

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Community and Protective Services Committee
Comité des services communautaires et de protection
18 June 2015 / 18 juin 2015**

**and Council
et au Conseil
24 June 2015 / 24 juin 2015**

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**Submitted by
Soumis par:
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Ward: RIDEAU-VANIER (12)

File Number: ACS2015-CMR-CPS-0003

SUBJECT: PROGRESS OF THE SANDY HILL TOWN AND GOWN COMMITTEE

OBJET: PROGRÈS DU COMITÉ MIXTE UNIVERSITÉ-COMMUNAUTÉ

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Community and Protective Services Committee and Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des services communautaires et de protection et Conseil municipal prenne connaissance de ce rapport.

BACKGROUND

Sandy Hill is a very culturally and economically diverse neighbourhood where many families, seniors, students, and new Canadians have chosen to call home.

Geographically, the neighbourhood is bounded by Rideau Street to the north, Highway 417 to the south, the Rideau River to the east, and the Rideau Canal to the west.

According to 2011 census results, 33.7% of Sandy Hill residents are aged 20-29 years, compared to a city-wide average of 14.4%. The increased number of young adult residents can be attributed in large part to this neighbourhood's proximity to the University of Ottawa. As many of these young neighbours are living on their own for the first time, there are some who may not be aware of the rules around garbage, noise and property maintenance.

For several years, residents of Sandy Hill had been noticing an increase in the number of noisy parties and improperly stored garbage. These increases are closely linked to the growth of the University of Ottawa population, as well as gaps which previously existed in planning policies for the protection of this mature neighbourhood's character. Furthermore, the community was being negatively impacted by the garbage and the noise from the move-in (September) and move-out (April) of many students living in the community. In order to address these issues in a comprehensive way, the Ward 12 Councillor (Councillor Fleury), the City, the University of Ottawa and the community came together to form the Sandy Hill Town and Gown Committee (SHTGC).

The Sandy Hill Town and Gown Committee held its inaugural meeting in August 2012. The committee's permanent membership includes:

- The Ward 12 (Rideau-Vanier) Councillor (Chairperson)
- One representative from Action Sandy Hill
- One representative from the University of Ottawa
- One representative from By-law and Regulatory Services
- One representative from Ottawa Police Services
- One representative of the Student Federation of the University of Ottawa (SFUO)
- One representative of the Graduate Students Association of the University of Ottawa (GSAED)
- One Landlord-at-large representative
- One Resident-at-large representative

In addition to these representatives, other resources have been invited to join meetings of the SHTGC, including: Solid Waste Services, Ottawa Fire Services, Campus Security from the University of Ottawa, large landlords within the community, and dozens of residents of the area. The committee meets 4 times a year, and has the option of creating working groups to address and coordinate responses to specific issues.

DISCUSSION

The committee chair and members wanted to ensure that Council was made aware of its progress, as well as the many successful initiatives it has undertaken over the past 3 years. The following section highlights the progress, the successes, as well as the ongoing of the committee for Sandy Hill.

Annual Welcome Week Walkabout

This initiative began in September 2011 prior to the creation of the committee as an activity with By-law Services, Ottawa Police Services, the Ward Councillor and residents of Sandy Hill. The objective was to go door-to-door and speak with tenants about noise and property standards by-laws. The activity has now evolved into a large event, which involves approximately 50 student volunteers from the University of Ottawa's Housing Services, as well as City Services and local residents. In small groups, these volunteers deliver approximately 500 welcome bags, which include information from the City, as well as from the University of Ottawa and services offered by the SFUO. This peer-to-peer education initiative has helped strengthen the knowledge of the City's by-laws in Sandy Hill, and has given a chance to new students to meet some of their neighbours.

Move-in and Move-out Strategy

An issue which had been raised repeatedly by local residents was the mess which was often left behind by the move-in, and the move-out, in September and April respectively. It was not uncommon during the first two weeks of September and April to find couches, mattresses, and garbage bags across the front lawns of many properties in Sandy Hill. In order to put an end to this problem, Solid Waste Services and By-law Services have been partnering on an enforcement initiative targeted to those first weeks during the move-in and move-out. These two city departments have been assigning a By-law Officer to a Solid Waste Enforcement Officer in order to issue orders to properties where there is waste placed to the curb or in the front yard on non-collection days. These notices have short timelines for compliance, and if they are not respected, the waste collection truck is called to pick up the waste at the property owner's expense.

Since the implementation of this enforcement approach in 2012, complaints from local residents have all but disappeared completely.

Special Enforcement Initiatives

Another issue which was identified by members of the SHTGC was excessive noise on special days of celebration, including St. Patrick's Day, Canada Day and Halloween. The large number of late-night gatherings which were occurring (including an incident where a party of over 300 people on St. Patrick's Day 2012 was broken up at the corner of Chapel Street and Somerset Street East because it was blocking traffic and its participants were vandalizing properties) required additional enforcement officers from By-law Services and occasionally from Ottawa Police. As a result, the Strategic Initiatives Working Group was formed so that City Services and the university plan ahead and ensure that additional officers are assigned to the central area in response to increased call volumes in Sandy Hill and other inner urban areas on special days.

Landlord Education Session

Members of the SHTGC, including the Landlord at-large representative, had been interested in holding a session for landlords whose properties had previously seen repeated calls for Property Standards infractions. The format for this session was based on the one held for landlords in Hintonburg who had similar issues with their properties, back in 2005. The SHTGC held its Landlord Education Session in August 2014. The goal of the meeting was to educate the landlords on their rights and responsibilities for Property Standards, Fire Code, and safety for the tenants. Various City staff partnered on this initiative, including employees of: By-law Services, Ottawa Fire Services, Ottawa Police, and Solid Waste Services. Lessons learned from the session related to landlords being informed of tenants' by-law infractions and property issues.

Addition of University of Ottawa Residences

In response to the need to fulfill a commitment from its administration to offer housing on-campus to any first year student who requests it, the University of Ottawa has added a total of 936 beds to its housing portfolio. In September of 2014, it opened the Friel Residence, formerly a retirement home, adding 391 beds. Subsequently, in May of 2015, it opened the Rideau Residence, formerly a Quality Inn, which has 372 beds. Finally, it will be opening the Henderson Residence in September of 2015; a new build which will accommodate 173 students. This increase in housing available through the University of Ottawa will assist to relieve some of the pressure from the development of private student housing in Sandy Hill, which appears to have slowed significantly. This

slow down can be attributed to this new construction and to some key changes to planning policies, including an Interim Control By-law banning conversions of single-family homes to multi-apartment dwellings (three or more units), the subsequent Infill 1 and Infill 2 policies, as well as the Sandy Hill Heritage Study.

Projects for 2015

Existing initiatives, such as the move-in and move-out strategy, the Welcome Week Walkabout, a continued effort of proactive by-law enforcement over the summer months for Property Maintenance issues, and follow-ups on the Landlord Education Session. Furthermore, work will continue to be done on the planning front, as a review of the R4 zone, as well as the Secondary Plan for Sandy Hill will occur.

There will be a project brought to fruition this year which will have the Eastern Ontario Landlords Organization inform landlords of some issues reported to 3-1-1. Landlords currently do not have access to information on the charges laid on their tenants for noise, and other by-law infractions. EOLO would like to host a service where residents are able to post their complaint numbers, along with the address in question. This service would allow landlords to consult when complaints are being made about their tenants and allow them to proceed with disciplinary action against the tenants, if necessary.

The success of the SHTGC has not gone unnoticed. Many other Councillors with near-campus neighbourhoods have approached Councillor Fleury showing interest in having similar models implemented in their areas. This committee remains focused on issues local to Sandy Hill, and further discussion with SHTGC members would be required prior to expanding its reach.

Reduction in Call Volume

As a result of these initiatives, we have observed a marked decrease in calls for Property Standards Enforcement (10% decrease from 2011-2014) as well as for Noise (21% decrease from 2011-2014). The full call volume reports can be found in Table 1 below.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

This report was created based on the many initiatives undertaken by the members of the SHTGC over the past 3 years. This report was also circulated to the SHTGC members. Residents are encouraged to provide their comments regarding this committee to the Chair, Councillor Fleury.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

Councillor Fleury: “As the Chair of this committee, I am very proud of its many accomplishments, and of the improvements to the quality of life which we have seen as a result. This initiative is bringing the right partners to the table and has demonstrated its success. It is amazing what can be accomplished when all of the stakeholders are a part of the solution in improving the quality of life for all Sandy Hill residents.”

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving the information in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with the recommendations in this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Indicate the report’s direct impact on the 2010-2014 Term of Council Priorities: Economic Prosperity, Transportation and Mobility, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy & Caring Communities, Service Excellence, Governance, Planning & Decision Making, Employee Engagement, and Fiscal Responsibility. (*Details available on Ottawa.ca.*) If there are no impacts, provide a comment to that effect.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 - Ward 12 Call Volumes

DISPOSITION

Following the approval of this report by the Community and Protective Services Committee, it will be brought to the attention of Ottawa City Council for information.

Document 1

Ward 12 Call Volumes

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Animals	1060	934	1099	994	1010	954
Care of Streets	172	148	158	185	208	161
Graffiti	420	343	209	293	277	329
Noise	2507	2538	2799	2732	2638	2207
Parking	3162	2743	3084	3312	3601	3356
Parks	88	126	107	96	82	108
Property Standards	1297	1519	1874	1583	1822	1683
Signs	55	76	68	46	54	93
Zoning Enforcement	138	137	204	160	156	157