

Document Submission from Sean LeBrun, Staff Liaison to the Advisory Committee on Bear Awareness

1. Bear Smart Inter-Agency Meeting Minutes from February 7, 2019
2. DRAFT Bear Smart Program Application from the City of Prince George – June 2020
3. Bear Smart Inter-Agency Feedback on the Draft Application
4. Bear Smart Update (City of Prince George) – September 2020



Bear Smart Inter-Agency Meeting Minutes

Meeting: February 7th, 2019 @ 11:00 am, City of PG Parks Admin Meeting Room

External Agency Attendees:

Dave Bakker – Northern Bear Awareness Society
Shelley Marshall – Province of BC (Senior Wildlife Biologist)
Steve Ackles – BC Conservation Office

City of Prince George Attendees:

Laurie-Ann Kosec, Strategic Parks Planner
Larry Ward, Parks Supervisor

Education & Enforcement Discussion

- From April 1, 2018 to February 7, 2019, the BC Conservation Office (BCCO) in PG has received around 1,500 bear calls which is 10% more than in previous years. The BCCO uses a bear matrix for action. Less bears were destroyed in 2018 and more time is spent educating residents. However bears continue to be killed despite an increase in education efforts, primarily because of unsecured residential attractants.
- The BCCO can only enforce a penalty on a resident if a bear is found getting into their garbage. The BCCO needs to work jointly with the City of Prince George (CPG) Bylaw Division on education and enforcement with an ability to write a ticket with a bylaw fine. The CPG Garbage Collection and Property Maintenance Bylaws include bear smart bylaws which require some rewording and fines for enforcement.
- Keeping bears wild is how to save them, not rehabilitation. Hazing does not work if there is a viable food source (e.g. Whistler).
- Unfortunately education often starts after an incident happens, therefore we need to be more proactive to improve public safety, reduce bear conflicts, and associated bear mortality. Proactive efforts would raise awareness on bear smart bylaws (e.g. need to wash out carts & recyclables), revised CPG website, and joint work between Bylaw & BCCO. Opportunities for criminal negligence can also help with a ground up approach.
- Social media can have a negative impact such as people reporting bear sightings or incidents to each other and not to the BCCO. Social media could however be used positively as a forum to raise awareness (destroyed property, destroyed bears, safety concerns, fines if applicable).
- The BCCO and CPG have not been approached by animal activists in PG.
- Newer residential development could be bear smart with outdoor enclosures for garbage carts.
- Need to include Fraser Fort George Regional District in discussions moving forward.

2019 Bear-Resistant Cart Pilot Project

- Older neighbourhoods in the Hart (e.g. Croft, Wildwood) and lower College Heights are priority areas for bear-resistant carts given the high incidences of bear activity and residential homes without garages, unlike in newer neighbourhoods like University Heights. Future expansion of the project should first create a nucleus around the pilot project to concentrate efforts in one area first. Complete replacement of all CPG residential carts is estimated at around \$7 million for +/- 23,500 carts.
- Goal to implement the PG Bear-Resistant Cart Pilot Project in early/mid-April. Residents in the Pilot Project area will be notified by hand delivered notice & CPG online communications. Need to communicate there may be more bear activity around the pilot project area as they search for food.
- Yukon recently implemented these carts with some lessons learned. Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-bears-garbage-bins-1.4998168>

Bear Smart Power Point Presentation

- Power point presentation includes Bear Smart Community program information and stats for Tumbler Ridge. A similar presentation can be provided to CPG council.

P.G. Bear Smart Community Status & Letter of Agreement

- Bear Smart Community Status is a badge of honour and a tourism opportunity for PG. CPG Council committed to becoming a Bear Smart Community on February 21, 2011. Bear smart bylaws were implemented in 2012.
- A Letter of Agreement (LOA) between the CPG and BCCO was signed in 2011 and outlines the partnership, roles, and responsibilities for each organization in bear/human conflict resolution. The Letter of Agreement expired in 2013 two years after it was signed, however it is agreed upon that we would honour the intent of the LOA in principle with resigning if required.

Bear-Smart Criteria	Status	Completed to Date	Outstanding/Undetermined
1. Bear Hazard Assessment	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008 Assessment complete & received by Council in June 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include addition of a Foreward outlining updates since 2008
2. Bear/Human Conflict Management Plan	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008 Mgt. Plan complete & received by Council in June 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include addition of a Foreward outlining updates since 2008
3. Revise Planning/Decision-Making Documents	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 OCP Bylaw 8383 Wildlife Section 6.4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the Mgt. Plan policy is incorporated into the OCP • Identify guidelines/regulations for new development
4. Continuing Education	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Bear Awareness website, Facebook, community education • CPG garbage truck education decals & City website 'Wildlife' webpage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise 'Wildlife' webpage on City website with bear smart key messages & consequences. • Seasonal media releases in Spring & Fall regarding bear awareness
5. Bear-Proof Solid Waste Management System	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2019 Pilot Project for Bear-Resistant residential waste carts • Bear-Proof Haul All containers in parks/public with high bear frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop long-term plan for Bear-Resistant residential waste carts & Bear-Proof Haul All containers in locations with high bear frequency (need mapping & container inventory)
6. Bear Smart Bylaws	Underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garbage Collection Bylaw 7661 revised & Property Maintenance Bylaw 8425 added 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reword and add fines for enforcement

CPG Council Presentation – Proposed for March 11, 2019

- Council report and presentation will update CPG Council on the Bear Smart Community implementation, stats, requirements moving forward (e.g. bylaw revision), and the 2019 Pilot Project.
- Power point presentation will be jointly presented by the BCCO (Steve), Province of BC (Shelley), Northern Bear Awareness Society (Dave), and CPG Parks & Solid Waste Services (Laurie).



Photo Source: NBAS



June 2020

PRINCE GEORGE BEAR SMART PROGRAM APPLICATION

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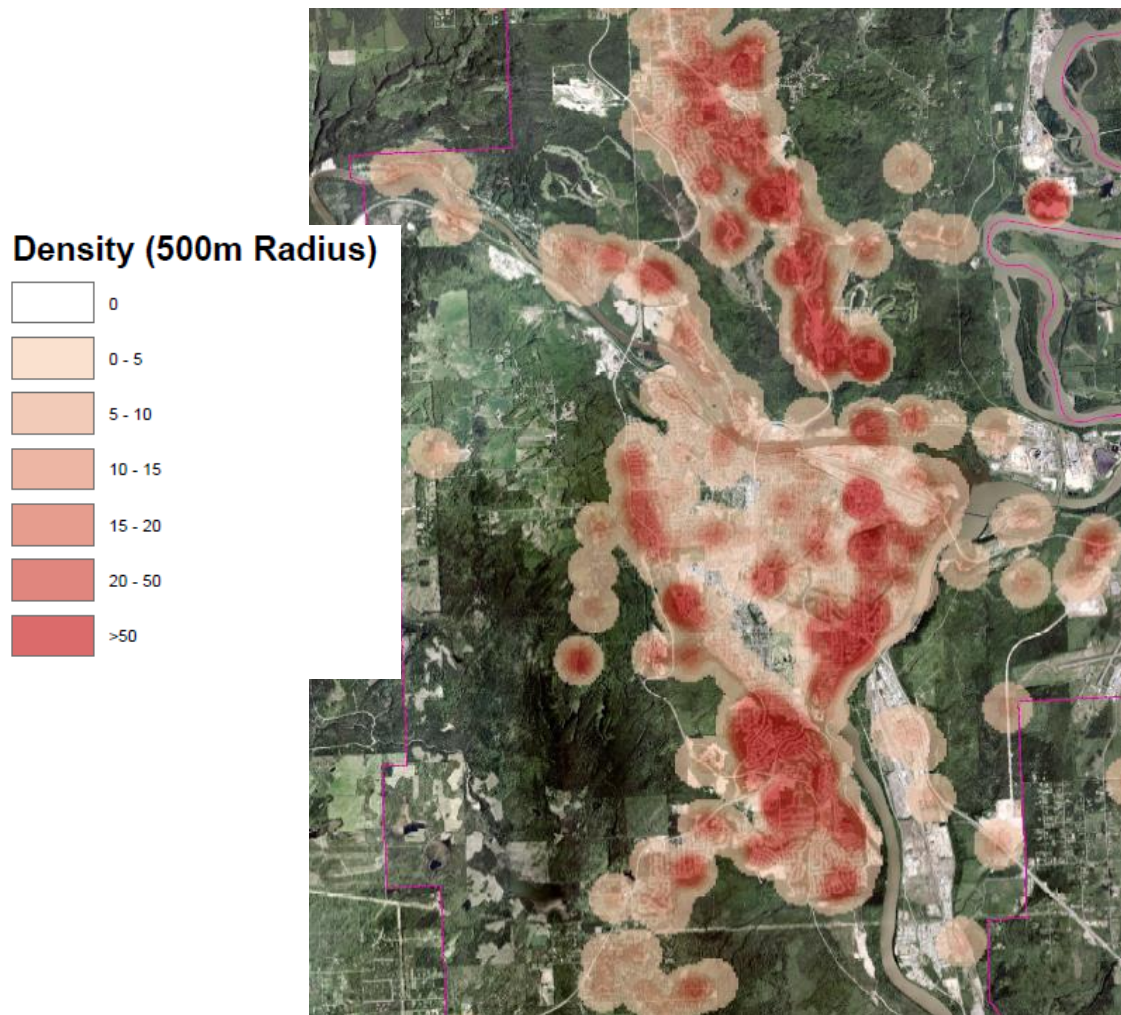
“Plans to protect air, water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact plans to protect man.”

Stewart Udall

Add letter from the City Manager here

1.0 Black Bears in PG

Prince George is the largest city in northern British Columbia with a population of 74,000¹ people and a large population of black bears. The city is situated in prime black bear habitat where black bears often utilize the Nechako and Fraser Rivers within the City as travel corridors and rely on the natural areas around Prince George for food. Unnatural bear attractants such as garbage has been detrimental to local the black bear population. Over the past 10 years, Prince George had an average of 890 bear sighting calls and the destruction of 35 bears per year, which unfortunately represents the highest numbers of any community in B.C.².



2016 Density of Bear Sighting Areas (source: NBAS)

The unfortunate reality for the community of Prince George is that “a ‘catch-22’ situation occurs where one bear is removed and another just takes its place and management is caught in continually responding to calls and destroying bears. – Source: *Bear Occurrence Reports and Mortalities for Prince George, BC, 2011-2017*, Ciarniello, Lana M.

¹ Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census

² Source: Northern Bear Awareness Society Condensed Activity Report 2011-2018

2.0 Prince George Bear Smart Community Application

At a [February 21, 2011 Council Meeting](#), City of Prince George Mayor and Council committed to achieving Provincial Bear Smart Community status and authorized a Memorandum of Understanding with the Conservation Office of British Columbia (COBC). Since 2011, the City of Prince George has been actively working towards this goal through an inter-agency partnership with the BC Conservation Officer Services (COS), Province of British Columbia, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG), and the Northern Bear Awareness Society (NBAS).



At an [April 8th, 2019 Council meeting](#), the inter-agency partnership provided City of Prince George Mayor and Council with a [presentation](#) and [Bear Smart Status Implementation 2019 Update](#). The update outlined the tasks completed to date as well as those requiring completion in order to achieve Provincial Bear Smart Community status.

The 2020 application package provided herein represents the completion of the outstanding tasks in relation to the six (6) Provincial Bear Smart Community program criteria, while also identifying all ongoing or future tasks to be completed pending available resources.



Photo Source: Northern Bear Awareness Society

Criteria #1 – Prepare a Bear Hazard Assessment

“Prepare a bear hazard assessment of the community and surrounding area.”

2009 Bear Hazard Assessment & 2019 Update

A [Bear Hazard Assessment for Prince George, BC](#) was completed in 2008 and received by City of Prince George Mayor and Council in 2009. The assessment was based on Problem Wildlife Occurrence Report (PWOR) data collected between 2004 and 2007 by the BC Conservation Officer Service (COS). The assessment fulfilled the requirement to identify current and potential risks for human-bear conflict.

An updated [2019 Bear Occurrence Reports & Mortalities](#) assessment report was prepared to analyze current PWOR data from 2011 and 2017 and identify any changes to bear behaviour in Prince George since the original 2008 report. The 2019 report findings are summarized in Appendix 1 of this document and confirm that:

- bear activity is increasing with continued hot spot areas throughout Prince George;
- garbage continues to be the primary bear attractant; and
- bear mortality is slightly increasing.

Bear Smart City Park Audit

The findings from both the 2008 and 2019 assessment reports were utilized to develop the [City of Prince George Bear Smart Park Audit](#) which assigned a bear hazard ranking to all the City’s 169 parks and green spaces. The audit is a vital tool to prioritize the investment of infrastructure and ongoing operations with higher bear hazard City parks and green spaces like waterfront areas to help reduce human-bear conflicts. The audit rankings and results are summarized below and available in further detail in Appendix 2 with inventories of bear smart garbage cans and signage.



City of PG Park Bear Hazard Ranking		
Bear Hazard Rank	Ranking Criteria	# City Parks
Very High (VH)	Natural area along or near the 2 major rivers	16
High (H)	Riparian areas and greenways connecting to the major rivers	10
Medium-High (MH)	Within or adjacent to larger natural forested areas	12
Medium (M)	Within or adjacent to smaller natural forested areas	37
Low (L)	All other areas	94

- TO DO: Continue to support the collection of bear data, research projects, and audits to inform the bear hazard ratings and targeted bear smart solutions.
- TO DO: Continue to revisit the audit to identify any potential revisions to the assigned bear hazard rankings for City parks and green spaces.

Criteria #2 – Prepare a Human-Bear Conflict Management Plan

“Prepare a bear/human conflict management plan that is designed to address the bear hazards and land-use conflicts identified in the previous step.”

The [Human-Bear Conflict Prevention Management Plan for Prince George, BC](#) was received by the City of Prince George Mayor and Council in 2009. The management plan primarily addresses two (2) key issues of removing bear attractants and managing humans in order to reduce human-bear conflict as well as the number of bears that are destroyed in Prince George.

Most of the recommendations from the management plan have been implemented to date or are ongoing, while some additional ‘To Do’ items would be pursued with available resources and funding.

Prince George Human-Bear Conflict Prevention Management Plan Recommendation Summary				
Recommendation	Completed	Ongoing	To Do	Notes
1. Manage Non-Natural Attractants				
Residential Curbside Garbage Cans	✓	✓		Curbside carts implemented in 2004.
Residential Bear-Resistant Garbage Cans		✓	✓	2019 Pilot Project with 2 yr. monitoring. TO DO - Pursue potential expansion.
Residential Bear-Resistant Garbage Locks		✓	✓	Tie-down strap recommended. TO DO - Trial other locking mechanisms.
Residential Curbside Recycling	✓			Implemented in 2014 by Multi-Material BC.
Bear Smart Garbage Enclosures		✓	✓	Guidelines provided. TO DO – Refine bylaws & provide structural guidance.
Commercial & Multi-Family Garbage Mgt.		✓		Guidelines provided in Development Permits & to existing owners.
Landfill & Transfer Stations Fencing	✓			RDFFG Landfill fencing completed in 2011. All Transfer Stations are fenced.
Unauthorized Dumping & Homeless Camps		✓		Ongoing clean-up a focus area for City. Barriers installed in problem areas.
Fruit Trees	✓			Fruit Exchange Program, tree lists, education, policies, & bylaws are in place.
Composting & Other Attractants	✓			Education and bylaws are in place.
2. Manage Humans				
Bear Smart Residential Garbage Bylaws	✓		✓	Completed. TO DO – Refine attractant and storage definitions.
Bear Smart Bylaw Enforcement		✓		Bylaw permits C.O. enforcement (Wildlife Act). Compliance Strategy in place.
Education Programs & Partnership Delivery		✓		Coordinated education by NBAS, REAPS, & CPG.
Educational Materials		✓		Online, info flyer, seasonal Media Releases, special events, classrooms, etc.
Communications & Media		✓		Online CPG, NBAS, & REAPS websites (linked). CPG park Bear Aware signs.
3. Urban Development & Parks				
Trail Corridors		✓		Neighbourhood Plan policy, development guidelines, & CPG Bear Aware signs
Park Bear-Resistant Garbage Cans	✓		✓	Implemented. TO DO – Install remaining bear-resistant garbage cans.
Park Design & Development		✓		Development guidelines and bear-resistant tree species.
Park Vegetation Management		✓	✓	Ongoing mtce. TO DO – Improve sight lines & remove cover/foods.
Neighbourhood Plans		✓		Guidelines provided for Neighbourhood Plan for policy approval.
4. Schools				
School District 57 & UNBC	✓	✓		Garbage & play areas conform to dev. guidelines. Education is ongoing.
5. Bear Criteria				
Problem Bear Designation	✓			Provincial Bear Conflict Response Matrix established & in use.
6. Research & Data				
Provincial Bear Occurrence Database		✓		Continued data provision through the Province of BC.
Future Research		✓		Continued support for research projects & UNBC graduate studies.
7. Inter-agency Cooperation				
Interagency Partnership		✓		Est. via 2011 M.O.U. – COS, NBAS, Province of BC, & RDFFG.
City Responsibilities		✓		Dedicated bear-smart resources, staffing, & funding commitments.

Criteria #3 – Revise Planning and Decision-Making Documents

“Revise planning and decision-making documents to be consistent with the bear/human conflict management plan.”

Official Community Plan

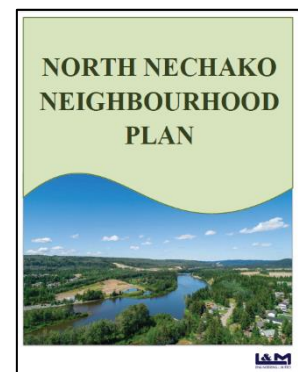
The [2011 Prince George Official Community Plan \(OCP\) Bylaw No. 8383](#) (Section 6.4.B pp. 45-51) provides broad policy direction to support local wildlife and reduce human-bear conflict as outlined below.

- Ensuring bylaws have regulations to manage attractants such as garbage and fruit trees, while also governing greenbelt dumping and other activities which impact bear habitat (Policy 6.4.18).
- Supporting continued bear smart community education, initiatives, and programs (Policy 6.4.20, 6.4.21).
- Working with supportive partner agencies on education, monitoring, and enforcement (Policy 6.4.21)
- Balancing wildlife habitat within the urban environment and new neighbourhoods by conserving or protecting significant habitat areas and wildlife corridors, maintaining landscape connectivity, and supporting ecosystem diversity (Policy 6.4.22, 6.4.23, 6.4.25, 6.4.34).
- Considering potential impacts to bear habitat and local pollinators through fuel management treatments, plant selection, and climate change adaptation (6.4.19, 6.4.24).
- Implementing bear smart landscape guidelines and land-use planning decisions from environmental assessments (Policy 6.4.42).

Neighbourhood Plans & Rezoning

[Neighbourhood & Area Plans](#) to apply the OCP policy direction into land-use plans which direct the zoning and development of new neighbourhoods. The City of Prince George provides bear smart policy direction (Appendix 3) which has been incorporated into the following Neighbourhood Plans located within prominent bear habitat and corridor areas:

- Woodlands Neighbourhood Plan (Draft for adoption 2020)
- North Nechako Neighbourhood Plan (2019)
- Fraser River Bench Lands Neighbourhood Plan (2009)
- University Heights Neighbourhood Plan (2007)



Development Guidelines & Permits

The City provides bear smart development and management guidelines (Appendix 3) and other development processes and tools are recommended such as:

- Building Schemes to be registered on title during the time of rezoning with landscape guidelines to manage attractants such as residential garbage and fruit bearing trees; and
- Development and Building Permits that incorporate bear-resistant plantings and secure bear-resistant garbage enclosures for commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family residential development.



Photo Source: WildSafeBC Elk Valley

Criteria #4 – Implement a Continuing Education Program

“Implement a continuing education program (i.e. Bear Aware), directed at all sectors of the community.”

The City of Prince George works closely with inter-agency partners like the Northern Bear Awareness Society to deliver a bear smart continuing education program that is thorough, connected, and diverse as included below:

Northern Bear Awareness Society (NBAS)

This non-profit organization was incorporated in 2008 and delivers much of the preventative bear smart education in Prince George since 2000 through the following mechanisms delivered by volunteers:

- Elementary School Classroom presentations (360 presentations reaching over 10,000 students)
- Summer Camps (over 150 interactive presentations reaching over 3,500 participants)
- Public events (reaching over 40,000 people)
- Brochures provided to residents (over 7,000 homes)
- Neighbourhood watch programs and initiatives such as the residential garbage cart tagging project
- [Fruit Exchange Program](#) as supported by [Northern Lights Estate Winery](#)
- [Online education](#) for managing attractants, resource links, bear sighting data, and projects
- [NBAS Facebook](#) page as a primary online communication tool
- Online links to other bear smart organizations and government resources



City of Prince George

- City [Bears and Wildlife webpage](#) with education on bear smart safety, initiatives, bylaws, downloads, resource links, and contact information
- [Bear Smart Info Flyer](#) (see Appendix 4) on the City's website and provided to residents for education and bylaw compliance
- [Bear Aware signage](#) (see Appendix 5) installed in very high to medium bear hazard parks and green spaces
- Online [Garbage Collection Schedule](#) with bear smart and bylaw education mailed to 23,000+ residences annually
- Online [Recommended Bear-Resistant Tree List](#)
- Bear smart seasonal [news releases](#) and [social media posts](#)
- City garbage truck bear smart decals



These ongoing educational efforts will continue with a goal to focus educational efforts before the problem starts where possible to limit human-bear conflict and the development of food-conditioned bears.

- TO DO: Develop and post educational signage on bears and attractants in parks and at transfer stations.
- TO DO: Expand the bear-resistant tree list to include understory plant material.
- TO DO: Provide bear-resistant lists and info flyer to local nurseries and fruit tree retailers.

Criteria #5 – Develop & Maintain a Bear-Proof Solid Waste Mgt. System

“Develop and maintain a bear-proof municipal solid waste (MSW) management system.”

Bear smart solid waste management is a top priority to help reduce human-bear conflict given that garbage is the primary non-natural bear attractant. An effective bear smart solid waste management system must incorporate all levels of private and public solid waste collection and disposal systems to effectively reduce human-bear conflict. The solutions must also be feasible and supported by available legislation, tools, and resources tools for implementation and ongoing operations.

The City of Prince George has a diverse range of infrastructure, education, regulations, and guidelines as outlined that support an effective bear smart solid waste management system.

Residential Bear Resistant Garbage Cart Pilot Project

In April 2019, the City of Prince George introduced [300 bear-resistant residential garbage carts](#) to a high frequency bear area in the Hart Highlands Croft neighbourhood. All of the existing residential curbside garbage carts were swapped with a Rehrig bear-resistant 95 gallon cart which unlocks with one hand for garbage disposal and will only open when inverted upside down by a garbage collection truck. The carts are being tested as a pilot project as each garbage cart is over five (5) times the price of a regular cart and over \$7 million would be required to convert the City's inventory of over 23,000 residential garbage carts. A survey of area residents has identified that the carts are deterring bear activity and are relatively easy to use. The City will continue to monitor the success of these carts over a two (2) year period for potential expansion.



- TO DO: Develop a Bear Resistant Garbage Cart expansion program with identified funding solutions and implementation plan for other high frequency bear residential areas.
- TO DO: Explore alternative options for bear-resistant garbage cart management such as conducting trials on various locking mechanisms (e.g. Port Coquitlam) or distributing cam straps to residents.
- TO DO: Identify and provide best practices for bear resistant lockable enclosures to residents.

City Parks & Green Spaces

All City parks and green spaces identified with a very high to medium bear hazard in the [City of Prince George Bear Smart Park Audit](#) have bear resistant Haul All garbage cans (see Appendix 2). Some of these parks also have Sybertech garbage cans that help to dissuade bear activity, but are not bear resistant. The City also has an established operational program to ensure all garbage cans are maintained regularly to reduce odours are ensure the infrastructure is functional for use.



TO DO: Continue to monitor the Sybertech garbage cans and barrels within City parks and green spaces and swap these cans with Haul All's if required.

“Haul-All's bear proof garbage bins have done more to prevent bear deaths than any other product on the market today.” – Dr. Stephen Herrero (Bear Attacks: Their Causes and Avoidances)

Regional District Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG) Solid Waste Landfill & Transfer Stations

The RDFFG maintains the Foothills Boulevard Regional Landfill within the City of Prince George and collects over 96% of region's municipal solid waste. The [2015 Regional Solid Waste Management Plan](#) includes landfill operations that are helping to reduce human-bear conflict such as completing the perimeter chain-link fencing around the Foothills Boulevard Regional Landfill. All of the transfer stations within the City of Prince George are also enclosed with chain-link perimeter fencing.



- **TO DO:** Continue to work with the RDFFG as an inter-agency partner and explore solutions such as an electrified cattle guard for bear breaches while the Foothills landfill gate is open during operational hours.

Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, & Multi-Family Solid Waste Systems

The City's bear smart development and management guidelines in Appendix 3 are provided to the private sector and other public agencies through new development proposals or where existing land uses require solutions to help reduce human-bear conflict. The City must work within the provincial legislative framework which includes tools such as Development Permits for commercial, intensive residential, and industrial land uses where bear smart guidelines can be provided for potential implementation.

- **TO DO:** Provide options and examples of potential bear smart solid waste solutions for various land uses including intensive residential areas such as trailer parks with ongoing human-bear conflict.



Criteria #6 – Implement Bear Smart Bylaws & Compliance Strategy

“Implement ‘Bear Smart’ bylaws prohibiting the provision of food to bears as a result of intent, neglect, or irresponsible management of attractants. Implement a compliance strategy for these bylaws to ensure that there is full compliance with them.”

Bear Smart Bylaws

The following City of Prince George bylaws include bear smart regulations as summarized below.

[Garbage Collection Regulation Bylaw No. 7661, 2004](#) (includes 2012 amendment Bylaw 8366)

Residential Garbage carts must be set at the curb no earlier than 4:00 am on collection day and must be removed by 7:00 pm that day as per Sections 6.2(d), 6.2(e), & 6.4(b).

[Property Maintenance Bylaw No. 8425, 2012](#) (includes 2017 amendment Bylaw 8819)

Section 11 of the bylaw outlines regulations for feeding wildlife as well as attracting dangerous wildlife as defined by the Wildlife Act. Section 11 (1) to (5) of the bylaw includes regulations where a person cannot:

- Store, handle, dispose wildlife attractants in a way that is accessible to dangerous wildlife;
- Feed dangerous wildlife or make a bird feeder and seed accessible to dangerous wildlife; and
- Allow fruit to accumulate in a way that makes it attractive to dangerous wildlife.

Section 26 permits a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, RCMP Officer, and BC Provincial Conservation Officer to enforce Section 11 of the bylaw.

[Bylaw Notice Enforcement Bylaw No. 8813, 2016](#)

Section “B” of the bylaw outlines a fine schedule ranging from \$100 for Bylaw 7661 garbage collection infractions and \$300 for Bylaw 8425 wildlife attractant infractions. Section 9.1 of the bylaw outlines the regulations for ‘Compliance Agreements’ that can be executed for up to a one (1) year with terms and conditions, including payment schedules as outlined in Schedule “A” of the bylaw.

- **TO DO: Research best practices in bear smart bylaws to refine City regulations and definitions particularly as it relates to attractants, storage, and penalties.**



Photo Source: NBAS

Compliance Strategy

The City of Prince George developed a Compliance Strategy to support the enforcement of City bear smart bylaw regulations. As with most bylaw enforcement, the City relies primarily on complaints by citizens which are entered as calls for service and are assigned for investigation by bylaw enforcement officers. The City's system allows for the calls for service to be tracked which provides the opportunity to identify repeat areas of concern. The City's Compliance Strategy for bear smart bylaw regulations has a primary enforcement objective to gain voluntary compliance through education and warnings. Problem areas and repeat areas of concern may advance to formal violation enforcement under the City's bylaw enforcement regulations.



Photo Source: NBAS

Provincial Conservation Officer Service

In the Fall of 2019, the BC Provincial Conservation Officer Service (COS) enforced the residential curbside garbage cart regulations under the provincial Wildlife Act as permitted through the City's bylaw regulations. The enforcement focused on areas in Prince George where a substantial volume of calls for food conditioned bears were received by the Province of BC and traps were set within 500 metres of the area.

- TO DO: Continue to work proactively with the Province of BC and COS through the inter-agency partnership to identify high frequency bear occurrences and coordinate efforts in education, bylaw enforcement, and compliance.
- TO DO: Continue to monitor and enforce regulations with a focus on residential curbside garbage carts.

3.0 Next Steps

The City of Prince George and its inter-agency partners have worked proactively to meet the required criteria to become a Provincial Bear Smart community as evidenced in this application package. The City and inter-agency partners are also committed to working towards the completion of the 'To Do' items outlined in this application package, using an adaptive and prioritized approach to implementation and ongoing management.

A successful application to the Provincial Bear Smart Community program would not only help to raise awareness in the community, but also to gain the required support, funding, and resources required to continue with the bear smart initiatives. A bear smart community designation can establish the City of Prince George as leaders in northern BC and provide a resource to many of the smaller communities in the region in their goal to reduce human-bear conflict.



Photo Source: NBAS

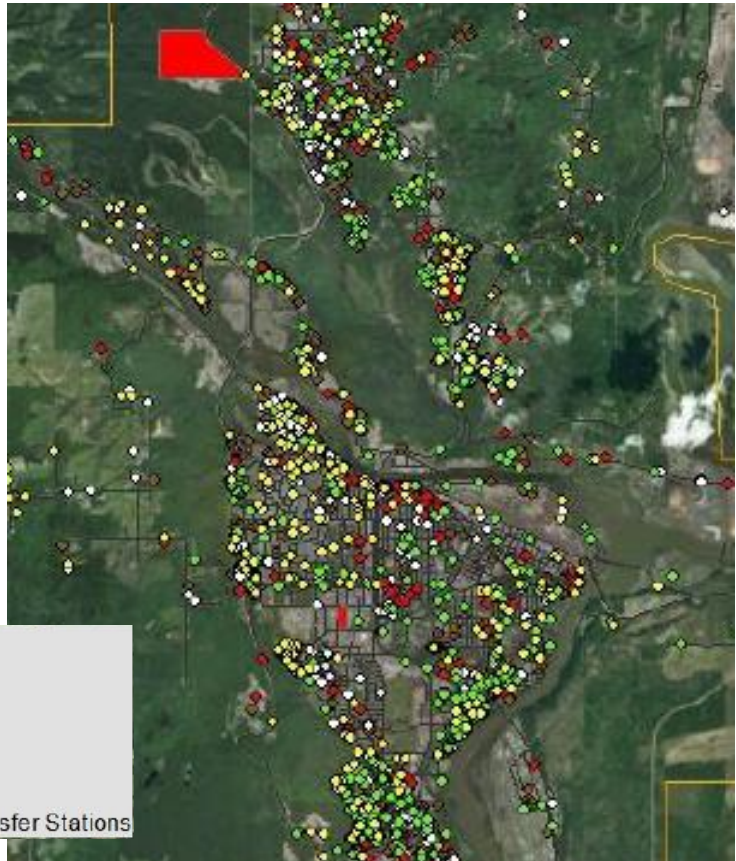
Appendix 1 – Prince George Bear Data

A report was recently produced by Aklak Wildlife Consulting which provides an analysis of the 4,446 provincial bear occurrence calls and 218 bear mortalities in Prince George between 2011 to 2017³. A bear occurrence call is recorded when a resident contacts the BC Conservation Officer Service to report any form of a bear sighting which may or may not be problematic in nature. A similar bear data set from 2004 to 2007 was previously analyzed in the 2008 PG Bear Hazard Assessment report. The 2011 to 2017 report provides a follow-up and comparison of these data sets for further consideration. The following is a summary of the report findings.

Bear Activity is increasing ...

Over the years the number of bear occurrence calls has increased with clusters of bear activity around the outskirts of the City and an expanding area within College Heights. Since 2004, the high frequency bear activity areas continue to be concentrated in the following areas listed from the north to south end of the City:

- Hart Highlands to Aberdeen
- Stirling/Moore's Meadow
- Lansdowne/Charella/Peden Hill/College Heights



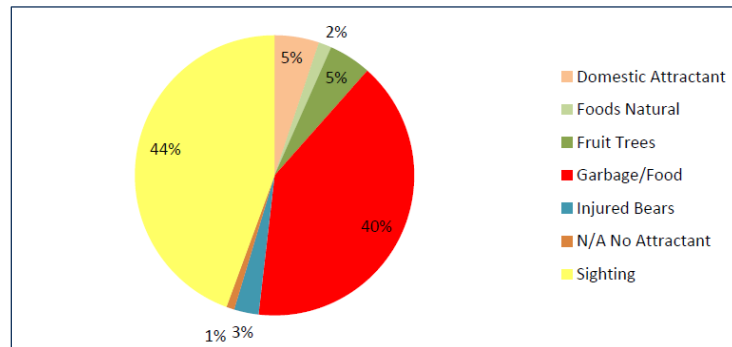
Location of bear occurrence reports in Prince George from 2014-2017



³ Report available on <https://www.northernbearawareness.com> and entitled 'Bear Occurrence Reports and Mortalities for Prince George, BC, 2011-2017' as prepared by Lana M. Ciarniello, Ph.D., RPBio of Aklak Wildlife Consulting.

Garbage is the #1 attractant ...

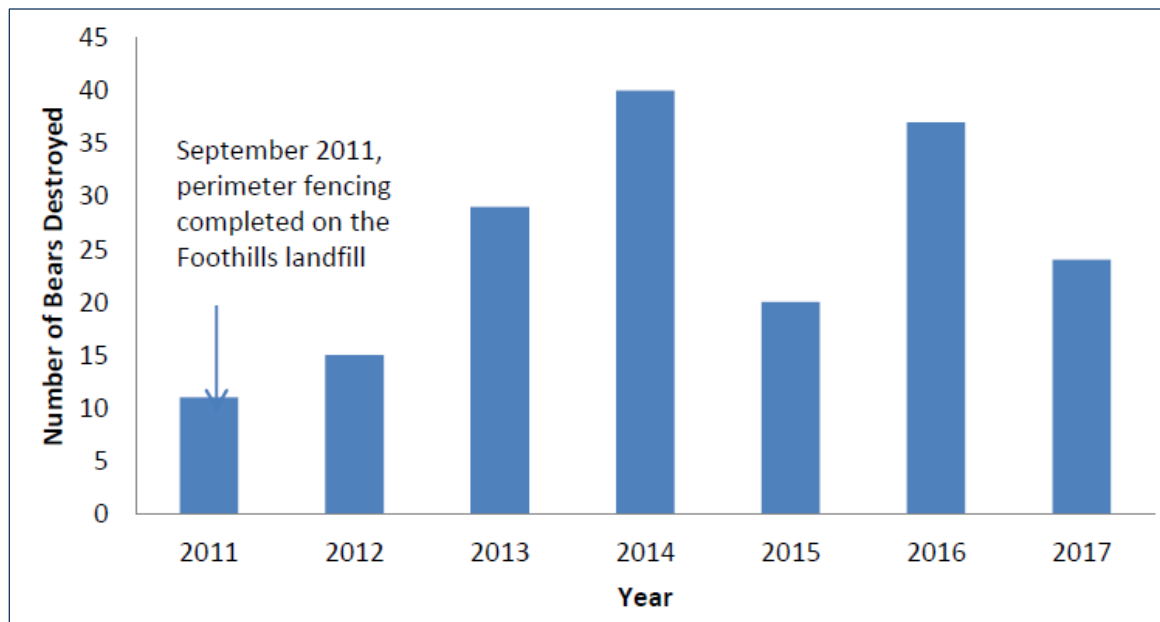
While a large percentage of the total bear occurrence calls within the City of Prince George are typically related to observed bear sightings (44%), around 40% of the bear occurrence calls were directly related to bears actively knocking down garbage cans in search of food. The report identifies that garbage is a primary reason why bears are observed within City limits and human/bear conflicts are anticipated to increase with ongoing access to garbage and expanding residential developments.



Bear occurrence reports in Prince George from 2011-2017 by category

Bear mortality is not decreasing ...

The BC Conservation Officer Service destroyed an average of 35 bears in the City of Prince George over the past 10 years. However this number has grown to an average of 41 bears in the last three (3) years between 2015 and 2017 and is showing little sign of decreasing.



Number of bears destroyed in Prince George by year from 2011-2017

Appendix 2 – Bear Hazard Park Audit & Infrastructure Investment

An audit of bear hazards in City parks was originally completed over 10 years ago through the 2008 [Bear Hazard Assessment for Prince George, BC](#) report. The information below builds on the initial 2008 assessment to include bear hazard ratings for each City park, along with bear smart guidelines to help reduce these hazards.

Bear Hazard Rankings & Results

Each of the City's 169 parks and green spaces were assigned the following Very High to Low bear hazard ranking based on the 2008 [Bear Hazard Assessment for Prince George, BC](#) report findings. The hazard rating was determined through an audit of the level of development within each park, proximity to waterfronts, and identified bear habitat or travel corridors.

- **Very High (VH)** – Natural area along or near the 2 major rivers
- **High (H)** – Riparian areas and greenways connecting to the major rivers
- **Medium-High (MH)** – Within or adjacent to larger natural forested areas
- **Medium (M)** – Within or adjacent to smaller natural forested areas
- **Low (L)** – All other areas

The audit resulted in a total of 16 Very High, 10 High, and 12 Medium-High ranked bear hazard sites. More than half of the parks were ranked as Low (94) while the remaining parks were ranked as a Medium (37) bear hazard.



Popular waterfront parks like Cottonwood Island Park or Forests for the World are high bear hazard areas.

Bear Smart Infrastructure Investment

The Very High to Medium-High ranked bear hazard parks and green spaces represent prioritized investment for bear smart infrastructure and ongoing maintenance. The following table outlines the implementation of bear-resistant garbage cans and bear aware signage infrastructure to date along with additional requirements for ongoing investment.

Park Name	Classification	Dev.	Garbage Cans				Bear Signs	
			Haul All	Sybertech	Other	Total Cans	Proposed Haul Alls	Qty.
VERY HIGH (VH) BEAR HAZARD								
Cottonwood Island Park	Nature	Y	6	5	0	11	0	4
Fish Trap Island	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	2
Fraser River Benchland Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Heritage River Trail System	Nature	Y	7	1	0	8	0	2
Hudson’s Bay Wetland Nature Park	Nature	Y	1	0	0	1	0	3
Kiwanis Park	Nature	Y	2	0	0	2	0	1
Klein Quarry	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
LC Gunn Park	Nature	Y	0	1	0	1	0	2
McMillan Ck. Fishing Park	Nature	Y	3	0	0	3	0	1
McMillan Creek Regional Park	Public	Y	0	0	0	0	0	1
Nechako Riverside Park	Nature	Y	8	0	0	8	0	2
North Nechako Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parkridge Creek Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rustad Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Williams Park	Green Space	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilson Park	Nature	Y	1	0	0	1	0	2
HIGH (H) BEAR HAZARD								
Bob Martin Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Ferguson Lake Nature Reserve	Nature	Y	1	0	0	1	0	2
Forests for the World	Nature	Y	2	0	0	2	0	3
Hazelton Park	Nature	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Latrobe Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Lheidli T’enneh Memorial Park	Major	Y	22	0	0	22	0	2
Moore’s Meadow Park	Nature	Y	6	0	0	6	0	4
North College Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	2
Otway Ski Centre	Special Purpose	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paddlewheel Park	Neighbourhood	Y	2	0	0	2	0	1
MEDIUM-HIGH (MH) BEAR HAZARD								
Chancellor Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chief Memorial Park	Green Space	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cranbrook Hill Greenway	Nature	Y	0	0	0	0	0	3
Delisle	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elgin Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exhibition Park	Special Purpose	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fairburn Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0	1	0	1	1	0
Haldi Road Park	Green Space	Y	0	0	0	0	0	1
Nechako Cutbanks Park	Green Space	Y	1	0	0	1	0	0
UNBC Connector Trail/Ginter’s M.	Nature	Y	8	1	0	9	0	5
Valleyview Reserve	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Volunteer Park	Athletic	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1

Park Name	Classification	Dev.	Garbage Cans				Bear Signs	
			Haul All	Sybertech	Other	Total Cans	Proposed Haul Alls	Qty.
MEDIUM (M) BEAR HAZARD								
Aberdeen	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Balsum Park	Athletic	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Brentwood	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Campbell Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carrie Jane Gray Park	Athletic	Y	8	0	7	15	0	1
Cemetery	Special Purpose	Y	0	0	8	8	0	0
Connaught Hill Park	Major	Y	13	0	0	13	0	1
Crieff Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Croft	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Edgewood Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Essex Park	Green Space	N	0	1	0	1	0	0
Exhibition Park (Fields)	Athletic	Y	0	0	1	1	0	0
Gladstone Park & Trail System	Neighbourhood	Y	5	0	0	5	0	2
Hammond Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Heather Road Park	Community	Y	2	0	0	2	0	1
Jasper Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	0
Jean de Brebeuf Park	Neighbourhood	Y	2	0	0	2	0	1
Krystal	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loyola Park	Green Space	Y	0	1	0	1	0	0
McGill Park	Green Space	Y	2	0	0	2	0	0
Moriarty Park	Green Space	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0	0	0	0	1	1
Parkridge Heights Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	0
Prudente Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0	1	0	1	0	1
Rainbow Park	Major	Y	9	0	0	9	0	0
Ridgeview Park	Neighbourhood	Y	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ridgeview Trail	Green Space	Y	0	0	0	0	0	2
Romanin	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sadler	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sinclair Park	Athletic	Y	1	0	0	1	0	0
Starlane Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Stauble Park	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stirling Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	1
Strathcona Park	Community	Y	3	0	0	3	0	0
Wallace	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watrous Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	0
Winslow	Green Space	N	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zimmaro Park	Neighbourhood	Y	1	0	0	1	0	0
TOTALS							2	63

Appendix 3 – Bear Smart Policies & Guidelines

The following policies and guidelines have been developed to help to direct the development and maintenance of both City lands and private development with a goal to provide people with a meaningful connection to nature while mitigating human-bear conflict and reduce bear mortality.

Neighbourhood Plan Bear Smart Policies

The following policy direction has been developed for inclusion within neighbourhood plans to help reduce human-bear conflict while supporting local bear habitat within new development areas.

- Parkland shall encourage biodiversity where possible by retaining existing intact vegetation communities and wildlife corridors to connect flora and fauna.
- Parks and natural features should be linked via green corridors to provide informal public access and wildlife linkages to critical natural habitats within the plan areas.
- Bear warning signage shall be installed at trailheads in wildlife corridors and parks with a higher probability of human-wildlife conflict.
- Environmental assessments shall be pursued for the plan area to identify wildlife habitats, potential impacts from development, and mitigation measures during and post development.
- Landscape design shall be pursued in the plan to reduce human-wildlife conflict by restricting fruit bearing trees, including perimeter residential fencing, and securing residential garbage.
- Building schemes shall be considered for registration within the plan area to help reduce human-wildlife conflict through restrictions such as banning fruit bearing trees and requiring secured enclosures for residential garbage.


Bear Smart Development & Management Guidelines

The following bear smart guidelines help to inform the design, development, and maintenance of both new and existing areas to help limit human-bear conflict. The guidelines have been developed from 2009 Human-Bear Conflict Prevention Management Plan for Prince George, British Columbia (Recommendations Section 4.0 pp. 53-54). These guidelines apply to all public and private sector lands and are provided through the Development Permit process or development review processes.

- Avoid placing playgrounds and schools in areas backing onto the edge of green spaces.
- Consider higher perimeter fencing (e.g. 2 m. ht.) where playgrounds and schools back onto green spaces.
- Remove the majority of vegetation and clear out the underbrush around playgrounds (e.g. 50-100 m.).
- Assure all garbage cans or locked enclosures are bear-resistant, properly managed, and maintained.
- Reduce odours in garbage cans through regular maintenance and the use of lime as required.
- Place garbage cans and bins away from vegetated and forested areas.
- Remove, manage, or reconfigure trails that lead into chronic bear hazard areas.
- Remove and thin vegetation at trailheads and on trail switch-backs to improve the line of sight.
- Assure bear warning signs are placed in parks and at trailheads within active bear areas or corridors.
- Ensure plant material is bear-resistant and remove non-compliant species (e.g. fruit trees/shrubs).
- Ensure riparian areas and critical natural habitats are connected through corridors and linkages.
- Ensure attractants are stored and unavailable to wildlife during and post-development.

Appendix 4 – Bear Smart Info Flyer


Front:



LEARN TO BE BEAR SMART


DID YOU KNOW?

- Every year an average of **35 bears are destroyed** in Prince George when they become used to eating unnatural food sources like garbage and fruit from gardens.
- Often these bears cannot be successfully relocated and must be destroyed for public safety.
- Hibernation can also be delayed if garbage or other unnatural food sources are available.



Black bears in Prince George. **Source:** Northern Bear Awareness Society

REGULATIONS AND FINES



You can use a flat hook tie-down strap rated at 1,000 lbs to secure a cart, but it's less effective than a locked garage or shed.

Avoid a fine of up to \$300 by following City bylaw regulations:

- **SET YOUR GARBAGE CART** at the curb no earlier than 4:00am on collection day and remove it no later than 7:00pm that day.
- **LOCK YOUR GARBAGE CART** and other items that may attract bears in an enclosed and locked structure like a garage or shed.
- **REMOVE ITEMS** that may attract bears from your property such as fruit, bird feeders from spring to fall, and BBQ grease.

The B.C. Conservation Officer Service can also issue tickets through the Provincial Wildlife Protection Act for attracting or intentionally feeding wildlife with fines **up to \$340**.

IF YOU SEE A BEAR

- To report a bear accessing garbage/fruit or an injured bear, phone the 24-hour B.C. Conservation Officer hotline at **1-877-952-RAPP (7277)**.

REPORT A BYLAW VIOLATION

- Contact the City by phone at **311** or by email at **311@princegeorge.ca**.

For more information on how to be Bear Smart visit:
<https://princegeorge.ca/wildlife>

Back:



BEARS IN PRINCE GEORGE

Prince George is prime habitat for bears since the city is situated along two major rivers and surrounded by forests. Bears spend much of their time searching for food, especially in the spring - when they emerge from hibernation - and in the fall when they can consume up to 25,000 calories a day.

Unfortunately, more bears are destroyed in Prince George than any other community in British Columbia given the easy access to unnatural food sources like garbage or fruit. If these unnatural food sources are not carefully managed, another bear may move into the area once a bear is destroyed. You can prevent this and help your community stay safe by following the regulations.

For Bear Smart programs and tips, visit: <https://www.northernbearawareness.com/>

BEAR SMART COMMUNITY

Prince George is working to become a provincially-designated Bear Smart Community. We've partnered with the Province of B.C. (Conservation Officer Service and Omineca Fish & Wildlife), the Fraser-Fort George Regional District, and the Northern Bear Awareness Society to reduce human-bear conflicts. Some of the things we're doing include:

- Adding more bear-resistant garbage carts in parks in addition to the residential pilot project in the Hart.
- Expanding Bear Smart education.
- Implementing strategies for Bear Smart garbage management.



STAY SAFE IN BEAR COUNTRY

- Make noises and speak loudly when hiking or biking to alert bears in the area.
- Travel in a group whenever possible.
- Use officially marked trails and only hike or bike during daylight hours.
- Keep pets on leashes at all times, even in off-leash areas if they are not under control.
- If you meet a bear unexpectedly, maintain a safe distance especially with a mother bear and her cubs. Stop, remain calm, and do not face away, scream, or run. Slowly back away and leave the area. Carry bear spray and know how to use it.

1100 Patricia Blvd., V2L 3V9 | p: 250.561.7600 | www.princegeorge.ca | [@cityofpg](https://twitter.com/cityofpg) | [/cityofpg](https://facebook.com/cityofpg) | [@cityofpg](https://instagram.com/cityofpg)

**BEAR AWARE**



Make noise and speak loudly
Travel in a group if possible
Keep dogs on a leash
Don't approach or feed a bear

IF YOU SEE A BEAR

Maintain a safe distance and back away slowly.
Do NOT run. Speak calmly.

Report a Bear

BC Conservation Office. 24-hours. 1-877-952-RAPP (7277)
For more information call 311 or visit www.princegeorge.ca

Appendix 6 – Letters of Support

Include letters from Inter-Agency partners:

- Conservation Officer Service of BC
- Province of BC
- Northern Bear Awareness Society
- RDFFG



Bear Smart Inter-Agency Application Feedback

On Jun 18, 2020, at 12:52 PM, Marshall, Shelley FLNR:EX <Shelley.Marshall@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

Hi Laurie

It is so great to see that the City remains committed to achieving Bear Smart status. It's been a long time coming and there are so many human-bear conflicts in PG that the requirements for becoming Bear Smart are actually needed rather than nice to have. In my opinion, lack of action to properly manage garbage within PG has created a huge public safety issue. Laurie, I think this whole team really appreciates the lead you've taken on this project for the City.

Criteria 1 – hazard assessment: Great that you were able to have Lana update the bear reporting data so that the Provincial reviewers can see how the City recognized that the original hazard assessment may be outdated. The hazard assessment contains many pages of recommendations on issues that need to be addressed yet the application only details the Park Audit. It would be good to summarize how the City will address the remaining recommendations. Or maybe this is covered in Criteria 2 so just direct the review to Criteria 2 for implementation progress updates.

Criteria 2 – mgmt. plan: There appear to be some discrepancies between the Actions in the Application and the Mgmt Plan and some mis-categorization of action. I haven't gone through the list in full detail but some examples include:

- * Line 1: Residential curbside garbage cans – the Application has this listed as complete and ongoing but the Mgmt Plan explicitly states that the curbside cans need to be bear resistant. So this recommendation isn't related to the automated cans the City implemented in 2004, but rather relates to retrofitting this cans with latches or distribution of bear resistant cans (like those in the pilot). This discrepancy needs to be fixed in the Application. In my opinion, this recommendation is still in the "to do" category. Or just delete this line completely because it doesn't relate to Bear Smart activities.

- * Line 2/3: My view is that these both remain in the "to do" category. It is fantastic that the City piloted those cans last year but the lack of movement forward with the purchase of new cans this year suggests this does not fit into the "ongoing" category. And as far as I know, the City has remained resistant to latches for cans so that option would still be "to do"

- * Enforcement and bylaws are noted in a couple lines. It is great that the City has bylaws that support Bear Smart attractant management but the lack of enforcement or even Bylaw education to residents on this render the bylaws ineffective. There is a note that COS can enforce bylaws which is great but the City has bylaws so the City should demonstrate commitment to Bear Smart status by enforcing/educating via Bylaw staff and not relying on COS who has a whole other suite of regulations to enforce.

Criteria 3 – Planning/DM documents: it is great to see that attractant mgmt. and consideration for wildlife and their habitat feature so prominently in the OCP. Again, I'd caution about overstating the bylaws because they aren't being enforced. Also, Dave provided some very useful comments re the Woodlands Plan – the Plan contained a wildlife component but was pretty slim on mitigation/prevention actions to be implemented – it would be good for the City to request more specifics for review in this Plan.

Criteria 4 – Education: No comments on this section. NBAS leads most of the education work which has been great and is accordingly acknowledged here. I really appreciated the continued education efforts the City has been working on (eg, website, signage).

Criteria 5 – waste mgmt. plan: Great work on upgrades to the Parks garbage cans. From my perspective, household waste mgmt. is still the largest outstanding item for the City to tackle. The pilot project is great but I'd ask why 2 years of monitoring was needed before purchasing more cans? It wasn't needed but maybe better aligns with the lack of funds that were available this yr to purchase more cans. From a Bear Smart perspective, expanding the bear resistant cart program and implementing some type of latching system is absolutely required in the hotspot areas. City-wide distribution of bear resistant cans would be fantastic but the reality is that focussing on the hotspots is the best approach. At this point, I don't think a commitment to looking for funds for bear-resistant containers and testing latches adequately addresses the Criteria 5 requirements. If the City could demonstrate an annual financial commitment to funds dedicated for this work, with follow-up to show implementation annually, that might help. Until then, I think this adequate household garbage management will remain a stumbling block in achieving Bear Smart status. (good to see that the results of the survey were positive for ease of use and effectiveness of the bear resistant cans).

Criteria 6 – Bylaws: as mentioned earlier, its great that attractant bylaws exist but until the City bylaw staff begin to enforce and/or educate on a larger scale, the bylaws remain ineffective. Maybe bylaw enforcement has increased recently. If so, it would be good to include some metric of compliance monitoring/enforcement in the application. Something like # of tickets and # of 1-on-1 education from bylaw given per # of garbage complaints. Or # of enforcement actions per # of infractions (eg, drive the neighbourhoods and see how many cans are out early and compare this to how many enforcement actions occurred in the same area).

Laurie, again, thanks for your continued work on this file. I hope these comments are useful to revisions of the application and/or planning for City funds and bylaw priorities. Please let me know if there's anything I can help with.

Cheers
Shelley

This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize and trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Everyone

I would like to start of by saying that responding to this has not been easy and have spent portions of the last few days putting in much thought as to what I would like to say. What has made it so difficult is the many directions the response could move and how much detail the reply should contain, but I see this has already been done and I would just be repeating the same comments.

I have to acknowledge the forward moving progress that has occurred in the last year as being extremely positive, and express my appreciation for all the hard work and commitment with the belief that this will continue on a constant basis.

After reviewing the draft and many of the linked documents several times over the past few days, I have come to conclude that there is still much more to do. The details provided in the draft provide reminders as to the length of time that has passed since the plan to become a Bear Smart Community was first approached. I honestly feel, even after the accomplishments over the last year, we are still at the same stage as we were in 2011, but now have a better focus on what is needed.

Support from NBAS will always be provided and we will contribute to the best of our abilities as a solely volunteer organization to fully meet the requirements with the Bear Smart Criteria. The Draft is well prepared, professionally written and extremely detailed, but I feel it is more of a highly informative update that highlights the direction all future steps must move toward. I believe that submitting this as an application to be recognized as a Bear Smart Community is premature as many of the required criteria, while being deemed complete, are not completely fulfilled at this time.

I would like to recommend that the number of meetings with members of the working group be increased in the future, with an agenda that would focus on one specific Bear Smart Criteria item.

There is one analogy that kept coming to mind while reviewing all the documents that I thought I would share.

"I have never received a letter grade on a test I have promised to write in the future"

Dave Bakker
Northern Bear Awareness Society
Prince George BC

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Hi Laurie,

Sorry for the late response, but we are extremely busy with bears and call volume has become very high. I agree with Shelley's comments 100%. I am will omg to provide training and support bylaw officers but they will have to enforce PG bylaws. We can work together on enforcement projects.

Thanks

Steve

Steve Ackles
Sergeant
Conservation Officer Service
Prince George
Omineca Region

September 24th, 2020

The City of Prince George is continuing to build on the progress it has made in recent years towards the achievement of Bear Smart Community status.

When the City's Bear Smart Community Status Implementation Update was presented to Council in April of 2019, Council authorized the City to pursue Bear Smart Community status via the recommendations outlined in the Implementation Update:

- Install bear smart signage and/or decals on solid waste management containers, at solid waste landfills and transfer stations, and along trail heads in high-frequency bear areas.
- Continue to include bear smart promotional materials through outlets such as the annual residential garbage calendar distribution notice.
- Provide current bear smart information to residents through the City website and communication outlets with links to resources such as the NBAS website (<https://www.princegeorge.ca/City%20Services/Pages/Animal%20Control%20Services/Wildlife.aspx>).
- Audit parks and public spaces for safety issues.
- Support the collection of bear data and analysis to inform targeted bear smart solutions.
- Develop and implement a City of Prince George Bear Smart Solid Waste Management Strategy to address priorities for the collection, transfer, disposal, recycling, and composting of solid waste in the City.
- Ensure that all bylaws and policy direction supports the planning, design, development, and maintenance of new residential development areas and public spaces such as riverfronts to minimize human/bear conflicts.
- Develop and implement a compliance strategy for bear smart bylaw regulations.

A number of these recommendations are underway or have been completed. The full implementation of the Bear Smart Solid Waste Management Strategy and its recommendations/actions will require additional resources and capital funding approval by Council.

One of the recommendations under the plan is to manage non-natural attractants. To that end, in April 2019, the City of Prince George introduced 300 bear-resistant residential garbage carts to a high frequency bear area in the Hart Highlands/Croft neighbourhoods. All of the existing residential curbside garbage carts were swapped with a Rehrig bear-resistant 95-gallon cart which unlocks with one hand for garbage disposal and will only open when inverted upside down by a garbage collection truck. The carts are being tested as a pilot project as each garbage cart is over five (5) times the price of a regular cart and over \$7 million would be required to convert the City's inventory of over 23,000 residential garbage carts. A survey of area residents has identified that the carts are deterring bear activity and are relatively easy to use. The City will continue to monitor the success of these carts over a two (2) year period for potential expansion.

As part of the Bear Smart Community program process, an interagency working group was created which includes the following organizations/agencies:

- City of Prince George – Laurie Kosec (Strategic Parks Planner)
- Conservation Officer Service of BC – Steve Ackles (Officer)
- Province of BC – Shelley Marshall (Senior Wildlife Biologist)
- Northern Bear Awareness Society – Dave Bakker
- Regional District of Fraser Fort George – Rachel Ryder (Waste Diversion Program Leader)

A draft of the Prince George Bear Smart Community Program application was distributed to this working group in June 2020 for review. From that review, it was identified that there were some items that needed further work before the application could be submitted and the agencies/organizations could provide their full support. With this in mind, the need for future capital, and recognizing the impacts of COVID-19 (budgets and staff resources) the application submission was deferred to a future date. This time will allow the City to complete the pilot program on the bear-resistant residential garbage carts and determine the best way forward for implementing the recommendations while taking the current (2020/2021) resources into consideration.