

Subject: Mandatory Mask Bylaw Amendment**Recommendation:**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2020-0154 for information;

AND THAT Council consider passing the proposed by-law amendment attached to the said report and presented separately at the Presentation and Consideration of By-Laws of this Regular Meeting of Council as By-Law No. 4285(2020).

Background:

Council passed its mandatory mask bylaw on August 10, 2020. Generally, residents have respected both the Town's and Region's bylaw on this topic in recognition of the benefits for community health. At time of writing, Pelham is fortunate to have only two active cases of Covid-19 infection. Staff have now received multiple complaints from residents of a multi-unit residential building that residents are not respecting social distancing guidelines in common space areas such as hallways, laundry rooms, recreation areas, the lobby, etc. Assuming this case to be illustrative of the other multi-unit residential buildings in Pelham, staff propose adopting the requirements of the equivalent bylaw from the City of Toronto.

Analysis:

The proposed amendment would extend the existing bylaw's reach to the common areas of multi-unit residential properties in the Town of Pelham. It would apply equally to apartment buildings, seniors buildings and condominiums (the legal ownership structure not being germane to the health consideration). It is difficult to socially distance in hallways, laundry rooms and other in-door common spaces. With the onset of cold weather, it is reasonable to expect people to be spending more time indoors, and consequently there being an increased likelihood of virus transmission. Requiring masks to be worn in these areas is a relatively simple mechanism to protect public health.

The wearing of face masks has been demonstrated to be a pillar of the prevention efforts with respect to the spread of Coronavirus. Town Council has seen fit to enact a local facemask bylaw. This fits into the rationale for the bylaw, by extending it to shared, semi-public areas in otherwise private property where transmission is a realistic possibility because of the need to use the shared, semi-public areas and the difficulty in achieving adequate social distancing whilst doing so.

Financial Considerations:

Not applicable.

Alternatives Reviewed:

The status quo is always an option, however this proposed bylaw amendment is based upon the experience of other municipalities and has been initiated as the result of multiple complaints from a resident of a multi-unit, private dwelling, demonstrating a degree of need in the community.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Build Strong Communities and Cultural Assets

While this amendment will not specifically make the community stronger, it is intended to protect health.

Consultation:

Bylaws from the City of Mississauga and the City of Toronto were reviewed. Town staff have adapted the language from the equivalent amendment made to the City of Toronto's mandatory facemask bylaw. Staff have also consulted with staff at the City of St. Catharines, which at time of writing appears poised to pass an equivalent type amendment to that City's bylaw.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

Draft Bylaw Amendment

Prepared and Recommended by:

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