



April 3, 2020

## **AMO COVID-19 Update Week Three**

As week-three of the COVID-19 state of emergency concludes, AMO is working hard to assist its member municipal governments in every part of the province. It has been a difficult week in communities everywhere, with many important developments here in Ontario.

Since the onset of COVID-19 situation, AMO has been working in partnership with the Government of Ontario to support rapid changes in provincial policies that are responding to public health and other needs of our communities. We have been supported in this work by many extraordinary municipal public servants in your communities and the professional associations to which they belong. The developments, policy changes and emergency orders have been relayed to members on a near daily basis but there is much more work to be done, and many important matters that will require collaboration in the weeks and months ahead.

Last week, Ontario delivered a fiscal and economic statement that provided important financial measures as part of a comprehensive provincial response to COVID-19. AMO applauded the measures that affect municipalities as an important first step in dealing with financial and other pressures facing municipal government. AMO will continue to work with members and the province to ensure immediate and longer term municipal fiscal pressures are in focus.

Last Friday, the AMO Board held its March Board meeting virtually. The business conducted included a discussion about what the organization has been doing to assist members, and what more can be done to ensure municipalities have the resources and tools they need to respond to the COVID-19 emergency, to manage through it effectively, and to support the economic recovery that will follow. The AMO Board and staff are committed to doing everything possible to support members at this critically important time.

The Board also recognized the remarkable leadership demonstrated by Ontario municipalities from councils to front-line workers in responding to the COVID-19 emergency. The municipal response reflects outstanding leadership, effective emergency planning, the critically important role of municipalities in public health and emergency health services, and the important role of a wide array of municipal services that support healthy, safe communities, and businesses large and small.

Thank you for the work you are doing under difficult circumstances.

We are keeping our [COVID-19](#) webpage current and focusing on what's most relevant.

AMO's dedicated COVID-19 email account will manage your questions, take your ideas, and facilitate your feedback. AMO's policy and member services teams look forward to hearing from you at [covid19@amo.on.ca](mailto:covid19@amo.on.ca).

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\*Disclaimer: The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) is unable to provide any warranty regarding the accuracy or completeness of third-party submissions. Distribution of these items does not imply an endorsement of the views, information or services mentioned.



April 6, 2020

## AMO COVID-19 Update

As we enter week four of the COVID-19 emergency, please know that AMO continues to bring critical municipal issues to the province in real time seeking immediate and practical resolutions to manage during the emergency. We are now in the depths of public health action to flatten the curve and we know that many communities are dealing with difficult local challenges.

### Revised List of Essential Services:

As was noted in AMO's Friday [Update](#), the Ontario government announced revisions to the essential services list that limited construction (see Sections 27 – 31 of the updated essential services [list](#)) to critical provincial infrastructure, including health, transport, energy and justice sectors – this includes construction projects and services required to ensure the safe and reliable operations of these provincial assets.

With respect to private sector construction activities, various industrial activities related to petrochemicals projects or manufacturing of medical devices and other identified products related to combatting COVID-19 also remain as essential. Residential construction projects can also proceed if either a footing permit or above grade structural permit have been issued or renovations were started before April 4, 2020.

In addition, construction and maintenance related to **municipal government services** are explicitly included on the essential services list and activities related to their operation may continue. These include water, sewer, roads, bridges, dams, waste and environmental management, emergency management, justice and policing. See section 34 for the entire list of essential community services.

For municipal governments, this means that works that support the delivery of services like sewage and drinking water would remain as essential. Lastly, under section 20, the maintenance or repair works to maintain the safety, security, sanitation and essential operation of institutional, commercial, industrial (ICI) and residential properties remain essential. It is our understanding that the municipal projects beyond critical maintenance or repair (i.e. new recreation hub) would fall under the closure order for the applicable period, with the possibility of extensions.

The provincial help line at 1-888-444-3659 is a resource for clarification on what municipal construction projects could be considered to be on the revised services list.

That said, it may be prudent for municipal governments to consult with legal counsel for clarity on individual projects.

Ultimately, any of the workplaces that remain open must abide by the directives from the Chief Medical Officer or local public health units and comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Further, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development recently issued the revised guidelines for construction sites. Employers should know that failure to comply with OHSA and its regulations could result in a stop work order.

### **Seasonal Trailer Parks:**

Seasonal trailer parks and recreational campgrounds are not listed as essential businesses and, as such, were required to be closed as of midnight Saturday April 4, 2020.

Over the weekend, Minister Clark provided [clarification \(French\)](#) that for Ontarians whose only Canadian residence is at one of these seasonal trailer parks or campgrounds, they are permitted to continue their occupancy.

As well, those who fall into this group will be returning from another country and must complete their mandatory self-isolation as required by the mandatory isolation order made by the federal government under the Quarantine Act which took effect on March 25, 2020.

### **Help to Serve Vulnerable Persons:**

The province will provide up to \$40 million to support organizations that provide residential services for children and youth, people with developmental disabilities and emergency shelters for women and families fleeing domestic violence.

The COVID-19 [Residential Relief Fund](#) will cover costs such as additional staffing, residential respite for caregivers; personal protective equipment and supplies; initiatives to support physical distancing and transportation to minimize client exposure.

### **Future Work:**

AMO has been working with the Province to provide extensions of timelines for all administrative processes required under all legislation obliging municipalities to process applications or materials, notify, report or hold public meetings. With the focus and possible reassignment of duties to COVID related tasks, it is impossible for some municipal governments (and in some cases applicants) to meet deadlines. As well, AMO is requesting that this potential timeline pause, when restarted, should allow for a reasonable recovery period.

Municipal governments continue to deliver what is essential to our residents and business - a credit to both councils and all staff. You are public service at its finest.

We are keeping our [COVID-19](#) webpage current and focusing on what's most relevant.

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