

Dear Colleagues,

As some of you know, on December 8<sup>th</sup> I was in a car accident. Thankfully no one was injured, however tow trucks were required. As a result, I became aware through first-hand experience that London is experiencing an issue with so-called “chaser” towing services. In brief, these are tow truck operators who rush to the scene of accidents to arrive ahead of any towing calls made by police or fire services to city contracted service providers.

High pressure tactics are used to try to secure business before the city contracted services arrive on scene. The rates these operators charge is unregulated, leaving a Londoner who has just had the unfortunate, often traumatic experience of a car accident vulnerable to predatory business practices.

Conversations with both London Police Officers and staff with the city contracted Ross Towing Services has informed me that some of these operators have been aggressive toward them as well.

Other communities in Ontario, including Toronto and Waterloo have implemented by-laws to discourage this type of activity and I believe London needs to do so as well. I have included for your information an attachment with the research conducted by council staff on the by-laws enacted in these municipalities.

Therefore I am requesting the committee, and council’s, consideration of the following motion:

That staff be directed to review existing by-laws in other Ontario municipalities and prepare a draft by-law to address predatory towing practices in London including but not limited to;

- a) Minimum distances restrictions on tow trucker owners or drivers for the purpose of soliciting the hiring or use of the services of such a driver of his or her tow truck,
- b) Restrictions on tow truck drivers or owners prohibiting the hook, lift, or connection of a vehicle to a tow truck, or perform any related services, unless first requested so to do by one of the following: (1) A hirer; (2) Any peace officer, as defined in the Criminal Code of Canada; (3) Any member of a municipal fire department; (4) Any person authorized by law to direct the removal of the vehicle from municipal property; or (5) any person authorized by law to direct the removal of the vehicle from private property.

Respectfully,

Shawn Lewis  
Ward 2 Councillor