



MOTION on NOTICE

Submitted at the Regular Board meeting held on 2020-07-27

Suspending Daily Removal of Temporary Shelters During the COVID-19 Pandemic

MOVER: Commissioner Irwin

SECONDER: Commissioner Giesbrecht

WHEREAS:

1. Health officials recommend that people be able to go outside and physically distance during all phases of the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. BC Centre for Disease Control guidance states that “clearing or moving encampments without providing shelter or housing immediately can cause people to disperse throughout the community and break connections with service providers. This increases the potential for infectious disease spread and may lead to isolation, which also poses health and safety risks to vulnerable people”¹;
3. Housing or other shelter is not immediately available to unhoused people currently sheltering in Vancouver parks;
4. Dispersing people experiencing homelessness would lead to an inability to contract trace; and
5. The City of Victoria deferred the tent removal section of its amended Parks Regulation Bylaw governing sheltering in City Parks during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Vancouver Park Board defer enforcement of any by-law that requires unhoused people sheltering in parks to remove their temporary shelters on a daily basis, unless alternate housing is made immediately available to them; and
- B. THAT Park Board staff continue to work with the City of Vancouver and Province of BC to explore mitigation strategies for key issues related to homeless encampments, which align with BC Centre for Disease Control guidance that clearing or moving encampments without immediately providing shelter or housing increases health and safety risks.

1. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/pho_homeless_encampment_responses_resource.pdf