



Prince Albert Grand Council

Media Release

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PAGC is calling for the third reading of its proposed back alley curfew to be tabled

Treaty 6 Territory/Prince Albert. Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) is requesting Prince Albert City Council's Executive Committee to delay the passage of its proposed curfew bylaw and consider it for a different date until there is further consultation.

Upon closer examination of the proposed bylaw, PAGC's leadership is concerned that police officers already have the authority under the Criminal Code to investigate suspicious activities when they receive complaints, and that this proposed bylaw will only lead to more problematic issues of discrimination and racial profiling.

"We agree with some critics that this proposed by-law is punitive in nature and that there is no data-driven, evidence-based research that clearly shows it will lower property crime rates in the city. Instead, we can learn from a 2010-2017 review by the Ontario Human Rights Commission into race and policing in Toronto that showed that the practice of 'carding' was heavily focussed on race. This concern is compounded by the fact that there are already high incarceration rates of Indigenous peoples in the provincial and federal prison system, and we are deeply disturbed that this practice of racial profiling will only reinforce higher incarceration rates," said Grand Chief Brian Hardlotte.

At another level, he said that he is not convinced it will address the core issues related to property crime and would rather work together with the municipality to develop alternative strategies that address the complexity of issues at hand.

"With our high population of First Nations people living in the city, we are an inseparable part of this urban community, and we want to ensure all families both Indigenous and non-Indigenous are safe. Furthermore, we recognize that most property-related crimes are directly linked to poverty, homelessness, and an increasing rate of addictions, and we are committed to addressing the root causes of the problem through a more proactive approach rather than one that could potentially gravitate into a larger human rights issue."

He continued, “We are committed to addressing these multi-faceted challenges by working together with the City of Prince Albert and the Prince Albert Police Service. To this end, we are calling for the Executive Committee to deny the motion of passage and to invite PAGC to make submissions for debate and discussion that will be grounded on promoting public trust and guardianship for all citizens in the city, especially in this era of reconciliation.”

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