

Date: December 4, 2025

To: **Mayor and Council.**

Name and title: Eric Depenau, Director of Administrative Services

Subject: Public Safety Petition to the House of Commons

Attachment(s): Draft Petition

Recommendation(s):

That Council

1. APPROVES the draft petition as attached to the report dated December 4, 2025, from the Director of Administrative Services, titled “Public Safety Petition to the House of Commons”; and
2. DIRECTS Administration to affix Mayor Yu as the petitioner and members of Council as supporters of the petition and submit the petition to the Clerk of Petitions for examination and publishing on the petitions website for gathering signatures by the general public.

Purpose:

This report supports Council discussion of a petition to the House of Commons, specifically addressing the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

Background:

Local governments have a very limited scope of authority to address fundamental challenges in the mental health and criminal justice systems which contribute to the persistence of street disorder. Ongoing issues in the downtown area, both locally and in many other municipalities, have made many residents feel unsafe. The main tool available to Council with regards to supporting recent calls to the Federal government to strengthen the criminal justice system through such proposals as amendment to bail reform, stiffer penalties for repeat offenders, and longer sentences for violent crimes is advocacy.

As these calls fall within the jurisdiction of the federal government, a draft petition to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada has been drafted (attached), advocating for amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada, appointment of more judges and prosecutors to end court backlogs, additional funding and resources for Crown Counsel to increase capacity and decrease delays, and additional funding and resources for provincial correctional centres and support services to increase capacity for detention of individuals, as well as providing rehabilitation and release planning services.

The steps for publishing a petition are as follows:

1. Identify supporters. A minimum of five (5) and a maximum of ten (10) supporters must be identified and affixed to the petition. For the purposes of this petition, members of Council (if supportive) have been identified as the initial signatories.
2. Choose the length of time for which your e-petition will remain open for signature (30, 60, 90, or 120 days). For the purposes of this petition, the time period for signature collections from the public is proposed at 60 days.
3. Invite any member of Parliament to authorize the online publication of the e-petition. Member for Cariboo-Prince George, Todd Doherty has been identified and has agreed to support the petition through the petition process.
4. Examination by the Clerk of Petitions. Through this process, the petition is examined to ensure that its form and content respect the rules and practices of the House. This includes validating signatures and supporters. If the petition meets requirements, it will be translated and published on the petitions website for signature by the general public.

In order to move to the Certification and Presentation stages, the petition requires a minimum of 500 signatures. These signatures will be validated by the Clerk of Petitions once the signature collection period has elapsed. Once validated, the Clerk of Petitions will issue a certificate to the Member of Parliament who authorized the publications of the petition. After this, any Member of Parliament may present the petition to the House. If the petition does not receive a minimum of 500 valid signatures by the closing date, it will remain visible online but will not proceed to the House of Commons.

Once the petition is approved, the petition may be submitted to the petition process for examination and publishing.

Summary and conclusion:

A draft petition to the House of Commons, specifically addressing the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada advocating for amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada, appointment of more judges and prosecutors to end court backlogs, additional funding and resources for Crown Counsel to increase capacity and decrease delays, and additional funding and resources for provincial correctional centres and support services to increase capacity for detention of individuals, as well as providing rehabilitation and release planning services is attached for Council's review and approval.

If approved, the petition is intended to be submitted to the petition process for examination and publishing.

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric Depenau, Director of Administrative Services

Prepared by Catharine Sikobe, Senior Advisor, Intergovernmental Relations

Approved:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: 2025/12/15