



**Quality of Life Standing Committee Meeting
Agenda**

**Tuesday, November 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m.
S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium**

	Pages
1. Quality of Life Standing Committee in the S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium (Council Chambers) at 4:30 p.m. Chair: Councillor Kristen Oliver	
2. Land Acknowledgement	
3. Disclosures of Interest	
4. Confirmation of Agenda WITH RESPECT to the Tuesday, November 18, 2025 Quality of Life Standing Committee meeting, we recommend that the agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business, be confirmed.	
5. Minutes of Previous Meetings Minutes of the Quality of Life Standing Committee, held on October 14, 2025, for information.	3 - 5
6. Reports of Administration	
6.1 Tbaytel Multiplex - Operating Model Report 357-2025-Community Services (Distributed Separately)	
6.2 Affordable Access Program to Recreation and Transit 2025 Update Report 345-2025 - Community Services - Recreation & Culture seeking endorsement from the Quality of Life Standing Committee for City Council to extend the Affordable Access Program for Recreation and Transit pilot program December 31, 2026. WITH RESPECT to Report 345-2025-Community Services-Recreation & Culture, we request endorsement of the Standing Committee to forward the following recommendations to City Council: WE RECOMMEND THAT the Affordable Access to Recreation and	6 - 10

Transit Pilot Program be extended from June 30, 2026 to December 31, 2026;

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

6.3 Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot

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Report 342-2025 - Corporate Services - Licensing & Enforcement seeking endorsement of the Quality of Life Standing Committee for inclusion of a Mobile Security Enforcement Pilot service level expansion in the 2026 Operating Budget.

WITH RESPECT to Report 342-2025-Corporate Services-Licensing & Enforcement, we request endorsement of the Standing Committee for inclusion of a Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot service level expansion in the 2026 Operating Budget for City Council's consideration;

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

7. New Business

8. Adjournment



Quality of Life Standing Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, 7:02 p.m.

S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium

Present: Mayor Ken Boshcoff
Councillor Shelby Ch'ng
Councillor Andrew Foulds
Councillor Greg Johnsen
Councillor Kristen Oliver

Officials: Jeff Walters, Manager – Legislative Services & Deputy City Clerk
John Collin, City Manager
Michael Grimaldi, Solicitor
Keri Greaves, Commissioner - Corporate Services & City Treasurer
Kelly Robertson, Commissioner-Community Services
Mathew Miedema, Acting Commissioner – Infrastructure & Operations
Dave Paxton, Chief of Fire
Dave Tarini, Deputy Chief of Fire
Jack Avella, Director - Corporate Information Technology
Shawna Fowlds, GIS & Data Coordinator
Katie Piché, Council & Committee Clerk

1. Quality of Life Standing Committee in the S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium (Council Chambers)

Chair: Councillor Kristen Oliver

2. Land Acknowledgement

Councillor Greg Johnsen provided a land acknowledgement.

3. Disclosures of Interest

4. Confirmation of Agenda

MOVED BY: Councillor Andrew Foulds

SECONDED BY: Councillor Greg Johnsen

WITH RESPECT to the October 14, 2025 Quality of Life Standing Committee meeting, we recommend that the agenda as printed, including any additional information and new business, be confirmed.

CARRIED

5. Presentations

5.1 City Neighbourhood Services - Interactive Map Launch

Director-Corporate Information Technology Jack Avella to provide a presentation relative to the City Neighbourhood Services Interactive Map Launch.

Director-Corporate Information Technology Jack Avella and GIS & Data Coordinator Shawna Fowlds appeared before Committee, provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

6. Deputations

6.1 Fire Smart Plan

Correspondence from Laird Van Damme, dated September 5, 2025 requesting to provide a deputation relative to developing a Fire Smart Plan.

Laird Van Damme appeared before Committee, provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

Referral - Fire Smart Plan

MOVED BY: Councillor Andrew Foulds

SECONDED BY: Councillor Shelby Ch'ng

WITH RESPECT to the deputation from Laird Van Damme relative to the City of Thunder Bay implementing a Fire Smart Plan, we recommend that Administration report back to the Quality of Life Standing Committee for consideration of the development and refinement of a Fire Smart Plan.

CARRIED

7. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes of Quality of Life Standing Committee, held on September 23, 2025, for information.

8. Reports of Administration

8.1 Operating Model Indoor Turf Facility

Report 313-2025-Community Services seeking feedback from the Standing Committee on the proposed operating model for the facility and providing information on the use of a third party operator or the City of Thunder Bay taking on the operation of the facility, for information.

Confidential Memorandum from Commissioner-Community Services Kelly Robertson dated October 8, 2025 relative to Report 313-2025-Operating Model Indoor Turf Facility, for information was distributed separately to Members of Council, City Manager, City Solicitor, Commissioner-Community Services and Director-Human Resources on Friday, October 10, 2025.

Commissioner-Community Services Kelly Robertson provided a PowerPoint presentation and responded to questions.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Standing Committee Report

REPORT NUMBER 345-2025-Community Services-Recreation & Culture		
DATE PREPARED	October 26, 2025	FILE
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING DATE	November 18, 2025	
SUBJECT	Affordable Access Program to Recreation and Transit 2025 Update	

PURPOSE – To seek endorsement from the Standing Committee on Quality of Life

WITH RESPECT to Report 345-2025-Community Services-Recreation & Culture, we request endorsement of the Standing Committee to forward the following recommendations to City Council:

WE RECOMMEND THAT the Affordable Access to Recreation and Transit Pilot Program be extended from June 30, 2026 to December 31, 2026;

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the Affordable Access to Recreation and Transit Pilot Program (Affordable Access Program) and recommends a six-month extension of the pilot from June 30, 2026 to December 31, 2026. The program was established in July 2023 as a 3-year pilot program to help reduce financial barriers to accessing recreation and transit geared towards adults in low-income households.

With endorsement from Lakehead Social Planning Council (LSPC), the partner administering the intake process, Administration recommends that the pilot program continue to the end of 2026 in order to better align with the budget cycle, and to provide a full calendar year of data for its final year to help inform recommendations on the future of the program. Extending it to the end of the calendar year will also give participants access to recreation credits and bus passes for the duration of the year.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The Affordable Access to Recreation and Transit Program was launched in July 2023 to help achieve the following goals:

- Making the cost of transit and recreation and culture programs more affordable for low-income individuals.
- Assisting residents living in low-income households by enabling them to spend less on transportation and recreation program costs, therefore being able to allocate more of their budget toward basic needs such as food, clothing, child care and accommodations.
- Improving program participants' well-being through increased opportunities to participate in and contribute to their communities.

The program intake is administered by Lakehead Social Planning Council. The program includes a single application process where adults that meet eligibility criteria may receive a \$350 recreation credit and/or a half price adult monthly bus pass.

Program Trends

Participation in the Affordable Access Program increased by 35% from year one (July 2023-June 2024) to year two (July 2024-June 2025).

Awareness of the program is growing, particularly with direct outreach to social service agencies. As of November 1, 2025, 93 individuals have received half price Adult Monthly Bus Passes, and 133 clients accessed a recreation credit in 2025.

Administration is exploring ways to further promote the program to target audiences. This includes, but is not limited to, continuing to work with PRO Kids staff to promote the program to parents who may not otherwise have a chance to participate in recreation or access transit themselves. This family-centred approach has proven to be successful, and the program is seeing an increase in participants that are parents of PRO Kids participants.

Program Eligibility

Eligible income threshold is based on the Low-Income Cut-Off +20% and participants must live within City limits. Applicants must meet the age eligibility criteria (18+ for the recreation credit, and 25-59 for the Affordable Bus Pass).

Applicants must not be currently receiving transit assistance through Ontario Works (OW), Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or the Passport Program if applying specifically for the Affordable Bus Pass. However, they are still eligible to apply for the recreation subsidy. Recreation credits may be used toward City recreation programs, admissions, paid-in-full memberships, rentals (including birthday parties), and other activities that are purchased through the PerfectMind registration system, excluding programs already subsidized by PRO Kids.

CONSULTATION

An applicant survey was distributed after the end of second full year of the program. 46 applicants responded. The survey provided a valuable opportunity to capture feedback on the impact of the program, identify challenges/barriers to applying or accessing credits/passes, and for suggestions on how to improve the program in the final year of the pilot.

Over 98% of respondents would like to see the program continue past the pilot. The most common benefits identified by respondents included:

- Allowing clients to access programs and services they otherwise could not afford
- Saving more of their money for basic needs like housing and food
- Improving quality of life
- Improving physical and mental well-being
- Having reliable transportation to access work, school, medical care, etc.

Testimonials

Through the applicant survey, there was a clear message that the program has had a significant impact on participants' lives. Below are some of the testimonials received:

"This program has literally saved my life & helped me to improve my health."

"Allowed me to access services at the Thunder Bay Complex, and provided affordable public transit to get there, much appreciated."

"The pilot program is an awesome way to not only afford recreational services but gets individuals involved."

"Prescribed pool therapy by Neurosurgeon & Physiotherapist. This is this only thing helping keep me out of a wheelchair. I would not be able to afford this at all on my own, & this is an amazing program."

"Thank you for this program, it helps me and many others and is a great way to support low income folks."

"Access to pool exercise which is physical therapy as I'm unable to do land exercise. Life changing. REDUCES PAIN. HELPS REGAIN FITNESS."

"I was able to join the Churchill Pool through the winter which was excellent for my mental and physical health. I've also been able to attend all of my appointments as now I have the affordable bus pass. I'm so grateful for this pilot program."

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

The current budget for the program is \$231,600 per year split between the Transit and Recreation & Culture operating budgets. Based on program uptake trends and statistics, there is room to accommodate an increase in participants at no additional cost, as the participation level is still below the cap and total budget for participant allocation costs. The administrative fees for LSPC associated with a six-month extension is anticipated to be \$12,000, which will be included in the 2026 Operating Budget for City Council consideration.

BACKGROUND

The Affordable Access Program was created in response to the identified need for fee assistance through both the User Fee Review Project (Report 116/2021 – September 13, 2021 – Community Services - Recreation and Culture) and Transit Fare Strategy consultations (Memo – Transit Fare Strategy Update - July 19, 2021). A need for fee assistance in the adult population was identified for individuals that did not have access to other subsidies such as PRO Kids and ODSP or other discounted rates, but still faced financial barriers in accessing services.

Council approved the Recreation and Culture User Fee Model (R164/2021 – December 6, 2021) and asked Administration to report back with recommendations and implications for a proposed Affordable Access to Recreation and Culture Pilot by Q4 2022. Council also approved Transit Fare Strategy 2022-2026 (Report 163/2021) and asked Administration to report back with recommendations and implications for a proposed Affordable Monthly Bus Pass program by Q4 2022.

Council approved the 3-year Affordable Access Pilot Program in Report R 28/2022 (Community Services – Recreation & Culture). Recommendations in the report considered the objectives of the “Provincial Policy Framework on Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians: Everyone Plays” and addressed recommendations of the Recreation and Facilities Master Plan and Program and Services Review related to fee setting, subsidization and revenue generation.

The recommendations also aligned with the Transit Fare Strategy 2022-2026 which recognizes that residents living in low-income households have specific challenges that may reduce their access to public transit.

Administration provided an update after the first full year of the program was completed in November 2024 (345-2025-Community Services-Recreation & Culture).

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

None.

REPORT PREPARED BY

Callie Hemsworth, Supervisor – Initiatives, Marketing & Community Support –
Recreation & Culture Division, Community Services Department

REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

Shane Muir, Acting Commissioner – Community Services

11/07/2025 (MM/DD/YEAR)

Standing Committee Report

REPORT NUMBER 342-2025-Corporate Services-Licensing & Enforcement		
DATE		
PREPARED	November 3, 2025	FILE
STANDING		
COMMITTEE	November 18, 2025	
MEETING DATE		
SUBJECT Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot		

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek feedback and endorsement from the Quality of Life Standing Committee for the proposed Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot.

WITH RESPECT to Report (342-2025-Corporate Services-Licensing & Enforcement), we request endorsement of the Standing Committee for inclusion of a Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot service level expansion in the 2026 Operating Budget for City Council's consideration;

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to ongoing public and employee concerns about safety and recurrent incidents of disorderly behaviour, Administration is recommending a Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot. The pilot will operate at transit terminals, on board buses, and across public spaces and municipally owned facilities, providing support to neighbourhood and community organizations in addressing safety issues.

The pilot proposes the deployment of Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEOs) in a mobile capacity to provide a visible, proactive presence and timely response to incidents of unwanted behaviour or disorderly conduct that do not warrant police intervention. The service would operate seven days per week between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 a.m., with teams of two officers on rotating shifts supported by field supervision.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Enhance public safety;
- Foster community engagement; and
- Support vulnerable populations.

The pilot would emphasize education, prevention, and de-escalation, with all officers receiving extensive training including communication, de-escalation, and Mental Health First Aid, and would enhance measures already taken to address issues that disrupt transit services. Administration will include the initiative as a service expansion in the 2026 Operating Budget for Council's consideration during budget deliberations.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

There continue to be ongoing concerns from riders, the public and transit employees regarding perceived and specific safety concerns at the transit terminals and on-board buses.

A safer work environment contributes to greater employee engagement, reduced lost-time injuries and absences, and improved recruitment and retention. Enhanced public confidence in the transit system may also encourage increased ridership, supporting higher revenues and more efficient service delivery.

Corporate Report R059-2025, presented to City Council in March 2025, provided an update on Transit Operator Safety. While the total number of staff-reported incidents and/or negative interactions directly involving Operators declined between 2022 and 2024, a significant number of incidents continue to occur both on buses and at the Transit Terminals. The City has an obligation under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to protect workers from violence and harassment in the workplace and take every reasonable precaution to protect employees in the workplace.

In addition, there are social and legislative responsibilities to ensure that public spaces are safe. Moreover, to further encourage growth and improve safety perceptions of our city, additional effort is warranted to ensure that public spaces are welcoming for all users. Recent incidents of disorderly behaviour in and around City Hall and in many other public spaces and public buildings have further underscored the need for a coordinated and visible safety presence.

At present, one static contracted security guard is assigned inside of City Hall during operating hours. A second guard is assigned to provide outside security dedicated to support transit services. On August 28th an additional outside guard for transit was added in response to recent incidences. Outside guard coverage to support transit services is currently provided as follows:

- Monday through Saturday: Guard #1 on-duty 13:00 – 24:30 and Guard #2 on duty 16:30 – 24:30
- Sundays and Statutory Holidays: Guard #1 on-duty 13:00 – 23:30 and Guard #2 on duty 16:30 – 23:30

Current contract security responsibilities are primarily monitoring and reporting, with limited authority to intervene.

Several organizations in the vicinity of City Hall currently maintain a contract security presence or have identified the need for additional security to address ongoing safety concerns.

In 2024, Administration issued an Expression of Interest (EOI) to identify potential community partners interested in collaborating on a pilot program to respond to incidents occurring in and around City Hall. Services envisioned under the EOI included health, social service, and culturally appropriate supports intended to reduce calls to emergency services, leverage community expertise, and optimize the use of public resources.

No submissions were received through the EOI process. Consequently, Administration turned its attention to reviewing successful approaches implemented in other municipalities.

Specifically, municipalities such as Sudbury and Mississauga have implemented a security enforcement model where Municipal Law Enforcement Officers (MLEO) can be called in to respond to incidents which are disruptive but do not warrant police intervention.

Administration has engaged with these municipalities and believe that this model could be effective in the City of Thunder Bay as well.

Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot

Administration is recommending implementation of a Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot to deter disorderly conduct and other unwanted behaviours at transit terminals, on board buses, and across public spaces and municipally owned facilities.

The objectives of the pilot would be as follows:

- **Enhance Public Safety** – Address safety concerns in key public areas through a consistent, visible presence and timely response.
- **Foster Community Engagement** – Build trust with community members through respectful, proactive communication and presence.
- **Support Vulnerable Populations** – Provide a compassionate approach to enforcement, connecting individuals to appropriate supports when possible.

With appropriate training and policy development, the program would provide a balanced enforcement presence that emphasizes de-escalation and community safety. Training would include communication, de-escalation, Mental Health First Aid, and other relevant certifications. Officers would be required to complete all training prior to deployment and participate in refresher courses as required.

Teams of two MLEOs would operate on rotating shifts, seven days per week between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 a.m. The officers would have access to a vehicle and would conduct proactive patrols, respond to concerns from residents and City staff, and support on-site presence at key locations such as the transit terminals and on buses.

The visible presence of MLEOs is expected to serve as a deterrent to unwanted behaviours. Where intervention is required, officers would seek voluntary compliance through communication and de-escalation. In cases of persistent non-compliance, officers could issue trespass notices.

The proposed service would operate 16 hours per day, year-round, equating to approximately 6.0 full-time equivalents (FTEs). Estimated annual salary and benefits for these positions would total approximately \$540,000. To effectively implement this service, and at the same time create capacity within the traditional Municipal Enforcement Services, 2.0 FTE Field Supervisors would be required at an estimated cost of \$205,000. Including \$25,000 for training and equipment, the total annual cost of the pilot program is estimated at \$770,000.

Broader Community Safety Context

The development of a Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot builds on the City's ongoing and coordinated efforts to enhance community safety and well-being. This initiative complements a range of existing strategies and partnerships that together work toward a safer, more inclusive, and supportive community.

Through the Community Safety & Well-Being Plan, the City continues to strengthen collaboration across sectors to address the root causes of social issues and reduce risk before harm occurs. The Thunder Bay Drug strategy remains a cornerstone in promoting health, prevention, and recovery, while the City's Encampment Response Plan provides a compassionate and coordinated approach to supporting individuals living unsheltered.

Additionally, over the past year there has been preliminary discussions with local business organizations to explore opportunities to develop a proactive, community-oriented approach to support downtown vibrancy, hospitality, and connection.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate the City's commitment to advancing both enforcement and prevention, balancing accountability with empathy, to build a community where everyone feels safe, respected, and supported. The proposed Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot is another important step in this integrated approach, providing visible presence, by-law enforcement, and outreach in a way that emphasizes prevention, communication, and care.

Next Steps

Administration is seeking endorsement of the proposed Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot from the Quality of Life Standing Committee, along with any related feedback. The Pilot will be brought forward as a proposed service level enhancement in the 2026 Operating Budget for City Council's consideration during budget deliberations.

Any necessary by-laws and supporting policies will be developed and presented to City Council for approval to ensure the pilot program aligns with Council priorities.

CONSULTATION

Administration met with several organizations located around City Hall in July 2025 to discuss security concerns, identify common challenges, and share experiences. There was a general consensus on the need for collaborative, shared solutions. Administration has committed to ongoing dialogue with these organizations and will consult with them in the design of the pilot program.

In addition, Administration will consult with the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Advisory Committee and collaborate with community service providers to support alignment of the pilot with the CSWB Plan and broader community needs.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

There are no direct financial implications with this report. The costs associated with the Mobile Safety and Security Response Pilot will be included in the 2026 Operating Budget for City Council's consideration and are estimated to be \$770,000 annually.

BACKGROUND

The Transit Services Division provided an update on safety initiative trends and an update on safety initiatives in March 2025 (R059-2025 Transit Operator Safety Update).

Annual safety reports to Council dating back to 2018 have consistently identified incidents of violence against Transit Operators, highlighting this as a longstanding issue requiring attention.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

None.

REPORT PREPARED BY

Keri Greaves, CPA, Commissioner – Corporate Services & City Treasurer
Brad Loroff, Manager – Transit Services
Keri Bernardi, Manager – Safety & Wellness
Cynthia Olsen, Director – Strategy & Engagement

REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

Keri Greaves, CPA, Commissioner – Corporate Security & City Treasurer

Date 11/10/2025 (MM/DD/YEAR)