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**Date** December 15, 2020 **Report No.** 2020-585

**To** Mayor and Members of City Council

**From** Brian Hutchings  
Chief Administrative Officer

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## 1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item ☐  
Item For Consideration ☒

## 2.0 Topic **CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 12.15.20 [Financial Impact: \$26,944 reduction in Business Licensing revenue]**

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## 3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2020-585 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 12.15.20 BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to:
  - i. Cancel events held by or on behalf of the City of Brantford until January 26, 2021; and
  - ii. Not permit the use or rental of City of Brantford property for special event purposes until January 26, 2021; and
  - iii. review event cancellations on a monthly basis ongoing and provide updates to Council with the CAO COVID-19 update reports; and
- C. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to temporarily extend the 2020 renewal status of licence applicants, as defined in Chapters 326 (Business), 327 (Taxi Driver) and 329 (Adult Entertainer) of the City of Brantford

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Municipal Code, on account of various impacts to the licence renewal program in response to the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic to March 31 2022; and

- D. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to process renewals fees for all valid “Food Premises” Business Licence holders in eating establishment categories 1 (seating for 1-30 people), 2 (seating for 31-150 people), and 3 (seating for more than 150 people) as a “Food Shop” Business Licence fee for 2021 licensing year in recognition of adjustments to capacity at locations due to the COVID-19 Pandemic operations.

#### **4.0 Purpose and Overview**

Report 2020-585 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 12.15.20 responds to recommendations outlined in Report 2020-219 COVID-19 EOC Actions and Operational Impacts to bring back ongoing updates to Council detailing the COVID-19 emergency. This report outlines:

- 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.

Several emergency actions have been passed by the EOC and by Council since the declaration of the COVID-19 Emergency. Those actions and decisions are detailed in the following reports:

- Report 2020-216 COVID-19 EOC Actions and Operational Impacts
- Report 2020-234 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 04.28.20
- Report 2020-237 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 05.12.20
- Report 2020-247 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 05.26.20
- Report 2020-273 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 06.09.20
- Report 2020-282 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 06.23.20
- Report 2020-307 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 07.14.20
- Report 2020-337 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 08.04.20
- Report 2020-370 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 08.25.20
- Report 2020-403 CAO COVID-19 Emergency update 09.08.20
- Report 2020-419 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 09.22.20
- Report 2020-447 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 10.13.20
- Report 2020-483 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 10.27.20
- Report 2020-520 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 11.10.20
- Report 2020-546 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 11.24.20

## **6.0 Corporate Policy Context**

Emergency Management

## **7.0 Input From Other Sources**

Emergency Operations Centre

City of Brantford – Clerk's Services

City of Brantford – Public Works

## **8.0 Analysis**

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In recent weeks, COVID-19 cases have remained high in Ontario and as of December 8, Ontario reported 1,676 active cases, a weekly increase of 12.7% with 794 currently hospitalized cases. In total, Ontario has had 130,910 cases, 110,951 resolved cases, and 3,808 deaths.

Locally, as of December 8, the Brant County Health Unit advised that there has been a total of 561 confirmed cases, 508 resolved cases, 48 active cases, and 5 deaths, with 48,382 covid-19 tests administered. There have been recent outbreaks at Community Living Brant, Penmarvian Retirement Home, and Peace Haven, and there remains an outbreak at Brierwood Gardens Long-Term Care Home. As of December 3, the Brucefield Manor Retirement Home outbreak was declared over.

## **8.1 Operational Decisions of the Emergency Operations Centre**

The EOC has continued to meet regularly to review the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as conducting additional meetings to review and plan accordingly to the provincial response framework. Areas of focus include operations, health and safety, enforcement and communications needs.

Most recently, the EOC approved the following actions:

- Enhanced check-in and tracing processes to be implemented at recreation facilities (ice/pools) to ensure that new team registrations/ rentals from regions in the 'Red-Restrict' or 'Lockdown' zones will not be permitted.
- Woodman Community Centre, Lions Park Arena, Beckett Adult Leisure Centre, and Northridge Golf Course Clubhouse have been identified as possible locations for Public Health's review and consideration as they explore appropriate centres for vaccinations.
- Communications will be sent through the Neighbours Helping Neighbours website to encourage residents to support neighbours who may be in need of help with shoveling snow from driveways and walkways.

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

## **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**

### **8.3.1 Temporarily Cancelling Events**

In April 2020, Council directed staff to cancel special events held by or on behalf of the City of Brantford (Report No. 2020- 234 CAO COVID -19 Emergency Update 04/28/20):

A. THAT Report 2020-234 CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 04/28/20 BE RECEIVED, and

B. THAT Staff BE DIRECTED to:

- i. cancel events held by or on behalf of the City of Brantford, as further defined in Report 2020-234, "CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 04/28/20", until August 31, 2020; and
- ii. not permit the use or rental of City of Brantford property for event purposes until August 31, 2020, as further set out in Report 2020-234, "CAO COVID-19 Emergency Update 04/28/20".

As part of the Stage 3 of the Province's reopening plan, City events that adhered to public health measures were permitted to resume, including special events effective September 1, 2020.

With the impact of a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the fall and with the implementation of the Province's Response Framework where Brant regions remains in the 'Orange-Restrict' level, the EOC recommends that all special events be cancelled and that use and rental of City of Brantford property for special events not be permitted until January 26 2021; at which time a CAO COVID-19 update report will be brought to Council and an extension to special event cancellations can by further reviewed and considered.

Special events are described as an annual or infrequent event that occurs on City property, or within the City boundaries, for a specific period of time and represents a community celebration, fund raising initiative, cultural display, parade, musical performance or general gathering of interest at which a volume of people, traffic, or pedestrian traffic could impact the City.

The EOC has determined that the Glenhurst Lights will remain open with the necessary restrictions and protocols in place, however the New Years Eve Event at Harmony Square will be cancelled. The EOC recommends that special event cancellations be reviewed on a monthly basis and updated to Council with the monthly CAO COVID-19 update reports.

### **8.3.2 COVID-19 Business Licensing Implications**

On May 26, 2020 City Council approved for business licence-holders in good standing to be granted extended renewal status into 2021, meaning a business that was required to renew the licence, could do so up to March 31, 2021 without penalty. This relief allowed businesses who had ceased operating on account of the pandemic the flexibility to renew later in the 2020 licensing year once they were able to safely resume operations, and the requirement to obtain a licence before operating was upheld. Staff are requesting City Council to consider the same approach to renewal status across all Schedules in Chapters 326, 327, and 329 of the Municipal Code for the 2021 business licensing year (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022).

Providing businesses with the extended renewal status allowed access the renewal licensing fee which is consistently lower than the new licensing fee, across various business licensing schedules. Extending the renewal status also reduced the pressure on the City's licensing partners that take part in the review of licensing applications and conduct inspections at various businesses.

With the pandemic expected to continue into the 2021 licensing year (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022), Staff are proposing additional flexibility pursuant to business licensing for Council's consideration. Currently, Chapter 326 of the Municipal Code provides for business licensing of food premises in 3 sub-

categories of eating establishments based on seating capacity: 1 (seating for 1-30 people), 2 (seating for 31-150 people), and 3 (seating for more than 150 people). The introduction of various provincial regulations has shifted capacity requirements as part of managing the pandemic. As a result of the regulations remaining somewhat fluid through the response, Staff are recommending the Food Premises Business Licence-holders, be considered for a Food Shop Business Licence temporarily for the term of the upcoming licensing year as it relates to their fee calculation. Typically, Food Shop Business Licences are acquired by operators with take-out style service only and realize a lower fee than a Food Premises Business Licence. Applying the Food Shop licence-type to a Food Premises category on a temporary basis would still provide a level of integrity with respect to the safety of the food premises, but would not require the business to pay a higher rate for a licence category based on the capacity of their premises that may change throughout the pandemic response.

If approved, Staff anticipate approximately 400 businesses transitioning from an Eating Establishment seating capacity licensee to a Food Shop Licence for renewal in the 2021 licensing year, resulting in an estimated \$26,944 reduction in revenue.

## **8.4 Provincial Policy Impacts**

### **8.4.1 COVID-19 Response Framework**

As outlined in Report 2020-520 COVID-19 Emergency Update 11.10.20, the Province announced it was moving to a tiered, colour-coded response framework, to determine public health measures and restrictions for public health regions. The Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework is intended to be more targeted and responsive in limiting the spread of COVID-19.

On November 16, it was announced that the Brant Region would move from 'Yellow-Protect' to the 'Orange-Restrict' category with enhanced measures, restrictions and enforcement to slow the spread of COVID-19. This change reflects changes in the framework metrics, including: weekly incidence rate, % positivity,

and increasing incidence of COVID-19 positive cases in the region.

On November 27, the Province announced that various public health regions would be moving in framework levels including: Windsor-Essex County Health Unit to 'Red-Control', Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit to 'Orange-Restrict', and Hastings Prince Edward Public Health, Lambton Public Health, and Northwestern Health Unit to 'Yellow-Protect'. On December 4th, the Province announced that additional public health regions would be moving framework levels, including: Middlesex-London Health Unit and Thunder Bay District Health Unit to 'Orange-Restrict', and Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit to 'Yellow-Protect'. All other public health regions remain at their current level including Brant Region which remains in the 'Orange Restrict' level.

#### **8.4.2 Rapid Testing**

On November 24, the Province announced their deployment of COVID-19 rapid tests to manage outbreaks and provide more efficient testing in high transmission and rural and remote regions, and will be used to screen staff in hospitals, long-term care homes and select workplaces.

#### **8.4.3 Support for families**

On November 30, the Province announced additional financial relief for families facing new education-related expenses. The Support for Learners program will provide direct one-time payments to help offset additional learning costs, and parents or guardians can complete applications online through the Support for Learners web page until January 15, 2021. Funds can assist with additional education expenses during COVID-19, such as workbooks, school supplies, technology and developmental resources. The funding can also assist with additional childcare costs, whether the child is in child care or at home.

#### **8.4.4 High Intensity Supports, Virtual Care, and Paramedicine**



On December 2, the Province announced that they will be investing more than \$115 million to support 850 patients across the province with high, complex care needs access services in their own homes, while also expanding virtual care options for patients across the province. The new High Intensity Supports at Home program helps patients with high care needs transition from a hospital back to their home or community setting with integrated, team-based care wrap-around care from multiple types of services.

This followed an announcement on November 27, that outlined the Province's commitment to expanding eligible and existing Community Paramedicine programs to assist seniors on long-term care waitlists with access to care from their home.

#### **8.4.5 COVID-19 Vaccination Roll-Out**

On December 4, the Province announced the appointment of nine members to the new Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force, chaired by General (retired) Rick Hillier, former Chief of Defence Staff for the Canadian Forces, which will oversee the delivery, storage and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

On December 7 the Province further announced that when the vaccination is ready for distribution, the key distribution groups will include:

- Residents, staff, essential caregivers, and other employees of congregate living settings (e.g., long-term care homes and retirement homes) that provide care for seniors as they are at higher risk of infection and serious illness from COVID-19;
- Health care workers, including hospital employees, other staff who work or study in hospitals, and other health care personnel;
- Adults in Indigenous communities, including remote communities where risk of transmission is high; and
- Adult recipients of chronic home health care.

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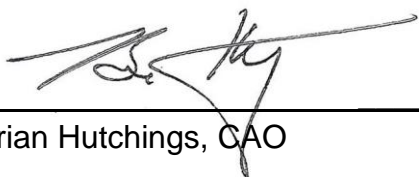
## 9.0 Financial Implications

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.

The adjustment to the fee allocations for the Food Premises, in order to recognize the seating capacity changes experienced by Eating Establishments would result in approximately \$26,944 reduction in revenue for the 2021 licensing year.

## 10.0 Conclusion

The City of Brantford currently remains in the 'Orange-Ristrict' zone within the Province's Response Framework. The EOC is committed to taking steps necessary to mitigate risk and ensure the health and safety of its residents and continuing to follow the recommendations and advice of local and provincial public health authorities. This report outlines items for Council's consideration including a recommendation for Council to approve the cancellations of special events until January 26, 2021 with a monthly review of event cancellations ongoing, and; that Council consider temporarily extending the 2020 renewal status of licence applicants, and process renewals fees for all valid "Food Premises" Business Licence holders in eating establishment categories 1,2, and 3 as a "Food Shop" Business Licence fee for 2021 licensing year.



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Brian Hutchings, CAO

### Attachments:

Appendix A: Emergency Management and Operation Centre COVID-19 Response and Actions

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 ☒ no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk ☐ yes ☒ no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? ☐ yes ☒ no