



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	June 1, 2022
SUBJECT:	Encampment Coordination Team Update - May 2022 (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Angela Burden General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

Background:

On March 31, 2022, City Council approved:

- (a) That an Encampment Coordination Team be created as a pilot to the end of 2022 with an estimated cost of \$305,000, funded first from COVID-19 Government Funds (eligible costs), then COVID-19 Reserve (eligible costs), then departmental budgets surplus and finally by the Tax Stabilization Reserve; and,
- (b) That all reporting from staff related to encampment coordination and response in Hamilton be brought forward to the General Issues Committee for discussion and decisions.

This is the second monthly update for the dedicated Encampment Coordination Team which began on April 11, 2022.

Information:

The coordinated systemic multi-agency response to encampments continues to prove effective in achieving compliance with the Parks By-law, while continuing to address potential health and safety risks, as well as facilitating person-centred engagement opportunities and individualized connections to community-based supports, including housing/shelter options. Also, having dedicated MLE (Municipal Law Enforcement) staff

is proving effective in achieving early voluntary compliance as Officers develop relationships with unsheltered individuals in our community and better understand the impacts of homelessness on mental and physical well-being.

During the month of May 2022, 149 actioned items about encampments were received; eight of which were duplicate calls. Staff investigated 141 encampment sites (proactively and reactively) on City and private property. For the 141 investigations the following results were achieved:

- At 59 encampments voluntary compliance was achieved (51 City/8 private);
- 29 complaints were unfounded (11 City and 18 Private) (not encampment sites, but garbage and debris, partying locations, etc.);
- It was not necessary to issue any Notices of Trespass at encampment sites on City property as voluntary compliance was achieved without any further intervention;
- Approximately 30 unique individuals that we are aware of currently remain unsheltered and regularly living in encampments throughout the City;
- 71 unique individuals (both in encampments and otherwise) engaged with Outreach for supports/referrals (examples include: referrals to shelters and/or other community supports, housing searches, open bank accounts, obtain ID, etc.);
- One unique individual was housed directly from an encampment by Outreach; and,
- Nine unique individuals were assisted by Outreach through Housing Services OW Case Managers in obtaining or stabilizing their Social Assistance.

Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEO's) continue to work 7 days a week responding to complaints about new encampment sites and proactively monitoring recurring and challenging locations.

Service improvements continue to be investigated and will be reported on as implemented in staff's monthly Communication Updates. During the month of May there are two notable service improvements:

- To support event organizers and successful events on City property, MLE Officers, based on information provided weekly by the City's Special Events Office, now proactively attend park locations prior to a scheduled special event to ensure there are no encampments and/or to clear abandoned sites. During one of these recent proactive site inspections an encampment was identified and remediated prior to the event.
- The MLE Supervisor and two MLE Officers attended in-depth four day "Crisis Intervention Training" provided by Hamilton Police Service to increase their knowledge and understanding of individuals with mental health and addiction challenges. The new skills learned will be valuable when interacting with

encampment individuals to be able to build relationships and achieve better outcomes.

Finally, while not within the formal pilot mandate, staff from the Encampment Coordination Team and other City staff continue to expend inordinate time and effort addressing a few challenging locations in parks and on City property, to address complaints related to loitering/congregating, garbage, debris and/or where encampments have been cleared in the past and are no longer the main source of concern, but where people (not living unsheltered per se) congregate before and after visiting/using external outreach services.

Please direct any inquiries to Marty Hazell, Director, Response Coordination at (905) 546-2424 ext. 4588 or by email at Marty.Hazell@hamilton.ca.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.