



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 4, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Encampment Update (HSC20038(b)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Grace Mater (905) 546 2424 Ext. 4979
SUBMITTED BY:	Paul Johnson General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Staff were requested to provide an update on the operationalization of the Encampment Protocol¹ (attached as Appendix “A” to Report HSC20038(a)) that was approved by Council on September 30, 2020.

INFORMATION

Encampment Outreach

The Encampment Response Team (originally referred to as the Encampment Task Force) includes staff from the City’s Housing Services Division, Licencing and By-law Services - Municipal Law Enforcement, Social Navigator Program, partner agencies and persons with lived experience.

Roles and responsibilities of the team include:

- Proactive client centred engagement approach when working with all individuals experiencing homelessness
- Collaborative approach to case and site planning amongst staff

¹ <https://www.hamilton.ca/social-services/housing/city-hamilton-encampment-response>

- Goal for all individuals is long-term sustainable housing - plans completed for each willing person
- Connecting individuals to all available services and supports
- Providing information regarding locations that are prohibited. Staff do not direct individuals to specific locations.
- Work with individuals to ensure compliance with other relevant by-laws (e.g. Public Nuisance By-law concerning fires, etc.)
- Work with property owners and residents if an encampment occurs on private property as requested.

A telephone number and email address were created to better assist the community related to any questions or concerns regarding encampments:

- (905) 546-2828
- unsheltered@hamilton.ca

The following provides an overview of how the team operates when an encampment has been identified:

Encampment Response Team reviews location and determines if the site is Prohibited or Greenspace. If the site is Prohibited:

- Municipal Law Enforcement (MLE) along with Social Navigator Programs staff (SNP) notify individuals at encampment that the area is a Prohibited site, and that they will have to leave the area;
- Response team subsequently engages with individuals to discuss immediate options: shelter, hotels or housing, and begins process of developing individualized housing plan. If the individual is not already known, the VI-SPDAT is completed at this point.
- Deadline day for removal of encampment is determined.
- At deadline day, MLE (with SNP/Hamilton Police Services (HPS) support) assists in ensuring remaining individuals vacate the area. Response Team provides support in the vicinity with arranging transportation, etc.
- Public Works assists with clean up of any discarded items once individuals have vacated site.

If site is determined to be Greenspace or not Prohibited:

- MLE with SNP support notifies individuals at encampment that they may only remain in that location for maximum 14 days. Notice of the deadline to vacate the area is provided for the end of that period
- Response Team subsequently engages with individuals daily to discuss immediate options: shelter, hotels or housing, and begins process of developing

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.

individualized housing plan. If the individual is not already known, the VI-SPDAT is completed at this point.

- At deadline day, MLE (with SNP/HPS support) assists in ensuring remaining individuals vacate the area. Response Team provides support in the vicinity with arranging transportation, etc.
- Public Works assists with clean up of any discarded items once individuals have vacated site

The staff complement to the Response Team has been temporarily increased until March 31, 2021, through the pandemic. The Housing Services Division is finalizing a plan for implementation of a housing focused street outreach team. This model will be presented to Committee in March 2021.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report HSC20038(a): Bylaw Enforcement Protocol