



Hamilton

ENCAMPMENT OBSERVATION REPORT

General Issues Committee Meeting

May 15, 2024

Presentation Outline

- Overview of Current Situation
- Encampment Protocol Objectives
- Implementation to date
- Challenges
- Next Steps
- Recommendations

Homelessness and Encampments

- Homelessness continues to be a crisis
- Housing is a Human Right
- Homelessness is a system failure
- Encampments are a visible manifestation of the homelessness crisis.



Homelessness and Encampments

- The encampment protocol is not a means of eliminating encampments.
- The protocol is a tool to help manage the encampments that are occurring across the City
- The protocol is not a solution to homelessness rather it is recognition that encampments will exist, and we need to manage that in a way that also allows for other city space use.



The Protocol

Less than five (5) tents per cluster, with 50m of separation between each cluster



Encampments are NOT to be located on or within any:

Off-Leash Dog Area	Cemetery	Community Garden	Sidewalk or Pathway
Fire Route or Blocking Fire Hydrant	Entrance, Exit, or Doorway	Accessibility Entrance or Ramp	Area Susceptible to Flooding or Erosion

100 metres of any:

School or Childcare Centre	Playground or Spray Pad	Pool or Waterpark
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10 metres of any:

Private Property

50 metres of any:

Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters Pilot Site	Sports Fields, Multi-Use Courts and Bleachers	Lake, Beach, Pond, Watercourse, or Dock
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5 metres of any:

Transit Stop or Highway
Property with a Heritage or Environmental Designation

Note: Encampments should not be placed against, under, or be attached or tied to any building or structure. All temporary shelters or tents must be freestanding.

If you are experiencing homelessness and require support or follow-up, contact Housing Focused Street Outreach at the City of Hamilton at unsheltered@hamilton.ca or 905-546-2828

- Approved August 2023
- An approach to balance the needs of those housed and unhoused.
- Clarity on where tents are allowed on City Property.
- 24/7 Washroom access with security

By the numbers

- Housing Focused Street Outreach has been contacted 3825 times via its unsheltered email, as well as hundreds more times by voicemail
- Currently there are approximately 50 encampments across the City and over 200 individuals are in the encampments
- 472 encampment sites have been investigated to date and 89% of the time HFSSO attended the site within the mandated 72 hours.
- 419 notices issued by MLE

Purpose of Protocol

- Protocol provides clarity for those in encampments on where they can locate which is appreciated by those in encampments
- The protocol allows stability in location allowing service providers to more easily locate clients
- The protocol allows a means of preventing large entrenched encampments.
- Coordination of City Resources – multi-department collaboration and partnership

Where are we now?

- Provision of 24/7 washrooms at 2 fixed sites
 - J.C Beemer and Corktown
- Access to shower facilities at 2 fixed sites
 - Pinky Lewis – 14 users per week
 - Benetto – 6 users per week
- Waste pick-up in parks and areas impacted by encampments
 - Pick-up schedule established
 - 67-80 requests for clean up monthly

Challenges - Housing

- Unsheltered inbox and follow ups.
- Need to balance the needs of those unhoused with those housed in neighborhoods.
- Increasing numbers of people in encampments.
- Increasingly complex needs



Challenges – Impacts to Parks



Challenges - MLE

- Difficulty meeting 4-day timeline proscribed by the protocol due to increase in encampment activity.
- Increased amount of time and resources required to address large scale sites.
- Need to quickly address health and safety issues.
- Cyber Security Incident – Data and database access
- Vulnerable population

Next Steps

- Continue with current encampment protocol and coordinated city response
- Continue to identify and implement short term solutions to the emergency
 - Increased availability of drop in spaces
 - Maintenance of expanded "winter response" shelter beds
- Medium and Long-term solutions to address homelessness

Recommendations

(a) The Encampment Protocol (Appendix “A” in Report HSC20038(g)) be modified to remove the following provision from Section D, indicating the removal of encampments, temporary shelters, or tents “on or within 50 meters of the Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters model site. For the purpose of this site the full length of the Strachan Linear Park, Bay Street North to Ferguson Street North, will be considered the site.”

(b) That Housing Services Division report back with recommendations on how to address the needs of individuals who are unhoused and any additional service gaps highlighted in this report.



Hamilton

THANK YOU