



## City of Victoria Responds to COVID-19

Date: Monday, March 16, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — The City of Victoria is closing the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre and a number of its facilities to curb the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) in the community. This follows today's public health direction to cancel gatherings of 50 people or more.

"Federal and provincial health authorities have urged increased social distancing measures and today the Prime Minister told Canadians to 'stay at home.' That's why today the City is taking the measures within our jurisdiction to limit contact between people and to keep our community safe and healthy," said Mayor Lisa Helps.

"We know these are challenging times for everyone and we all need to pull together to support each other in new and creative ways, while keeping the important social distances that the health professionals recommend."

### **Recreation Programs, Community and Seniors Centres**

City of Victoria recreation programs and services offered at the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre and Royal Athletic Park will close at 5 p.m. today until further notice. Refunds will be issued for anyone affected by programs cancelled during the closure.

The City is advising City-owned community and seniors centres, which are run by independent non-profit societies, to close. People registered for programs at community and seniors centres should contact those centres for more information.

### **Victoria City Hall**

Victoria City Hall will now be open by appointment only starting Tuesday, March 17 for accessing City services. We encourage the public to use MyCity Online for many online payment and services. The public can call 250-385-5711 for general information. To make appointments with respect to development applications or building permits, please call the Development Service Centre at 250-361-0382. Visit the City's website for full details.

### **Council and Committee Meetings**

Council's Committee of the Whole on Thursday, March 19 will proceed. The public can watch the live webcast, beginning at 9 a.m., to follow the proceedings. Information regarding upcoming Council meetings and public hearings will be available soon.

All Advisory Committee, Board and Task Force meetings and any other meetings scheduled to be held at City Hall have been cancelled, until further notice.

## **2020 Municipal By-Election**

The Chief Medical Health Officer for Island Health has recommended that the April 4 by-election be postponed until the coronavirus pandemic is declared over. The City has requested an order from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to authorize the postponement under the Local Government Act.

## **Engagement Events**

Following the advice from BC's Public Health Officer for social distancing and avoiding large groups, the City has decided to postpone all public engagement events until further notice. This includes any scheduled open houses, workshops, meet-ups, and the Mayor's Community Drop-In. Check out the City's engagement portal at [engage.victoria.ca](https://engage.victoria.ca) for the latest information.

## **Check Status Updates**

For updates on the City's response to COVID-19 and the status of programs and services, visit [victoria.ca](https://victoria.ca). Residents are encouraged to follow @CityofVictoria on Twitter to stay informed.

—30—

## **For More Information:**

Bill Eisenhauer  
Head of Engagement  
250.858.1061  
[beisenhauer@victoria.ca](mailto:beisenhauer@victoria.ca)