

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM38.8	ACTION			Ward:All
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Keeping Toronto Safe by Ammunition Control - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Janet Davis

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Janet Davis, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to report back as soon as possible and before the end of this term of Council to the Planning and Growth Management Committee, with draft options for a zoning by-law amendment that would have the effect of the City of Toronto regulating, within its borders, the sale, storage, and use of ammunition for firearms, with the exception of ammunition that is stored or used by the Canadian Forces, a police force, or other entity that is authorized to store or use ammunition in connection with a legal obligation imposed by the municipal, the provincial or the federal government.
2. City Council request the City Manager and the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, in consultation with the Chief of Police, Toronto Police Service, to report on the findings of their review of the powers under the licensing provisions of the City of Toronto Act to regulate/and or limit the sale of ammunition, similar to the regulations implemented for fireworks.
3. City Council request the City Manager, in consultation with the Chief of Police, Toronto Police Service, to conduct a review of existing municipal initiatives in Canada that have as their aim the reduction and/or regulation in the sale, storage, and use of ammunition, and to identify possible regulatory options that may be pursued by the City of Toronto in this regard.
4. City Council request the City Manager to present City Council with a comprehensive analysis of the legislative tools available to Council to regulate the sale, storage and use of ammunition with the City's borders.
5. City Council communicate its support for efforts by the Government of Canada to restrict the availability, possession and use of firearms.

Summary

Over the years, City Council has taken a number of actions to address gun violence in our City. In particular, as part of the “Making a Safe City Safer” initiative, City Council has: strengthened innovative prevention programs; engaged in an active national advocacy campaign seeking a ban on handguns; established a policy that deems the promotion of firearms use as unacceptable at City owned facilities; employed its land use regulatory authority in order to reduce the availability and use of handguns; and legally sought to retain the long gun registry and its data.

Notwithstanding these efforts by City Council, until most recently other orders of government charged with primary responsibility for public safety and firearms regulation have not furthered our effort.

Now the Federal government is set to introduce a much-anticipated gun control bill this month that will include measures to boost screening for prospective gun owners. We applaud this renewed interest by the Federal government to reduce the availability, use, and possession of firearms. It is long overdue and needed to reverse the harmful policies of the previous federal government.

The Liberal platform promises included: (i) repealing changes made by the previous Conservative government around the transportation of restricted and prohibited weapons without a permit; (ii) requiring enhanced background checks for people seeking to buy a handgun or other restricted firearms; (iii) ensuring people who want to buy a firearm show a validated licence; and (iv) having firearm sellers keep records of gun inventory and sales.

There are many matters of public health, safety and security where there are precedents for all orders of government to play a role in regulating use. For example, the use, sale, storage and advertising of both Tobacco and Alcohol are governed by regulations from all three orders of government in Canada.

Ammunition (cartridges, shot shells, or similar devices containing a projectile) significantly increases the danger posed by firearms – whether handguns, long guns or other restricted weapons.

In connection with its legislative duty to address matters that relate to the health, safety, and well-being of persons, the City of Toronto should examine what options are available for it to prevent the significant threat and damage to the health, safety, and well-being of Toronto residents that can arise from the availability and use of ammunition.

In regulating the use of land through its Official Plan and Zoning By-law, City Council is obligated to have regard to principles of the Planning Act, including the development of safe and healthy communities and the protection of public health and safety.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM38.8