



City of Victoria COVID-19 Update

Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Victoria City Council continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and look at ways to support the community.

Today, new federal regulations will allow law enforcement agencies to issue tickets to individuals who do not comply with orders under the Federal Quarantine Act. The Quarantine Act covers people arriving in Canada and provides measures for screening, health assessments and medical examinations of travellers.

The Prime Minister in his address today also gestured that more help would be coming soon for small businesses struggling to pay commercial rents, as well as expanding supports for people who don't qualify for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

"It's encouraging to hear the federal government is listening and ready to adjust their programs to ensure local small businesses that have closed to help us flatten the curve, get the support they need to make it through this crisis," said Mayor Helps.

Over the weekend, the province announced new grants for local musicians as part of a new program called *Showcase BC*, an online hub for live performances and entertainment. The program, a partnership with Creative BC, comes with one-time micro-grants of \$500 to emerging artists and \$2,000 to established artists for livestreaming, songwriting and professional development. Visit showcasebc.ca to search for, stream and submit made-in-BC performances.

Another opportunity opens later this week for local writers when the Victoria Book Prizes launch its annual call for entries for the \$5,000 City of Victoria Butler Book Prize and the \$5,000 Victoria Children's Book Prize. Additionally, submissions close today for the City's eighth installation of the Commercial Alley Outdoor Art Gallery. The gallery will feature the work of a local artist or artist team from August 2020 to August 2021.

"Art is powerful and can help us through this challenging time. Although the world may look and feel different, art – whether visual or music expression – will always be here to help us better understand ourselves, others and our surroundings," said Mayor Helps.

The recent \$3 million B.C. government investment in public libraries will help support programs and services at the Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL), among others. Although neighbourhood library branches are now closed during the pandemic, GVPL's extensive digital resources are still available for free, such as e-books, audiobooks and other content. Visit gvpl.ca to sign up for a library card and start reading, watching and learning.

For information on the City's response to COVID-19, the public is invited to tune into the Mayor's Facebook Live weekday updates at 2:30 p.m. on the City of Victoria Facebook page, and to visit victoria.ca/covid19response.

—30—

For More Information:

Bill Eisenhauer

Head of Engagement

Cellular: 250.858.1061

beisenhauer@victoria.ca