

## Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Members, Community and Protective Services Committee  
**From:** Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development  
**Subject:** Options to Address Safety and Security Concerns  
**Date:** September 12, 2023

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development, the following actions **BE TAKEN**:

- a) That the report dated September 12, 2023, titled “Options to Address Safety and Security Concerns” **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
- b) **TO AUTHORIZE** and **APPROVE** a one-time funding allocation of up to \$174,210 from the Social Services Reserve Fund for London Cares Homeless Response Services to support security services for 602 Queens Avenue and 448 Horton Street locations; and
- c) **TO ENDORSE** the additional programs identified to support safety and security in the Old East Village area, including additional Coordinated Informed Response programming and street cleaning to be accommodated within existing Housing Stability Services budgets; and
- d) That Civic Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to undertake all administrative acts which are necessary in relation to this matter.

## Executive Summary

As directed by Council at the July 25, 2023, meeting, the purpose of this report is to identify options and the associated costs to address the safety and security concerns identified as well as the safety and security concerns of the agencies' staff, volunteers and those accessing services.

As a result of this direction, Civic Administration undertook an assessment of ongoing engagement opportunities with agencies, volunteers, those accessing services and community members. These sessions, although not all specific to community safety, identified significant feedback outlined in this report.

## Previous Reports Pertinent to this Matter

- Housing Stability Services 2023-24 Contract Amendments (CPSC; July 24, 2023)
- London's Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response Proposed Hubs Implementation Plan (CPSC; July 24, 2023)

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The City of London Strategic Plan (2023–2027) identifies Housing and Homelessness as a key strategic area of focus. In addition, housing and homelessness work is identified throughout the Strategic Plan, impacting all areas of life for Londoners.

### Economic Growth, Culture, and Prosperity

- Increased safety in the Core Area

### Housing and Homelessness

- Increased access to a range of quality, affordable, and supportive housing options that meet the unique needs of Londoners
- Decreased number of Londoners at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- Improved safety in London's shelters system

### Wellbeing and Safety

- Londoners have safe access to public spaces, services, and supports that increase wellbeing and quality of life

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Council Direction on this Matter

The topic of community safety has been prominent throughout many community engagement sessions both formally and informally as it relates to the efforts to support those experiencing homelessness and for those impacted by the effects of the health and homelessness crisis. While future corporate initiatives including the Multi Year Budget (MYB) process may bring forward opportunities for investments related to the Core Area and measures of community safety, there are certain steps that should be taken in the immediate term.

At its meeting held on July 25, 2023, Municipal Council passed a resolution which amongst other matters, identified that:

*The Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to provide a report to a future Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC) to identify options and the associated costs to address the safety and security concerns identified as well as the safety and security concerns of the agencies' staff, volunteers and those accessing services; and,*

*A one-time funding allocation of up to \$200,000 from the Social Services Reserve Fund for London Cares Homeless Response Services to support security services for 602 Queens Avenue and 448 Horton Street locations as outlined on the attached Schedule 1 of the staff report dated July 18, 2023. (2023-S11) (AS AMENDED) (2.3/12/CPSC)*

As such, Civic Administration through the supports of staff from Social and Health Development, Neighbourhood and Community Wide Services, Enterprise Supports, and the London Police Services collected feedback and information from multiple sources and in various ways to inform recommendations for actions that can be taken in the immediate future to support the neighbouring areas that the Council direction focused on.

### 2.0 Discussion and Considerations

#### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to bring forward recommendations for immediate term supports to improve the community safety and security in the areas of Old East Village and in close proximity to services offered at 602 Queens Ave. Civic Administration has set out a number of recommendations for Council consideration that reflects feedback from the community and that can be implemented in a timely fashion. Broader community safety or policing requests are best suited for other corporate initiatives such as the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, the Whole of Community System Response, any future updates to the Core Area Action Plan, and the Multi-Year Budget process (MYB). The recommendations in this report seek to maintain current security staffing levels at both 602 Queens Ave and 448 Horton St, increase cleaning services such as power washing, removal of leftover debris, and sharps removal services, as well as expanding the Coordinated Informed Response team for a defined period of time. These recommendations aim to assist with addressing the safety and security concerns identified by agency staff, residents, volunteers, community members and participants accessing services.

#### 2.2 Engagement Opportunities

Over the past several months, a number of community engagement sessions were held, and a collection of the feedback is highlighted below.

London Cares Homeless Response Services:

- Door to door resident meet and greets by senior leadership of London Cares within the surrounding block of resting spaces to introduce and answer concerns and questions and leave contact numbers;
- Distribution of monthly information flyers;
- Prior to moving into 448 Horton St, London Cares has reported that their senior leadership undertook community engagement within the surrounding block. Over the past months, there have been a number of engagement opportunities regarding safety and security concerns of residents, the agencies' staff, volunteers and those accessing services as reported by the agency.

London Police Service (LPS):

- On August 16, 2023, LPS Officers went door to door engaging residents who live in proximity to the London Cares Resting Space at 448 Horton, about what they would like to see to improve safety in the neighbourhood.

Civic Administration Community Engagement:

- Five (5) previous community engagement sessions, two (2) business-focused engagement sessions and an online [Get Involved](#) survey which has received more than 1,500 responses related to the Whole of Community System Response and the Hubs Implementation Plan.

### **2.3 Safety and Security Concerns Identified through Engagement Sessions**

Through the engagement opportunities noted above, feedback received has identified the following safety and security concerns:

- Noise from escalated community members
- Drug use
- Increased debris and hazardous waste
- Vandalism
- Trespassing

### **2.4 Potential Solutions Identified through Engagement Sessions**

Through the various engagement opportunities and feedback received, the following potential solutions to safety and security concerns were raised:

- Security on-site for London Cares during working shifts, with an emphasis on security that is trained to work well with those who access services;
- Street cleaning to ensure that neighbourhoods are free of garbage, sharps, cigarette butts, tents, medical waste, human waste, graffiti, and debris;
- Expanded Community Informed Response with greater presence in Old East Village;
- Increased security presence in Old East Village to support a sense of safety and security;
- Camera monitoring 24/7; and,
- Increased police presence in neighbourhoods to prevent and discourage theft, crime and increase response times.

### **3.0 Recommendation for Consideration**

The following recommendations have emerged from engagement opportunities and Civic Administration engagement with agency staff and can be accommodated within an existing identified funding source. Broader community safety and security measures are best to be brought forward through other applicable programs and funding sources including future programs, plans, and budget processes.

As noted, this option would also approve an amount up-to the remaining \$174,210 identified in the July 18, 2023 report to cover the associated security costs for the properties at 602 Queens Ave and 448 Horton St. with the source of funding being previously identified as the Social Services Reserve Fund.

#### **3.1 Recommended Response**

The recommendation seeks to continue funding up to \$174,210, towards existing security measures (including 2 security guards at each identified location) for London Cares to cover services at 602 Queens Ave and 448 Horton St until the end of December 2023, or until the identified funding has been fully expensed, or programming scope changes.

Additionally, Civic Administration recommends the following added measures also be implemented to reflect neighbourhood feedback, noting additional service levels beyond what is recommended, and the associated funding would need to be realized through the 2024 – 2027 Multi-Year Budget. These added measures include:

- Third party street cleaning, 3 days per week, in close proximity to 602 Queens Ave and 448 Horton St. In order to provide sharps collection, garbage pickup, and services such as pressure washing and debris removal for a period which concludes at the end of December 2023;
- Expanded Coordinated Informed Response by adding additional team staff to support all aspects of the program, with an emphasis on the area in close proximity to Old East Village which includes 6 days a week of additional team coverage, pending a successful recruitment period;
- A partial Core Area Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) program already exists and is currently under expansion to cover the entire Core Area. This expansion is expected to be completed by year end. The cameras are monitored by City of London Security Services and access is provided to London Police Services when required;
- Future requests for similar or related action items focused on community safety and security may emerge as part of other strategic initiatives and plans, and therefore no other recommendations are being considered at this time through this report. Expanded or sustained service level increases, beyond those recommended in this report would need to be brought forward through other avenues including the Multi-Year Budget (MYB) process.

### **3.2 Next Steps**

Pending Council approval, Civic Administration will conduct the necessary recruitment process for an additional Coordinated Informed Response team to provide additional and consistent coverage in the Old East Village area. Additionally, pending Council approval, a procurement process will be undertaken to secure a third party to provide the necessary cleaning and debris pick up through to the end of December three days per week.

Furthermore, Civic Administration will be inviting a group of Old East Village area social service agencies, interested businesses and Neighbourhood Association representatives to a meeting to discuss ways to address ongoing safety and security concerns and evaluate the effectiveness of any options implemented. Further discussions on broader safety and security measures and good neighbour relations would be aligned through other efforts including actions related to the Core Area, the Whole of Community System Response, and the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan.

### **4.0 Financial Impact**

The total costs associated with the recommendations have been identified through the Social Services Reserve Fund and within existing Housing Stability Services budgets and no further financial impact of this recommendation is anticipated at this time.

If Council wishes to consider additional safety and security measures, additional funding would need to be identified through future corporate programs, plans and where appropriate the 2024 – 2027 Multi-Year Budget.

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**Submitted by:** Craig Cooper, Director, Housing Stability Services  
**Recommended by:** Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development