



**Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of December 9, 2021**

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** December 6, 2021
From: Councillor Alto and Councillor Thornton-Joe
Subject: Supporting Bylaw Services in Addressing Unightly or Unsafe Properties

BACKGROUND

While there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of people sheltering in City parks, due to the Provincial Government's supply of additional indoor housing options as well as the end of 24/7 sheltering, an increasing number of individuals find themselves living adjacent to or on vacant private properties.

In its consideration of the city's 2022 budget, Council is considering a number of actions which may address some related issues, such as a proposed one-time grant program to help defray costs for businesses and residents who have had to add security and safety measures, increased resources for both bylaw and police services, support for enhanced DVBA Clean Team services beyond their current boundaries, and increased city maintenance services (trash pickup, street cleaning) in high use blocks.

In addition to these city-led actions, Council continues to urge the province to expedite complex care services in Victoria, lobby the federal government to retain alleged criminals in custody until trial, and offer additional dollars for temporary multi-disciplinary service teams.

At the same time, while city bylaw officers continue to spend significant hours dedicated to attending to parks and public space patrol, the same workforce is now being called to attend to unwarranted and/or unpermitted use of vacant private properties.

Although the "Abandoned Property Bylaw" and "Property Maintenance Bylaw" each do regulate and impose some requirements for the safeguarding and security of abandoned property (and also regulate, prohibit and impose some requirements of all property as it pertains to refuse, accumulation of water, weeds and graffiti), there are inefficiencies and inadequacies in these bylaws that limit the effectiveness of bylaw officers in addressing public complaints.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council direct city staff to report back on the feasibility and implications of amending relevant city bylaws to increase and/or augment bylaw staff's ability to address unsightly or unsafe properties, whether abandoned or not, in a more efficient and effective manner.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Alto', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor Alto

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlayne Thornton-Joe', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Thornton-Joe