

City of Prince George
1100 Patricia Boulevard
Prince George, BC
V2L 3V9

August 25, 2021

Subject: Letter of Support for Removal of Encampment on Lower Patricia/ Fifth Avenue

To Mayor and Council,

I am writing this letter in support of the civil injunction process for the removal of the encampment on Lower Patricia/ Fifth Avenue in Prince George, BC. My husband and I live at 1402 Ash Street (facing Patricia Boulevard) and are directly impacted by the encampment and its residents.

Since the encampment came to be, my neighbourhood has seen a rapid increase in crime and unsafe behaviours. I personally no longer feel safe. We have experienced and observed:

- Several unsafe and uncontrolled fires/campfires within the hillside of Patricia Boulevard near homes.
- Fireworks being lit at the encampment late at night during a fire ban.
- Several gunshots which we (my husband and I) reported:
 - I've been woken up by gunshots in the morning.
 - I have reported gunshots downtown which did not seem to be taken seriously by RCMP as we heard no sirens.
 - Another gunshot incident was that same night as the violent home invasion on River Rd. No sirens were heard for at least 10 minutes after the call. However, there was a response for the home invasion which resulted in many police vehicles in my neighbourhood. There was one vehicle stationed outside my bedroom window until at 12:30 AM with lights on and I was informed that they were looking for a third suspect.
- My neighbour was bear sprayed for requesting that someone leave his yard. This was called into police. The suspect ran away and also called the police saying she was defending herself as he had firearm leading police to believe there was a separate firearm incident. This led to neighbours informing other neighbours to remain in their homes as there was a gunman at large. Police determined there were no guns and no other incident and the lady was caught. Unfortunately, this is a diversion tactic that has been seen before.

- Lit cigarette butts being thrown onto dry grass.
- An increase in garbage, vandalism, and drug paraphernalia scattered around the neighbourhood.
- Trespassing onto both my neighbours' properties while my husband and I were outside watching:
 - A person using my neighbours' hose while she was away.
 - A man trying to look through my neighbour's window, when I approached him, he proceeded down the street to watch another woman working in her yard while he had his hands in his pants.
- Trespassing onto another neighbourhood property while the owners were away. My husband approached the couple with the help of another female neighbour. This female neighbour was directly threatened with bodily harm.
- My friend was chased by a man with his pants down by the river. She is only safe because she ran into another neighbour's yard. Luckily the neighbour, a man, was outside and could chase the attacker away. She even had a dog with her. This person was later stopped by police which he also attacked. The police confirmed that he would likely be released the next day and be back in the tent city.
- Another woman was assaulted by a man down the bank in front of my house.
- My husband has been pushed off the sidewalk multiple times while walking to and from work (downtown).
- Sharps containers have been placed on neighbourhood benches across from my house as this is now viewed as a high drug use area. They were taken down by bylaws but Re
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- In addition, many neighbours have reported other crimes on our neighbourhood watch group. Neighbours have also informed me of many more violent crimes that have happened to them and been reported to bylaws and/or police. It seems that violence is becoming more frequent and the norm.

Direct impacts to ourselves include:

- My husband and I can no longer use the trail going down the bank on Patricia Boulevard to get downtown (also riddled with these issues) as it passes by the tent city.
- Within the last few months, we have gone from a safe neighbourhood to being concerned about leaving any items unattended for even short periods of time and making sure house and vehicle doors are locked at all times.

- My sense of safety has been impacted to a point where I set my house alarm on when home alone. I always lock my doors when home, and lock vehicle doors in between carrying things to the house.
- I no longer feel safe walking my dog alone at night. I have had to change some routines to accommodate not walking my dog alone after dark (before bed) or bring bear spray for protection as it is my last source of defence if something were to happen. As darkness is setting in earlier and earlier, I find myself using my vehicle more for safety.
- I am becoming suspicious of everyone and everything, and that is not who I am or who I want to be. But I am scared. My neighbours have reported feeling the same way.
- Having just bought a house in this neighbourhood that is now being highly impacted by residents of an illegal encampment, my husband and I are also stressed about our financial security.
- My husband and I have strongly considered selling our home. If things don't change, neither of us want to raise children in this neighbourhood.

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to voice my concerns and I sincerely hope these matters can be addressed.

Regards,

Alissa Nyheim-Rivet
Ed Bryson
1402 Ash Street
Prince George, BC
V2L 1A6

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