



---

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Jennifer Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** May 11, 2020

**RE:** **Town Office Re-Opening**

---

**ISSUE:**

Municipalities need to make the decisions about what is best for their citizens and staff as the province moves through the phases outlined in the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan. Council needs to decide whether they will open or keep the municipal office closed.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, Council resolved that the Town Office be closed to the public effective immediately and until further notice. At the May 4, 2020 Council meeting, Administration provided an update on a tentative office re-opening date of May 20.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

- 1) Open May 20, 2020 by appointment only and review again June 16.
- 2) Open May 21, 2020 from 9am-12pm Tuesdays and Thursday and review again June 16.
- 3) Open May 20, 2020 from 9am-4pm Monday to Friday.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications.

**ANALYSIS:**

When making this decision, Council needs to take into consideration the safety of citizens and as an employer, the safety of staff. Municipalities, no matter what their decisions are, need to continue to provide the following government and community services:

- All water/wastewater utilities; and
- Resources deemed essential by the municipality (i.e. administration, public workers, etc.).

When opening to the public, the Town office must adhere to the following provincial government guidelines:

- Two-metre distancing between individuals should be maintained.
  - Besides customers, business-related visitors should be limited to essential services only.
  - Encourage customers to use credit or debit cards for payment.
  - Conduct business remotely (e.g. conference calls, video conferences, email), whenever possible.
  - Limit the exchange of papers (e.g. signing contracts). If documents must be exchanged, leave them on a clean surface while maintaining a two-metre distance.
  - Avoid sharing pens and office equipment. Disinfect after each use.
-

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection.

Tax notices will be sent out on May 25 and utility bills will go out mid-June, creating the busiest time of the year for customer visits to the Town office in June and July.

Administration have begun preparations for the opening of the office. A plexiglass sneeze guard and hand sanitizer dispenser has been ordered for the front counter. A secure drop box to be mounted to the exterior of the building to accommodate payment or paperwork drop off has also been ordered.

Services are being provided to residents over the phone, applications are being sent in electronically and payments are being made online, over the phone or through the mail. In most cases, there is no need for residents to visit the office in person with the variety of options available; however:

- 1) Opening by appointment only would continue to encourage residents to utilize alternate payment and application submission methods while still accommodating those needing in person services. This option enables staff to spend more time on day-to-day tasks than on cleaning and disinfection between customers. This option could be revisited at the June 16 Council meeting.
- 2) Opening two mornings a week would accommodate residents while limiting the hours to continuing to encourage alternate payment and application submission methods. This option enables staff to spend more time on day-to-day tasks than on cleaning and disinfection between customers. This option would be revisited at the June 16 Council meeting.
- 3) Resuming Monday to Friday hours beginning at 9am rather than 8am, provides full access to residents but additional staff time throughout the day dedicated to cleaning and disinfection. This option also provides the most exposure to staff members.

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Administration recommends either alternative 1 or 2.

“THAT the Town Office reopen to the public by appointment only.”