Staff will be required to wear masks when they cannot practice physical distancing, and other staff may wear face coverings if desired.

All other decisions and actions taken by the EOC are recorded and outlined in Appendix B: Emergency Management and Operation Centre COVID-19 Response and Actions.

Also, as noted in Report 2020-282, in order to respond to the heat events of late June, the EOC advisory directed staff to set up temporary cooling shelters at the Doug Snooks Eagle Place Community Centre. Cooling centres were opened to the public for 4 days as a precautionary measure to ensure residents without access to air conditioned spaces or pools were able to seek a comfortable area to cool down. One guest visited the centre during that time. Since late June, the City has been able to reopen splash pads and pools which are more popular cooling strategies for residents to enjoy.

In early April, as the pandemic began to spread across Ontario and more restrictive public health measures were encouraged, City Council approved a temporary by-law to allow for the temporary use of travel trailers and motor homes in the front yard of residential properties for use by essential service workers or people who have to quarantine for COVID-19 related purposes. The City established a registry for this purpose, and required that individuals using a
recreation vehicle (RV) register their vehicle with the City within 7 days from the start of the use of the motor home or travel trailer for the purposes of self-isolating or quarantine during the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. To date, two recreation vehicles have been registered with the City and have been inspected by the City’s by-law department. The RV registry will be available to residents until the declared state of emergency is determined to be over.

8.2 Emergency Group Decisions

No decisions were made by the Emergency Group by way of the Delegation of Authority By-law.

In future, Council will be informed of decisions made by the Emergency Group by way of resolution. Additionally, the CAO will continue to report on these decisions in regular, on-going reports to Council.

8.3 Decisions before Council

As noted above, the City is beginning to reopen sports field, facilities and amenities to residents, and sporting associations. Due to COVID-19, local sports associations have faced financial pressures with limited ability to offer services and programs, and even with reopening plans now in place, registration must be limited to ensure that physical distancing and other public health measures are maintained. In the spirit of community and collaboration, staff are recommending that a select number of sports field rental fees be reduced slightly to support local sports associations and participants at this time. The proposed changes to the rates and fees can be found in Appendix C: By-law 210-2019 2020 Rates Fees - Proposed COVID-19 Sports Field Changes for Council’s consideration.

8.4 Provincial Policy Impacts

8.4.1 Provincial and Federal Funding

As noted in Report 2020-282, the Province announced Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) would be making $30 million in funding available to destination marketing organizations to promote local tourism. Tourism Brantford is the destination marketing organization (DMO) for this region. Economic Development and Tourism Department staff submitted
an application to TIAO on June 12, 2020. City staff were notified that they were successful in the pursuit of funding from the Regional Relief Recovery Fund, and were awarded a grant of $178,434.50. The funds will be used to create a marketing campaign to encourage visitor activity in Brantford, and promote local businesses, restaurants, activities and natural assets.

The Sanderson Centre was also approved for a COVID-19 Emergency Support Fund payout from the Canada Council for the Arts in the amount of $17,500.

Additionally, the Health and Human Services department will receive the second payment from the Social Assistance Relief Fund in the amount of $130,000. The City has will allocate an additional $100,000 to the Brantford Food Bank to lead the city’s emergency food security response and $30,000 to the Salvation Army to support food security efforts in the County of Brant. The Brantford Food Bank will continue to work with other meal providers to ensure that individuals have access to grocery or meal programs throughout the city. With the COVID-19–related employment or emergency support benefits beginning to wind down, these agencies are projecting increased demand for food supports in Fall 2020. This second allocation from the City, in addition to other resources that can be procured from donations and grant applications, will help position these food agencies to meet the expected demand.

9.0 Financial Implications

There may be a financial impact associated with the reduction in sports field rental fees and rates. If approved, staff will report back on the implications of the fee reductions after the 2020 season. The financial implications associated with COVID-19 continue to be monitored and tracked by staff, and will be reported on by the City’s Finance department.

10.0 Conclusion

The COVID-19 situation across Canada remains largely controlled, and the City of Brantford has been fortunate to have experienced relatively low-levels of cases. As new epidemiological forecasts and model demonstrate, strong public health measures such as physical distancing, good hygiene, limiting the number of individuals that are exposed to each other and rapid detection and tracing will allow us to continue to prevent potential future rebounds. These restrictions are increasingly important as Provinces and Territories move towards reopening.
The City will need to remain vigilant and cautious as we continue to reopen municipal services in order to protect the health and safety of Brantford residents.

Brian Hutchings  
Chief Administrative Officer

Inderjit Hans  
General Manager, Public Works

Attachments (if applicable)


Appendix B: Emergency Management and Operation Centre COVID-19 Response and Actions Updated July 3, 2020


In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required [ ] yes [X] no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk [ ] yes [X] no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? [ ] yes [X] no