



**PUBLIC FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
AN ENCAMPMENT PROTOCOL AND SANCTIONED
SITES**

(HSC20036(g)) (City Wide)

General Issues Committee

August 14, 2023

Overview

- Issue and Context
- Public engagement – June 2023
- What did we hear?
- Collaborative approach
- Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters pilot
- Services and Supports
- Recommended Encampment Response
- Complaint response process
- Next steps

Issue and Context

- The number of individuals living unsheltered has grown as the severity of Hamilton's housing crisis has increased.
- Encampments are a result of lack of affordable, appropriate housing options
- Housing is a Human Right
- Strategy to manage encampments is needed while addressing root causes – respecting autonomy and choice of individuals living unsheltered
- Solutions must address homelessness and its root causes

Public Engagement – June 2023

- 11,943 Engage Hamilton visitors
- 7,536 Engage Hamilton questionnaire response
- 15,965 Individual comments submitted
- ~2,000 people attended three in-person town hall sessions

What Did We Hear?

- No tents within public parks, and that parkland should be safe and available for public use and for children and youth
- Contrasting views - Some believing Protocol was too lenient and others too restrictive
- Some agreement around greater proximity from schools, daycares, playgrounds, pools, waterparks, spray pads and private property lines
- Clear consensus for the City to focus on permanent housing

Collaborative Approach

- Internal
 - Coordinated Response Team:
 - Housing Focused Street Outreach
 - Municipal Law Enforcement
 - Parks Section
 - Hamilton Police Services
 - Encampment Engagement Officers
 - Additional members from the Crisis Support Branch
- External/Stakeholder
 - Encampment Liaison Committee
 - Hamilton Regional Indian Centre

Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters

- Two-year pilot approach beginning Q4 2023
- Low barrier alternative to emergency shelter
- Strachan Linear Park as preferred short-term site
- Work with Housing Services Division to ensure alignment with Coordinated Access and measurable outcomes

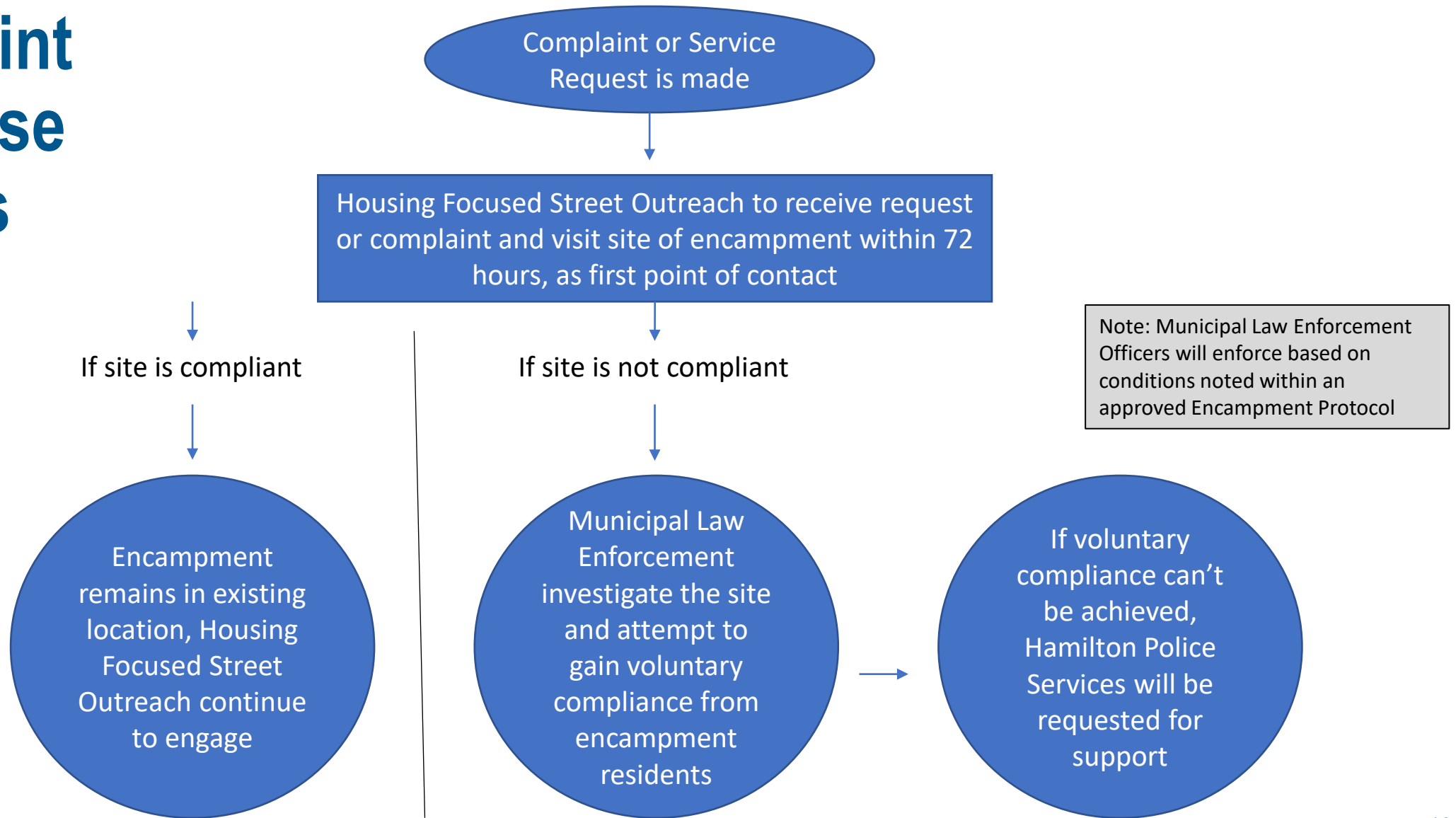
Services and Supports

- Provide access to washrooms, showers, and drinking water
 - Two 24/7 existing washrooms in two city parks
 - Shower and washroom facilities at two existing recreation facilities for 12 hours daily. Each facility with showers will provide hygiene and sundry supplies
- Integration of indigenous supports (cost-neutral)
- Integration of peer supports
 - Two seconded Outreach workers, with focus on harm reduction

Recommended Encampment Response

- Implement Protocol to provide guidelines for our City while we work towards permanent housing for all
- Continue 7 day/week, housing-led approach
- Increase services and supports to individuals living unsheltered;
- Increase garbage and waste removal; ensure Monday-Friday service level for By-law officers
- HATS pilot (up to 25 shelters)
- Invest in immediate and long term permanent housing solutions

Complaint Response Process



Next Steps

- Council to consider:
 - Adopting Encampment Protocol with Amendments
 - Providing security to ensure access to washroom and/or shower services to support individuals who are unsheltered, including two existing all-year outdoor washroom facilities with 24-hour security and two existing all-year recreation centres with 12-hour security

Next Steps

- Council to consider:
 - Supporting enforcement of the Protocol based on the existing Monday to Friday level of service, and a four-day response time, via approval of 1 FTE Supervisor of Municipal By-Law, and vehicle
 - Supporting an enhanced service level to allow Parks staff to respond to requests for clean-up and maintenance in alignment with the service levels outlined in the Proposed Encampment Protocol and approve 1 FTE Parks Lead Hand, 2 FTE Parks Operators, and required equipment.

Next Steps

- Council to consider:
 - Directing staff to enter into the appropriate agreements with the Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters for the operation of a two-year pilot of up to 25 temporary tiny homes on City lands, with appropriate security, services and supports at no cost to the City on the preferred site of Strachan Linear Park
 - Referring 2 FTEs within the Housing Services Division, as Peer Support Workers to the 2024 Tax Operating Budget; and additional costs in 2023 also referred to 2024 Tax Operating Budget to make resources permanent



Hamilton

THANK YOU

Michelle Baird
Director, Housing Services Division

Michelle.Baird@hamilton.ca