

For Immediate Release April 16, 2020

Council Connect: Highlights from the April 16, 2020 Special Meeting of Council

Tecumseh Town Council met electronically today to discuss Emergency Flood Mitigation Measures and Amendments to the Town of Tecumseh's Flood Response Plan.

The purpose of the meeting was to consider amendments to the Town's Flood Response Plan that will permit emergency works on private properties to install permanent berms in low-lying areas with the objective of preventing inland flooding or at least mitigating the extent of flooding. As the works were not contemplated in the 2020 budget, Council was also requested to approve \$500,000 to complete these works. Additionally, a new Emergency Order was required to enable these works as a flood prevention measure under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

As part of the meeting, Council received the report "Amendments to the Town of Tecumseh Flood Response Plan"; approved a by-law to adopt the revised Emergency Response Plan including the amended Flood Response Plan; and, approved \$500,000 from the Infrastructure Reserve for the implementation of flood mitigation defenses on identified properties that pose a significant risk for further inland flooding and authorized their completion.

Background

2019 Flood Mitigation Works: at the July 9, 2019 Regular Meeting of Council, Council adopted the Town of Tecumseh Flood Response Plan as part of the Town of Tecumseh Emergency Response Plan. As part of that plan, Public Works and Engineering Services (PWES) conducted Lidar mapping of the northern portion of Town from Lake St. Clair to Essex County Road 22. The mapping outlined the extent of inland flooding with potential to affect more than 5,500 households and identified several key low-lying areas along the shoreline that would act as conduits for inland flooding. PWES identified nine areas of concern along the shoreline and provided filled sandbags to property owners in these areas to help mitigate inland flooding. Property owners along the Lake St. Clair and Pike Creek Shorelines were provided with 100 free sandbags with free sand in Lakewood Park.

In early March 2020, the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) advised Tecumseh and Lakeshore that Lake St. Clair was sitting 33 cm over the April 2019 levels and would not peak until June/July of this year. An update on the Flood Response Plan was provided to Council at the March 24, 2020 Regular Meeting of Council which resulted in the further provision of an additional 100 bags (200 for those owners that did not collect the 2019 allotment) to shoreline properties for protection.

COVID-19 and Self-Evacuation: the Town's Flood Response Plan identified a temporary shelter/reception centre should inland flooding dictate self-evacuation. On March 17, 2020, the Province of Ontario announced a State of Emergency and ordered the closure of a number of public facilities to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. On March 28, 2020, the Province made an additional order prohibiting social gatherings of more than five people. Additionally, it has been the consistent advice of all levels of government for people to stay home as much as possible to avoid exposure to COVID-19. Finally, the Town was recently advised by the Windsor-Essex

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Community and Health Services to avoid setting up a centre during the pandemic and the Red Cross confirmed that it would not be able to assist with establishing and running a centre, other than virtually. As a result, the Town is not able to use the previously planned Temporary Emergency Shelter/Reception Centre. This situation caused Administration to consider additional works to protect the shoreline and reduce the extent of inland flooding so as to minimize the extent of any evacuation.

Emergency Flood Mitigation Measures: The Public Works & Environmental Services Department identified eight locations comprised of 16 waterfront properties where the Town will install clay berms along with site grading and restoration in these low-lying areas which will serve as a semi-permanent/permanent flood mitigation measure. These properties currently act as conduits for inland flooding south of Riverside Drive. The work will also include pump repair at St. Mark's pump station to ensure it remains functional during the spring flooding season.

Declared Emergency: the Mayor declared an emergency on March 22, 2020 related to both the COVID-19 pandemic and anticipated flood emergency. Following today's meeting, the Mayor signed an additional order under the declared emergency to enable crews to enter onto private property to install these flood mitigation measures.

Waterfront Standards By-Law: Administration, with the assistance of the Town Solicitor, will draft a by-law for future consideration that imposes standards of general application on waterfront property owners in relation to flood control. This by-law will include recommendations resulting from the Shoreline Study currently underway. Under the by-law, property owners will be required to implement recommendations of the shoreline study at their own expense within a reasonable time. Should remedial action be required for those property owners not in compliance, the Town will be permitted to enter the property to complete the works with recovery of costs from the owner. Public input and consultation will be held on this by-law for consideration from Council at a later date.

Immediate Next Steps: The Town will be notifying those affected properties of the order under the declared emergency, as well as retain a contractor to undertake the works which would begin as early as Monday April 20, 2020.

The next Regular Meeting of Council is Tuesday, April 28, 2020 and will be held electronically. The live stream will be available on our website at www.tecumseh.ca. The agenda for the Regular meeting will be made available on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

Information on this and all Town of Tecumseh news and events is available at www.tecumseh.ca, Twitter (@TownofTecumseh), and Facebook (www.facebook.com/townoftecumseh).

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