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## Report 2024-042

**Report Title:** Emergency Management Evacuation Shelter Services

**Prepared by:** Lisa Ainsworth  
Director Corporate Services  
Corporate Services  
  
Colleen McCabe  
Health Safety Emergency Risk Manager  
Corporate Services

**Approved by:** Jennifer Moore, CAO

**Council Meeting Date:** March 6, 2024

**Report Not Considered by**

**Standing Committee Because:**

- Time-sensitive Issue (information received too late for Committee consideration)
- Urgent Matter (issue arose after this month's Committee meeting)
- Other

**Strategic Plan Priorities:**  Innovate for Service Excellence  
 Ignite Economic Opportunity  
 Foster a Thriving Community  
 Propel Sustainable Growth  
 Champion a Vibrant Future

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### Recommendation

**“Whereas** Northumberland County's emergency management team is actively preparing for the April 8, 2024 solar eclipse event by coordinating with local agencies, law enforcement, and emergency responders to ensure readiness for any potential impacts; and

**Whereas** at the February 28, 2024 Town of Cobourg Council meeting, it was noted that the Town of Cobourg's Emergency Care Establishment Licensing By-law shall come into force and take effect as of March 28, 2024 unless an agreement deemed satisfactory to the Town is implemented with the County and Transition House by that date pertaining to 310 Division Street; and

**Whereas** notwithstanding the outcome of negotiations between the County and the Town of Cobourg regarding an Emergency Shelter Agreement, maintaining current Emergency Management Evacuation Shelters is of critical importance;

**Now Therefore Be It Resolved That** County Council having considered Report 2024-042 'Emergency Management Evacuation Shelter Services', direct staff to request that the Town of Cobourg amend the By-law 'to Licence, Regulate and Govern Emergency Care Establishments in the Town of Cobourg', to exempt Emergency Reception Centres and Evacuation Shelters."

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council direction to request that the Town of Cobourg make the necessary changes to their By-Law number 000-2024, being a By-Law to 'License, Regulate and Govern Emergency Care Establishment in the Town of Cobourg' to exempt Emergency Reception Centres and Evacuation Shelters from the licensing requirements.

## **Background**

At its February 28<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, the Town of Cobourg approved a By-Law governing the establishment of emergency care shelters in the Town of Cobourg, that shall come into force and take effect as of March 28, 2024.

The By-Law stated that "No person shall operate, advertise, broker or permit the operation, advertising or brokering of an Emergency Care Establishment in the town without a valid E.C.E. license." Further the By-Law states that "Emergency Care Establishment or E.C.E means an institutional use that provides means of immediate, temporary accommodation and assistance for a short term period, generally less than one week for the majority of the residents."

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act ("the Act"), Chapter E.9 R.S.O 1900 provides for the formulation and implementation of emergency plans by the County with the approval from constituent municipalities.

The Act enables the Council of a municipality to enter into an Agreement with the Council of any other municipality for the provision of any personnel, service, equipment or materials during an emergency.

The County has an Emergency Management Program designed to provide staff with guidelines to effectively manage the four distinct phases of the program, e.g. mitigation of hazards, preparing for an emergency, responding to an emergency and recovery of an emergency. The County is responsible for the reception and care of evacuees including the provision of emergency clothing, feeding, lodging, registration and inquiry, and personal services. The County entered into mutual assistance and shelter agreements with its member municipalities and Alderville First Nation.

Emergency evacuation centers/shelters provide temporary relief to individuals and families. Services include at a minimum food, short term lodging, clothing etc.

Over the span of decades, the Town of Cobourg has authorized the County's participation in the planning and response activities necessary during an emergency. Together with all 7 member municipalities, the Town of Cobourg agreed that Northumberland County will deliver Emergency

Social Services to a municipality requesting assistance. The Town of Cobourg's By-Law Number 094-2009 is a By-law to authorize execution of an emergency social service support agreement with the County of Northumberland.

The County currently has an agreement for the emergency use of the Cobourg Community Centre (CCC) located at 750 D'Arcy Street. The Agreement establishes the framework through which the County will have access to the CCC under emergency conditions. In the event of an emergency, the location is used as a community focal point for registration and inquiry of evacuees and/or for the purpose of accommodation of a duration ending the conditions of the emergency.

The County also has an Agreement with the Lion's Community Centre at 175 Elgin Street in Cobourg, to utilize as an emergency evacuation centre for the residents of the Golden Plough Lodge for the purposes of accommodation of a duration pending the conditions of the associated emergency or pending emergency.

Notification requirements during an emergency are outlined in the Agreement with Cobourg (attached). Response times for establishing an emergency evacuation shelter during an emergency are immediate and do not afford the luxury of time to apply to the Town for a shelter license, and meet the conditions specified in the Town's By-Law.

### **Consultations**

The County's Health Safety Emergency Risk Manager, together with the Emergency Management Coordinators at each municipality have secured agreements for emergency evacuation shelters at each municipality.

County staff were not consulted on the impacts to the emergency evacuation sheltering system.

### **Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations**

The Town of Cobourg's By-Law restricts the County's ability to respond to an emergency and provide Emergency Social Services support, evacuation shelter, in the event of an emergency as defined by the Province of Ontario in the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act as well as the County's ability to evacuate residents of the Golden Plough Lodge in the event of an emergency or pending emergency.

### **Discussion / Options**

It is recommended that the Town of Cobourg exempt Emergency Reception Centres and Evacuation Shelters from the By-Law.

### **Financial Impact**

N/A

### **Member Municipality Impacts**

The absence of an Emergency Social Services support agreement for an emergency reception centre and evacuation shelter in the event of an emergency is detrimental to the Town of Cobourg, its residents, residents of member municipalities and the residents of the Golden Plough Lodge.

## **Conclusion / Outcomes**

Staff recommend that County Council direct staff to request that the Town of Cobourg amend their By-Law to exempt Emergency Receptions Centres and Evacuation Shelters from the licensing requirements.

## **Attachments**

1. Town of Cobourg By-law 094-2009 'A By-law to Authorize Execution of an Emergency Social Service Support Agreement with the County of Northumberland'
2. Town of Cobourg Correspondence regarding Mutual Support Agreements and By-law 093-2009 'A By-law to Authorize Execution of a Mutual Support Agreement with the County of Northumberland'
3. By-Law 57-09 'A By-law to Enter into Emergency Social Services Support Agreements Between the County of Northumberland and the Seven Member Municipalities and Alderville First Nation'
4. County of Northumberland Agreement for the Emergency use of the Cobourg Community Centre