

## CURFEW BYLAW 62-2005

### Report Purpose

To provide to Council the information gathered during the public input opportunities provided for the proposed Curfew Bylaw.

### Recommendation

**THAT Council receive as information the results of the various public input opportunities provided for input into the proposed Curfew Bylaw.**

### Council History

May 3, 2005: Councillor Wlodarczak served a Notice of Motion which provided "THAT Administration be directed to present a draft Curfew Bylaw and a public consultation plan to Council prior to June 7, 2005." On May 24, 2005 Council amended the motion by changing the date from June "7" to June "15".

June 14, 2005: Council received a proposed Curfew Bylaw as information and authorized Administration to gather information regarding curfew bylaws and to propose opportunities by which the public could provide their input into the bylaw.

September 20, 2005: Council received as information the results of Administration's research into existing curfew bylaws and authorized Administration to proceed to collect public input and report back to Council before the end of January, 2006.

### Background/Justification

#### **Strategic Plan:**

<i>Governance</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>Community Well Being</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Community Sustainability</i>		<i>Economic Viability</i>	
<i>Service Delivery</i>		<i>Stakeholder Communication</i>	
		<i>Resource Management</i>	

**Legislative/Legal:** n/a

**Economic:** n/a

**Social:** Strathcona County is committed to preserving a community quality of life which emphasizes individual safety and wellbeing as well as the protection of public and private property.

**Environmental:** n/a

**Stakeholder:** n/a

**Interdepartmental:** n/a

### Summary

Opportunities for input were as follows:

- Random, statistically valid survey of adult residents of the County (401 participants surveyed)

- Random, statistically valid survey of Strathcona County high school students (453 student participants)
- Open phone-in line (152 calls received)
- Open on-line questionnaire on County website (196 participants)
- Open opportunity to send letter or email comments (15 emails/letters received)

Ads in the local newspapers identified the Strathcona County website as the source for additional information regarding the proposed bylaw. The website contained the background information received by Council in September 2005, outlined the opportunities for input and how they could be accessed, and contained the online survey form for individuals to complete and submit.

Over the input period, there were 1,346 visits on the introductory page and 1,207 visits on the survey page. The number of visits on the background information provided by the County was 381.

Administration has now completed the public information gathering process. The opportunities provided for input have been wide-ranging, easily accessible and included the statistically valid random surveys of residents. This is the first instance of statistically valid surveys being used in Strathcona to determine public support for a bylaw.

Council may wish to consider one of the following options as the next step in the process:

- 1) Take time to consider the information presented prior to determining a course of action.
- 2) Direct that the Curfew Bylaw 62-2005 be presented to Council for consideration;
- 3) Not proceed with Curfew Bylaw 62-2005.

A statutory public hearing is not required should Council wish to consider passing the Curfew Bylaw, however, Council has the opportunity to hold one or more Public Input Sessions (non-statutory public hearings) if Council sees merit in conducting further public input opportunities.

## **Enclosures**

- I Summary of Public Input Results
- II Detailed Public Input Results

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Document #: *LLS44532*

Date: January 17, 2006

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

<b>Statistically valid results</b>			
Do you support the bylaw?	Yes	No	Don't Know
Adults (Telephone)	275 (68.6%)	106 (26.4%)	20 (5.0%)
Students (In classroom)	38 ( 8.4%)	376 (83.2%)	38 (8.4%)

<b>Results – Open Invitation</b>			
Do you support the bylaw?	Yes	No	Don't Know
Online responses	84 (42.9%)	104 (53.2%)	8 (4.1%)
Telephone responses	117 (77.0%)	35 (23%)	
E-mail/letters	7 (46.7%)	8 (53.3%)	

With respect to the **adult survey**, the three most common reasons given for **support** of a curfew bylaw were:

- (1) to keep youth off the streets/no reason for them to be out there,
- (2) vandalism and property damage and
- (3) a belief that late hours are when mischief occurs.

The three most common reasons given for adult **non-support** of a curfew were:

- (1) parents should set curfews or control their children, not the government,
- (2) the bylaw cannot be properly enforced and
- (3) the bylaw constitutes an unfair punishment of all youth for the behavior of a few.

With respect to the **student survey**, the three most common reasons given for **non-support** of the bylaw were that the curfew bylaw would:

- (1) be an unfair restriction of rights and freedoms of youth and unnecessary discrimination based on age,
- (2) restrict or punish the many for the few who actually cause trouble and
- (3) limit being with friends or participating in legitimate recreational, work and sport opportunities.

The three most common reasons for student **support** of the bylaw were

- (1) to create a safer environment/keep youth safe,
- (2) there is no reason to be outside without adult supervision during the curfew period and
- (3) it would limit the amount of crime or vandalism committed.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

There were four different methods used to obtain feedback from residents about a potential curfew bylaw for Strathcona County.

The first two methods incorporated random, scientific methodology to obtain feedback from residents:

- The first method was a telephone survey where 401 County residents were randomly contacted by telephone and asked to give their views on the potential curfew bylaw.
- The second method was an in-person interview method, where an independent market researcher went into different Strathcona County high school classrooms and administered a survey on the curfew directly to 453 students aged 14 to 17.

The other two methods allowed residents to provide feedback on this issue – Please note that both of these methods were “self-selected” responses, where people who felt strongly about this issue took the initiative to make their feelings known. In this regard:

- The third method was the completion of a survey via a section of the Strathcona County website. This survey had the same basic questions that were on the phone and student survey. Overall, 201 residents completed this survey.
- The fourth method was based on residents calling a specified telephone number and leaving a recorded message about the proposed bylaw. Sometimes reasons were given, sometimes not. Overall, 152 residents left messages.

The overall preferences toward the curfew and perceptions of safety in the community were common questions in three out of the four surveys. These results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1 – Support for the Curfew by Type of Survey**

	Random Phone Survey		School (Student) Survey		On-line Internet Survey		Phone in Comments	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Support the Curfew?</b>								
Yes	275	68.6%	38	8.4%	84	42.9%	117	77.0%
No	106	26.4%	376	83.2%	104	53.2%	35	23.0%
Don't know	20	5.0%	38	8.4%	8	4.1%	---	---

**Table 2 – Perceptions of Safety in the Community by Type of Survey**

	Random Phone Survey		School (Student) Survey		On-line Internet Survey		Phone in Comments*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Safety Perceptions</b>								
Feel Safe	295	75.7%	348	76.8%	125	68.7%	---	---
Average Safety	56	14.4%	76	16.8%	24	13.2%	---	---
Don't Feel Safe	39	10.0%	29	6.4%	33	18.1%	---	---

\*Residents did not comment about safety in the community when they phoned in about the proposed curfew bylaw. As such, there are no statistics on this.

Reasons associated with why people did or did not support the curfew are depicted in Table 3 and Table 4 for the formal scientific surveys (the random telephone survey of adults and the random in-school surveys of high school students), and for the Internet self-selected survey.

In both of these tables, percentages add up to 100% (or greater) by columns. Percentage totals may exceed 100% due to multiple answers from some residents from each survey.

**Table 3 – Reasons put forth by those who were in favour of the Curfew**

	Random Phone Survey (N=275 out of 401)		School (Student) Survey (N=38 out of 453)		On-Line Internet Survey (N=84 out of 196)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Perceptions of Crime by Youth and Distrust of Youth</b>						
Keep youth off the streets/no reason for them to be out there	84	30.5%	10	26.3%	13	15.5%
Vandalism/property damage	64	23.3%	8	21.1%	19	22.6%
Believe late hours are when mischief occurs	39	14.2%	0	---	3	3.6%
Need to protect children/kids/public /may create a safer place	20	7.3%	17	44.7%	5	6.0%
Good thing/no reason given	17	6.2%	0	---	1	1.2%
Youth are bad/crazy/hoodlums	12	4.4%	0	---	0	---
Prevent crime	12	4.4%	0	---	2	2.4%
Mischief by youth	11	4.0%	0	---	6	7.1%
Believe it would cut down on drug abuse	10	3.6%	3	7.9%	2	2.4%
Theft by youth	6	2.2%	0	---	0	---
Too much crime/violence	4	1.5%	0	---	1	1.2%
Do not feel safe on streets at night	1	0.4%	0	---	0	---
<b>Loitering/Noise problems/Crowd Problems</b>						
Kids hanging around fields/parks	9	3.3%	0	---	6	7.1%
Kids make too much noise	5	1.8%	0	---	5	6.0%
Potential for trouble when out in groups	2	0.7%	0	---	6	7.1%
<b>Parental / Individual Responsibility</b>						
Parents should set curfews, control kids, not government	8	2.9%	0	---	15	17.9%
Give parents more control over kids	6	2.2%	0	---	0	---
Dislike the potential of a "police state" here in the County	0	0.0%	0	---	8	9.5%
Punish bad parents	5	1.8%	0	---	1	1.2%
Kids not properly supervised	1	0.4%	0	---	2	2.4%
<b>Comments/Modifications for proposed curfew</b>						
Maybe have it apply to those under 16	6	2.2%	0	---	1	1.2%
Can't be enforced properly	3	1.1%	2	5.3%	9	10.7%
Maybe set it later (1 a.m.)	3	1.1%	0	---	0	---
Had one when I was a kid - good idea	3	1.1%	0	---	0	---
Should be even earlier - 10 pm	3	1.1%	0	---	0	---
Because I was up to no good when I was a teen	2	0.7%	0	---	0	---
Work in max security prison so know trouble happens	1	0.4%	0	---	1	1.2%
<b>Curfew Not the Answer</b>						
Have more things for youth to do	3	1.1%	0	---	3	3.6%
Unfair punishment of all youth for sins of a few	2	0.7%	0	---	6	7.1%
More info required	2	0.7%	0	---	1	1.2%
Unfair to youth who have jobs/babysitting that keep them out/legitimate recreation & sports activities	2	0.7%	1	2.6%	0	---
Those over 18 also causing crimes/vandalism	1	0.4%	11	28.9%	3	3.6%
Don't think that youth are getting into trouble	1	0.4%	0	---	0	---

**Table 4 – Reasons put forth by those who were against the Curfew**

	Random Phone Survey (N=106 out of 401)		School (Student) Survey (N=376 out of 453)		On-Line Internet Survey (N=104 out of 196)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Parental / Individual Responsibility</b>						
Parents should set curfews, control kids, not government	22	<b>20.8%</b>	47	12.5%	14	13.5%
Punish bad parents / youth not properly supervised	1	0.9%	0	---	5	4.8%
Disregards youths ability to take responsibility for actions/become independent/make own decisions	0	---	33	8.8%	0	---
Don't support because I stay out late a lot	0	---	6	1.6%	0	---
<b>Comments/Modifications for proposed curfew</b>						
Can't be enforced properly	24	<b>22.6%</b>	88	23.4%	10	<b>9.6%</b>
Maybe have it apply to those under 16	7	6.6%	5	1.3%	2	1.9%
Maybe set it later (1 a.m. or 2 a.m.)	6	5.7%	6	1.6%	0	---
Too restrictive/intrusive	3	2.8%	0	---	0	---
Would create even more problems	3	2.8%	0	---	0	---
Because I was up to no good when I was a teen	1	0.9%	0	---	0	---
7 days a week a bit much	1	0.9%	1	0.3%	0	---
<b>Curfew Not the Answer</b>						
Infringement based on age	6	5.7%	88	<b>23.4%</b>	11	10.6%
Unfair to youth who have jobs/babysitting that keep them out/legitimate recreation & sports activities / walking a dog /walking home in rural areas takes longer	7	6.6%	75	<b>19.9%</b>	1	1.0%
Unfair punishment of all youth for sins of a few	25	<b>23.6%</b>	78	<b>20.7%</b>	0	---
Opposed to it	12	11.3%	27	7.2%	5	4.8%
Would just make kids mad & they would rebel / facilitates mistrust between youth and adults	0	---	17	4.5%	0	---
Feel safe in community so curfew unnecessary	0	---	16	4.3%	0	---
Restricts youth mobility/ Sometimes walking only form of transportation/ walking safer than drinking and driving	0	---	16	4.3%	0	---
Curfew should be for entire population, not just part of it	0	---	9	2.4%	0	---
Have stricter laws/ harsher punishments/ other measures for those who actually perpetrate the crimes	0	---	5	1.4%	0	---
Why doesn't Edmonton have a curfew?/ Sherwood Park is not half as bad as Edmonton and we're getting the curfew	0	---	4	1.1%	0	---
Police already have right to stop people who look suspicious	0	---	3	0.8%	0	---
Not many people actually out after midnight	0	---	3	0.8%	0	---
Youth crime & shenanigans occurs at times other than 12 - 6 am	0	---	2	0.5%	0	---
For safety of teens, promote awareness - don't create laws making access illegal	0	---	1	0.3%	0	---
Those over 18 also causing crimes/vandalism	3	2.8%	1	0.3%	2	1.9%
More info required	1	0.9%	1	0.3%	0	---
Have more things for youth to do	0	---	0	---	2	1.9%
Don't think that youth are getting into trouble	1	0.9%	0	---	1	1.0%
Depends on whether kids are rowdy or not	1	0.9%	0	---	0	---