



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of August 1st, 2024

To: Committee of the Whole

Date: April 18th, 2024

From: Councillor Gardiner

Subject: Sheltering in Parks and the Parks Regulation Bylaw

BACKGROUND

In 2008, Council began to designate parks in which sheltering would not be permitted. Over the past 15 years several parks have been added to the list, resulting in few parks left which permit sheltering. A “winners and losers” approach has not served our City well. Public comments on the selection of parks have created division among residents, businesses and neighbourhoods.

While the more recent changes to the Parks Regulation Bylaw, made in 2023, were purported to “*balance availability and prohibitions*” among neighbourhoods, the changes did not balance availability of prohibitions. Further, *balancing availability and prohibitions* has not been proven to be of benefit to the city at large or to the people who live within it, be they housed or sheltering.

Considerations should include proximity to service providers and impact on residents living near to select parks, especially to our vulnerable elderly, young residents and other residents who may be unable to protect themselves from physical assault.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council direct staff to:

1. Consider and recommend an approach to sheltering in parks which suggests sanctioned parks and/or areas of parks. Such considerations to include:
 - a. parks currently identified as providing the basic necessities for those sheltering,
 - b. park sizes,
 - c. areas within parks which are separated from playground areas by 10 meters,
 - d. proximity to established service providers, and
 - e. identifying a target number of maximum sheltering sites related to park size, and positioning of any playground, within each park.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line.

Councillor Gardiner