

Committee of the Whole (1) Report

DATE: Tuesday, March 31, 2026

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: AMENDMENTS TO THE PROTECTING VULNERABLE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE BY-LAW

FROM:

Gus Michaels, Deputy City Manager, Community Services

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

This report recommends amendments to the Protecting Vulnerable Social Infrastructure By-law (By-law 143-2024), enacted by Council in June 2024, to provide greater clarity regarding its application.

Report Highlights

- On May 7, 2024, Mayor Del Duca introduced a Members Resolution that identified the need for the City to take action to help prevent unsafe protests that intimidate residents and incite hatred or violence.
- On June 25, 2024, Vaughan Council unanimously approved the Protecting Vulnerable Infrastructure By-law 143-2024, which prohibits the organization or participation in a nuisance demonstration within 100 meters of vulnerable social infrastructure.
- Now that the By-law has been in use for a period of time, Staff have taken the opportunity to review By-law 143-2024 to ensure the intent and language of the By-law is clear and continues to align with Charter values, while maintaining the City's commitment to protecting the safety and well-being of its community members accessing vulnerable social infrastructure.
- The proposed amendments clarify the meaning of "participate", and identify areas around City Hall where gathering is permitted.

Recommendations

1. THAT Council authorize by-law amendments to Protecting Vulnerable Infrastructure By-law 143-2024, substantially in accordance with Attachment 1 of this report, in a form satisfactory to the Office of the City Solicitor.

Background

Council Enacted the Protecting Vulnerable Social Infrastructure By-law in June 2024.

On June 25, 2024, Vaughan Council approved the Protecting Vulnerable Social Infrastructure (By-law 143-2024), intended to protect individuals accessing childcare centers, congregate care facilities, hospitals, schools and places of worship from intimidation or obstruction caused by nuisance demonstrations. The by-law was developed in response to rising tensions, targeted protests and acts of intimidation in Vaughan and across the GTA. By-law 143-2024 restricts nuisance demonstrations within 100 meters of vulnerable social infrastructure and provides enforcement tools to ensure access and safety.

The By-law has now been in use for 21 months and has provided Staff with a better understanding of its practical application; thus, leading to a focused review of its provisions to identify opportunities to further strengthen its clarity and intent. This review reaffirmed the City's position that the by-law remains both appropriate and necessary, while also highlighting areas where additional clarity—such as defining designated outdoor areas at City Hall for protests and gatherings and refining the meaning of “participate”—could enhance transparency and operational consistency. Considerations included ensuring childcare access, maintaining emergency routes, and supporting consistent enforcement.

Previous Reports/Authority

- [Mayor Del Duca's Member's Resolution Re: Protecting Vaughan's Vulnerable Social Infrastructure, dated Tuesday May 7, 2024](#)
- Committee of the Whole (2) Report, June 18, 2024: [BY-LAW TO PROTECT VAUGHAN'S VULNERABLE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE](#)
- [Vulnerable Infrastructure By-law 143-2024](#), (adopted by City Council on June 25, 2024)

Analysis and Options

Staff have reviewed the current Vulnerable Infrastructure By-law (By-law 143-2024), and have identified opportunities to provide additional clarity to support the administration of By-law 143-2024.

In light of this review, staff recommend the following amendments to the Vulnerable-Infrastructure By-law (By-law 143-2024):

- 1. Allow gatherings or protests in specified areas of City Hall:** City Hall functions as a civic space where residents traditionally engage in political expression. Although City Hall contains a childcare facility that qualifies as Vulnerable Social Infrastructure under By-law 143-2024, staff recommend explicitly identifying designated outdoor areas at City Hall where gatherings and protests may occur in accordance with Attachment A. This amendment is intended to maintain City Hall as an accessible space for public expression while supporting continued access to the childcare facility and the adjacent long-term care facility, and ensuring that emergency service routes remain unobstructed.
- 2. Clarify who “participates” in a nuisance demonstration:** The existing by-law prohibits “participating” in a nuisance demonstration. To ensure that this provision is not applied to individuals who are merely present at a demonstration, staff recommend clarifying that a person who attends a nuisance demonstration without engaging in conduct that would cause a reasonable person to be intimidated does not “participate” within the meaning of the By-law, unless such person fails to vacate an area after being directed to do so by an Enforcement Officer, as defined by By-law 143-2024.

Together, these amendments are intended to support clear and consistent administration of By-law 143-2024 by outlining where gatherings may occur at City Hall and by clarifying the circumstances in which an individual is considered to participate in a nuisance demonstration. These clarifications are designed to assist residents, organizers, and enforcement officers in understanding the By-law’s application while maintaining its core purpose of protecting access to vulnerable social infrastructure.

Financial Impact

There are no known financial impacts related to the recommendations set out in this report.

Operational Impact

During the review of the Vulnerable Infrastructure By-law, BCLPS consulted with other relevant City departments, including the Office of the City Solicitor, Facility Management, Vaughan Fire and Rescue, Parks, Forestry and Horticulture Operations, and Transportation and Fleet Management Services.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

The amendments set out in this report will provide York Region Police (“YRP”) and other law enforcement agencies with the authority to apply and enforce the by-law provisions. YRP was consulted and given the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments.

Conclusion

The proposed amendments are designed to clarify the administration and application of the Protecting Vulnerable Social Infrastructure By-law, supporting consistent implementation and public understanding, and maintaining safe access to vulnerable social infrastructure. Together, the amendments maintain the By-law’s focus on safeguarding access to childcare centres, congregate care facilities, hospitals, schools, and places of worship and support predictable processes for residents and enforcement officers. For these reasons, staff recommend the amendments set out in this report.

Attachments

1. Proposed Draft By-Law

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