



# COMMUNICATION UPDATE

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| <b>TO:</b>               | Mayor and Members<br>City Council   |
| <b>DATE:</b>             | May 6, 2022   |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>          | Encampment Coordination Team Update - April 2022 (City Wide)                |
| <b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b> | City Wide   |
| <b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>     | Angela Burden<br>General Manager<br>Healthy and Safe Communities Department |
| <b>SIGNATURE:</b>        |   |

## 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.

## Information:

The dedicated Encampment Coordination Team began with the hiring of a Director, Response Coordination effective April 11, 2022. The three person encampment team works in partnership with multi-disciplinary stakeholders including, but not limited to, staff from Municipal Law Enforcement, Housing Services Division, Street Outreach, Social Navigator and Parks. As well, there is now an extended partnership with the Hamilton Police Service, Social Navigator Program that provides fully coordinated responses for all involved parties. All dedicated staff are now in place, except for the

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

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.

Senior Project Manager, Encampment Response (Housing) and recruitment is currently underway. All parties meet each morning to discuss priorities and strategies, and to carefully coordinate efforts to ensure that Outreach staff or Social Navigator are the first point of contact to engage and offer supports to encampment individuals.

To-date, the coordinated systemic multi-agency response to encampments is proving effective 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.

During the month of April 2022, 121 complaints about encampments were received of which 15 were duplicate site complaints. Staff investigated 76 encampment sites on City and private property. For the 76 investigations the following results were achieved:

- At 38 encampments voluntary compliance was achieved (31 City/7private)
- 15 complaints were unfounded (10 City and 5 Private) (not encampment sites, but garbage and debris, partying locations, etc.)
- It was necessary to issue Notices of Trespass at three encampment sites on City property and voluntary compliance was achieved without any further intervention.
- Parks staff provided cleanup and maintenance at 26 sites in City Parks
- We are aware of approximately 25 individuals that currently remain unsheltered and regularly living in encampments throughout the City
- 43 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.).
- 2 individuals were housed directly from an encampment by Outreach
- 8 individuals obtained Social Assistance assisted by Outreach through Housing Services OW Case Managers

One notable improvement to the encampment response is that staff have implemented a process to allow homeless individuals to temporarily store personal items, as necessary, at a centrally located City facility. This will eliminate one barrier for those wishing to seek proper housing/shelter accommodations.

Another service improvement the Parks Division is working on is enhancing their service level to ensure consistency in timely clean up requests. Parks will be tracking their activity through the summer and report back on those efforts with the overall evaluation of the Encampment Response Pilot.

Staff intend to provide Council with monthly updates with respect to the Encampment Coordination Teams activities. An evaluation framework for the Encampment Response Pilot, including KPIs, is currently under development. This will allow staff to

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strengthen monthly data reporting capabilities across the service areas and support the overall evaluation of the pilot.

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