



## CITY OF LANGLEY

### COUNCIL MEMBER MOTION

#### **Citizens' Assembly on Community Safety Reform in Langley City – Councillor Pachal**

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#### **Background:**

Based on Langley City's Community Survey, in 2004, 82% of residents felt safe and secure. Over the past two decades, this number has been steadily dropping. As of 2019, only 67% of Langley City's residents felt safe and secure. This is despite the City's protective services budget more than doubling over the past 18 years.

In 2004, the City budgeted 39% of property tax for the police and \$8.5 million on protective services overall. In 2022, the City budgeted 45% of property tax for the police and \$20.5 million on protective services overall.

The top concerns in our City remain poverty, homelessness, and the perception of crime.

The status quo, how we are responding to these concerns, is not working and is costing Langley City residents not only dollars and cents or their quality of life, but, tragically for some people, their lives.

Reform only works when it comes from the community. A Citizens' Assembly brings together people from the community, representing diverse viewpoints and lived experiences.

A Citizens' Assembly convenes, supported by experts and facilitators, to deliberate on a given set of challenges and provide a set of recommendations. The Assembly drives the outcomes of these recommendations.

At a high level, Assembly will evaluate current pressures and top calls for service in Langley City for the police service, fire-rescue service, BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS), bylaw department, parks department, and engineering department through the lens of community safety.

The Assembly will determine which services or City department can fulfil these calls for service in the most timely, nimble, and resource-effective manner to maximize positive outcomes. Where there is a gap in capacity, the Assembly will also look at which service or department the City controls or influences can most effectively close the gap in the ability to execute.

For example, the fire service may be in the best position to help stabilize people during a medical event and partner with health care professionals to ensure people are attached to the care they need.

The bylaw department, working with health care and housing professionals, could be in the best position to attach people experiencing homelessness to housing and healthcare.

A new City Park and Trail Ranger service might be the best to help keep our parks safe and clean.

These are just ideas, and the Assembly will think outside the box.

The Assembly will also look at the upstream reasons for the top calls for service and generate an action plan for the City to complete in partnership with First Nations, the federal government, province, school board, other local governments, and our non-profit sector.

For example, the Assembly might determine that universal access to after-school programs will reduce tagging of City infrastructure and recommend future advocacy of provincial funding for said programs.

**Motion:**

THAT Staff include in the 2023 budget a line item for convening a Citizens' Assembly.

THAT, if Council approves the resources to convene a Citizens' Assembly, the Assembly will:

1. Be representative of the demographics of Langley City, have five additional seats for each of our four host First Nations, and one additional seat for a person who lives in Langley City who self-identifies as Indigenous.
2. Have access to people with lived experience or, external of Langley City and independent, expert knowledge to help inform its recommendations.
3. Look at the calls for service that are responsible for 80% of the volume each for the police service, fire-rescue service, BCEHS calls where the fire-rescue service responds, bylaw department, parks department, and engineering department to determine:
  - a. Which service or department should handle the call for service based on:
    - i. Cost-effectiveness.
    - ii. The ability to respond promptly.
    - iii. The most direct line of accountability to local businesses and residents.
    - iv. The ability to improve people's quality of life, attaching people to services and care.
    - v. The "best fit" for resolving a call for service based on the existing skillsets of people working in the service or department, looking thru the lens of equality and equitably, as well as the report "Transforming Policing and Community Safety in British Columbia."
    - vi. The ability to reduce repeated calls for service caused by a single person.
  - b. If there isn't a "best fit" department or service, identify:

- i. What skillsets are missing and must be implemented into a department or service to be able to respond to the call for service effectively; or,
  - ii. If a new department, service, program, or partnership is required to provide a “best fit” to respond to a call for service, identify why a department, service, program or partnership is needed and what skillsets are required.
4. Develop a phase staffing plan to address the calls for service assessed in section 3.
5. Evaluate for the top ten calls for service based on volume, the upstream reasons causing these calls for service.
6. Develop an action plan for the City, either directly or by working directly with partners, to reduce calls for service identified in section 5.

THAT, if Council approves the resources to convene a Citizens’ Assembly, Staff work with the Citizens’ Assembly to prepare a report of recommendations and outcomes desired, based on the work plan outlined in this motion, for Council to consider.

THAT, if Council approves the resources to convene a Citizens’ Assembly, that Staff:

- i. Develop metrics to monitor the implementation of the Assembly’s recommendations and outcomes desired.
- ii. Develop a process to create a feedback loop to facilitate updating the actions of the City to ensure the spirit of the Assembly’s recommended actions and outcomes are being met.
- iii. Update Council at least biannually on items i. and ii.

**More information:**

<https://pub-langleycity.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=10926>

<https://langleycity.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/Finance/Financial%20Plans/Amended%20Bylaw%203194%202022%20Financial%20Plan-updated.pdf>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20050403214113/http://www.city.langley.bc.ca/serv/tax.htm>

[https://www.leg.bc.ca/content/CommitteeDocuments/42nd-parliament/3rd-session/rpa/SC-RPA-Report\\_42-3\\_2022-04-28.pdf](https://www.leg.bc.ca/content/CommitteeDocuments/42nd-parliament/3rd-session/rpa/SC-RPA-Report_42-3_2022-04-28.pdf)