



City of Victoria COVID-19 Update

Date: Friday, March 27, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Victoria City Council continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and explore ways to support residents, businesses and City staff. Today's federal announcement of a major relief package for small business and non-profit organizations fills a gap that will help support the recovery of this vital sector of the City's economy.

"I want to thank the federal government for moving swiftly to create a relief package to help small business and non-profits get through this. This is something City, the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Destination Greater Victoria and many others have been calling for," said Mayor Lisa Helps. "It will get much needed relief to business and non-profits now to help with rent, inventory, payroll and other expenses to keep them whole and ready to recover."

The federal program includes a \$40,000 interest-free loan for businesses with a payroll between \$50,000 and \$1 million and a subsidy to cover 75 per cent of wages, up from the previously announced 10 per cent.

This aligns with City Council's decision yesterday requesting that the Mayor write to the province to advocate on behalf of small businesses and non-profits which have been affected in Victoria with respect to rent relief and halting evictions during the current state of emergency.

The City is working on a number of initiatives to ensure housing projects continue to move forward. Effective immediately, all Development and Building Permit Applications for the City of Victoria can now be accepted online.

This includes rezonings, development permits, heritage alteration permits, temporary use permits, and variance applications, as well as building, plumbing, electrical and sign permit applications. These initiatives will not only help housing to continue to be built but will also help maintain jobs for tradespeople.

City staff will continue to process applications to the Victoria Housing Reserve Fund to support affordable housing projects. The work of planning staff is vital to keeping the City's housing action plan on track and supporting the construction sector.

The public is invited to tune into the Mayor's Facebook Live weekday updates at 2:30 p.m. To learn more about the City's response to COVID-19, visit: victoria.ca/covid19response.

For More Information:

Bill Eisenhauer

Head of Engagement

Cellular: 250.858.1061

beisenhauer@victoria.ca