

TO: MAYOR & COUNCILLORS
FROM: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: **BEAR SPRAY USE IN THE CITY OF BURNABY**
PURPOSE: To direct staff to investigate the feasibility and advisability of a bylaw to regulate the use of bear spray in Burnaby.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT staff be directed to investigate the feasibility and advisability of a bylaw to regulate the use of bear spray in Burnaby and report back to Council.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The proposal outlined in the report aligns with the Burnaby Community Safety Plan (2020) and the Terms of Reference of the Public Safety Committee (2024), as the Committee collaborates with the Burnaby Detachment RCMP, Burnaby Fire Department, City departments and external stakeholders to implement and promote public safety programs and initiatives while providing an opportunity for the public to have input into community safety priorities.

2.0 BACKGROUND

At the October 23, 2024, Public Safety Committee meeting, the Committee received a verbal report titled “Bear Spray Use in the City of Burnaby – Looking at the Issues”. Constable Dwight Martin provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the use of bear spray in the City of Burnaby and advised that there has been an increase of incidents where bear spray is being used in conjunction with other crimes, such as robberies.

Constable Martin further advised that bear spray is legal in Canada for use only against attacking bears and is regulated by Health Canada and the *Pest Control Products Act* and under the *Act* bear spray can only be sold in Canada by authorized vendors who maintain proper sales records. The speaker noted that it is currently legal to sell bear spray to anyone over the age of 18, and anyone purchasing must sign a Notice to Purchaser Agreement to complete the sale.

Constable Martin further provided information on the decrease of bear spray incidents in Chilliwack since the regulation of bear spray products through the introduction of a bylaw.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

Other municipalities in Lower Mainland, including the City of Vancouver and the City of Chilliwack, have recently introduced bylaws regulating the sale of bear spray. Currently, the City of Burnaby does not have a similar bylaw.

The Committee recommends that staff explore the feasibility of creating a bylaw to regulate the use of bear spray in Burnaby and report back its findings to Council.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

On behalf of the Public Safety Committee,

Councillor James Wang, Chair

Councillor Maita Santiago, Vice Chair

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 — Bear Spray Use in the City of Burnaby

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Anastassiya Denissenko, Administrative Officer 1, and reviewed by Blanka Zeinabova, Senior Manager Legislative Services.