

RE: A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

I am writing to advise that Regional Council approved the following resolution at its meeting held on June 26, 2025:

Resolution Number 2025-499

1. That Peel's Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response, as described in this report, be approved; and
2. That two funding agreements, one between the Regional Municipality of Peel and The Corporation of the City of Brampton, and one between the Regional Municipality of Peel and The Corporation of the City of Mississauga, be created to support the implementation of the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response; and
3. That upon request by the Town of Caledon, that a third funding agreement between the Regional Municipality of Peel and The Corporation of the Town of Caledon be created to support the implementation of the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response; and
4. That the Director of Housing Services be delegated authority to execute such agreements and ancillary documents on business terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Human Services and on legal terms satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor and Commissioner of Legislative Services, as may be necessary; and
5. That Memoranda of Understanding be created between the Regional Municipality of Peel and all member organizations who wish to participate in the Coordinated Encampment Response and follow the policy and joint protocols; and
6. That subject to approval of the 2026 Housing Support budget, Contract (Document 2025-365N) for a Peer Supports Pilot Program to improve outcomes for encampment residents, be awarded to Moyo Health and Community Services, for a period of up to two years, in the estimated annual amount of \$400,000, excluding applicable taxes, pursuant to Procurement By-Law 45-2023, as amended; and
7. That the Director of Housing Services be delegated authority to execute agreements and ancillary documents with Moyo Health & Community Services for a Peer Supports Pilot Program (Document 2025-365N) and on business terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Human Services and on

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legal terms satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor and
Commissioner of Legislative Services, as may be necessary;
and

8. That the Director of Housing Services and the Director of Procurement be authorized to approve increases to the contract (Document 2025-365N) between the Region of Peel and Moyo Health & Community Services, for the provision of the Peer Supports Pilot Program as required to provide continued support to encampment residents, throughout the term of the pilot, subject to satisfactory performance, available budget, and pursuant to Procurement By-law 45-2023; as amended; and
9. That the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon be sent to local municipal Councils for approval.

A copy of the subject report is enclosed for your information.



Christine Thomson
Deputy Clerk and Manager, Legislative Services
Region of Peel

C: Diana Rusnov, City Clerk, City of Mississauga
Genevieve Scharback, City Clerk, City of Brampton
Kevin Klingenberg, Town Clerk, Town of Caledon
Steve Jacques, Commissioner of Human Services
Aileen Baird, Director of Housing Services
Kristin Misurka, Director of Procurement

REPORT TITLE: A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

FROM: Steve Jacques, MScPI, MCIP, RPP, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Peel’s Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response, as described in this report, be approved;**
- 2. That two funding agreements, one between the Regional Municipality of Peel and The Corporation of the City of Brampton, and one between the Regional Municipality of Peel and The Corporation of the City of Mississauga, be created to support the implementation of the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response; and**
- 3. That upon request by the Town of Caledon, that a third funding agreement between the Regional Municipality of Peel and The Corporation of the Town of Caledon be created to support the implementation of the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response; and**
- 4. That the Director of Housing Services be delegated authority to execute such agreements and ancillary documents on business terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Human Services and on legal terms satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor and Commissioner of Legislative Services, as may be necessary; and**
- 5. That Memoranda of Understanding be created between the Regional Municipality of Peel and all member organizations who wish to participate in the Coordinated Encampment Response and follow the policy and joint protocols; and**
- 6. That subject to approval of the 2026 Housing Support budget, Contract (Document 2025-365N) for a Peer Supports Pilot Program to improve outcomes for encampment residents, be awarded to Moyo Health & Community Services, for a period of up to two years, in the estimated annual amount of \$400,000, excluding applicable taxes, pursuant to Procurement By-Law 45-2023, as amended; and**
- 7. That the Director of Housing Services be delegated authority to execute agreements and ancillary documents with Moyo Health & Community Services for a Peer Supports Pilot Program (Document 2025-365N) and on business terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Human Services and on legal terms satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor and Commissioner of Legislative Services, as may be necessary; and**

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

- 8. That the Director of Housing Services and the Director of Procurement be authorized to approve increases to the contract (Document 2025-365N) between the Region of Peel and Moyo Health & Community Services, for the provision of the Peer Supports Pilot Program as required to provide continued support to encampment residents, throughout the term of the pilot, subject to satisfactory performance, available budget, and pursuant to Procurement By-law 45-2023; as amended; and**
- 9. That the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon be sent to local municipal Councils for approval.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Peel Region, local municipalities, Peel Regional Police, and other organizations have co-designed an encampment response that is human rights-based, coordinated, and balanced.
- The goal of the Coordinated Homeless Encampments Response is to reduce the risks and negative impacts of homeless encampments on public lands in Peel.
- The encampment response includes six components: a policy, guiding principles, encampment response process steps, no encampment zones, encampment response teams, and joint protocols.
- The homeless encampment policy for Peel, Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga provides operational guidance to ensure a consistent, coordinated approach between all parties, while providing the landowner with the flexibility required to make required decisions.
- To mitigate risks, the policy and joint protocols have established who assesses the encampment, the scoring used to assess risk, and the service response appropriate to the assessed level of risk. If risks are too high, a process exists to expeditiously remove the encampment, while prioritizing the health and safety needs of encampment residents.
- Response time targets for an expedited response can be established by municipal landowners/custodians if desired, and brought forward to local municipal Councils for approval, based on risk tolerances.
- The Encampment Response Teams comprised of staff from Peel Region, Peel Regional Police, the City of Brampton, Town of Caledon and City of Mississauga have been piloting the protocols since the fall of 2024 with good results. The protocols will be regularly improved as implementation continues. Further work and collaboration will continue with OPP to implement the encampment response in Caledon.
- The proposed 2026 Housing Support budget includes costs to support the Region, City of Brampton, and City of Mississauga to fully implement the coordinated encampment response. Costs to continue to operate the temporary shelter for encampment clients, together with costs to fully implement the policy and protocols, site clean-up and remediation and peer supports through Moyo Health & Community Services are approximately \$15 million and will be included as part of the proposed 2026 Housing Support budget.
- To meaningfully support the needs and improve outcomes of some encampment residents who may use substances, staff is requesting to directly negotiate with Moyo Health & Community Services to create a peer supports pilot program that would work with Peel Outreach and Housing staff.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

- Next steps include securing local municipal Council approval of the encampment response and updating municipal and regional by-laws and standard operating procedures, as appropriate. Local municipalities may choose to add response time targets to their operating procedures, as directed by their respective Councils.
 - Full implementation of the new coordinated encampment response will occur in late Q1 2026 should the budget be approved.
 - While having a coordinated response to homeless encampments is essential, the policy and protocols alone will not eliminate homeless encampments nor end street homelessness in Peel.
 - Ending chronic homelessness in Peel requires the ongoing implementation of Peel's 10-year housing and homelessness plan, including greater federal and provincial investments in community housing and homelessness prevention.
 - A comprehensive report on Peel's 10-year plan will be tabled at Regional Council in the fall of 2025.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

Since 2018, Peel Region has been working collaboratively with partner organizations to implement Peel's 10-year strategic Housing and Homelessness Plan (PHHP). The plan includes several actions which combine to prevent, manage and reduce chronic homelessness in Peel. A comprehensive update on Peel's strategy is coming to Regional Council in the fall of 2025.

The coordinated Encampment Response is one action within this broader homelessness strategy.

In April 2024, the Peel Encampments Working Group and Steering Committee began work to create an encampment policy and set of joint protocols that coordinate roles and responsibilities of Peel Region, the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga, Town of Caledon, Peel Regional Police, and Peel Outreach program. Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is responsible for policing the Town of Caledon and agreed to participate in the Working Group in early 2025. Further work and collaboration will continue with OPP to implement the encampment response in Caledon. Other community organizations who expressed interest in being part of the coordinated response also participated, including agencies serving people experiencing homelessness, conservation authorities, and transportation agencies. The encampment response was also informed by input from current and former encampment residents and a Citizens' Table.

The overarching goal of the Coordinated Homeless Encampments Response is to reduce the risks and negative impacts of homeless encampments on public lands in Peel. ¹ The policy and joint protocols were developed using a balanced approach, respecting the needs

¹The coordinated encampment response, including the policy and joint protocols, do not apply to encampments on private property. Improving how the Region of Peel supports private owners, such as businesses, who have encampments on their properties is a goal of Peel's new place-based outreach program, which is not the focus of this report.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

of people residing in encampments with the needs of community members living and sharing the same community spaces, while aligning with applicable legal requirements.

To achieve a balanced encampment response, five objectives were created to guide the development of the policy and protocols. These are:

- More **coordinated and timely service provision** for people living in encampments to reduce the precariousness of their living conditions.
- Increased **resident and business satisfaction** about the approach and tools used to address encampments.
- Increased **community awareness** about homelessness in Peel and what concerned citizens can do.
- **Upholding the safety** of public spaces.
- **Improved communication and data sharing** amongst service providers.

Since project launch Council has received six reports on this work and other items related to homeless encampments. These are:

- May 23, 2024: “Homeless Encampment Policy and Joint Protocols”
- July 11, 2024: “Update on the Encampment Policy Framework and Joint Protocols for Peel Region”
- November 7, 2024: “Unsheltered Homelessness and Encampments Initiative Funding”
- January 9, 2025: “Provincial Encampment Funding Programs”
- February 13, 2025: “Peel’s Homeless Encampment Policy and Protocols Update”
- March 20, 2025: “Citizens’ Table and Encampment Residents’ Insights on Peel’s Encampment Policy and Protocols”

This report seeks Council’s approval of Peel’s proposed coordinated homeless encampment response, which includes six elements: 1) Encampment Policy; 2) Guiding Principles; 3) Encampment Response Process Steps; 4) No Encampment Zones; 5) Encampment Response Teams; and 6) Joint Protocols. A proposed budget is also included for approval through the 2026 budget process.

2. Scope of unsheltered homelessness and encampments in Peel

There are two methods Peel uses to quantify the number of people experiencing homelessness in Peel. One is the Point-in-Time Count mandated by the federal government. The second is data collected by Peel Outreach and emergency shelter staff. The number of people experiencing homelessness is increasing. In 2023, 6,007 clients accessed emergency shelter in Peel. In 2024, 8,637 clients accessed emergency shelter in Peel – an increase of 36 per cent. A small minority of homeless residents live in encampments in Peel. Using daily reporting data, on average, less than 150 people live in encampments in Peel at any given time, comprising roughly 8 per cent of the homeless population. Of Peel Region’s total population as recorded in the 2021 Census, approximately 0.1 per cent are people experiencing homelessness.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

Table 1: Snapshots of Homelessness and Shelter System Data

Measure	January	February	March	April	May
Shelter occupancy rate	124%	118%	112%	116%	130%
Total homeless individuals in emergency shelters	1,360	1,361	1,298	1,287	1,352
Total homeless in encampments	--	98	102	137	182
Total homeless population	--	1,459	1,400	1,424	1,534
% unsheltered homeless individuals	--	6.7%	7.3%	9.6%	11.9%
Total population, Peel Region, 2021 Census	1,451,022				
Proportion of homeless individuals (2025 monthly) vs total population (2021)	--	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

Note: Total homeless population includes people in shelter and in encampments, however there is hidden homelessness in Peel that cannot be quantified. Homeless individuals in shelters and encampments are reported on the last day of each month and published on Peel's website.

Table 2 shows the results of the 2024 point-in-time counts from neighbouring municipalities. As reported to Council on April 24, 2025 through the report entitled, "2024 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count Results", the number of people experiencing homelessness in Peel increased 93 per cent from 866 people in 2021, to 1,674 people in 2024. While the number of people experiencing homelessness in Peel is significant, the proportion of Peel's unsheltered homeless population counted in 2024 was smaller than other comparable municipalities and per capita data showed approximately 0.12 per cent of Peel's population was comprised of people experiencing homelessness.

It is important to note that Point in Time counts are a measure of how many individuals are experiencing homelessness on one day and does not capture the number of unique individuals experiencing homelessness over a year's time. For example, Peel's 2024 PIT count was 1,674 people on one day, while the total number of people experiencing homelessness in Peel in 2024 was 8,637.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

Table 2: 2024 Point-in-Time Counts by Select Neighbouring Municipalities

Municipality	Total homeless population counted	Total unsheltered, if known	% unsheltered homeless individuals	Total population (2021 Census)	% homeless of total population
Durham Region	1,345	--	--	696,992	0.19%
Peel (local system)	1,674	206	12%	1,451,022	0.12%
Halton Region	343	61	18%	596,637	0.06%
City of Hamilton	1,216	257	21%	785,184	0.15%
Niagara Region	701	282	40%	477,941	0.15%
Waterloo Region	2,371	1,009	43%	587,165	0.40%

Note: The point-in-time count definition of unsheltered includes observed homelessness – on the street, in public spaces, in a vehicle, or in encampments.

3. Peel Region’s Encampment Response

Staff is seeking Council approval for a coordinated encampment response comprised of six key elements: 1) Encampment Policy; 2) Guiding Principles; 3) Encampment Response Process Steps; 4) No Encampment Zones; 5) Encampment Response Teams; and 6) Joint Protocols.

All recommendations are informed by research, best practices, positive pilot results, input/direction from Council, sector organizations, encampment residents, citizens (via a citizens table, townhall sessions, and surveys), a review of legislation and recent case law.

a) Encampment Policy

The overarching goal of the Homeless Encampments Policy is to reduce the risks, harms and negative impacts of homeless encampments on public lands in Peel. The policy and joint protocols were developed using a balanced approach, respecting the needs of people residing in encampments with the needs of community members living and sharing the same community spaces, while aligning with all applicable legal requirements.

Peel’s encampment policy and joint protocols create a balanced, risk-based, coordinated, consistent, and accountable process to assess, mitigate, and respond to documented risks in encampments.

Voluntary relocation by encampment residents is the preferred approach. A coordinated encampment response is vital because most encampments are located on local municipal properties and the Region provides the essential housing, homelessness, and income supports needed by encampment residents. Part of the policy and protocols process includes a plan for removal when health and safety risks are high and cannot be mitigated and/or all other voluntary efforts have been unsuccessful. The process also

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

includes an expedited removal option that is supported by the Encampment Response Teams for instances when encampments are erected in “no encampment zones” and/or when risk levels are too high and unable to be mitigated.

The policy is attached as Appendix I and has been updated since Council received the policy draft on July 11, 2024 to reflect improvements in Peel’s coordinated encampment response plan.

b) Guiding Principles

Peel’s Encampment Response is guided by the following principles:

- Implementing a **rights-based, case-by-case approach** to respond to each encampment.
- Using **evidence-based, risk informed decision-making** to maintain community safety and balance the needs of encampment residents with those of community members living and sharing the same community spaces.
- Committing to the **voluntary relocation of encampment residents** wherever possible and proceeding with enforcement after all reasonable support efforts have been attempted without success and with reasonable advance notice of the requirement to vacate a public space. However, it is also recognized that in exceptional high-risk circumstances, more immediate intervention may be required to address public safety concerns.

c) Encampment Response Process Steps

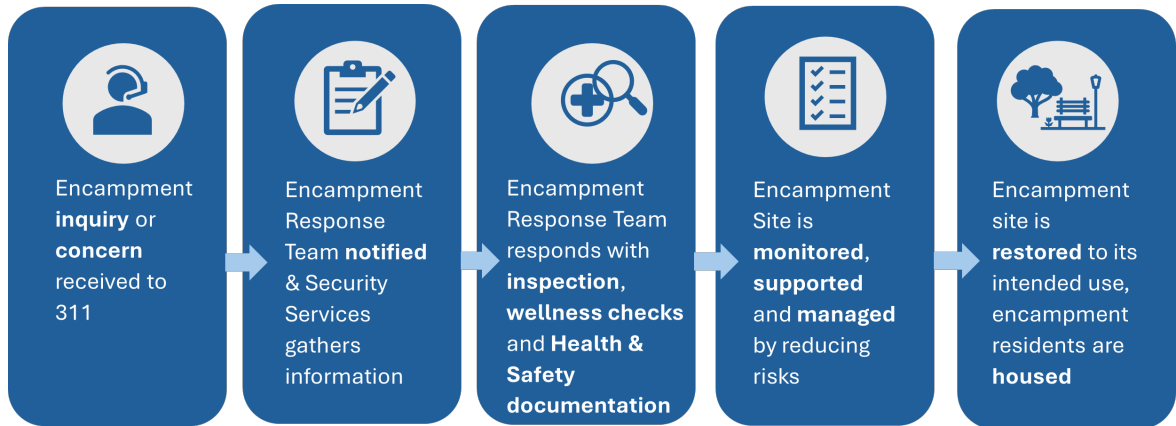
Peel’s encampment response is a highly coordinated process between several key organizations. Every time an encampment is reported, investigated, monitored, or other measures actioned, a consistent process is followed. Each step of the encampment response is supported by at least one, if not several, protocols to guide consistent decision making and to ensure the members of the encampment response teams understand their roles and responsibilities.

Please refer to Figure 1 below and to Appendix II for more information. Depending on the situation, not all steps are always necessary.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

Figure 1: Encampment Response Process

Please note: The time to move through this process is highly variable, depending on level of risk



d) No Encampment Zones

Encampments are not permitted in areas known as “no encampment zones” and the policy and protocols acknowledge that the removal process may be expedited for known encampments in these zones because of significant health and safety concerns. “No encampment zones” in Peel are owned either by the City of Mississauga, City of Brampton, Town of Caledon, or Peel Region. The custodian may choose to immediately proceed with removal and enforcement. The zones include:

- Prominent municipal spaces regularly used for public gatherings
- Municipal facilities where events with a permit are scheduled
- Sites located within flood plains
- Obstructing critical infrastructure sites
- Active construction sites
- Playgrounds, sports fields and any fenced-in, off-leash dog area
- On any community garden and in any garden shed or greenhouse
- On or within any designated fire route, or the entrance to or exist from a designated fire route, or located so as to block any fire hydrant
- On or within areas prone to erosion, slope instability, not serviced in winter, or other environmental hazards, due to risks to health and safety

Please refer to Appendix III for more information.

The Mississauga and Brampton Encampment Response Teams have been piloting the use of “no encampment zones” for several months. Early results show that these zones keep the encampment response balanced with reasonable rules based on health and safety risks. When consulted, encampment residents said they easily understood and accepted these rules; therefore, the zones help prevent new sites from being established and they help preserve important public spaces for their intended use. Selective designation of these “no encampment zones” ensures that accessible alternative sites are available, which increases voluntary compliance and the defensibility of any forced removals should they become necessary.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

These steps are followed by the Encampment Response Teams if an encampment is found to be in a “no encampment zone” in Brampton and Mississauga:

- 1) Voluntary relocation is always encouraged and is facilitated through arranging for storage, site clean-up(s), and shelter options.
- 2) The land custodian will issue a trespass notice.
- 3) Removal day: municipal and regional staff, as well as Peel Outreach and Peel Regional Police, will attend. Storage, clean-up, and shelter options are arranged, and the trespass notice will be enforced as required.
- 4) Site is remediated and monitored to ensure the site remains unoccupied.

There are several types of non-municipally owned lands that are also considered to be “no encampment zones” as they have a public purpose, but they differ in response because they are owned by non-government organizations that do not have the same charter obligations towards homeless individuals as governments. These lands include schoolboard properties (schools, daycares, playgrounds, and sports fields), as well as conservation areas and transit stations. These agencies, boards and commissions have the option to decide how they want to respond to encampments on their lands.

e) Encampment Response Teams

Peel’s Encampment Response Teams (ERTs) are comprised of staff from the local municipalities, region, police, Peel Outreach, and other community agencies. The ERTs have been piloting the draft policy framework and protocols since the summer of 2024, continuously improving the approach with lessons learned. To be effective local municipal Councils will also need to enact or approve updates to local municipal by-laws and policies.

Encampment Response Teams (ERTs) have been established in the City of Brampton and the City of Mississauga. An Encampment Response Team for the Town of Caledon will be established when necessary. They are comprised of municipal and regional staff as well as police, Peel Outreach, and other community agencies as appropriate. The ERTs use the policy, protocols, and other tools to coordinate service delivery, site monitoring, and decision-making across Peel Region. The teams actively monitor known encampments to mitigate health and safety risks and encourage/support encampment residents to access housing and/or emergency shelter.

The ERTs meet weekly or more often if required to review all encampment sites and any risks identified during their encampment inspections and assessment documents. The ERTs discuss mitigation measures to support encampment residents and surrounding communities, other actions taken, and recommendations for next steps. Please refer to Appendix II for more information.

i) Risk-Based Approach

Peel’s policy and protocols follow a risk-based approach that prioritizes reducing or eliminating health and safety risks that may be present at encampments. Members of Peel’s Encampment Response Teams identify, observe, and report health and safety risks about each encampment through an encampment site assessment and an encampment resident needs assessment. These assessments capture the full spectrum of possible and current risks, probability, and impact for encampment residents, the encampment site, and the community surrounding the site.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

The encampment site assessment focuses on the conditions of the physical site. It is completed by the public property owner (usually the local municipality, which includes local fire and emergency services), and Peel Regional Police. The site assessment documents observations and hazards, supports decision-making by the Encampment Response Teams, and determines encampment risk levels.

The encampment resident needs assessment focuses on encampment residents and their pets. It is completed by Peel Outreach, who typically have established trusting relationships with encampment residents, which is critical for success. The resident needs assessment documents daily living needs, safety needs, and willingness to accept housing and other supports or referrals of an encampment as a whole rather than individually, to protect privacy. It details hazards and has a documented process on how to escalate concerns regarding hazards. It also supports decision-making by the Encampment Response Teams.

The Encampment Response Teams review this information on a weekly basis to optimize resource allocation, prioritize actions to mitigate or remove risks, and better support people living in an encampment and the surrounding community.

ii) Removal and Enforcement

Before any enforcement action is taken to remove an encampment, it is always important to encourage encampment residents to voluntarily relocate. If relocation is deemed necessary, it must be conducted in a manner that respects the human rights of encampment residents. Regular and early discussions with encampment residents will encourage meaningful engagement and effective participation.

Encampment removal is determined on a case-by-case basis. Encampment removal is a property rights issue, not a criminal offence. The final decision to remove an encampment rests with the public property owner or other agency with jurisdiction over the property (known as the “custodian” in the protocols). This is often the owner of the property. The custodian has responsibility and control over the property.

The custodian, with information and support from the appropriate Encampment Response Team, will make an informed, evidence-based decision whether to remove an encampment. The team’s recommendations are based on identified and assessed health and safety risks, how the risks have been reduced, eliminated, or otherwise managed, and monitored changes over time. The recommendations are also balanced with the needs of the encampment residents as captured on needs assessments and availability of alternate accommodations.

The Region and the local Municipalities continue to monitor developments in the law as it relates to encampments. To date, the human-rights centred approach is most consistent with direction from courts.

f) Joint Protocols

The protocols are very operational in nature and its intended audience and use are the Encampment Response Teams. If regional and local municipal councils approve the policy, it will provide the working group with the authority to finalize the protocols and ensure they reflect the nuances of implementation and the budget. A sample protocol, “Removal and Enforcement” is included as Appendix IV.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

A summary of the protocols is included in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Purpose and Responsibilities of the Encampment Protocols

Protocol Title	Purpose	Who is responsible
Roles and Responsibilities	Explaining responsibilities and accountabilities for each member of the Encampment Response Teams.	Peel, Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel Outreach, Peel Regional Police
Supporting Encampment Residents	Supporting encampment residents.	Peel Outreach, Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel, Peel Regional Police
Service Requests and Complaints	Coordinating and responding to service requests and complaints.	Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel
Encampment Site Conferencing	Discussing complex issues related to encampment risks and deciding next steps.	Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel, Peel Regional Police
Site Clean-Up	Coordinating site clean-ups and supporting encampment residents.	Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel
Inactive Encampment Site	Instructing how to determine whether anyone is living in an encampment and how to close and remediate the site.	Peel Outreach, Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel
Removal and Enforcement	Coordinating an encampment removal and how to enforce a trespass notice if necessary.	Peel, Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel Regional Police
Measurements & Reporting	Clarifying the data and information to be shared between Encampment Response Teams and with the public.	Peel, Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel Outreach, Peel Regional Police
Privacy and Information Sharing	Outlining privacy expectations and what to do if there is a privacy breach.	Peel, Brampton, Caledon, Mississauga, Peel Outreach, Peel Regional Police

4. Monitoring and Reporting

The effective operation of the policy and protocols depend on encampment response partners regularly collecting and sharing information in real time so that performance metrics can track activities. It is also important to be accountable to Peel citizens. Key metrics are

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

publicly shared on Peel's website². This information helps Peel's Encampment Response Teams better understand what's happening on the ground and how to appropriately respond.

Table 4 shows the number of active encampments in Peel since January 2025. An active encampment means one or more person is living there. One active site is a location captured by the site address and park location on public property. The site can contain a single structure or tent, or multiple structures or tents clustered together. When multiple structures are in a park or a location with one site address, encampment structures will be treated as separate active locations when they are 1km apart. With the return of warmer weather Encampment Response Teams expect to see an increase in the number of encampments and have prepared accordingly alongside homeless service and emergency shelter providers in Peel.

Table 4: Active Encampments in Peel

Municipality	January	February	March	April	May
Mississauga	9	5	10	11	10
Brampton	16	15	16	14	14
Caledon	0	0	0	0	0
Peel Total	25	20	26	25	24

The risk assessments used to monitor encampments consider encampments to be small if they are 1-2 tents; medium if they are 3-4 tents; and large if they are 5 or more tents. Table 5 shows that most encampments in Peel in 2025 are considered small, consisting of 1-2 tents. Small encampments generally have fewer risks than those of a medium or large size.

² <https://peelregion.ca/housing-social-support/encampments-peel>

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

Table 5: Size of Encampments in Mississauga and Brampton

Municipality	January	February	March	April	May
Mississauga	Small 8 Med 1 Large 0	Small 3 Med 2 Large 0	Small 8 Med 2 Large 0	Small 9 Med 2 Large 0	Small 9 Med 0 Large 1
Brampton	Small 14 Med 2 Large 0	Small 10 Med 5 Large 0	Small 16 Med 0 Large 0	Small 13 Med 0 Large 1	Small 12 Med 1 Large 1
Caledon	0	0	0	0	0
Peel Total, Small (1-2 tents)	22	13	24	22	21
Peel Total, Medium (3-4 tents)	3	7	2	2	1
Peel Total, Large (5+ tents)	0	0	0	1	2

5. Peer Support Program

Moyo Health & Community Services (“Moyo”) is a member organization of the Peel Encampment Steering Committee and Working Group. As the support of people living in encampments requires multi-faceted approaches, staff propose to directly negotiate with Moyo for a two-year pilot to create a dedicated harm reduction peer support team. The intent of the pilot will be to determine its effectiveness in reducing the barriers to encampment residents accessing services and supports consistent with the encampment policy and protocols. Once the pilot is complete and if shown to be effective, staff will review the options and available resources in the marketplace and will update council.

The service – harm reduction-focused peer supports to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness – will assist with the successful implementation of the encampment response’s goal to improve service by having peers work alongside Peel Outreach to strengthen relationships with encampment residents and influence decisions to relocate. The peer supports team will also work with other members of the Encampment Response Teams as appropriate. The funding required for the direct negotiation are included in the 2026 encampment budget request.

The rationale to contract directly with Moyo for the pilot, is as follows:

- Moyo is the known service provider for harm reduction in Peel and has demonstrated good service at Peel’s Urgent Public Health Need Site (UPHNS). Moyo has also fostered relationships to mitigate any issues with the community inclusive of residents through the UPHNS Community Advisory Committee.
- The harm reduction nuance is critical for establishing an impactful peer support program, which will address substance use through people who have or are using substances and

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

who want to support others in this situation.

- Moyo runs the Peel Drug Users Advisory Panel, which is where people with living experience of substance use come together to support the co-design and ensure ongoing efficacy of various harm reduction programs and strategies. Moyo has already established trusting relationships with people who use substances.
- Moyo is unique in that it has the peer-led harm reduction experience that other providers do not have, and they have expressed an interest to run a harm reduction-focused peer support program in Peel.

Pursuant to Part VII – Direct Negotiations, and Schedule “B”, of the Procurement By-law 45-2023, as amended, the process to award this contract (Document 2025-365N) requires Regional Council approval.

6. Implementation and Next Steps

Deliverable	Timeline	Status
Regional and Municipal Implementation Planning	2025	In progress
Local Municipal Council approval	2025	Not started
Regional Council Report re: regionally funded municipal reimbursement program for encampment litter maintenance, clean-up and site remediation	Q3 2025	In progress
Municipal, Regional By-Law Amendments	2025-2026	Not started
Municipal Response Time Targets Established by landowner/custodian (if desired)	Q4 2025	Not started
2026 Budget approvals	Q4 2025	In progress
Implementation – policy and protocols operationalized	Q1 2026	Not started
Project close-out and transition to operations	Q1 2026	Not started

Staff will continue to advance council-endorsed advocacy and awareness campaigns as well as broader objectives contained in the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan.

Once the new policy and protocols have been implemented and resourced accordingly, staff will return to Council to provide an update on impact and recommendations about right-sizing resources for the 2027 budget, including municipal costs for encampment litter maintenance, clean-up, and site remediation, and the scope of unsheltered homelessness in Peel.

Upon approval of the recommendations in this report, targeted communications will be released to stakeholders. Members of the Encampment Response Teams will be equipped with tools communicating ‘no encampment zones’ as well as support documents on Peel shelters, services, and contact information. Regular email updates to Members of Council regarding encampments in Peel will continue up to full implementation, including key messaging, newsletters, and social media content aimed for residents. Peel will continue engaging service providers and community agencies to encourage clients to seek Peel

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

shelter and supports. Peel's website will be updated throughout implementation and as new monthly encampment data becomes available.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

While having a coordinated response to homeless encampments is essential, the policy and protocols will not eliminate homeless encampments nor end street homelessness in Peel Region. As the Municipal Engagement Guidance document states: "Homeless encampments will rarely satisfy the requirements of the human right to housing, and thus should not be understood as a solution to homelessness and should not be permanent."³

Ending chronic homelessness in Peel requires the ongoing implementation of Peel's 10-year housing and homelessness plan, including greater federal and provincial investments in community housing and homelessness prevention. A comprehensive report on Peel's 10-year plan will be tabled at Regional Council in the fall of 2025.

To mitigate risks, the policy and joint protocols have established who assesses the encampment, the scoring used to assess risk, and the service response appropriate to the assessed level of risk. If risks are too high, a process exists to expeditiously remove the encampment, while prioritizing the health and safety needs of encampment residents. Response time targets for an expedited response can be established by municipal landowners/custodians if desired, and brought forward to local municipal Councils for approval, based on risk tolerances.

Staff has been monitoring legislative developments that may affect the encampment response, including the *Safer Municipalities Act (SMA)*. Following the SMA's introduction as Bill 242 Staff provided an information update on the January 9, 2025 Council agenda at item 13.4. The SMA did not pass before the election, was re-introduced as Bill 6 in the current legislative session, and received royal assent on June 5, 2025. While the precise impact of the SMA will depend on regulations that have not yet been enacted, the Coordinated Homeless Encampment Response is consistent with this legislation.

There are considerable challenges in removing an encampment. As such, it is essential to have reasonable rules – the "no encampment zones" – that are socialized with encampment residents. It is only with their cooperation, as well as with the teamwork of the Encampment Response Team, that successful outcomes will emerge.

Any action to enforce removing an encampment requires the approval of the property owner and/or main contact (property custodian). A two-tier municipal environment with joint accountability means that Peel, Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga must commit to joint protocols that will guide the Encampment Response Teams to use a balanced and consistent approach. Member organizations of the steering committee and working group have achieved consensus on this and the approach is being piloted on an interim basis until full resourcing is possible. This consistent, human rights-based approach must be maintained to ensure the ongoing success of Peel's encampment response.

³ National Working Group on Homeless Encampments (2023). *Homeless Encampments: Municipal Engagement Guidance*, p. 2.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

The increase in homelessness and encampments is a direct result of multiple systems failure, including a decades-long gap in producing new community housing and dedicated supportive housing, an insufficient amount of new rental housing to keep pace with demand, inadequate income assistance programs, and an absence of support from the federal and provincial governments for long-term financial commitments to municipalities which, in Ontario, fund the majority of the costs of the affordable housing system through their property tax base.

As stated in the July 11, 2024 report to Council, according to the basic principles of the Municipal Engagement Guidance document, “Municipalities do not always have the jurisdiction, capacity, and resources to ensure unhoused people have affordable, secure, and dignified housing. Significant support and intervention from other levels of government is required.”⁴ Working to prevent and reduce homelessness by providing permanent housing for all is critical and will require an ongoing commitment from the Region, local municipalities, community, and federal and provincial governments to find meaningful solutions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

While frequent assessments and inspections ensure that sites are monitored proactively as conditions may change, implementing this approach requires new resources for both the Region and its local municipalities.

Table 4 below provides an overview of the proposed 2026 budget resources necessary for Peel Region and its municipal partners to implement the coordinated encampment response. At this time, there is no external funding for these estimated costs and these expenses will need to be funded by property tax.

Note: The Town of Caledon has indicated it does not yet require resources.

Table 6: Overview of the 2026 Encampment Budget Request

Organization	Estimated Costs	Description
Region of Peel	\$10,800,000	Continued operations of overflow hotel for encampment residents
	\$784,911	4 full time equivalent staff (FTE), tools, peer support program, training for regional and municipal staff
	\$2,160,000	Funds for municipal and regional litter maintenance, clean-ups and remediation
City of Brampton	\$601,729	4 FTEs, 1 fire vehicle
City of Mississauga	\$601,729	4 FTEs, 1 fire vehicle
Town of Caledon	--	--
TOTAL	\$14,948,369	

Through the creation and execution of grant agreements to flow regional funding, as well as a regionally funded reimbursement program for site clean-up and remediation costs on

⁴ Ibid.

A Coordinated Encampment Response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

municipally-owned properties, Peel will assist its local municipal partners to increase their capacity to successfully resource their roles and responsibilities.

Encampments costs for implementation of the coordinated encampment response, site clean-up and remediation and peer supports through Moyo Health & Community Services are included as part of the proposed 2026 Housing Support budget.

CONCLUSION

This report provides council with an updated policy and a protocol roadmap of how Peel Region, the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga, Town of Caledon, Peel Outreach, Peel Regional Police, and other organizations as needed work together to respond to encampments with a coordinated, human rights-based approach. Further consultation and collaboration with OPP is required.

The overarching goal of the coordinated encampment response for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon is to balance the needs of people residing in encampments as well as community members sharing the same community spaces, while aligning with all applicable legal requirements. Balance is achieved through the use of an evidence-based health and safety approach that assesses, mitigates, and/or eliminates risks.

The level of coordination required between multiple governments and other organizations for the encampment response is unprecedented in Peel. With continued partnership and support, Peel's Encampment Response Teams will continue to provide service and maintain their focus on helping to improve the quality of life for all Peel residents.

APPENDICES

Appendix I – Homeless Encampment Policy for Peel Region, the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon

Appendix II – Encampment Response Teams and the Encampment Response in Peel

Appendix III – No Encampment Zones

Appendix IV – Removal and Enforcement Protocol



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