

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF WINDSOR**  
**Community Development and Health Services –**  
**Housing and Children's Services**

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

*"Our City is built on relationships – between citizens and their government, businesses and public institutions, city and region – all interconnected, mutually supportive, and focused on the brightest future we can create together."*

<b>LiveLink REPORT #: 17185 SWE/3069</b>	<b>Report Date: May 13, 2014</b>
<b>Author's Name: Dawn Bosco</b>	<b>Date to Council: May 20, 2014</b>
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**To: Mayor and Members of City Council**

**Subject: The City of Windsor as a Potential Host Community for Evacuees**

**1. RECOMMENDATION:** City Wide: ☒ Ward(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**THAT** Council **APPROVE** the City of Windsor to be identified to Emergency Management Ontario as a host community for evacuees from Ontario communities experiencing crisis; and further,

**THAT** the City of Windsor **BE CONSIDERED** as a community of last resort in Emergency Management Ontario's to the list of municipalities to host evacuees in a provincial emergency; and further,

**THAT** the CAO (or designate) be **AUTHORIZED** to respond to requests from Emergency Management Ontario and to make the decision to determine the type and number of evacuees that will be hosted dependent on the parameters outlined in the agreement with EMO and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AADNC) and available resources to support the evacuees including the availability of accommodations and staffing; and further,

**THAT** the CAO and City Clerk **BE AUTHORIZED** to execute agreements with the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and/or the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada should an agreement be reached satisfactory in technical content by the Community Development and Health Services Commission, in legal content to the City Solicitor and in financial content to the Chief Financial Officer.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

N/A

## **2. BACKGROUND:**

From time to time Emergency Management Ontario's Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) reaches out to municipalities to host evacuated residents from communities that are deemed at risk of natural disasters including flooding or fires. In the past the City of Windsor has expressed a willingness to EMO to be a host community with the appropriate agreements in place to ensure that costs incurred for evacuees are recovered by the federal and/or provincial governments. Despite a lack of agreement the City of Windsor, as a caring community has put forward a willingness to host evacuees in times of crisis. To date, there has not been a need by EMO to take up the willingness of the City of Windsor to act as a host site as there has been sufficient support from other municipalities to host evacuees. However, since these requests have come at least on 2 occasions in the month of May it was felt that formal Council approval was required in order to be able to respond to future requests from EMO.

The City of Windsor has been attempting for several years now to finalize an agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of hosting evacuees from other communities. Despite a number of discussions and exchanges of draft agreements between EMO and AANDC to date no template of an agreement has been finalized to the satisfaction of all parties. Two major concerns have been identified as barriers to finalizing the agreement: 1) appropriate provisions around cost reimbursement; and; 2) adequate treatment of the liability implication of being a host community in provincial emergencies. The last draft of the agreement that was shared with the City of Windsor by EMO on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 our Legal Counsel outlined in an email to the Fire Chief/Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) a number of concerns related to these two areas which are still not addressed in the latest draft of the agreement.

## **3. DISCUSSION:**

On May 13<sup>th</sup> PEOC convened a conference call with designated Community Emergency Management Coordinators (CEMC) across the province to determine the capacity to host evacuees from the northern community of the Attawapiskat First Nation as they are currently in a flood watch. The watch is expected to turn into a flood warning due to melting ice that could lead to the potential need to evacuate the community of 1800 residents. EMO has identified that while there is no immediate need for additional host communities they are seeking availability of municipalities to act as a host for Stage 1 evacuees in the event that the situation changes and the community must evacuate. The community of Kashechewan First Nation has already been evacuated to a number of municipalities primarily in Northern Ontario as a result of flooding.

EMO has identified two types of evacuees: Stage 1 and Stage 2. Stage 1 includes persons with a disability, pregnant women, children and seniors; includes all other residents who do not fall under the Stage 1 category. EMO has stated that ideally Stage 1 evacuees should be housed in hotel, motels, dormitories or other similar facilities. EMO was also trying to establish potential Stage 2 sites where the evacuees can be housed in arenas, community centres and other similar facilities.

EMO is requesting that municipalities respond to the following questions as soon as possible:

- Are you willing to act as a Stage One host community (priority)?
- If so, what is your capacity to act as a Stage One host community (how many Stage One evacuees could you host)?

- Are you willing to act as a Stage Two host community?
- What date would you be available to receive evacuees?
- How long could you act as a Host Community?
- How much notice would you require in order to begin receiving evacuees?

Administration undertook an assessment of our current capacity related to becoming a host community for this particular request and future requests and has determined that the parameters that we would put forward to EMO for the City of Windsor to become a host community would include the use of only dormitories as an accommodation option, that sufficient community supports would be available, that supports would be provided by the Red Cross, and that there is sufficient staffing resources available.

As it relates to this request we offer the following assessment regarding our capacity at this time:

1. The availability of dormitories in the community.
2. We would not have sufficient resources to support Stage 1 evacuees at this time, whom depending on their needs, may require additional supports from other sectors, most notably the health care sector.
3. Elementary/secondary schools are not an option as the school year is still in progress.
4. Arenas/community centres are being utilized for programming at this time of year and using them as sites would require the cancellation of programming.
5. Supports from the Red Cross may be limited as they have been called out to assist other communities.
6. We would have to call upon our limited staffing resources in Community Development and Health Services to support the evacuees while they are housed on a 24 hour basis so placing people who are identified as Stage 2 evacuees would reduce the number of staffing resources that we would have to put in place to provide the necessary supports to the evacuees.
7. Due to our limited capacity we would limit the number of Stage 2 evacuees to a maximum of 100.

Other communities who have hosted evacuees in the past have identified that dormitories are the best accommodations to suit the needs of evacuees and the host communities as they provide the necessary amenities and allow the community to be housed in close proximity to each other and allowing for ease of access from support agencies.

Should Council agree to be a host community for evacuees we would engage supports from the local First Nations community, most notably the Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre, to assist in providing supports to the evacuees from Aatawapiskat First Nation.

Housing and Children's Services currently has Memoranda of Agreements with a number of organizations in the community where their sites would act as Reception/Evacuation Centres. We also have an agreement with the Red Cross to provide assistance in emergencies and they will be available to support the City with hosting duties contingent on the availability of their volunteers.

#### **4. RISK ANALYSIS:**

Despite reassurances in the past by EMO that costs for evacuees would be covered by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) there is yet to be a formal agreement that outlines the parameters of these costs therefore there is a financial risk to the Corporation to cover the costs related to the hosting of evacuees.

There is a resource risk should there not be sufficient staffing or long term availability of accommodations for evacuees as it is not known how long these individuals will require accommodations as it is dependent on their home community being safe for them to return. There is the potential for liability issues related to accommodations.

Accepting and sheltering evacuees could present a liability risk for the City. There are currently no provisions in the agreement to indemnify or otherwise protect the City if anything were to happen in conjunction with the hosting of these evacuees. In fact, the most recent draft of the agreement saw the City indemnifying AANDC rather than the other way around which would be the expectation.

We have obtained information from other municipalities who have identified some lessons learned about previous evacuations as well as a copy of an agreement between a municipality and the federal government that assisted us in determining what the best approach would be to supporting evacuees and to mitigate any potential risk.

#### **5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

EMO has stated that AANDC will cover the costs of hosting evacuees and that they would do their best to ensure that an agreement is signed that outlines what costs will be covered with the goal of ensuring that municipalities are not in a position to have to cover these costs. It is projected that these costs would include preparation and planning, accommodations, food, clothing, linens, personal hygiene products, medical necessities, transportation, staffing from Community Development and Health Services to provide supports and language and translation services.

Council may recall (LiveLink #16214) that effective January 1, 2013, funding of emergency shelter services is no longer cost shared with Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) through the Ontario Works Financial Assistance program.

Emergency shelter services are now one of several programs funded by the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH). MMAH provides a capped annual allocation of 100% funding to deliver four categories of housing and homelessness programs. Municipal Service Managers determine how and what services are provided, in accordance with local needs and priorities. The 2014 CHPI allocation, approximately \$8.1million is already fully committed.


Any cost incurred for hosting evacuees that remains unfunded or is not reimbursed through the agreement with EMO and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development will be at a 100% City cost.


## 6. CONSULTATIONS:

Bruce Montone, Fire Chief/CEMC;  
Donna Girard, The Red Cross;  
Wira Vendrasco, Deputy City Solicitor  
Linda Higgins, Manager of Financial Administration and Intergovernmental Affairs.

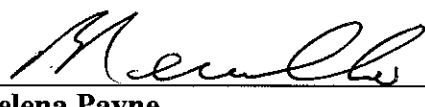
## 7. CONCLUSION:


The City of Windsor is a caring community and it is recommended that we pursue the possibility of becoming a host community for evacuees from Aattawapsikat or from other communities in need under the parameters listed in this report. Emergency Management Ontario has been advised that the City of Windsor would assess our capacity to be a host community for a provincial emergency and seek Council approval prior to providing them a response to their request made on May 13, 2014.


*for*   
Dawn Bosco  
Acting Manager of Residential Support  
Services

  
Debbie Cercone  
Executive Director of Housing and  
Children's Services

  
Shelby Askin-Hager  
City Solicitor

*for*   
Jelena Payne  
Community Development and Health  
Commissioner and Corporate Leader Social  
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Culture

  
Onorio Colucci  
Chief Financial Officer and City  
Treasurer

  
Helga Reidel  
Chief Administrative Officer

DB:kk

## APPENDICES:

N/A

**DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED:****Name: Bruce Montone, Fire Chief/CEMC****Phone #: 519-253-3016 ext. 238****Name: Wira Vendrasco, Deputy City Solicitor****Phone #: 519-255-6100 ext. 6375****Name: Linda Higgins, Manager of Intergovernmental Subsidies & Financial  
Administration****Phone #: 519-255-5200 ext. 5222****NOTIFICATION :**

Name	Address	Email Address	Telephone	FAX