

June 17th, 2021

Secretary, SPC on Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development & Community Services

Dear Secretary:

Re: Street Activity Subcommittee – Concerning Trends of Rising Homelessness and Barrier to Accessible Services by Community Support Program

The Street Activity Subcommittee met on June 16th, 2021 and received a report from Supervisor Rob Garrison of the Community Support Program (CSP) which highlighted numerous alarming trends in the three core Business Improvement Districts.

- A significant increase in the number of people sleeping outside, which has resulted in a steady increase in calls for service;
- An increase in reports of open drug use.
- More interactions with people indicating they are hungry and wanting food in the evenings. While there are a number of places for people to access food, it seems they are reluctant to leave their belongings to seek it out.
- Many service providers continue to operate at less than full capacity, which means services are harder to access.
- The CSP officers are having difficult securing emergency accommodations for people after hours.
- Transportation for people with disabilities to access support services, such as medical support, remains a problem.

The CSP connected with 303 different people in May, with 1196 points of contacts and an average response time of less than 5 minutes. These 6 officers operate 5 days a week, Tuesday and Saturday from 10am to 8pm and Wednesday to Friday 8am to 10 pm. We share these issues to increase awareness of the rising needs in our community and the pressure on the Community Support Program.

The Committee resolved:

That a letter be forwarded to the Standing Policy Committee on PDCS, through the Chair, that informs of the current trends and requests for better systemic change around the need for public services for those who are not housed and highlight barriers to accessing social services for disabilities, approval for afterhours accommodations and the lack of long term accommodations.

The Street Activity Subcommittee respectfully requests that the recommendation be considered by the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development & Community Services.

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Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Mercier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

DeeAnn Mercier, Chair
Street Activity Subcommittee

DM:ht

Attachment

cc: General Manager, Community Services Department
Senior Planner, Neighbourhood Planning, Community Services Department



**[2021] - Street Activity Steering Subcommittee Meeting
Program Report for [March – May]**

March - There were 249 calls for service involving 292 people compared to 209 calls involving 288 people, and 180 calls involving 238 people in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

On March 8th to 9th one remaining CSO completed Mental Health First Aid Training and on the 12th the same staff member completed De-escalating Violent Situations Training. On March 17th four CSOs attended a virtual workshop on Harm Reduction in the afternoon. All of the above training sessions were facilitated by Sask Health Authority trainers and were provided free of charge.

On the 23rd of March CSP conducted a presentation at the Saskatoon Inn to a large group of northern Saskatchewan students who were attending a weeklong session regarding employment opportunities in security and policing. The session was very well received and CSOs fielded many questions at the end of the presentation regarding future employment with CSP. A commitment was made that when CSP advertises for candidates, the students will indicate on their applications that they had attended the full course and the instructors would be made aware of their application.

On the 23rd of March three CSOs attended Suicide Prevention Training.

April- There were 241 calls for service involving 319 people compared to 174 calls involving 236 people, and 206 calls involving 288 people in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

On April 16 all CSOs attended and completed the annual Defensive Tactics recertification.

One noticeable trend that CSOs are observing, is a larger number of people sleeping outside. This has resulted in a steady increase in calls for service as well as more reports of open drug use. When communicating with people who are sleeping outside, the CSOs note that many of the people prefer this type of accommodations. Some say they would rather sleep outside than self isolate in hotels or work with agencies to find suitable housing. There appears to be a lack of urgency with people wanting to improve their situations. Agencies need to be able to assist people when they are ready to accept help and be proactive and timely in finding solutions. CSOs are also reporting that more people are indicating to them that they are hungry and are wanting food in the evenings. While there are a number of places for people to access food, it seems they are reluctant to leave their belongings to seek it out.



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CSOs were very active in providing information on Bylaw infractions. The number almost doubled from the previous month. There were 9 tickets and 3 written warnings issued.

May- There were 241 calls for service involving 303 people compared to 315 calls involving 490 people, and 158 calls involving 205 people in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

May 5th CSOs conducted a presentation at SPS Headquarters. The participants were the new cadre of Alternative Response Officers. On May 12 the officers then visited the CSP office with their Sergeant and two training officers.

On May 13th CSP conducted a walk along with Jonathan our new subcommittee member.

On May 14th one of our bike team members conducted a presentation to students involved in Ecoquest. SPS bike patrol officers had invited us to attend. They gave the grade 8 students an information session on bike safety and the differences between Police Officers and Community Support Officers.

May 11th to 13th one CSO attended the Law Enforcement Bike Association (LEBA) Training course. We are now back to having 3 CSOs certified and conducting bike patrols.

May 20th CSOs and supervisor had an introductory zoom call with the newly appointed supervisor of the Regina Community Support Program. Invitation was extended for her team to attend a walk along with Saskatoon CSOs when they are hired and conditions permit.

May 27th CSOs requested a meeting with the manager of the Ministry of Social Services Income Assistance in order to clarify emergency after hours roles and responsibilities for assisting people with specific needs. The meeting was extremely beneficial and has already helped to improve efficiencies and outcomes.



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2. Statistics

Table 1 – Calls for Service

2021	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Period	YTD Total
Number of occurrences	163	189	249	241	241									
Individuals served	188	210	292	319	303									
Involvement	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Period	YTD Total
Business	118	142	175	133	123									
Community	18	22	25	32	27									
Vulnerable Person	145	196	225	210	216									
Call Origin	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Period	YTD Total
Office	111	132	169	134	128									
Patrol	41	40	59	87	87									
Police Dispatch	3	6	7	11	9									
Self-initiated	3	10	10	6	13									
Follow-up	2	1	4	3	2									
Outcome	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Period	YTD Total
Successful*	115	145	179	185	184									
Could not locate	32	44	53	18	40									
Not able to assist**	16	21	17	38	17									
Bylaw	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Period	YTD Total
Information	19	24	62	111	129									
Warned	1	1	4	3	5									
Ticketed	1	0	1	9	3									

* Successful includes identifying specific issue that exist at the time, assessing the scenario and assisting the individual(s) the supports they need (i.e. housing or shelter, mental health concerns, nutrition, transportation, etc.);

**Not able to assist includes a call in which an individual refuses service, Police or other services providers are in attendance, there is concurrent calls.



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Table 2 – Calls Attended & Action Taken

Call Type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Total	YTD Total
Addictions	46	34	62	51	71									
Suspicious Person	49	41	54	46	67									
Disturbance	30	25	58	47	44									
Bylaw	3	3	12	17	11									
Outreach	56	108	95	73	108									
Mediation	4	0	6	4	1									
Criminal	7	5	3	7	4									
Other	2	3	5	1	1									
Referrals	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current Total	YTD Total
On scene/immediate*	73	132	106	83	114									
Independent**	28	29	28	38	40									
Organization	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Current	YTD
City Police	9	18	17	22	15									
CSP	4	3	11	4	13									
Paramedics	3	3	2	1	4									
Larson House	7	5	16	10	12									
Lighthouse	9	13	8	14	24									
Lighthouse Stabilization	12	24	14	7	17									
Lighthouse Transport	9	10	18	14	13									
Salvation Army	6	13	6	2	5									
Mobile Crisis	1	2	2	1	0									
MSS Income Assistance	8	20	6	2	11									
Transit Services	5	5	7	6	5									
Other	25	41	23	36	33									

* On scene/immediate referrals are contacts made directly on scene to assist an individual(s) with immediate needs;

**An independent referral occurs when staff recommends information about a service provider or contact information about the CSP to follow-up with after a call for service is completed, the referral is made with the understanding that the initiative is to be taken by the client

