

Public Safety and Communication ISSUE

The Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) and Saskatoon Fire Department (SFD) have a long history of working together through emergency incidents, coordinated event response, fire investigations, and preparation for community-impacting events. Saskatoon takes a whole-community approach amongst residents, businesses, critical infrastructure, community organizations, and all levels of government to address public safety issues. A whole community response to issues of homelessness and neighborhood safety is applied through a coordinated community safety framework.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on [February 28, 2024](#), when considering emergency shelters resolved that:

1. That the Administration report back through a formal request to the BOPC as may be needed on the crime statistics in Fairhaven from December 2021 to the end of January 2024 and that the Administration report on what measures have been put in place to address the rise in crime;
2. That the Administration specifically identify the crime statistics on the 400 block of Fairmont Drive between the 415 Fairmont Drive and the large residential complex across the Confederation Suburban Area;
3. That the Administration report on what safety efforts and communication channels have been coordinated with the residents of Fairhaven;
4. That the Administration report on what community safety measures will be in place for the complex needs shelter in Mayfair and the temporary shelter in Sutherland. This should include what the future responsibilities will be for each department and what the communication strategy will be with the neighbourhoods during operations. The report should clearly identify the proposed course of action for the residents of Mayfair and Sutherland as operations of each facility commence;
5. That the Administration communicate with the appropriate provincial government ministries and report back on the detailed discharge strategy for the complex needs shelter in Mayfair;
6. That Administration report back on options for public consultation to take place in Ward 2 and 3 to hear more from police regarding the data and to discuss the experiences residents are facing to develop a more comprehensive report on how crime has really affected these areas; and
7. That the report include involvement with Saskatoon Tribal Council and Provincial Government.

CURRENT STATUS

Collaboration and coordination between SPS and SFD continues through information sharing, data analysis, response plans, and focusing on hot spots and individuals requiring attention of both services in Saskatoon.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

December 16, 2022, saw the Emergency Wellness Centre (EWC) relocating operations from downtown to its current location at 415 Fairmont Drive. The 106-bed shelter space is operated by the Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) and funded by the Ministry of Social Services.

SPS and SFD developed a coordinated safety plan to address any concerns of social disorder, crime and/or violence in addition to needles in public spaces, graffiti, inadequate housing, and property maintenance concerns. Data collection and information sharing has been ongoing since the opening of the EWC.

Residents of the Fairhaven community have expressed concerns of community safety and well-being since the shelter relocated.

Resolutions (R)

R.1. – At the April 10, 2024 Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meeting, the SPS and SFD presented a joint report, [Community Changes and Response to Emergency Shelters](#), on crime stats, responses, impacts and committed to meet with community stakeholders of Fairhaven. A meeting occurred at 234 Pendygrasse Road on April 10, 2024, at 6 p.m., coordinated by Fairhaven Community Association, with representatives from the community, SPS, SFD, Mayor's Office, Councillor David Kirton, and the provincial government. The residents expressed their concerns and experiences within their neighborhood.

R.2. – At the April 10, 2024 GPC meeting, the SPS provided crime stats along with data, [Community Changes and Response to Emergency Shelters](#), from SFD for the Fairhaven and Confederation Suburban Area.

R.3. – At the April 10, 2024 GPC meeting, the SPS and SFD committed to community engagement with the residents of Fairhaven to coordinate safety efforts to address concerns where practical.

R.4. – A complex needs facility will be located at 1701 Idylwyld Drive North. Edgewood Health Network (EHN) has been selected by the Ministry of Health as the service provider. SPS is working with the service provider on operational procedures including referrals, intake, and discharge. Referrals to the complex needs facility can only be through the SPS. Individuals can not self-refer or access the services on-demand.

This is a 15-bed facility that offers access to stabilization, comprehensive treatment for addiction, trauma, depression, anxiety, and 24/7 access to medical professionals. EHN is a Canada-wide network that is working with individuals dealing with mental health and addictions. The service provider has experience working with indigenous peoples and they have culturally informed protocols including the use of Elders and connections to First Nations Communities.

Patients remain inside the facility. Food and water will not be distributed outside the facility by the service provider to discourage individuals from loitering. Access is restricted to the facility, meaning patients do not leave the facility unless it is a planned release.

The SPS, SFD, EHN, and the Ministry of Health continue to work on an integrated and coordinated operating plan. This plan has not been finalized at this time. Included in this plan is a communication agreement that states “it is agreed that communication will be consistent, transparent, and collaborative between all parties.”

R.5. – SFD and SPS have initiated a coordinated safety plan, however, are awaiting a finalized copy/overview of operational procedures for the Mayfair complex needs facility that will be located at 1701 Idylwyld Drive North. Upon receipt of the operational procedures, the integrated operating plan will be fully completed.

A letter dated April 8, 2024, from EHN Canada (Appendix 1) outlines their discharge policy. SPS worked with the service provider on what discharge from the complex needs emergency shelter entails for the best outcome for the individuals being released to connect to support services and possible impact on community.

R.6. – Options for public consultation in Ward 2 and 3 was discussed at the April 10, 2024, meeting with the Fairhaven Community Association. SPS and SFD have agreed to engage in public meetings with residents. The Fairhaven Community Association was advised to contact SPS directly to plan for future meetings. SPS is waiting for dates and communication back from the Fairhaven Community Association.

R.7. – The SPS meets with the executive director of the EWC and Tribal Chief Mark Arcand regularly to discuss concerns that may arise related to the EWC. Ongoing meetings and discussions occur weekly between the City of Saskatoon (including SFD) and the Ministry of Social Services through information sharing and focusing on future shelter models/sites.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications currently.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

SPS has dedicated staff to several aspects of interacting with the Fairhaven and Confederation Suburban Center neighborhoods. There is a full-time member engaging with community organizations, shelter providers, and SFD. SPS has another member

within the Community Engagement Division whose sole function is to engage with residents and businesses in these areas on crime or public safety issues.

SPS also assigns Alternative Response Officers to the Fairhaven EWC area during weekdays as part of a funding agreement with the Province of Saskatchewan.

There are capacity issues with SFD that pull personnel away from other work to address and focus on safety concerns in the Fairhaven and Confederation Suburban Area. Prioritization of concerns, reactive and proactive responses, engagement, and data collection continue.

NEXT STEPS

Administration will continue to take a one-city and whole of community approach to public safety and issues arising from homelessness in Saskatoon. Ongoing data analysis, coordinated planning and communication, and flexibility in adjusting to priorities and resource allocation will occur with all partners.

APPENDICES

1. EHN Canada Discharge Policy

Report Approval

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