Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – September 16, 2025

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – September 8, 2025

Item No. 2 Encampment By-law Enforcement

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On September 8, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services considered the Council Motion of July 17, 2025, and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the Public Service be directed to implement the following by November 17, 2025:

    A. Prohibit encampments and prioritize enforcement in the following areas:

        i. Within 50 metres of the perimeter of playgrounds, pools, spray pads or outdoor recreational facilities designed for children, families or seniors

        ii. Within 50 metres of the perimeter of schools, daycares, or adult care facilities

        iii. Where a hazard or obstruction to vehicular or pedestrian traffic exists

        iv. Within a median or traffic island

        v. Within 30 metres of a transit shelter

        vi. Within 30 metres of bridges, docks, or piers

        vii. Within 50 metres of a rail line or crossing

        viii. Where life safety issues exist

2. That the Public Service be directed to prioritize enforcement on all other City properties and spaces between the following times:

    A. One hour after sunrise

    B. One hour before sunset

3. That the Public Service be directed to work with outreach service providers to give reasonable notice of the intended enforcement to encampment residents and notify them of shelter options.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – September 8, 2025

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

4. That vacated encampments be remediated as soon as possible to clear them of debris and detritus.

5. That existing resources be allocated for enforcement and garbage remediation, through the Chief Administrative Office, as required.

6. That the Public Service be directed to report back to Council in 60 days with a policy that formalizes the above approach and outlines responsibilities.

7. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – September 8, 2025

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On September 8, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services considered the Council Motion of July 17, 2025, and recommended to the Executive Policy Committee and Council:

1. That the Public Service be directed to implement the following by November 17, 2025:

    A. Prohibit encampments and prioritize enforcement in the following areas:

        i. Within 50 metres of the perimeter of playgrounds, pools, spray pads or outdoor recreational facilities designed for children, families or seniors

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Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – September 8, 2025

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

4. That vacated encampments be remediated as soon as possible to clear them of debris and detritus.

5. That existing resources be allocated for enforcement and garbage remediation, through the Chief Administrative Office, as required.

6. That the Public Service be directed to report back to Council in 60 days with a policy that formalizes the above approach and outlines responsibilities.

7. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On July 17, 2025, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services:

Moved by Councillor Gilroy,
Seconded by Councillor Rollins,

WHEREAS the Federal government has made it clear that encampments cannot be dismantled without the provision of adequate housing;

AND WHEREAS municipalities retain the authority to determine where encampments may or may not be permitted within their jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS I have consistently advocated to ensure that our parks, playgrounds, and public spaces remain safe and accessible for children and families;

AND WHEREAS there are well documented concerns from daycares, community members, and service providers regarding unsafe and hazardous materials such as drug paraphernalia being found in parks and playgrounds where children play;

AND WHEREAS fentanyl, a highly potent and deadly substance, has been found in parks and public spaces, and even trace amounts such as residue in discarded packaging can pose serious or fatal risks if picked up by a child;

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – September 8, 2025

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

AND WHEREAS discarded needles have also been found in areas frequented by children, posing serious health and safety concerns, including the risk of puncture injuries and exposure to blood-borne diseases;

AND WHEREAS there has been a concerning increase in encampments within community gardens, spaces where families grow food and children are often present, creating further risk of exposure to unsafe materials;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Public Service be directed to:

1. Prohibit encampments in community gardens, playgrounds, spray pads, pools, and community centers spaces specifically designed for children and families.

2. Prioritize enforcement and coordination with outreach organization at these sites while continuing to uphold the City's legal obligations.