



City of Victoria Takes Steps Towards COVID-19 Recovery

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Victoria City Council continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and explore ways to support the community.

Yesterday, Council took bold action to assist residents and businesses through the recovery period. Measures include:

- Reduced downtown parking rates will remain in place for now
- Working on options for restaurants and retailers to operate in public space
- A new grant stream to support the Create Victoria arts and culture plan
- Neighbourhood grants starting in June with a key focus on recovery and resilience

Council also passed a motion to increase physical distancing opportunities in the community. Staff will look for more ways to allocate space for people to walk and roll safely in village centres and downtown as well as implementing additional road closures in Beacon Hill Park. Parking lot access will be maintained at Heywood Road, Circle Drive and Nursery Road.

“What this means is that people who need to drive can still park in Beacon Hill Park, and there will also be more space for everyone to enjoy the park in this new world of physical distancing,” said Mayor Helps.

Today, the federal government announced that the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy is being extended to the end of August.

“This couldn’t come at a better time,” said Mayor Lisa Helps. “Many businesses are turning their minds to re-opening and this federal support will help them get back on their feet.”

The federal government also announced that applications for the Canadian Emergency Student Benefit open today for post-secondary students.

The provincial government announced today that students will have the option to return to classrooms part-time starting June 1 under enhanced health and safety measures.

“A gradual return to school is welcome news for many parents,” said Mayor Helps. “It’s a return to learning and also a return to friendships and community connection for children and families.”

Starting today, youth 18 and under living in the municipality of Victoria can apply online to receive their free monthly transit pass without having to visit City Hall. Applicants can apply at victoria.ca/transit, and transit passes for June, July and August will be mailed directly to their home.

“This program is the first of its kind in the province,” said Mayor Helps. “The goal is to encourage low-carbon, affordable transportation, but more importantly it’s to create lifelong transit riders that will lead to fewer vehicles on our roads and less traffic congestion.”

The Mayor’s Facebook Live COVID-19 updates will take place on Fridays at 2:00 p.m. on the City of Victoria Facebook page. For more information on the City’s response to the pandemic, visit: victoria.ca/covid19response.

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