

## **Municipal Council Vote Unanimously to Close Victoria Beach until August 31, 2020.**

*Community health and safety a top priority as Council continues to follow provincial and local health orders.*

**Cobourg, ON (June 2, 2020)** – The Town of Cobourg’s Municipal Council held a [Special Meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>](#) and voted unanimously to close Victoria Beach until August 31, 2020 in order to continue to ensure residents and visitors are complying with Provincial Orders and with physical distancing guidelines as set out by Federal, Provincial and local health units.

“This was an incredibly difficult decision to make and I, along with the rest of Council, listened and engaged with many citizens on this important matter,” said Mayor John Henderson for the Town of Cobourg. “The beach is a popular gathering area starting around this time of year, and for the time being, we want to continue to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within our community. During these unprecedented times it is the health and safety of our citizens that will always come first.”

Municipal Council directed Town staff to install metal fencing and barriers with emergency access points as necessary, and to continue with increased enforcement at the waterfront area. The Cobourg Police Service and Town Bylaw Enforcement Officers will continue to educate the public while increasing enforcement along the waterfront. Provincial fines for trespassing are set at \$65.

Municipal Council also directed Town staff to install portable washrooms, including accessible units and handwashing stations along the waterfront.

“At this time, we are using our patrols to proactively engage with the public and inform them of the recent beach closure,” said Chief Paul VandeGraaf of the Cobourg Police Service. “Once fencing and signage are installed, making it clear that the beach is closed, individuals found trespassing on Victoria Beach will be charged.”

Municipal Council has also directed Town staff to provide a further report to Council at the Monday, June 22, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting with statistics on the waterfront area activities and any other areas of concern that may arise due to the beach closure. The report will also include recommendations on how to safely re-open the beach with restricted use along with cost estimates for Council’s consideration.

Under the provincial order, green spaces in parks, trails, ravines and conservation areas that aren't otherwise closed would remain open for walk-through access, but individuals must maintain the safe physical distance of at least two metres apart from others. Walk-through access at the Victoria Beach boardwalk and West Beach boardwalk remain open.

### **Stay Informed**

The Town of Cobourg has launched a dedicated COVID-19 webpage that includes program and service updates, news issued from the municipality and risk reduction advice. Updates will be posted to [www.cobourg.ca/covid19](http://www.cobourg.ca/covid19) as they come in.

For local health unit updates visit the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit's website [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca). For provincial information including the status of cases in the province visit [www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus).

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### About The Town of Cobourg

The Town of Cobourg is a lakeside community (population 19,440) located on the north shore of Lake Ontario halfway between Toronto and Kingston and has been recognized multiple times by MoneySense Magazine as "One of Canada's Best Places to Live" in populations under 25,000.

Founded in 1798, Cobourg is rich in heritage offering a vibrant downtown, sophisticated small town atmosphere and renowned waterfront that serves as a popular getaway destination. As the largest town in Northumberland County, Cobourg is personified by historic Victoria Hall, hosts a 27.4 million community centre, an educated and skilled labour force, flourishing commercial sector and supportive municipal government. Cobourg has received the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Award, accolades from the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance, and multiple heritage, environmental, and event awards.