



## City of Victoria COVID-19 Update

Date: Friday, Sept. 18, 2020

For Immediate Release

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

As a key economic recovery project, the City along with the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) and the Association of BC Marine Industries has been awarded \$100,000 in federal funding to take the next steps towards establishing an Ocean Futures Innovation Hub in Greater Victoria. To develop the business case and feasibility study, SIPP has contracted a team from Urban Systems in B.C., plus Canadian company Hatch and Engage//Innovate of Norway.

“We are very grateful to the federal government for funds to move this project along at a rapid pace,” said Mayor Lisa Helps. “We’re keen to get working with the team from B.C. and Norway to engage the ocean and marine, tech, innovation sectors, and First Nations as we build the business plan over the next couple of months to set up the Ocean Futures Innovation Hub as a key COVID-19 recovery project for federal, provincial and private sector funders.”

Yesterday Council endorsed in principle the *Build Back Victoria* program that has made it possible for local businesses to extend outdoor patios and flex spaces over the summer. Today, the Province announced an extension of the temporary authorization of licensed service areas for another year. In early October, Council will look at ways to keep this going through the fall and winter and for next summer as well.

“Cooler weather is coming, and some businesses have expressed interest in keeping their patios open,” said Helps. “Patio heaters, temporary roofing – there are lots of ways this program can be successful through the cooler months.”

Today the Province also released its South Island Transportation Strategy. “The Strategy reinforces safety, reliability, sustainability and connectivity between communities in our region,” said Mayor Helps. “It aligns well with the City’s *Go Victoria* active transportation strategy, and I’m excited to work together on EV charging stations, downtown transit, and other initiatives.”

The Mayor’s Facebook Live COVID-19 updates take place on Fridays at 1 p.m. For more information on the City’s response and recovery to the pandemic, visit: [victoria.ca/covid19response](https://victoria.ca/covid19response).

—30—

**For More Information:**

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