

To: Chair and Members of the Planning and Development Committee

cc: Heather MacDonald, Director of City Building

From: Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

Date: December 1, 2018

Re: Options to deal with panhandling and safety

Staff Direction:

Direct the Director of City Building to assign appropriate staff to consult with Halton Regional Police Services and the Halton Region Health and Social Services Department, and report back on options to eliminate panhandling in busy intersections in Burlington, and identify social supports available to residents in need by Q2 2019.

Background:

Burlington residents are generous and caring, and that has contributed to an increase in panhandling at major intersections while vehicles are stopped at traffic lights. According to Halton Regional Police, no rules are being broken so long as people asking for money do not step into traffic until they are collecting a donation. However, stepping into traffic to collect a donation has created potential safety issues. Below is one sample of a number of emails my office has received on this topic:

"Although it's the time of giving, I have recently witnessed several occasions when the traffic flow and therefore tempers have been affected by the following. When people are collecting money at traffic lights they have rushed out to the second lane to collect and are still there when the lights change to green. They try to rush back to safety but one of them will get badly hurt when a car does not wait. At the weekend one driver was so incensed he went straight through the red light after being delayed. People talk about improving the traffic flow and this is one thing that need to be looked at".

Sincerely,



Mayor Marianne Meed Ward