# December 2020 Update
# North Park

## In Your Neighbourhood

### City Governance Review

Council has now approved a  motion for a governance review.   The primary resolution adopted was for staff to report back with a proposed work plan and engagement strategy that includes a Council workshop, a separate workshop for staff, and a workshop for residents and stakeholders to provide input to further inform the scope and priorities of a Governance Review aligned to the scope outlined in the report.

### Community Virtuals

A panel of City Parks staff and neighbourhood champions provided insights into growing trees in the City at the first Community Virtuals presentation held on November 18ᵗʰ.  The presentation will be posted online if you missed the online discussion.  The next presentation in the series will be at noon on December 9 and will include the screening of the film "The Great Disconnect",
a documentary film focusing the health and social impacts of loneliness about why neighbourhood connections are so important .  Discussions follow each presentation and the producer will be present at this next event.

### Emergency Social Services Grant

At the Council meeting of November 12, 2020, Council established the Emergency Social Services Grant and allocated up to $100,000 from the federal-provincial Restart funding to initiate a one-time grant program to deliver mobile hygiene and other social services.  The grant was open to not-for-profit organizations and informal groups.   On December 3, Council will be considering a staff report listing the applicants for the grant.  Oaklands Community Association submitted an application for an "Oaklands Pantry and Free Market ($15,299).

### Outdoor Sheltering Initiatives

In response to Council's direction for staff to report to them on the impacts of a prohibition of camping in the downtown business area ,  Council received a report at its November 12 meeting indicating that outdoor sheltering and criminal behaviour are negatively affecting businesses.  Council resolutions included:

- That Council add Centennial Square to the list of prohibited spaces for camping with this provision to expire at the same time as other restricted parks and be subject to review at the end of March 2021

Several other motions relating to outdoor sheltering were approved by Council at the meeting, including:

- That the City continue to provide funding to Our Place for shower services  and to seek funding to extend services to provide showers from 8am to 9pm daily
- That the City of Victoria allocate up to $2812 per month for the provision of transit fare for persons sheltering outdoors

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- That Council direct staff to prepare a bylaw amendment for first reading, introducing a set back provision of 4 metres between a shelter erected and adjacent private property
- That $27,490 be allocated from the financial stability reserve to fund the Sanctuary Youth Drop In for an additional 3 hours on days that they are currently open and to provide funds for a day shelter in the event of extreme weather
- That Council allocate up to $100,000 from the federal-provincial restart funding to initiate a one-time grant program to deliver mobile hygiene and other social services.

## Outdoor Sheltering Transition

On November 12, Council also considered resolutions proposed by Mayor Helps and Councillor Loveday intended to provide an accelerated approach for ending the need for outdoor sheltering.  The resulting (abridged) resolutions were :

- That Council direct staff to work with a private land owner or use city-owned land for the construction of temporary tiny home clusters of no more than 30 units beginning with one pilot project in Q1 of 2021 subject to the availability of one year of operating funding from BC Housing
- That Council allocate a portion of the City's federal-provincial restart money to help fund solutions that will move people indoors
- That the City request the Province immediately open Oak Bay Lodge to people 55 years and older who are currently living in City parks and/or shelters until the vacant building is demolished for redevelopment.
- That the City indicate to the Province that it supports the use of the two sites recently purchased by the Province on Yates Street and Meares Street for affordable, supportive housing and encourages the Province to begin construction of modular housing on those sites as soon as possible, respecting the City's design guidelines
- That the City of Victoria works with the Province and other partners to offer housing or indoor shelter with a path to permanent housing for everyone currently sheltering in City parks by March 31st 2021
- That Council directs staff to bring forward amendments to the Parks Regulation Bylaw so that the temporary measures that allow 24/7 camping expire on March 31st 2021, to be in effect once it is clear that adequate housing and shelter space will be available at that time
- That the City supports partner agencies in engaging people currently sheltering in City parks to determine their housing and support needs, to inform the operation of shelter and housing facilities and ensure access to safe and adequate housing for all

## Remember to Vote

Eleven candidates will vie for the vacant Council seat at the election on Saturday, December 12.  Mail-in ballots should be posted by Friday December 4th.  There are also eight days of advance polls at Crystal Garden.  For complete information, check the City's dedicated webpage .

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### Seniors Action Plan

Council approved a report recommending adoption of a draft Seniors Action Plan 2020 at their November 12 meeting.  The report is the product of the Seniors Task Force that was established in July 2019.   Council directed staff to apply for a grant to further the work and will consider additional funding in their 2021 financial planning process.  An ongoing Seniors' Advisory Committee will be created and an annual Seniors' Summit event will be held.

### Climate Action Plan

Council will received a staff report on the City's 2018 Climate Leadership Program at its November 19 Committee meeting. It described the many initiatives that the City has undertaken and indicates that greenhouse gases have been reduced by 25% since 2007 (11% in the City overall).  The Community Leadership Program set out goals, targets, and initial action plans to get the community to an 80% GHG reduction and 100% renewable power by 2050.   The report indicates that much of the remaining reduction is outside the City jurisdiction and will rely on community partnerships. The resolutions include to emphasize priority actions recommended by staff and to pursue specific grants that would help support achievement of these actions.

A Climate Adaptation Working Group is being established to help advance the program's objectives.  Matt Dell and Marg Gardiner were selected as community representatives to the Working Group at the November VCAN meeting.  A complementary group is to be established to ensure communication with all neighbourhood associations.

### Equity Framework

On November 5, Council received a report providing an overview of the work undertaken to date to develop an Equity Framework and Lens for the City of Victoria, including initial interpretation of community profile information and next steps.   The intended objectives of the presentation and discussion were to discuss the interpretation of community profile indicators and the need to validate community information with residents.  A subsequent report on engaging with community partner organizations was presented to Council on November 26.

### City Council Meetings

Committee of the Whole met on November 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 9:00am and December 3.  Council met on November 12, 26 and Dec 3  beginning at 6:30pm. Their last meetings will be on December 10.

Council also held **Financial Planning** sessions on November 10, 23, and 30.  You can view the draft Financial Plan online.

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