



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole meeting of June 1, 2023

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** June 1, 2023
From: Mayor Alto
Subject: Community Safety and Wellbeing Initiative

Background

City Council has endorsed its 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan, identifying eight priorities for action. Among those priorities is Community Wellbeing and Safety.

To begin that work, the strategic plan mapped six paths to actioning community wellbeing and safety:

- Support a range of civilian, bylaw and policing crisis response and prevention services.
- Beautify, support and enhance Victoria's downtown and urban villages.
- Advance City policies that support accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion through a social justice lens.
- Develop and implement a community safety plan.
- Support innovative, well-being solutions to reduce harm for housed and unhoused people living in neighbourhoods where there are shelters.
- Work with partner agencies and governments to create life opportunities for unhoused people.

This council member motion proposes a mechanism to achieve the fourth path to community wellbeing and safety, while supporting and complementing the other 5 paths.

Consistent with the City's newly adopted Strategic Plan, Victoria will develop a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. The Plan will identify opportunities and recommendations for the City of Victoria and its multi-sectoral partners in support of local, enhanced, integrated, complementary systems, processes, and initiatives with a specific focus on increasing community safety and well-being.

The resulting plan will encompass an intentional, balanced, practical re-imagination of community safety and wellbeing. It aims to enhance the quality of life for our community, residents (housed and unhoused) and businesses. The plan is intended to address a broad range of social issues, embracing a continuum of solutions, from conventional and common to innovative and novel.

Mayor and Council recognize that increasing community safety and wellbeing for people living in Victoria requires a collective approach to multiple complex issues, such as declining civility and social cohesion, increasing social disorder, inadequate housing supply and homelessness, poverty, inequality, addictions, mental and physical health challenges, criminal activity, and other factors. These efforts should include immediate interventions to reduce crime and chaos while creating longer term solutions.

Development of the plan would be supported by the Canadian Municipal Network on Crime Prevention (CMNCP), a Canadian, membership-based, not-for-profit organization representing over one hundred communities from coast to coast, encompassing approximately 50% of Canada's population. As a community of practice, CMNCP's mandate is to build capacity and mobilize Canadian communities (urban and rural) to use effective, evidence based, and collaborative crime prevention and community safety and wellbeing (CSWB) strategies to reduce crime and foster community safety. CMNCP's approach is based on Canadian and international best practices in crime prevention and community safety.

The plan would be developed within a 12 to 18 month period (June 2023 to November 2024). The project will include data collection and analysis, community engagement, plan development, and reporting. The work will be undertaken by a Project Team guided by a Community Safety and Wellbeing Steering Committee. The steering committee will be comprised of ten community leaders from law enforcement, first responders, service providers, business, health and housing services, downtown residents and the Mayor's office.

Updates and progress reports will be delivered to Council regularly throughout the project. Recommended actions arising from the work will come to city Council for consideration, deliberation and, as council determines, implementation. These recommendations may be delivered during, and/or at the completion of, the project, as feasible opportunities arise and as Council directs, outlining priority safety and wellbeing actions in the immediate and longer terms.

Resolution

That Council endorse the creation of a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan to identify achievable ways in which the City of Victoria can take a leadership role in making our community safer and realizing community wellbeing; and identify opportunities and recommendations for the City of Victoria, and its multi-sectoral partners, to take actions in support of local, enhanced, and integrated systems, processes, and initiatives with a specific focus on increasing community safety and wellbeing.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Alto

