



---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 4, 2020**

## **City Following Safe Work Practices to Maintain Services**

DUNCAN, BC – The City of Duncan continues to provide services to the community with some staff across all departments performing regular duties from home and others following the physical distancing measures recommended by BC’s Chief Medical Health Officer while they continue on-site duties. The City temporarily implemented a week-on, week-off rotation for essential Public Works staff to limit exposure, while appropriate safety measures could be put in place. The Public Works staff will be returning to their regular schedule starting next week with these measures in place.

We kindly ask that members of the public do not approach staff who are performing duties and that you maintain a minimum distance of two metres of separation.

“We are grateful for City staff who are out there working so hard to keep the city going, keeping us safe and ensuring our basic operations are running smoothly,” said Mayor Staples. “Thank you for the work so many of you are doing by staying at home and keeping your distance from others when you are out accessing essential services or getting fresh air. We know that the actions each of us take during this time will have a profound effect how all of us come through this.”

Currently, the City continues to follow the recommendations and health orders issued by BC’s Chief Medical Health Office, and our administrative buildings, playground and outdoor exercise equipment will remain closed until further notice. Public washrooms at McAdam Park, Centennial Park, and Canada Avenue remain open and are each being cleaned four times per day. People are advised that they can conduct their business with the City online or over the phone.

**Public Works** is maintaining the essential road, water, sewer, and garbage and recycling collection services, as well as minimal mowing of parks and sports fields; **Development Services** is processing current applications and responding to inquiries; **Finance** is processing invoices, responding to property information requests and processing payments; **Bylaw Enforcement** is conducting additional daytime and nighttime patrols throughout the City; **Corporate Services** staff are supporting Council in continuing to meet, providing internal and external communications and responding to questions received through [duncan@duncan.ca](mailto:duncan@duncan.ca)

On Tuesday, March 31, Duncan Council held a Special Meeting of Council virtually using Zoom – a secure video conferencing services, live web-streamed through the City’s YouTube account – respecting provincial orders to limit public gatherings and practice physical distancing. Council meetings in the foreseeable future will be held using Zoom. The next regular Council meeting will be at 6:00 pm on April 6. To watch future meetings online please visit: <https://duncan.civicweb.net/Portal/>

Questions regarding items on the agenda may be sent in advance of the meeting to the Director of Corporate Services at [paige@duncan.ca](mailto:paige@duncan.ca). Please make sure to include both your name and address for identification purposes. Questions sent after the start of the meeting of Council will be answered in the order they are received.

City Council understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has also created significant challenges and stresses for our residents and businesses. We continue to ask questions about programs the Province may introduce specifically for alleviating any financial strain from the payment of property taxes and will keep you informed as they respond.

Unless the Province changes its legislation, Council has until May 15, to make any changes to the proposed 2020-2024 financial plan, including adjustments to future service levels, and adopt the 2020 property tax rates bylaw. Council will consider the current draft 2020-2024 Financial Plan at the April 6, 2020, meeting.

Altogether, 51% of the total property tax bill is set by these other agencies to pay for services: Province of BC – school tax & police tax; Cowichan Valley Regional District; Regional Hospital District; BC Assessment Authority; and Municipal Finance Authority. At this time, the City is still required to provide property taxes to those agencies; however, the Province recently announced that business and light and major industry property classes will see their school property tax cut in half for the 2020 tax year, providing relief for business that own their property and for tenants on triple-net leases.

The City has waived water billing late payment penalties for those customers with payments due on March 31, 2020. At the meeting on Monday, City Council will also consider waiving penalties for those customers that would have had penalties applied on April 30, 2020.

Have a specific City enquiry? Here is a list of our Department email addresses:

Development Services: [developmentservices@duncan.ca](mailto:developmentservices@duncan.ca)

Finance: [finance@duncan.ca](mailto:finance@duncan.ca)

Corporate Services: [duncan@duncan.ca](mailto:duncan@duncan.ca)

Bylaw Enforcement: [bylawenforcement@duncan.ca](mailto:bylawenforcement@duncan.ca)

Public Works: [public@duncan.ca](mailto:public@duncan.ca)

Unsure who to contact? Please send an email to [duncan@duncan.ca](mailto:duncan@duncan.ca) , call City Hall at 250-746-6126, or call Public Works at 250-746-5321.

For latest news and updates visit the City's website at [www.duncan.ca](http://www.duncan.ca), sign up for email notifications on the home page (green envelope on the right), or follow us on the City's Facebook Page "City of Duncan-Local Government"