

MAYOR PATRICK BROWN

April 24, 2024

Andrea Warren
Commissioner of Human Services
Region of Peel
10 Peel Centre Drive
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9

Dear Commissioner Warren,

I am writing to you with respect to the ongoing challenges related to encampments across the Region of Peel, specifically along the Etobicoke Creek Trail in Brampton.

As you know, the rising costs of living, population growth, underfunding of support for mental health and addictions, lack of investment in infrastructure, the housing crisis and resulting growth in encampment sites are just some of the challenges faced by municipalities. Homelessness and encampments have been impacting our community and affecting some of the most vulnerable members of our community, including 2SLGBTQI+ youth, Black and racialized people, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous people.

The growth of homeless encampments along the Etobicoke Creek Trail in Brampton has been an ongoing issue that the City has been working to address over the last year. Many encampment locations are in close proximity to watersheds or creeks, which is a public safety concern. For example, flooding within the Etobicoke Creek valley is a naturally occurring process with the degree of flooding increasing as the severity of a storm event increases. This presents a real public safety concern for people encamped in these areas, their pets and belongings.

Over the past month, I've been deeply engaged with City staff, Peel Police, Peel Region, local residents, and businesses, urgently seeking solutions to the surging number of encampments while prioritizing health and safety, particularly within the Calvert Park, Duggan Park, Tara Park and Allan Kerbel Park area, concentrated within an existing residential neighbourhood and within a flood zone. Despite our relentless efforts, we are confronted with persistent dangers: recurrent open-air fires, rampant illegal substance abuse, drug-related activities, and a surge in crimes such as assaults and thefts. This dire situation has instilled a pervasive sense of insecurity among the surrounding residents, rendering their local park unusable and unsafe.

Region of Peel Council took decisive action on March 21, 2024, passing a motion to address this

pressing issue. They mandated regional staff to immediately prioritize the transition to available shelter accommodations.

Similarly, recognizing the urgency of the matter, the federal government allocated \$250 million over two years in Budget 2024 to combat encampments and unsheltered homelessness.

Underscoring the critical nature of this issue, the City of Brampton Council, on April 17, 2024, urgently passed a motion urging the Region of Peel to expedite the relocation and provision of additional shelter accommodations for encampment residents, particularly within this area. This call to action is especially poignant given the imminent threat of flooding and other public safety hazards along the Etobicoke Creek Trail.

In light of these urgent circumstances, it is imperative that the Region of Peel immediately prioritize the transition of encampment residents out of this concentrated area along the Etobicoke Creek flood zone, to ensure the safety and well-being of all community members affected. In response, please provide an update on when shelter space and/or hotels will be prioritized for transition of these individuals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Brown', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Patrick Brown
Mayor

cc: Gary Kent, CAO
Aretha Adams, Regional Clerk
Brampton MPs
Brampton MPPs
John MacKenzie, CEO, TRCA
Quentin Hanchard, CAO, CVC