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**Township of West Lincoln**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release: August 12, 2020**

**Update # 25 - West Lincoln Response to COVID-19 – Township Re-Opens By Appointment Only Commencing August 17, 2020**

**West Lincoln, Ont. – August 12, 2020**

The Township of West Lincoln is pleased to announce that commencing Monday, August 17th, the Township will be offering access to select services by appointment only at the Township Municipal Office, Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:30 pm. In anticipation of reopening, the municipality has been putting plans in place to welcome the public safely back into Township facilities. The Township's phone line continues to be answered from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, and we encourage customers to conduct their business with the Township via telephone or email or by downloading forms online. We ask that those who have scheduled appointments to be patient, follow posted instructions, wear a face covering and undertake passive screening when entering the Township Office.

As part of the State of Emergency the Township Municipal Office has been closed to the public. However, services have continued to be delivered to its residents, in many cases using on-line options. This is still encouraged; however we are pleased that in-person delivery will once again be available.

Residents and businesses will have access to the following services in person, by appointment only, during normal business hours:

- Building permit applications, inspections, and by-law complaints
- Lottery licences
- Commissioning of documents and affidavits
- Zoning inquiries
- Sign By-law, Fence Bylaw & Site Alteration applications
- Policy Planning inquiries
- Development applications
- Consent and Minor Variance applications
- Community Improvement Plans and incentives
- Recycling Bins for new homeowners who qualify
- Water test bottles available for pickup

Residents who wish to make water, tax or any other payment are encouraged to sign up for preauthorized payments, utilize the drop box (no cash), on-line banking or credit cards (through our website). Any payments that arise in relation to appointments will be processed in conjunction with the appointment.

Individuals who have made an appointment to access services in person will see enhanced health and safety precautions, including glass barriers at customer service counters, floor markings to support physical distancing requirements of 2 metres, hand hygiene stations, enhanced cleaning, and signage reminders to help with traffic flow and to control occupancy.

At the Township Municipal Office main entrance doors, customers will be greeted by staff who will provide COVID screening assistance and direction. With the lobby's current limited capacity of three (3) individuals, customers may be asked to line-up physically distanced outside of the entrance doors until they can be safely accommodated. Mandatory use of masks will be required in keeping with the Niagara Region By-Law.

The Township continues to follow the orders and advice of public health officials and reassessing our services through each phase of the Province's reopening framework to ensure we are meeting the expectations of our staff and citizens. With new safety protocols and procedures in place, Township of West Lincoln Council and staff appreciate everyone's patience as we carefully reopen the Township Municipal Office and thank residents for their continued practice of physical distancing and following any restrictions put in place to keep Township facilities, programs and services safe for everyone.

Mayor Bylsma stated,

“Council and staff continue to press forward to regain ground against the COVID 19 upheaval in a safe and responsible manner. We are confident to take these next steps towards recovery, but we remind all residents that strides have also been made to accommodate payments and inquiries on our new township website. While that work was well underway when the pandemic hit it has been vital in the engagement between staff and the public during this event. Again, on behalf of Council and staff we thank you for your understanding and patience.”

**Media Contact:**

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