

**Date:** July 9, 2024

**To:** **Standing Committee on Public Safety**

**Name and title:** Eric Depenau, Director of Administrative Services

**Subject:** IMSS Delegation Follow Up Report

**Attachment(s):** None

## Recommendation(s):

THAT the Committee RECIEVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated July 9, 2024 from the Director of Administrative Services, titled "IMSS Delegation Follow Up Report".

## Purpose:

To provide the committee with information on downtown security and the relocation of meal services as directed at the June meeting of the committee.

## Background:

### Security Downtown:

The City of Prince George is not in the business of security. Therefore, when there are requests for an increased security presence, we interpret that as a request for private security to be contracted to complete this work. In the case of this delegation, security in the downtown area is specifically what is being requested. Looking at existing systems, when a neighbourhood wishes to see a level of service separate from that provided across the community, a local area service project may be contemplated.

A local area service (LAS) project is a neighbourhood improvement paid for by the owners of the benefiting properties in order to deliver specific engineering infrastructure or other services. Typical services accommodated under the LAS program are curb and gutters, sidewalks, streetlights, water mains, storm sewers or sanitary sewers. However, initial review suggests security could be contemplated under such an agreement. A LAS project can be initiated either by petition or by Council initiative and must be approved by the benefiting properties and City Council. LAS projects are carried out on actual cost basis, which is determined at the completion of the project. The individual property's share is determined and then added to the property tax. In the usual process, to initiate a local area service project, property owners who would be affected by the project can complete and submit a local area service Expression of Interest form.

Looking at the LAS system as a model, additional contracted security in the downtown may be able to be facilitated through a similar program where benefiting business could split the cost of the service and have a group (like the City, or an appropriate association) hold the contract with the service provider. If directed staff could investigate this option further.

### **Relocation of Services:**

Discussion on the relocation of support services is tied to significant ongoing work on the municipalities' approach to addressing homelessness and related issues such as the heightened cost of living. Here, we see a network of options as being required to thoughtfully engage these challenges. Staff are working to provide decision makers with options to strengthen the interdependent network of housing options, this network includes:

- Encampments (not a permitted form of sheltering).
- Overnight sheltering in designated parks and open spaces.
- Shelter spaces.
- HEARTH 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave transitional site.
- Supportive housing options.
- Market housing options.
- These options are supported by extreme weather spaces, meal and daytime facilities, as examples.

Looking at the existing network, staff are asking what is missing or in need of additional support to meet the needs of the community. This helps inform recommendations and conversation with Council and external partners. Specific questions that are being reviewed on each project are:

- Where should these forms of housing and supports (like meals, overdose prevention and daytime services) take place.
- How long is it intended that the activity take place in that location. In other words, is this a short-term response (to meet immediate needs) or is this a response that is long term (and therefore should be consistent with the OCP and zoning).

Relocating a major support service, such as one of the significant meal providers in the downtown core, is a decision that is anticipated to be most successful if done in the context of the broader strategy.

No immediate alternative is identified in this report, rather this is a conversation that is suggested to occur once direction has been expressed by Council on future management of homelessness in and around the LPBE area. Conversations on this topic are advancing currently and a further report on overnight sheltering options is anticipated to be presented to Council later this summer or fall.

A suggested action the committee may consider, now or at a later date, is providing a recommendation to Council regarding the suitability of a particular area of the City as a long-term location for the provision of social services. As a specific example, the committee could

provide a comment on the suitability of the current LPBE site for future overnight sheltering. Answers to these questions will help determine how the municipality approaches this request to support the relocation of services.

### Summary and conclusion:

Using the Local Area Service model may be an avenue to advance interest in having private security support businesses downtown. Willingness for businesses to contribute to funding this service, and who would be best positioned to hold the contract for the service, are areas that remain to be explored.

Relocating a major support service, such as one of the significant meal providers in the downtown core, is a decision that is preferred to occur in the context of the broader strategy to address homelessness in Prince George. No immediate alternative has been identified in this report, rather this is a conversation that is suggested to occur once direction has been expressed by Council on future management of homelessness in and around the LPBE area. Conversations on this topic are advancing currently and a further report on overnight sheltering options is anticipated later this summer or in the fall of 2024.

### Respectfully submitted:

Eric Depenau, Director of Administrative Services

### Approved:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: 2024/07/16