



The Town of Cobourg Emergency Plan

Annex 12

Cobourg Emergency Flood Plan

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Town of Cobourg Emergency Flood Plan - Annex 12

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Introduction

The Town of Cobourg Emergency Flood Plan is intended to assist and prepare residents, businesses, visitors, and the towns emergency control group by creating plans to educate, exercise, respond and recover for the potential of a flood event. This plan describes the various emergency response efforts needed during a flood event and guidance for coordinating response activities to manage a flood event including clarifying roles and responsibilities. It sets out a concept of operations that fosters collaboration among multiple departments and organizations active in mitigating the consequences of a flood emergency. This plan outlines the assistance that will be provided to the municipality and its residents during flood emergencies.

The responsibility for dealing with flood contingency planning in Ontario is shared by municipalities, Conservation Authorities, and the Provincial Government. As with all emergencies, municipalities have the primary responsibilities for the welfare of residents. This plan incorporates flood emergency planning into the Town of Cobourg Emergency Response Plan.

Purpose

The purpose of the Town of Cobourg Emergency Flood Plan is to outline a plan of action for the most efficient deployment and coordination of municipal services, stakeholders, organizations, and personnel to provide the earliest possible response by:

- Protecting and preserving life and property.
- Minimizing the effects of the emergency on the health, safety and welfare of citizens, property, and the environment of the Town of Cobourg.
- Defining procedures to be utilized in minimizing the effects of a flood emergency in the Town of Cobourg.
- Providing an effective communication plan for before, during, and after a flood event.
- Establishing a coordinated response consistent with prevailing conditions and information provided by external agencies including the GRCA Flood Forecasting and Warning System, local dam operators, and/or other sources.
- Defining the roles and responsibilities of the Town of Cobourg's departments and supporting agencies involved in a flood emergency.
- Restoring essential services as quickly as possible following a flood emergency.

Scope

The Town of Cobourg Emergency Flood Plan describes the methodology the Emergency Control Group (ECG) will utilize for coordinating activities to manage a flood event including clarifying the roles and responsibilities. The Emergency Flood Plan outlines the assistance that will be provided by the municipality for the community during flood emergencies.

The Town of Cobourg will work in collaboration with stakeholders and Provincial authorities to help prepare for, prevent and or mitigate flood impacts where possible, and coordinate a response to flood emergencies.

Authority and Maintenance

This plan is published as an annex to the Town of Cobourg Emergency Response Plan, as authorized by By-law 067-2015, this plan will be reviewed annually by the Community Emergency Management Program Committee and maintained by the Emergency Planner. The authority for the development, content and implementation of the emergency plan is provided or referenced in the following legislation, regulations, policy statements and standards.

- Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act
- Ontario Regulation 380/04
- Town of Cobourg Flood Mitigation and Sandbagging Policy PW-OPS-1
- Canadian Emergency Management and Business Continuity Program Standards (C.S.A Z1600)
- Accessibility for Ontario with Disabilities Act

Activation of the Plan

This plan may be activated in whole or in part, as required, by any member of the Town of Cobourg Emergency Control Group, with or without the formal declaration of an emergency. Upon activation, all participating agencies will respond in accordance with the procedures described within this plan and in accordance with their agency operating procedures

Plan Limitations

- The protection of critical municipal infrastructure must be the first priority to ensure continuity of municipal services to the community.
- There may be factors that will adversely affect the municipality's ability to respond to flood emergencies. Response may be delayed if roads become impassable, normal channels of communications may be disrupted and utilities may be unavailable for extended periods of time.
- Response to flooding varies depending on the cause of flooding. In the event of a heavy rain fall / severe storm the response and recovery may take place simultaneously as there is little or no time to prepare.

Flood Hazard

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) defines flooding as an overflow of water associated with a lake, river, or stream that threatens the safety, welfare of people and/or damage to public and/or private property. Floods are caused by natural or human made conditions and geography. The Town of Cobourg could experience flooding due to:

- Heavy/intense precipitation at any time of year.
- Rain-on-snow events.
- Spring freshet flooding from rapid snow melt in the spring.
- Ice jams.
- Failure of dams or flood protection works.
- Human inference (e.g. stream diversion)
- High lake levels, storm surge

Flooding can also be caused by the following issues water main breaks, urban flooding of roads and streets from intense precipitation beyond the capabilities of drainage infrastructure.

Knowing Where it Floods

Flood plain hazard mapping has been prepared by the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority for the four major creeks systems within the Town of Cobourg and are depicted in **Figure 1**.

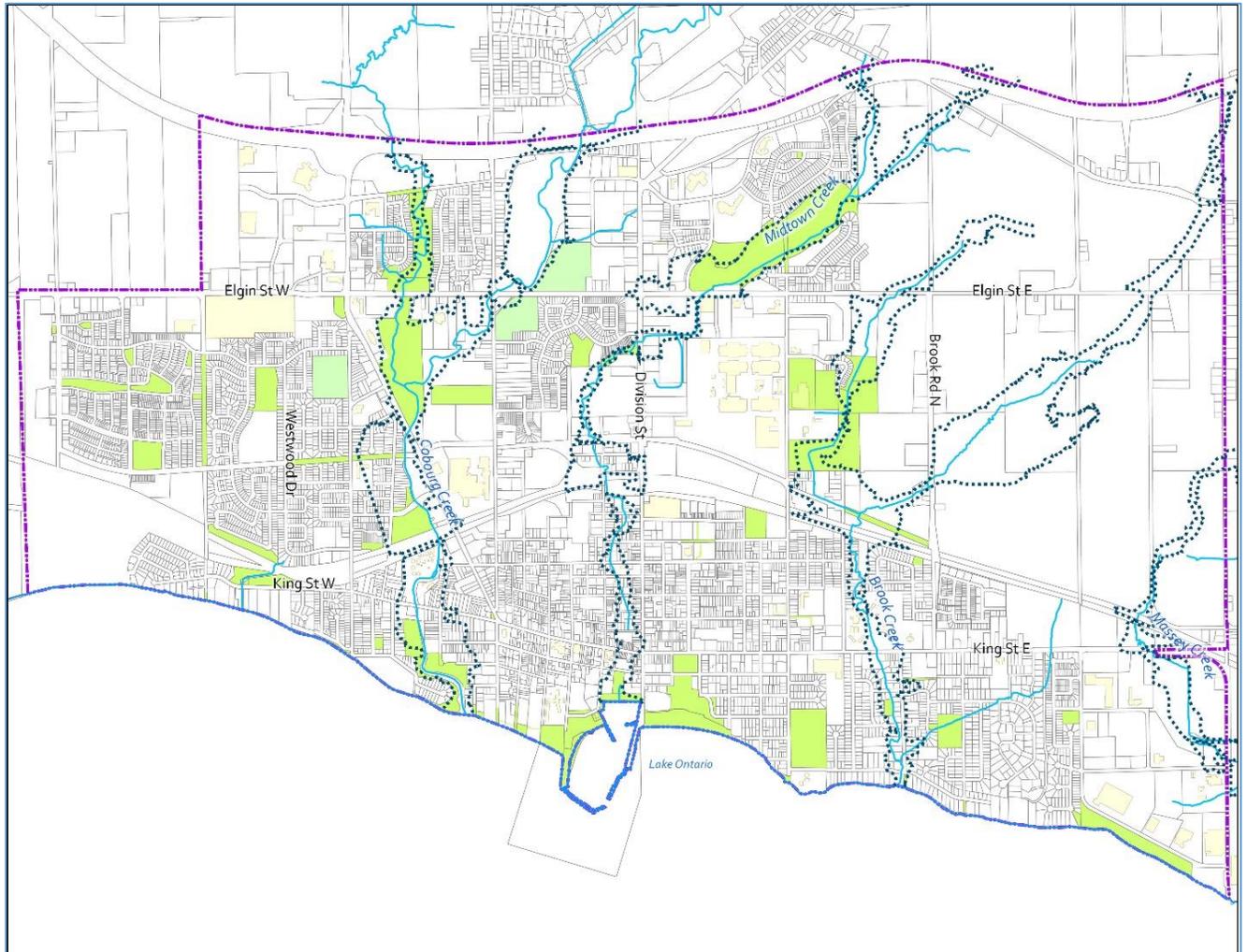


Figure 1 - Location of flood plains associated with creek systems in Cobourg.

Roles and Responsibilities

Provincial

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) is responsible for Provincial flood emergency management and response including:

- Provincial flood emergency management (Provincial Order in Council No. 1157/2009);
- Maintain and operate the Provincial Flood Forecasting and Warning System;
- Monitoring and reporting on surface water conditions through the [Surface Water Monitoring Centre](#);
- Issues flood messaging to Conservation Authorities and municipalities regarding status of provincial flood potential;
- Upon declaration of a municipal flood emergency, responds to municipal requests for assistance;
- In partnership with Environment Canada, maintain a network of hydrometric stations under a Federal / Provincial Agreement that ensures all water level / flow data is collected in such a way as to conform to national standards.
- The MNRF provides Provincial Watershed Conditions Statements that include information regarding provincial watershed conditions and their potential for flooding and an outlook regarding expected spring weather conditions, and Provincial Flood Watch information including current technical information about the potential for flooding

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MOECP) provides information to municipalities regarding the safe handling and disposal of hazardous waste and the disposal of sandbags.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) advises municipalities on the Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians (DRAO) and Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance (MDRA) applications and dispatches Provincial Disaster Assessment Teams (PDAT) to affected municipalities and activates these programs.

The Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) is responsible for operation of the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) and providing assistance when requested to municipalities.

Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA)

The GRCA legal authority comes from the Conservation Authorities Act of Ontario. The GRCA plays a role in the conservation, restoration, development, and management of natural resources on a watershed basis regarding flood emergencies. The GRCA is responsible for:

- Maintaining a flood forecasting and warning system to reduce risk to life and damage to property by providing local agencies and the public with advance notice, information, and advice so that they can respond to potential flood emergencies
- Preventing future loss of life and property by limiting flood plain / hazard land development.
- Assisting the Town of Cobourg and the Province (if necessary) with the implementation of their flood responsibilities.
- Monitoring watershed and weather conditions and operating a flood forecasting system in order to provide warning of anticipated or actual flood conditions.
- Issuing Flood Watch and Flood Warning Messages to municipalities and other appropriate agencies to advise of potential flooding.
- Providing advice to municipalities in preventing or reducing the effects of flooding.
- Maintaining communications with municipalities and the Surface Water Monitoring Centre of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry during a flood event
- Working with municipalities to undertake post event analyses to document extent of flooding and estimate recurrence interval of storm event (i.e. 50 year vs 100 year event, etc.).

Municipal

Prevention / Mitigation

The Town of Cobourg is responsible for developing and implementing mitigation strategies to prevent or lessen the occurrence and/or severity of flooding.

These Strategies include:

- Controlling development in and around flood zones (based on the GRCA's flood hazard maps) using Zoning By-laws, Official Plans, Subdivision/Site Plan development approvals and other applicable policy and regulatory instruments pursuant to the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P. 13, as amended.
- Working with GRCA to map the flood hazard areas and assess the impact on critical infrastructure.
- On going mitigation projects – Midtown Creek Flood Reduction Pond (completed) Massey Creek Flood Reduction (current 2021) Brook Creek Flood Reduction (ongoing)

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- Developing and circulating public education material concerning flood prevention and clean-up.

Response

When flooding occurs, the initial responsibility for the welfare of residents is at the Municipal level. As with any emergency, the first priority is responders and public safety. The second priority is the protection and maintenance of public critical infrastructure in order to maintain basic services (hydro, water / wastewater, gas, telecommunication systems, etc.).

When flood conditions are present the Town of Cobourg may:

- Activate the Emergency Flood Plan.
- Activate the Town of Cobourg Emergency Response Plan.
- Convene the Emergency Control Group.
- If necessary, recommend the declaration of a Municipal emergency.
- Direct and control all flood response operations in the town.
- Coordinate the acquisition of emergency response equipment, personnel and other resources required in flooded areas.
- Aid residents displaced by flooding.
- Disseminate vital emergency information to staff, the media and citizens using appropriate channels.
- Provide information to the public concerning water supply safety, alternative sources of water, and protective actions to be taken.
- Request assistance from agencies not under Municipal control, as required (i.e. Municipal Mutual Assistance Agreements, NGO Alliance, local industry, etc.).
- Request Provincial assistance to perform specific flood combat / control tasks as may be required.

Division and Departments Responsibilities

In the event of flooding the Public Works Department:

- Ensure that all vehicles, equipment, and personnel are available for assistance.
- Provide barricades and signage for traffic control and control for the emergency area.
- Update EOC Command of any special equipment needed to be rented/ procured to assist in flood recovery for the municipality.
- Clear debris, snow, or other obstructions in and around the affected emergency area as needed by Incident Commander.
- Conduct emergency pumping operations, sandbagging and other flood and water control measures to protect municipal infrastructure.

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- Maintain the essential services of sanitary sewers and storm sewers as required for health and safety purposes.
- Provide supplies of fuel for emergency services vehicles.
- Maintain roads and access to them, per O.Reg. 239/02 under the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 20021, c25.
- Provide equipment and personnel to assist in the clearing of trees to maintain vehicular access on Town roads.
- Advise Emergency Services on alternate traffic routes during an emergency.
- Maintaining the usual responsibilities of the Public Works.
- After the floodwaters have receded the Public Works Department will continue to monitor sandbagged areas around critical infrastructure, culverts, storm, and sanitary sewers. Also, provide ongoing assistance to Police for detour routes.

For declared emergencies Public Works will co-ordinate with the County the pickup of garbage and debris.

In the event of flooding the Communications Department:

- Assess the need for special alert and warning efforts, including for persons with special needs, and industries.
- Prepare an initial information summary as soon as possible after activation.
- Establish contact with local, provincial and/or national media representatives, as appropriate.
- Establish a schedule for news briefings (this should be linked to the operational period).
- Provide all news releases, bulletins, social media posts.

In the event of flooding the Cobourg Police Services:

- Evacuate the affected areas as required.
- Perform traffic and crowd control operations.
- Disperse people not directly connected with the operations who, by their presence, are considered to be in danger, or whose presence hinders in any way the efficient functioning of the flood combat/control operation.
- Secure the affected areas (based on need and availability of staff).

In the event of flooding the Cobourg Fire Department:

- Conduct floodwater rescue, as required.
- Assist Cobourg Police Services with evacuations in the affected areas as required.

- Rescuing people with mobility issues from floods at home.

In the event of flooding Lakefront Utilities:

- Implement actions to protect water and identify any threats to drinking water.
- Perform disconnect operations where this is considered necessary and in the interest of public safety.
- Coordinate the priority restoration of affected services as dictated by emergency needs of Town of Cobourg services and other essential users.
- Secure services and equipment to ensure continuity of supply
- Assist with clean up and restoration of services

In the event of evacuations required due to flooding the Community Services

Division:

- Working with EOC and Northumberland Emergency Social Services to activate Evacuation Shelter Operations Plans for a reception centre or evacuation centre.

Volunteers and Volunteer Management

The Town of Cobourg, through the Emergency Control Group, will in a declared emergency request volunteers and volunteer management through the NGO Alliance. The NGO Alliance of Ontario is a network of non-governmental organizations that are active participants in Ontario Emergency Management. These responding organizations have prepared volunteers to be able to safely assist municipalities. Volunteers will not, be utilized to carry out work normally performed by local authority employees.

Recovery

The ability to recover from the physical damage, injury, economic impairment, and human suffering resulting from a disaster is a critical element of any emergency program. It is essential to recognize that successful recovery planning and activities depend on the rapid start-up of a recovery plan and must begin during the emergency response phase. Through the implementation of the Flood Emergency Plan, the Town of Cobourg will work with its Departments, partner agencies and volunteer resources. The prioritization of restoration and cleanup efforts will be determined by the Town's

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Emergency Control Group based on several influencing factors, with the primary focus being on the protection of public safety.

- Clean up affected areas, debris removal and return the community to a state of normalcy.
- Restore municipal critical infrastructure
- Coordinate disaster recovery assistance (Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians DRAO) as deemed necessary.
- Facilitate arrangements for the inspection of evacuated premises and provide for their orderly re-occupation as appropriate.
- Assist the Provincial authorities with damage estimation and assessment after the flood.
- Provide residents and businesses with information on safe handling of items damaged by water / sewage.
- Explore mitigation and prevention strategies to reduce the impact of future flood events.

A successful recovery process promotes practices that minimize a community's risk of impact from all hazards and strengthens its ability to withstand and recover from future disasters, which constitutes the community resiliency.

Resources

Town of Cobourg Emergency Response Plan

Town of Cobourg Flood Preparedness Guide

<https://www.cobourg.ca/en/town-hall/Community-Emergency-Management.aspx#>

Emergency Response Plan annexes maybe confidential and provide more detailed information that may require frequent updating, be of a technical nature or is sensitive or personal information the release of could pose a security threat or violate privacy legislation. A copy of all annexes is available with the Emergency Planner and at the EOC for use by the Emergency Control Group.