

City of Mississauga
Corporate Report



<p>Date: October 22, 2024</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Raj Sheth, P.Eng, Commissioner of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Meeting date: November 6, 2024</p>

Subject

Playing Sports on City Streets

Recommendation

1. That Traffic By-law 0555-2000 be amended to deregulate the playing of any game or sport upon a roadway, as outlined in the corporate report from Commissioner of Corporate Services, dated October 22, 2024, and entitled "Playing Sports on City Streets".
2. That all necessary by-laws be enacted.

Executive Summary

- Enforcement Division received direction from Council to review the current by-laws related to sports and sports equipment on local roads in Mississauga.
- Staff conducted a jurisdictional scan of twelve jurisdictions, of which five jurisdictions prohibited sports on roadways, three permitted and the remainder neither prohibited nor permitted.
- An online survey was conducted to obtain resident input on playing sports and using sports equipment on local roads. The survey received 1,178 responses.
- Staff recommend removing section 38 (2) from Traffic By-law which prohibits the playing of any game or sport upon on a roadway. This would deregulate the playing of sports on streets by neither prohibiting nor permitting it.
- Enforcement will continue to respond to complaints about street sports through the Highway Obstruction By-law 0357-2010 and Noise Control By-law 0360-1979, which respectively, prohibits the obstruction of any street or road through the placing of sporting equipment and regulates when noise from sporting activities is permitted in residential areas.

Background

Following Council's motion on June 14, 2023, Enforcement received direction from Council to review the current by-laws related to sports and sports equipment on local roads in Mississauga. Staff were also directed that, should the City's current by-laws be amended to permit sports on local roads where appropriate, implementation be done in a safe and responsible manner.

Present Status

The playing of sports and using sports equipment on the public right-of-way has not been permitted on city roadways since 1979. The City's Traffic By-law 0555- 2000 ("Traffic By-law") does not permit any "any game or sport" to be played on the roadway. Further, the City's Highway Obstruction By-law 0357-2010 ("Highway Obstruction By-law") was amended in 2010 to not permit sporting equipment on the roadway, through a general provision limiting "the placing or depositing of sports equipment, including but not limited to basketball nets, hockey nets, skateboard ramps and bicycle ramps".

Enforcement

The regulations related to sports and sporting equipment on the roadway are enforced on a complaint basis. Most incidents, especially those related to sport equipment on the roadway, are resolved by compliance through education.

The City received 99 service requests in 2022, and 95 in 2023, related to noise from persons playing sports on the street or sporting equipment being left on the roadway. Most calls were in relation to basketball nets obstructing the roadway.

Comments

Jurisdictional Scan

Staff reviewed by-laws from 12 comparable jurisdictions (Appendix 1). Currently only Ottawa and Toronto permit sports on roadways, while Kitchener allows sports with a permit. Between 2008 and 2022, Kingston allowed the playing of street hockey on local streets in residential neighbourhoods where the speed limit was 50 km/h or less. In 2022, Kingston City Council amended their by-law to remove the provisions regulating the playing of sports and games on a roadway. This approach effectively deregulated the playing of street sports by neither expressly permitting or prohibiting the playing of sports and games on a roadway.

Community Engagement

Staff conducted an online survey between July 8 and August 7, 2024, to seek resident feedback on playing sports and using sports equipment on local roads in Mississauga. Survey responses (n=1,178) are summarized in Appendix 2.

Proposed Amendments

Staff recommend removing section 38 (2) from Traffic By-law, which expressly prohibits the playing of any game or sport upon a roadway. This would deregulate the playing of sports on streets by neither prohibiting nor permitting the activity.

The force and effect date for this amendment will be November 13, 2024.

Implementation

Municipal Licensing Enforcement Officers (MLEOs) would continue to respond to complaints about highway obstructions or noise, focusing on compliance with Highway Obstruction By-law and Noise Control By-law 0360-1979 (“Noise Control By-law”) provisions. The Highway Obstruction By-law prohibits the obstruction of any street or road, including through the placing of sporting equipment on the roadway, which is directly responsive to a concern expressed by some survey respondents. The Noise Control By-law permits the City to address noise emanating from sporting activities that violate the By-Law. Action will be taken on a case-by-case basis, where there are grounds to do so.

Financial Impact

There is no current financial impact associated with the recommendations in this report. Staff will collect and analyse complaint data to assess the impacts of deregulation and to determine resourcing requirements for enforcement of related by-laws. Should additional resources be required based on an increase of complaints, a request will be made through the 2026 business planning process.

Conclusion

As directed by Council through its June 14, 2023, motion staff have reviewed the current by-laws related to sports and sports equipment on local roads in Mississauga. This included a jurisdictional scan and community engagement on sports played on city streets. Staff recommend deregulating the playing of sports on streets in the Traffic By-law and using the Highway Obstruction and Noise By-laws to address related complaints. This approach balances the desire for increased recreational opportunities with enforcement of by-law contraventions.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Sports on Streets Jurisdictional Scan

Appendix 2: Sports on Steets Survey Analysis



Raj Sheth, P.Eng, Commissioner of Corporate Services

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