



Attn: Mayor and Council, City of Victoria

Date: June 24, 2020

From: North Park Neighbourhood Association

Subject: Outdoor Sheltering in Parks - Recommendation of criteria to be established

The North Park Neighbourhood Association (NPNA) is concerned about the lack of green space and a further reduction in green space in Victoria's core neighbourhoods as unhoused individuals relocate to Central Park for continuous sheltering. If outdoor sheltering is continuous and allowed in parks and neighbourhood green spaces, the burdens associated with this (loss of green space, exposure to noise) must be distributed in a manner that is fair and equal and must not be concentrated in neighbourhoods that are lower income and more diverse (such as North Park). Central Park is a well used local park that includes: basketball court; tennis courts; playground; exercise park, and two ball diamonds. With these facilities in full or partial use in addition to the footprint of Crystal Pool, available green space for non-active users is at a premium.

The NPNA therefore request that by July 17, 2020, staff provide a report to council with a set of criteria for evaluating outdoor sheltering spaces and an analysis of potential locations using these criteria. These criteria should include:

- proximity to residential property;
- proximity to playground structures and sports fields;
- proximity to outdoor exercise equipment;
- access to, or availability of hygiene amenities (showers, handwashing, washrooms);
- availability of increased City staff resources needed for daily regular garbage/paraphernalia pick-up/monitoring;
- amount of accessible* green space in the neighbourhood (taking into account hectares / 1000 residents);
- equity based analysis; and
- ability for sheltering spaces to be adequately physically distanced from other shelters and park users.

Given that continuous outdoor sheltering is likely to continue for the foreseeable future, the NPNA requests that by July 17, 2020, council and staff consider and make recommendations on various options, such as:

- setting limits on the number of shelters in parks where sheltering is allowed on a continuous basis;
- establishing a percentage of space in accessible* greenspaces where continuous sheltering is allowed; or
- setting rotation for continuous sheltering;

* please exclude Royal Athletic Park in this analysis as it is not accessible to all since there are always fees for its use

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- establishing signage in parks where sheltering is allowed providing contact information for both campers and park users to access resources and voice concerns;
- establish relationships with existing service providers and agreements for delivery of outreach services.

The NPNA also requests that an impact assessment be done on residential properties in the several blocks surrounding Central Park to determine the impact of the loss of greenspace due to continuous sheltering, specifically taking into account the following factors:

- Are local residents using the park less?
- What is the impact on health determinants for children in the area?
- What is the impact on health determinants for adults in the area?
- Are the impacts on health disproportionately borne by marginalized members of the North Park community?