

Memorandum

Office of the City Clerk
Fax: 623-5468
Telephone: 625-2230

TO: Members of Council
FROM: Krista Power, City Clerk
DATE: Monday, February 8, 2021
SUBJECT: **Additional Information/New Business**
Committee of the Whole/City Council – February 8, 2021

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

New Business

1. Correspondence from Ms. C. Thornton, Not One More Death, dated February 8, 2021 requesting to provide a deputation relative to Proposals for Cold Weather.
2. Memorandum from Ms. K. Power, City Clerk, dated February 8, 2021 relative to Not One More Death – Proposals for Cold Weather, for information.
3. Memorandum from Councillor A. Foulds, dated February 7, 2021 containing a motion relative to the Not One More Death – Proposals for Cold Weather deputation.

CITY COUNCIL

Additional Information

1. Memorandum from Ms. K. Dixon, Director – Engineering & Operations, dated February 8, 2021 containing information requested at the February 2, 2021 Committee of the Whole – Special Session (2021 Budget) meeting, relative to Dawson Road and Arthur Street West Project Costs.



Seven proposals from Not One More Death for the current cold weather emergency

February 8 2021

The following document represents a list of recommendations that Not One More Death has drafted in regards to the ongoing emergency in Thunder Bay, which threatens to lead to the premature death of many people in the coming days and weeks.

We are writing in response to the invitation of several people working for the city for feedback on what we, as a community-based organization with strong ties to “vulnerable populations” think might help in this moment.

1. Proposal for encouraging **isolation** among vulnerablized and decarcerated people (p. 3)
2. Proposal for **care busses** (p.6)
3. Proposal for **emergency shelter** (p.7)
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Two points before we begin

We reject the idea that some people or populations are “vulnerable.” Some people are *made* vulnerable, largely by failures in policy and practice that are linked to ongoing systems like colonialism and racism. These systems go beyond the intentions of a single individual or group of individuals but are “baked in” to policy and practice. We believe that any real solution begins with acknowledging that these systems exist and are making people vulnerable. Second and related, we want to highlight that the emergency we find ourselves in today should not come as a surprise. It is the direct result of decades of failed policy that has largely sought to criminalize vulnerablized populations. This crisis could and should have been avoided, but city leadership has not made it a priority.

With those things in mind, we enter into dialogue with goodwill and optimism. We have been assured things are changing and we choose to believe that.

Who we are

Not One More Death is an all-volunteer activist group that functions predominantly to hold public institutions to account. We are a non-hierarchical, all-volunteer organization and this document is collaboratively drafted and edited. We have rotating spokespeople but no official leaders.

Not One More Death
info@N1MD.com

As such, while we recognize the earnest goodwill of many people in those public institutions, we have neither the capacity nor the mandate to work extensively with government groups.

We work closely with other grassroots community initiatives that interface regularly with vulnerablized people in Thunder Bay. Based on this, we have developed a set of urgent recommendations for immediate implementation in the context of the “perfect storm” of extreme cold, the shelter crisis and COVID-19.

How we developed these recommendations

N1MD works closely and has strong dialogue with grassroots groups in the city who are working on keeping people safe and challenging vulnerablization. To develop these proposals, we surveyed these groups and volunteers shared with us their ideas and the conversations they were having with vulnerablized people. We also asked for feedback from many front-line care-providers and activists, as well as experts in Thunder Bay and beyond. We work closely with our elder, Ma-Nee Chacaby as well as many of our members who are experts or long-term advocates, volunteers or workers in care with vulnerablized people.

Over the past few days we have also released a draft of our recommendations to the public and garnered feedback. **During the weekend of Feb 5-7 many of our volunteers and members were, day and night, on the streets, providing frontline care and help to the community, and this has informed our revised recommendations.**

We understand that our proposals will require mobilization of many bodies and levels of government. We understand that city government is complex and interfaces at many levels with independent, non-governmental and government-owned organizations. We, however, do not particularly care about these complexities or jurisdictional issues: we are demanding change and results and it is not our job to explain exactly how they should be achieved, funded or supervised. We have neither the time nor the inclination to carefully study the organs of state. We do not and will not accept any excuses for inaction that make recourse to the idea that it’s “someone else’s problem” or that “it’s complex.” We are in a dire emergency and, as our group’s name makes clear, **we will not accept that a single death from neglect or exposure is necessary or acceptable.**

What comes next

Going forward, **we look forward to communicating to clarify our recommendations and discuss further how they might be implemented and activated.** In certain limited ways, and as necessary, we can collaborate to achieve specific aspects of these recommendations. However we want to be clear that we must remain completely independent of the city and maintain that it will continue to be our responsibility to be openly and publicly critical of the city if the situation demands it.

Further, our group is dedicated to maintaining the utmost transparency. As such, we intend to publish these notes and also future information as we can.

We want to close this preface by reiterating our belief that many people working for the city are acting in good faith and are dedicated to making things better and we want to see that happen. Our recommendations come from our earnest consideration of what we're hearing in the community from the grassroots. There is, unfortunately, a lot of fear and distrust among many vulnerablized people based on a lot of mistakes made in the past. That is regrettable but true. We're simply communicating that and trying to, as much as we can, offer earnest advice about what might make it better.

1. Proposal for encouraging isolation among vulnerablized and decarcerated people

Background

1. For decades, Thunder Bay has chosen to deal with problems related to addiction, trauma, colonialism, poverty and racism—including homelessness, criminalized behaviour, etc—through policing and incarceration. This approach has been completely ineffective, extremely inefficient and directly harmful to thousands of lives. **The Thunder Bay jail, a decrepit dungeon that has been widely condemned, has been used as a form of human warehousing that is a gross violation of human rights.**
2. That, recently, this jail has become a pestilent hell where most incarcerated people have been exposed to covid comes as no surprise.
3. It should be noted that a significant percentage of people in the jail are there either awaiting trial or for petty offenses like not paying fines or not showing up to court appearances. Their sentence now may be a death sentence. This is a horrific crime against humanity for which many levels of government share the responsibility.
4. We support the effort to immediately decarcerate people from the jail, however evidently this process has been fumbled with catastrophic consequences. Many if not most decarcerated people are housing-insecure and have no safe place to self isolate. It is common for decarcerated individuals, who are often poor, to depend on friends, family and the shelter system for housing. **It appears that there were not reliable systems set in place to prevent individuals exposed to covid in the jail and other correctional facilities from spreading the virus in the community and we are daily learning of new cases.**
5. In addition to the risks to individuals and the community at large, there is also a high risk that decarcerated individuals (or those with whom they are in close contact) will travel to Indigenous communities who, thanks to poor health indicators (due to racism and colonialism in many sectors) are extremely susceptible. This threatens to lead to the suffering and premature death of precious elders, and knowledge and language keepers. This contributes to genocide.
6. Now the city is in a position of having to convince many formerly incarcerated people (we have no firm numbers) to endure two weeks of isolation, but does not have the coercive means to do so. **The city cannot successfully order individuals into isolation, nor are there the resources to enforce such isolation, nor should coercive**

enforcement be attempted. This is not only the case for decarcerated individuals but for vulnerablized people more broadly.

7. People who need to isolate have diverse needs. Many are dependent on alcohol, opioids or other illegalized or stigmatized substances. Several suffer from FASD, trauma histories, mental ill health and medical issues which complicate matters profoundly. Others are **completely justified in their resentment of the systems that have oppressed them** and are unlikely to respond well to demands that they sacrifice their freedom for the public good.
8. **The need for isolation is paramount, but it cannot be coerced.**

Our proposal

1. **UNIQUE ISOLATION SHELTER:** The city established a unified isolation shelter designated for those released from the Thunder Bay Jail and Correctional Centre that is distant from other shelters. The facility should be able to provide food for a variety of diets. This shelter must have a special area or shelter for female-identified, trans, two spirit and non-binary people.
2. **SUPPORT:** That guests of this shelter be offered excellent food, access to goods and services they need, and harm reduction supports, including alcohol, tobacco, prescription medications and any other items to help make their isolation enjoyable in a timely and generous way.
3. **SAFE INJECTION AND SUPPLY:** That guests of this shelter have access to safe injection supports and services. In some cases it may be necessary to offer, in a non-stigmatizing way, access to illicit and stigmatized substances on which individuals may depend including opioids and other narcotics. Otherwise, individuals may leave isolation to seek these substances.
4. **CASH REMUNERATION:** That guests of this shelter be promised at least \$150 per day of isolation upon completion *in cash*, with a 2x bonus if they complete the entire period of recommended isolation. This is not just required as incentive, but to compensate for the inability of guests to access forms of income that they would otherwise have if released into the community.
5. **TRANSPORTATION:** That transportation to and from the shelter by taxi be guaranteed from wherever and to wherever the guest desires after their quarantine period is complete.
6. **ENTERTAINMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS:** That the guests be provided technology for their entertainment. This might include TV, computers, games, internet etc. Smartphones should be provided to all guests that they can take with them when they leave: these can be used in isolation for entertainment and communication and afterwards for communication. Individuals may choose to install the covid tracking bluetooth app.

7. WARM CLOTHING: That guests leaving the shelter be given warm clothing.
8. MEDICAL: Medical workers and other care staff be on call to meet and attend to guests. Daily pharmacy deliveries be arranged.
9. PEER SUPPORT: A peer support system be set in place.
10. POST-ISOLATION PREPARATION: That social workers meet with the guests in isolation to develop a path upon completion and that resources be set aside for post-isolation life (for example, looking for housing, replacing ID, etc.). This will ensure the days of isolation are used to assist with reintegration planning.
11. ASSISTANCE: That additional support workers be available to assist guests with business they may have to attend to, like arranging appointments and communication with family.
12. COORDINATION: All of the above need to be overseen and managed by a dedicated full-time coordinator who also works directly with guests

Addendum

The costs of the proposed solution are not inconsiderable but are minimal in comparison to the massive costs of incarcerating individuals. We must also take into consideration the potentially massive costs of failing to ensure decarcerated and vulnerablized people are able to isolate: the massive spread of covid in the community affecting vulnerablized and non-vulnerablized people in the city, with potentially catastrophic impacts on Indigenous people, posing a grave threat to elders, and knowledge- and language-keepers. The costs of a hospitalized single patient on a ventilator is massive.

It is our belief that this approach, which begins from a place of care and compassion and refuses extortion, incarceration, coercion and fear, is a good model to guide policy after the immediate crisis. We believe the costs associated with this proposal, especially #4 (remuneration) are *the least our city can do* for people we have knowingly and willingly exposed to covid and whom we have placed in a horrific, condemned jail - a massive human rights violation.

We believe that the proposal represents the **only just and reasonable solution** to the immediate problem, and is also a small part of the **reparations payments due to people we have incarcerated in violation of their human rights**. We do not accept the argument that, because incarceration is the jurisdiction of federal and provincial governments, the city of Thunder Bay is off the hook. **For decades we have used incarceration and policing as an ineffective, costly, dangerous and often deadly way of dealing with upstream social problems** related to poverty, trauma, colonialism, homelessness, racism and other systemic and structural issues. **That approach must end immediately** and those whose lives have been worsened by these policies need to be compensated.

2. Proposal for care busses

The problem

- As extreme cold weather sets in there is a need for warm spaces for vulnerablized people to temporarily get out of the cold.
- There is also a need for vulnerablized people to get from shelters to other destinations (and back) because many services are spread far apart.
- There is further a need for vulnerablized people to access services and get easy and immediate access help navigating multiple systems.
- As emergency shelters reach capacity, there is a need to get vulnerablized people to hotels to spend the night.
- Most people in need don't have extra money for taxis or bus fare, and services like SOS are at capacity.

The proposed remedy

- **A special free bus route should be established**, running 24/7 at regular intervals. The bus should run between Cumberland street (as far as the Salvation Army shelter) and City Hall, stopping at the intercity and other points along the way (eg. Court Street, Simpson Street).
- The bus needs to be clearly marked as free and safe, for people with low literacy.
- This bus needs to be staffed at all times by an anti-racist social worker or other person who can help get individuals access to shelters and other services.
- It should also be staffed by someone with basic first aid to treat dangerous intoxication, wounds, mental instability, or hypothermia.
- This route needs to be staffed by drivers who are courteous and actively not racist. (This is a significant and repeated concern from vulnerablized people in the city)
- People should be allowed to ride the bus (with good ventilation, re: COVID-19) as long as they need, including sleeping on the bus if need be.
- Police must not be allowed on the bus except in absolutely dire circumstances.
- The bus must be provisioned with free PPE, harm reduction supplies, snacks, water, hygiene supplies, and other provisions.
- Regularly serviced portable toilets should be provided at both bus terminals.
- Volunteers can be recruited to escort people to/from the bus to/from shelters and other services if need be so the social worker can remain on the bus and the bus can continue its rounds without delays.
- The bus should have winter clothing available for any person to wear and take with them.
- All city managers and elected officials, and executives of community organizations, whose remit includes care for vulnerable people should take at least one shift on the bus. This is crucially important as decision-makers need to meet and talk to vulnerable people directly, not through intermediaries. This must not be a photo opportunity.

3. Proposal for emergency shelter

The problem

- As extreme cold weather sets in there is a need for warm spaces for vulnerablized people to temporarily get out of the cold.
- There are not enough shelter spaces, and the presence of COVID-19 in the community has made the problem worse.
- Due to the outbreak at the Thunder Bay Jail and Thunder Bay Correctional Centre, the shelter system has now been operating at capacity for a week. They simply do not have the resources to keep up with demand. Individuals released from the jail are being reintroduced without precaution.
- There is no open wet shelter on the Port Arthur side of town.
- Most women (and many men) report feeling unsafe at many of the existing shelters.

The proposed remedy

- **An emergency shelter space must be made available**, nearby services and businesses that people in need access regularly. It should be in one of the two downtown cores, preferably in Port Arthur (as one already exists in Fort William).
- The space must have a no police policy.
- The space must provide privacy and dignity.
- The space must provide and maintain clean and supplied toilets, etc.
- The space must not discriminate against those who use substances and have harm reduction equipment available for their use, perhaps through partnerships with local organizations
- Special safe shelter space must be available for women.
- Security guards must be governed by very strict protocol. They must be extensively instructed and trained to ensure they understand racism, systemic racism, non-violent communication and intervention tactics, de-escalation and other relevant training.
- The space must be staffed with anti-racist social workers
- People must be able to enter before it gets dark
- Rapid testing for COVID-19 be available for the entire shelter system

4. Reimbursements

The problem

- Grassroots groups routinely work with people denied space in shelters or who for a multitude of reasons cannot gain access to shelter. On cold nights, this can be deadly.
- Several grassroots groups are presently paying out-of-pocket for hotel rooms, taxi rides, meals, clothing and other things for people who fall through the cracks.
- Through decades of bad policy and underfunding, the city has created the conditions that have led to this homelessness and lack of shelter crisis. This crisis was avoidable.

- Representatives of the city have intentionally made it dangerous for grassroots organizations like the former Bear Clan to do their work without fear of surveillance, interference and intimidation.
- Now, responsibility is being placed on city organizations, as well as non-profit and grassroots volunteer organizations, to solve the problems at hand and many are using their own funding resources to fill the gap.

The proposed remedy

- It be guaranteed that **individuals or community groups who pay out-of-pocket for expenses to rescue or alleviate the suffering of vulnerablized people**, such as hiring taxis, booking hotel rooms, or purchasing food, **be swiftly reimbursed** with a minimum amount of paperwork.
- That a relationship be formed with local motels to be invoiced directly for costs of people who need shelter.
- That a similar relationship be formed with taxi companies to transport people in need.

5. No new funding or role for police

The problem

- **Vulnerablized people in this community do not trust and are scared of the police.**
- The city pampers the police with funding beyond almost any other Canadian city.
- The police have not yet gained the community's trust and have yet to respond in a meaningful way to the core criticisms of the force in the OIPRD report in the Broken Trust investigation of 2018.

The proposed remedy

- It be recognized that the police cannot and should not be tasked with, or remunerated to solve *any* of these issues.
- It be recognized that the involvement of the police in any of the above initiatives will fatally undermine them. **Vulnerable people in this community do not trust and are scared of the police.** Whether this is justified or not (we believe it is) it doesn't matter. And participation of police will undermine these efforts.
- No additional funds of **any kind** should be allocated to the police while the city is in a state of emergency (which arguably began before the COVID crisis) including for a new police station.
- In cases where private security must be hired they must be extensively instructed and trained to ensure they understand racism, systemic racism, non-violent communication and intervention tactics, de-escalation and other relevant training.

6. Longhouse

- Our elder, Ma Nee Chacaby would like to work with the city to ensure that we can safely build a longhouse. The longhouse would be a structure where people could sleep in an emergency. We would work together to discover how this could be built in a way so as not to present a danger of fire or covid.
- In addition to being a spot for warming and shelter, the longhouse also represents an important part of an Anishinaabe worldview and protocols. Given that many if not most people who are vulnerable have an Indigenous and Anishinaabe background, such a structure will be important to helping them feel welcome.
- The city should provide a safe location for the longhouse which will ensure it will not be vandalized and where vulnerablized people will feel safe.
- This longhouse should be an opportunity for the city to reach out to Indigenous organizations and educate people on emergency preparedness and other issues.
- The city should pay for the materials to create durable and sustainable structures that will last for many years.

7. Coordinator and increased transparency in the shelter system

The problem

- Not enough is known by the public or shelter users about the operations and capacity of the emergency shelter system in the city. The scope of the problem, and its urgency, is not sufficiently understood in the broader community.
- Not One More Death and its collaborators have identified miscommunications and conflicting policies between parts of the shelter system. Vulnerablized people have been turned away from shelter beds because of errors or capacity being reached consistently.
- The Vulnerable Populations Working Group consists of executives/leadership of shelter organizations. It does not include representation of frontline staff, or of vulnerablized people who rely on the system.
- There is no on-the-ground coordinator who has a synoptic view of all services and the way the whole ecosystem fits together. Where managers and coordinators do exist within organizations, they often have little direct interface with vulnerablized people. Vulnerablized people need access to information, assistance and advocacy outside of regular business hours

The proposed remedy

- Data on shelter usage be made public daily, including reporting on how many people have been turned away from beds.
- Communication between all service providers, their employees, and the public should be clear and proactive. Policies for shelter access should be published. Information about all shelters should be obtainable at the same site. This should be written with the needs of people with low literacy in mind.

- Vulnerablized people who rely on the emergency shelter system should be invited to participate in meetings of the Vulnerable Populations Working Group. Frontline workers and volunteers should also be invited to participate. Understanding is paramount.
- A night-time coordinator be hired who can work with vulnerablized people on the streets and develop a synoptic view of services. They can assist, informa and advocate and get information and advice from vulnerablized people to feed back to the City and other organizations.

Memorandum

Office of the City Clerk
Fax: 623-5468
Telephone: 625-2230

TO: City Council
FROM: Krista Power, City Clerk
DATE: February 8, 2021
SUBJECT: Information N1MD Deputation – Authorities
Committee of the Whole – February 8, 2021

My office has been working with the N1MD group to bring forward their deputation this evening to City Council and would like to provide of information relative to By-Law 128-2012 – Procedural By-Law to Govern Meetings of Council and Committees.

The deputation before you this evening contains some items that City Council does not have authority to enact. This information is provided within the deputation as a part of a larger picture of the concerns presented by the N1MD group and are included for context.

It is appreciated that N1MD acknowledged in their written material that the system is complex and interfaces at many levels with independent government and non-government organizations. There is intersectionality between the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board, Thunder Bay District Health Unit, City of Thunder Bay and many other partners, it has been recommend N1MD also follows up with representations to those organizations.

It is important to note that City Council has no authority to direct those agencies:

- *the **Medical Officer of Health** is the authority for isolation orders as may be issued*
- *the **Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board** is the housing authority and service manager including the sheltering system as appointed by the Province*
- ***Thunder Bay Police** are under the governance of the Police Services Board and the Police Services Act.*

The City of Thunder Bay does play a coordination role and facilitates collaboration through the Vulnerable Populations table. As well, City Council conducts advocacy with other orders of government and organizations through its Intergovernmental Affairs Committee.

c.c. Norm Gale, City Manager
Chief S. Hauth, Thunder Bay Police
William Bradica, CEO, TBDSSAB
Dr. J. DeMille, Medical Officer of Health, TBDHU

Memorandum

Office of the City Clerk
Fax: 623-5468
Telephone: 625-2230

TO: Krista Power, City Clerk
FROM: Councillor Andrew Foulds
DATE: February 7, 2021
SUBJECT: Motion – Referral to Administration – N1MD
Committee of the Whole – February 8, 2021

On Tuesday, February 2, 2021, the City of Thunder Bay declared a State of Emergency with respect to exposure of covid-19 within the shelter care system affecting those in our community suffering from homelessness or precariously housed.

It is my understanding that the city has played a crucial role since the beginning of the pandemic by facilitating and supporting the work of the Vulnerable Populations Table which includes The District of Thunder Bay Services Board (TBDSSAB) and Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) who provide integral services in our community on behalf of the Province of Ontario. Shelter care providers such as Salvation Army, Grace Place and Shelter House in addition to key health services such as Norwest, St. Joe’s Care Group, Thunder Bay Regional and others have also played a critical role in this work. This collaborative work has made a difference but in all situations, more work is needed.

I appreciate the work of organizations such as Not One More Death in order to be part of the overarching solution to complex problems and to assist with support and care for those suffering from homelessness and extremely vulnerable in our community.

As such, I provide the following referral motion for Council’s consideration:

With respect to the deputation received from “Not one More Death” at the February 8, 2021 Committee of the Whole Meeting, we recommend that the applicable contents of the associated deputation be referred to Administration for further exploration and recommendations and funding opportunities where possible;

AND THAT Administration report back to Council on this matter;

AND THAT the City Clerk be directed to schedule a Special Committee of the Whole Meeting if required prior to the next scheduled meeting on March 1, 2021 should Administration require direction for specific work;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented for ratification.



Memorandum

TO: Members of Council

FROM: Kayla Dixon, P. Eng., MBA
Director – Engineering & Operations

DATE: February 8, 2021

SUBJECT: Dawson Road and Arthur Street West Project Costs
February 8, 2021 COW Meeting

At the February 2, 2021 Special Committee of the Whole Budget meeting, Administration was directed to provide a memorandum with costs of capital work on Dawson Road and Arthur Street from the past 5 years and for the next 5 years.

Significant work has been completed on Dawson Road under capital contracts for the last four years as indicated below with project phases continuing into 2023 to complete the work. After the next two projects are completed close to \$6.1 million will have been spent on Dawson Road.

Contract 5-2017 (Fassina to Skyline)	\$1,015,483.25
Contract 1-2018 (Hazelwood to Hunter)	\$ 616,839.30
Contract 1-2019 (Strand to Fassina)	\$ 765,577.01
<u>Contract 1-2020 (Skyline to Hazelwood)</u>	<u>\$1,127,163.83</u>
Sub-Total:	\$3,525,063.39
HST Payable:	\$ 62,041.11
Engineering:	\$ 300,000 (estimate)
2022 Ada Avenue to Dog Lake Road	\$1,100,000
<u>2023 Hunter Road to Ada Avenue</u>	<u>\$1,100,000</u>
Total:	\$6,087,104.50

Arthur Street West of the Thunder Bay Expressway has had some miscellaneous mill and pave projects over the past 5 years to address specific local deficiencies costing in the range of \$50,000 to \$80,000. Engineering is waiting for updated pavement management data collected in 2020 and it is expected sections of Arthur Street will be moving into the rehabilitation forecast in the near term. As development advances, there is also potential for new signals at Arthur Street and Mapleward Road.

KD

cc: Krista Power – City Clerk
Norm Gale – City Manager
Kerri Marshall – General Manager – Infrastructure & Operations
Lauren Paradis – Manager - Accounting
Emma Westover – Director – Financial Services
Kristie Sinclair – Manager – Budgets & Long Term Care