

# Report

City of Merritt  
REGULAR Council Meeting  
June 13, 2023

File Number: 3900-02

**To:** Sean Smith, Chief Administrative Officer  
**From:** Linda Brick, Deputy Corporate Officer  
**Date:** April 21, 2023  
**Subject:** Enforcement of Good Neighbour Bylaw in Flood Inundation Zone

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT Council provide staff with direction of expected enforcement levels of the Good Neighbour Bylaw in the flood inundation zone.**

## **Background:**

On November 22, 2022, Council considered the November 17, 2022, report of the Director of Corporate Services entitled “Enforcement of City’s Good Neighbour Bylaw in flood zone”. Council passed the following resolution:

“THAT Council instruct staff to continue selective enforcement based on the specific situation of each property to be revisited at April 30, 2023. “

Staff are returning the matter to Council for consideration as the resolution deadline has passed.

Staff advise that fire and property safety concerns have been raised regarding overgrowth of grass and weeds on unoccupied properties in the flood inundation area.

## **Options / discussion**

- 1) THAT Council instruct staff to proactively enforce the *Good Neighbour Bylaw* in regard to the maintenance of grass and weeds to prevent fire hazards in the flood inundation area;
- 2) THAT Council instruct staff to continue selective enforcement based on the specific situation of each property;

- 3) THAT Council instruct staff to strictly enforce the *Good Neighbour Bylaw* throughout the flood-affected area;
- 4) THAT Council instruct staff to formally cease enforcement of the *Good Neighbour Bylaw* in the flood affected area for a certain period of time; or,
- 5) THAT Council receive this report for information.

**Financial / Risk Implications:**

Some properties have been restored or rebuilt either through use of personal savings, insurance or receipt of Disaster Financial Assistance funds while other properties remain unoccupied and unrepaired.

Non-profit organizations are no longer available to assist with cleanup of properties or debris removal as they were prior to June 2022.

Some properties in the flood inundation area have grass and weeds growing to a height above what the Good Neighbour Bylaw permits. This uncontrolled growth poses a fire hazard to the larger neighbourhood in the dry summer season. In other areas of the community Bylaw Enforcement proactively enforces the grass cutting section of the Bylaw, this proactive enforcement is not currently being done in the flood inundation area.

Enforcement of the Good Neighbour Bylaw may have a financial impact on the property owners of those homes which are deemed “unsightly” if enforcement of the Bylaw proceeds to forced cleanups.

**Attachments:**

- November 17, 2022 report entitled Enforcement of City’s Good Neighbour Bylaw in flood zone
- Bylaw 2238 – Good Neighbour Bylaw

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Linda Brick  
Deputy Corporate Officer**