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## **OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

April 27, 2021

To Muskoka Lakes Residents, Builders & Real Estate Offices:

Covid-19 has necessitated changes to public and private sector business practices around the world. In this regard, the Township of Muskoka Lakes has also responded by making changes to its planning and building approvals and other processes.

Despite these efforts to ensure continued services, one of the unexpected impacts of Covid-19 has been an overwhelming increase in property planning and building applications and inquiries within the Township. We have seen more than double the amount of planning applications for the first 3 months of 2021 vs 2020 and the volume of planning and building inquiries and applications continues to increase. To address this increase in workload, we have added staff to our complement. However the increase in planning applications and inquiries is far beyond our capacity to maintain historical service levels.

As you are aware, there are legislated timeframes related to the processing of development applications. To address the increased volume of workload and meet these timeframes, effective immediately, staff will only be available to assist with those residents/builders and planners who submit planning applications.

As it pertains to emails or phone calls (general inquiries) from property owners, developers and the real estate community, we note that pertinent information (Zoning, etc.) on every property within the Township is available on the Township website. Simply click on the "Business and Property Development" tab and you can link to this information. Alternatively, if your inquiry is more in depth, you may wish to consult with a local planning/consulting firm who can provide further assistance.

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we continue to transition in response to this new reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Harding".

Phil Harding,  
Mayor, Township of Muskoka Lakes