

North Cowichan encampment and public safety response: Implementation Plan

Presentation to North Cowichan Council

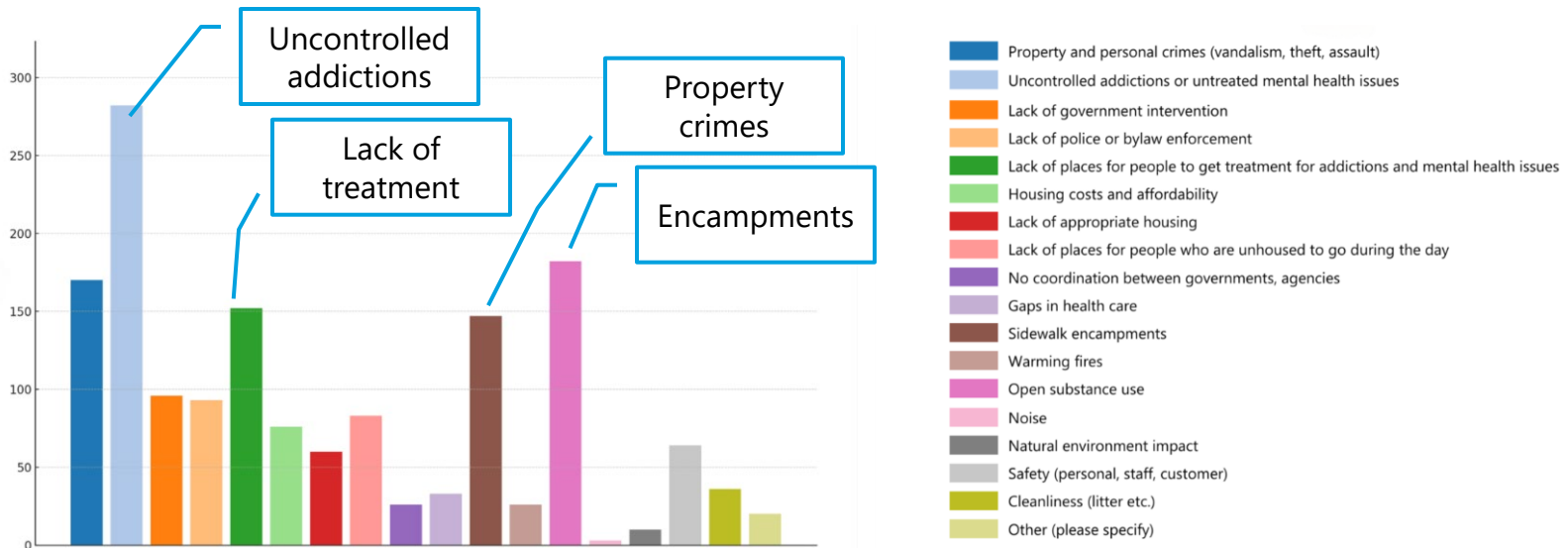
November 5, 2025

About this presentation

- October 7 Committee of the Whole meeting presentation on options for the Committee's consideration
- Recommendations endorsed at the October 15 Council meeting
- Review of Council direction
- Draft implementation plan (14 months/end of 2026)
- Direction on additional resource requirements

What we heard report (2024)

Top issues



What we heard report (2024)

Best ways forward



1: Addictions

- Advocate for provincially funded treatment beds
- Post-treatment residential living
- Provide a site for a substance use treatment facility (for women + for sober living)

2: Untreated mental illness

- Advocate for provincial mental health programs
- Consider Mobile Integrated Crisis Response program
- Advocate province for a complex/involuntary care facility

3: Open substance use

- Bylaw review for open substance use
- Advocate federal crown counsel for more prosecution for illicit substance use

4: Property and personal crimes

- Continued deployment of RCMP to corridor

5: Sidewalk encampments

- Continue with bylaw officer and public space custodians' presence
- Encampment dismantling and refuse collection
- Sanctioned and managed space (24/7 shelter)
- Consider bylaw tickets for prolific offenders

6: Lack of police and bylaw officers

- Continue with existing staffing resources (including private security)
- Resourcing for two additional bylaw officers to support this work (enhanced hours of service)

7: Lack of appropriate housing

- Identify sites for affordable housing (2 sites)
- Advocate to BC Housing for capital and operating funding

8: Cleanliness and public urination

- Continue with current public custodian response
- Consider increasing service to full-time
- Provide additional resources to support power washing
- Provide portable toilets at high traffic sites
- Address nuisance properties

9: Noise

- Continue with current RCMP response (evenings)
- Consider expanded bylaw resourcing

10: Personal safety

- Continue with current RCMP/bylaw service levels

11: Voice for impacted people

- Continue with existing bylaw and police presence
- Create a safety and solutions advisory group for residents and businesses to engage in dialogue

Implementation plan

What can be achieved in 14 months (end of 2026):

- Ongoing (happening now)
- Short-term (early/mid 2026)
- Longer term (to end of 2026)

+ advocacy efforts

Implementation plan: ongoing

Property and personal crime

→ Continued deployment of the RCMP and bylaw team

Sidewalk encampments

→ Continued deployment of the RCMP and bylaw team

Personal safety

→ Continued deployment of the RCMP and bylaw team

Cleanliness & public urination

→ Address nuisance properties

Voice for residents and business

→ Continued deployment of the RCMP and bylaw team

Implementation plan: short-term

Untreated mental illness

- Mobile integrated response unit

Open substance use

- Review of bylaws

Sidewalk encampments

- Increase budget for refuse collection
- Consider issuing bylaw tickets
- Identify location of 24/7 shelter

Cleanliness & public urination

- Portable toilets
- Power washing

Voice for business and residents

- Safety and solutions advisory group

Noise

- Continue with encampment monitoring

Implementation plan: longer term

Addictions

- Substance use treatment facility
- Post treatment living

Lack of police and bylaw officers

- Consider adding 2 bylaw officers

Lack of housing

- Identify sites for affordable housing

Cleanliness and public urination

- Consider full time presence of public space custodians

Implementation plan: advocacy

Addictions

→ Provincial treatment beds

Untreated mental illness

→ Mental health services

→ Complex care

Open substance use

→ Federal crown for more prosecution

Lack of affordable housing

→ Advocate to BC Housing for capital and operating funding

Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Approve the implementation plan as outlined in the report dated November 5, 2025 from the Director, Social Planning and Protective Services.
2. Consider the addition of 2 Bylaw Compliance Officers to support the implementation efforts.
3. Consider increasing the public space custodians from part-time to full-time to support implementation efforts at a cost of \$97,244 in the 2026 budget.
4. Allocate \$150,000 in the 2026 budget for the removal of refuse.
5. Allocate \$15,000 in the 2026 budget for a public portable toilet program.
6. Include \$2,000 in the 2026 budget to support the safety and solutions advisory group.