



City of Victoria COVID-19 Update

Date: Monday, March 23, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Victoria City Council continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic through public health officials and look for any opportunity to keep the community safe.

After closing all outdoor recreation facilities in public parks late last week the City closed all playgrounds in addition to skate & bike parks, basketball & tennis courts, sports fields, outdoor gyms and more, which are now closed help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

The City of Victoria has convened Island Health, BC Housing, the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, the Dandelion Society and other local service agencies to establish additional supports for vulnerable populations including more places for people to self-isolate.

"We are all in this together. Some populations in our community don't have the same options the rest of us do to stay safe, healthy and self-isolate at this time in accordance with the Chief Health Officer's directions," said Mayor Lisa Helps. "That's why we're working with all of our partners and looking at every option, to ensure everyone has the best chance at not spreading the COVID-19 virus. We all need to do our part: stay home, maintain physical distance with others when outside, and comply with the directives from public health officials."

Measures include allowing temporary shelters at Beacon Hill and Topaz Parks and Royal Athletic Park where residents can access up to date health information, meals, washrooms and handwashing stations.

BC Housing is working with Island Health to use the Royal Athletic Park as an outdoor shelter for the city's most vulnerable residents. This location allows for social distancing measures. The Province has the power, under the provincial state of emergency, to use city facilities for emergency measures.

Moving forward, the City is exploring indoor options for residents to be assigned a bed in addition to essential services.

All City of Victoria residents are encouraged to take the following steps to stay healthy and prevent the spread of infections by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- Coughing or sneezing into your sleeve and not your hands
- Staying home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others

For More Information:

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