



Message from the Mayor
Mayor Allan Mayhew
Municipality of Southwest Middlesex

May 5, 2020

The gradual reopening of selected businesses and services in our communities is part of the Province's phased approach of economic recovery. This initial step would not be possible without the co-operation of all citizens in following public health direction and advice. I want to thank all SWM residents, service providers, and businesses who are helping to flatten the curve of the COVID-19 outbreak. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the SWM staff, contractors, and my fellow members of council, who have continued their work to deliver public services.

Part of what has allowed the municipality to continue to deliver essential services for the public are municipal and departmental plans that are in place in the event of emergencies.

May 3-9, 2020 is Emergency Preparedness Week, an annual event that encourages all Canadians to be prepared during emergencies. While we are currently in an emergency situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, other emergency situations can happen at any time. We saw this with the flooding in Fort McMurray this past week. We all need to be prepared, by making a plan, having necessities in place, and keeping informed. I encourage you to make sure you know the risks, make a plan, and have a 72-hour kit, to help you during an emergency. Information on Emergency Preparedness can be found [here](#).



The municipal Emergency Plan is overseen by an Emergency Control Group, made up of representatives from council, staff, and partner agencies. The municipal Emergency Plan is updated and practiced throughout the year. During the COVID-19 pandemic the Emergency Control Group is meeting regularly to discuss issues and share information.

It is still not business as usual; it is business as necessary. In many ways, we are relying on information technology resources to keep services running. Council continues to meet using electronic participation tools. Staff use web-based applications for directing work in the field, allowing staff and contractors to safely undertake necessary tasks. Municipal office staff are working remotely and in limited numbers in the office. Information is being posted on our website and on social media, and staff continue to receive and respond to telephone messages.

When the office re-opens the office to the public, we will be moving to a 'new normal'. Maintaining physical distancing will be in place throughout the phased reopening of the economy, and we will continue to keep you informed as we progress through changes. Limiting physical interactions will continue, and some of the new practices that are currently in place will carry forward. Online banking and pre-authorized payment plans are established for any payments to the municipality. Mailing or dropping cheques off in the drop box at 153 McKellar Street in Glencoe are also options for accepting payments.

We have all witnessed physical changes in the coffee shops, grocery stores and pharmacies that we patronize. Protective barriers that limit the transmission of the virus, have become a new normal. These too will be evident in the Southwest Middlesex facilities as we work to support the health and safety of both citizens and staff. We are all looking forward to the resumption of routine interaction, but that may be some time from now. Patience and a willingness to adjust will be required.

Our website is being kept up to date with a list of available municipal services on a page dedicated to COVID-19 information. The page includes links to the Middlesex-London Health Unit, emergency financial support from other levels of government, and emergency food support. Please find it [here](#).

Though we are distancing from each other, it will be our efforts together as a community that will get us through these unprecedented times.

Together we can all do our part. Thanks for all you are doing.

Keep healthy and stay safe.

Allan