

MEMBER'S RESOLUTION

Committee of the Whole (1)

DATE: Tuesday, May 07, 2024

**TITLE: PROTECTING VAUGHAN'S VULNERABLE SOCIAL
INFRASTRUCTURE**

FROM:

Mayor Steven Del Duca

Whereas, safeguarding the quality of life for all Vaughan residents by combating all forms of hate, intimidation, intolerance, discrimination and the incitement of violence requires an immediate call to action;

Whereas, acts of intimidation such as the vandalism at Chabad House of Maple on November 14th, 2023 and the bomb threat targeting the Jaffari Community Centre on November 16th, 2023 are examples of the unacceptable rise in hateful behaviour against specific communities and their places of worship in our community;

Whereas, in March 2024, two large-scale protests took place in Thornhill, in close proximity to synagogues, schools, childcare facilities and congregate care facilities, leading to Vaughan residents to have feelings of considerable distress and intimidation;

Whereas, Mayor Del Duca, Councillor Martow, MP Melissa Lantsman and MPP Laura Smith released a joint statement on March 6th, 2024 stating that the targeting of places of worship, schools and childcare facilities is unacceptable;

Whereas, all levels of government have a responsibility to work together to protect vulnerable social infrastructure, as exemplified in the "Safe Zones Around Religious Institutions Act, 2022" (Schedule 9 of Bill 86, the "Our London Family Act - Working Together to Combat Islamophobia and Hatred, 2022," which was developed by the National Council of Canadian Muslims and was debated in the Ontario Legislature in 2022) which proposed a \$25,000 fine being imposed on any person who performed an

act of intimidation or disturbance, distributed hate propaganda, or uttered threats within 50 metres of the boundary of a place of worship;

Whereas, on December 17, 2021, Bill C-3 received Royal Assent. This federal legislation amended the Criminal Code of Canada to create a new intimidation offence that protects health care workers or persons seeking health care services against intimidating conduct including threats or other forms of violence that are intended to provoke fear or to interfere with the duties of a health care worker or to impede a person from receiving health care services, and carries with it a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment;

Whereas, in 2023, Calgary City Council passed the Safe and Inclusive Access Bylaw, which is designed to help ensure safe and inclusive access to municipal recreation facilities and libraries by providing 100 metre "access zones" around these facilities;

Whereas, no contemplated measures to protect vulnerable social infrastructure and the residents who use this infrastructure will prevent the right to peaceful protest or demonstration.

It is therefore recommended:

1. That Council direct staff to return at the earliest possible time, with a bylaw to be considered and voted upon by Council that prohibits demonstrations of a nature that intimidate, incite hatred, violence, intolerance or discrimination within 100 meters, or within reasonable distance, of a religious institution, school, childcare centre, hospital or congregate care facility is located; and
2. That Council directs City staff to ensure the bylaw provides that any person who violates the aforementioned condition be fined up to the maximum amount permissible, not to exceed \$100,000; and
3. That nothing in the bylaw should prevent peaceful protests or demonstrations, including those that occur as part of a labour union strike; and
4. That Council directs staff to engage with York Regional Police regarding the potential for a joint enforcement framework concurrent with the development of the bylaw; and
5. That a Special Council meeting be called immediately following this Committee of the Whole meeting for the purpose of ratifying this item, and that any requirements of the Procedure By-law be waived.

Financial and Staff Resource Impact

There are no financial impacts associated with this Member's Resolution.

Attachments

1. Correspondence In Support from York Regional Police – April 19, 2024
2. Correspondence In Support from LiUNA – April 12, 2024