



**CORPORATE MANAGEMENT**

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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January 8, 2021

BY EMAIL

Prince George Chamber of Commerce  
**Attention: Todd Corrigan, CEO**

Downtown Prince George (Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association)  
**Attention: Eoin Foley, President**

Gateway Business Improvement Association  
**Attention: Dan Denis, Representative**

**Re: Response to December 11, 2020 Correspondence to City Council**

Dear Mr. Corrigan, Mr. Foley, and Mr. Denis:

Thank you for your letter of December 11, 2020 to City Council, and for your continued commitment to the community. Your participation in the Mayor's Select Committee on a Safe, Clean and Inclusive Community (the Select Committee) has been appreciated, and contributed to the Committee's identification of four key actions that will be recommended to Council at its January 11, 2021 meeting.

Two of those four recommendations relate to advocacy with other levels of government, particularly in relation to the facilities and personnel necessary to ensure that those with mental health and/or substance use disorders can quickly access emergency and ongoing services and supports. These recommendations reflect the Committee's consideration of policy requests brought forward during your 2019 Delegation to Council presentation. With Council's approval of the Committee's recommendations, the City will facilitate a coordinated advocacy process that will help align and leverage the capacity of many stakeholders and partners to effect policy change that will mitigate social and economic impacts associated with the opioid crisis, and exacerbated by the concurrent COVID-19 pandemic.

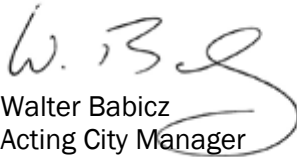
Your 2019 presentation to Council also included three requests specific to policing, bylaw enforcement and lighting solutions. You recommended that the City of Prince George provide an additional six officers and two support staff to the Prince George RCMP, and that these new members be assigned to uniformed patrols of the Downtown and Gateway areas. This request was considered by Council during its 2020 budget deliberations and resulted in a service enhancement allocation of \$273,249. The allocation enabled the addition of two member patrols, seven days a week for six hours per day in the Downtown and Gateway areas.

The issue of discarded drug paraphernalia was raised during interviews with some members of the Select Committee, and further discussed at the September 2020 half-day workshop, to identify solutions. There was not concurrence on the path forward. While your December 16, 2019 correspondence had recommended utilization of the Property Maintenance Bylaw to hold the owners and operators of harm reduction locations accountable for debris and waste in the area of their operations, the Select Committee chose to explore how peer employment through organizations like POUNDS, DART, and PGBIG might provide a more effective response, at a reasonable cost. Many thanks to Downtown Prince George (DPG) for advancing that concept. We understand that DPG has acquired funding from Northern Health and BC Housing to hire DART to provide additional clean-up services in the downtown. In relation to Bylaw Services, your December 16, 2019 correspondence also requested an integrated approach to public safety and enforcement that involved Bylaw Services, the RCMP, and community stakeholders. The Select Committee also considered the importance of multi-jurisdictional service coordination and integration, and has recommended that the City lead the establishment of a downtown public safety office to achieve this goal.

While the City has improved lighting at its parkades, more work needs to be done with organizations like BC Hydro to enhance lighting in other areas like alleys. The final recommendation made by the Select Committee calls for a review and reprioritization of the \$1.42 million service enhancement package. Further lighting enhancements will be considered during the review process.

We look forward to continuing to work with your respective organizations, and other key partners, as we address complex social issues impacting our community.

Sincerely,



Walter Babicz  
Acting City Manager

cc: Mayor Lyn Hall and Members of Council