
Extending Permits and Licences During Front Counter Closures**Report Purpose**

To seek Council approval on three readings of a bylaw that will extend certain expiring permits and licences, and issue temporary permits and licences, during the County's front counter closures related to Covid-19 pandemic response.

Recommendation

1. THAT Bylaw 19-2020, a bylaw to extend permits and licences in Strathcona County, be given first reading.
2. THAT Bylaw 19-2020 be given second reading.
3. THAT Bylaw 19-2020 be considered for third reading.
4. THAT Bylaw 19-202 be given third reading.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 8 - Foster an environment for safe communities
Governance Requirement

Report

Several the County's bylaws include provisions that allow the County to issue permits or licences. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant closure of the County's front counter services, it may be difficult for citizens to renew certain permits, or to apply within the timelines required in the bylaws.

Responsible Dog Ownership Bylaw

The *Responsible Dog Ownership Bylaw*, 37-2017, states that all dog licences, dangerous dog licences, and over-limit permits expire on March 31 of each year. Since the County's front counter services have been closed as of March 20, 2020, some people would face difficulty in renewing their respective permits and licenses by the deadline.

The *Responsible Dog Ownership Bylaw*, 37-2017, also requires anyone who moves to the County or acquires a dog that is older than three months to apply for a licence within thirty days. These applications are done in-person and so the closures would mean that people are unable to comply with the requirements set out in the bylaw.

In order to address these concerns, proposed Bylaw 19-2020 will issue an automatic temporary dog licence, dangerous dog licence, or over-limit permit to each person that had one on March 31, 2020. The temporary licence or permit will be without fee and will expire on July 31, 2020. In addition, Bylaw 19-2020 will extend the deadline to apply for a dog licence, for new owners or residents, to July 31, 2020 or the current thirty days, whichever is later. For any person who renews after July 31, 2020, the full renewal fee will apply (the bylaw does not pro-rate the fee depending on the time of year the licence is purchased).

Vehicle for Hire Bylaw

The *Vehicle for Hire Bylaw*, 30-2016, states that every vehicle permit or driver's permit issued under the bylaw expires on the one-year anniversary of the date the permit is issued. Permits under this bylaw require in-person checks, including presentation of documentation such as a provincial driver's permit and a criminal records check, as well as an inspection of the permitted vehicle. The front counter closures make these requirements difficult to manage.

In order to address these concerns, proposed Bylaw 19-2020 will issue automatic temporary permits to those persons whose permits have expired between the front counter closure on March 20, 2020, and the date the bylaw comes into force. In addition, Bylaw 19-2020 will extend, until July 31, 2020, all permits that expire between the date the bylaw comes into force and July 20, 2020. These temporary permits and extension will be made without fee.

Land Use Bylaw

At the initial update on this matter at the Special Council meeting of April 8, 2020, Administration indicated that some elements of the *Land Use Bylaw*, 6-2015, would be included in Bylaw 19-2020. After further investigation, Administration has determined that there are no current development permits that expire between now and July 31, 2020. For those permits that do expire after July 31, 2020, Administration can arrange administrative extensions for up to one year without requiring the County's front counter services.

There are currently 23 temporary development permits issued by Planning and Development Services. For each of these permits (none are currently expired), Planning and Development Services will proactively reach out to the permit-holder in order to arrange extension or resubmission for the permit. Amendments are not needed at this time.

Other Bylaws

A scan was done of other County bylaws that allow Administration to issue permits. These bylaws include:

- the *Animal Control Bylaw* (Animal Over-limit Permits)
- the *Apiculture Bylaw* (Apiculture Permits)
- the *Emergency Services Bylaw* (Fire Permits)
- the *Fireworks Bylaw* (Consumer and High-hazard Fireworks Permits, and Fireworks Sale and Distribution Permits)
- the *Alarm System Bylaw* (Alarm System Permits)
- the *Traffic Bylaw* (Road Use Agreements, Right-of-Way Construction Activity Permits, and Off-highway vehicle permits)
- the *Noise Bylaw* (Noise Permits)
- the *Firearms Control Bylaw* (Firearm Discharge Licences)

For each of these bylaws, the respective department has instituted practices that allow them to continue issuing these permits as necessary (typically by accepting electronic submissions and payments).

Other Impacts

Policy: N/A

Legislative/Legal: Licenses and permits are addressed in several County bylaws (e.g. Responsible Dog Ownership, Vehicle for Hire, Land Use Bylaw, etc.)

Interdepartmental: Legislative and Legal Services, Enforcement Services, Planning and Development Services.

Master Plan/Framework: N/A

Enclosure

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| 1 | Enclosure 1 – Bylaw 19-2020 – Permit and Licence Extension Bylaw (COVID-19) |
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