



North Park Neighbourhood Association
PO Box 661
#185-911 Yates Street
Victoria, BC, Canada
V8V 4Y9

Re: Central Park to 940 Caledonia Relocation Report (timeline, volunteer impact statements, case studies)

Attention: Mayor, Council, Shannon Perkins (Bylaw), Thomas Soulliere, Nav Sidhu (Parks), David Churchill (Facilities), Jason Adair (Public Works), Bill Eisenhauer, Jocelyn Jenkins (City Manager), Colleen Mycroft, Chief Bruce (Fire Department), Heidi Hartman, Murray Langdon (BC Housing), Jen Wilde (EWP), Janine Theobald, Kelly Roth (GVCEH), John Reilly (CRD), Laurel Collins (MP), Grace Lore, Rob Flemming, Murray Rankin (MLA), David Eby (Minister of Housing).

CC: NPNA Board, NPNA Land Use Advisor, Aryze Development, Our Place Society

Date: February 18, 2021

1) NPNA's attempts to communicate issues relating to Central Park


Date	NPNA's attempts to communicate issues relating to Central Park
June 24, 2020	NPNA requests a criteria be established for parks where sheltering is permitted taking into account equity, access to green space, hygiene facilities, etc.
August 31, 2020	Centennial Square is closed to sheltering, causing the number of shelters in Central Park to double overnight. NPNA sends a letter to Mayor and Council.
August - October NPNA attempts to sound the alarm on issues in Central Park	August - NPNA summarizes concerns about Central Park. September - NPNA summarizes concerns (including flooding) and makes suggestions about the situation in Central Park October - NPNA requests more and better communication, and highlights concerns for state in Central Park (including flooding).
September 1, 2020 Requests for immediate indoor housing options to be made available	September : Letter from North Park, Fernwood, Burnside Gorge, Hillside Quadra requesting Oak Bay Lodge be opened immediately. A second letter was also written, but the Victoria Community Association Network (VCAN) voted that it did not have jurisdictional authority to send this letter.

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November 20, 2020	Fences are installed around the perimeter of the playing fields in Central Park, and the 55+ tents are pushed further towards the playground and into the flood prone areas. NPNA sends a letter expressing frustration with the situation .
December 2, 2020	NPNA requests that immediate indoor housing options be made available. December : Letter to members of provincial and municipal government
December 14, 2020	Following NPNA's monthly public meeting on December 7 with MLA Lore, BC Housing's Murray Langdon, and City of Victoria Bylaw Manager Shannon Perkins MLA Lore sent this letter to David Eby stating that "neighbours would like to know whether the Province can and will use the powers of the BC State of Emergency to requisition the use of the Save On Foods Memorial Arena, which was providing temporary shelter for 45 individuals. They highlight Dr. Henry's Dec. 2 update requiring anyone playing sports to stay in their own community and believe that WHL hockey should not be prioritized over indoor shelter."

2) The Major events, what happened, and what was missing: Central Park to 940 Caledonia relocation

Event	What happened?	What's missing?
December 21, 2020 Flooding at Central Park	<p>One day of heavy rain and snow caused extreme flooding in Central Park, destroying the belongings and tents of the people sheltering in most of the 55 structures in the park.</p> <p>NPNA sends Request to Immediately Open Save On Foods Memorial Arena (SOFMA) for Immediate Indoor Shelter</p> <p>NPNA begins tweeting photos of flood and calling on elected officials to immediately open SOFMA for emergency shelter</p> <p>Filmmaker, Krista Loughton posts video of Tina Dawson and destroyed tents</p>	<p>No one is on the ground assessing the situation from any level of government. No planning taking place, no assessment of risk.</p> 


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	Residents abandon their belongings. Public outcry for a solution to the flooding is strong.	
December 22, 2020 City announces emergency response	<p>4:29pm BC Housing announces that people will be relocated from Central Park to RAP parking lot at 940 Caledonia</p> <p>5:00pm City sends press release announcing City and Province Working to Move People from Central Park Due to Flooding</p> <p>The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness announces that the relocation will take place at 1pm on Dec. 23.</p> <p>At 4pm December 22, 2021 The Salvation Army arrived with the cots, sleeping bags and dry clothing. BC Housing also supported the purchase of sleeping bags that were acquired and delivered by GVCEH. MSDPR, VIHA Orange Backpack Team, and Peers Victoria assisted with the setting up of the cots and the distribution of the sleeping bags and provided a check in with everyone on site. Peers who had previously, and currently, lived and Central Park shared the messages and supported in identifying individuals who wanted to relocate.</p>	<p>There is no response to the NPNA's letter requesting that the arena be opened immediately for indoor sheltering.</p> <p>All of the supplies distributed at 4pm on Dec. 22 needed to be replaced again at the new location.</p>
<p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Park closure: Parks Department imposed a 20 day closure of Central Park including the sports fields, playground, outdoor gym, tennis court, and basketball court. Closure took effect on January 4, 2021. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Parks Department recommended on January 21, 2021 that sheltering in Central Park be permanently banned. It is temporarily banned until March 4, 2021 when Council will decide to permanently remove Central Park from the list. 		
December 23,	The emergency community relocation	By now the City has installed fencing on

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<p>2020 Relocation from Central Park to Royal Athletic Park parking lot (940 Caledonia)</p>	<p>mobilization is organized by BC Housing and the City of Victoria, and facilitated by the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and Jen Wilde of the Extreme Weather Protocol.</p> <p>At about noon the Salvation Army arrives to share hot soup with volunteers and residents at Central Park.</p> <p>At about 1pm, the Fire Department drops off 36 tents at the Royal Athletic Park parking lot.</p> <p>The NPNA puts out a call out for volunteers and 30 community members arrive to help put up tents. Volunteers drive around to pick up pallets. The NPNA orders plywood, hammers, and nails to build platforms for the tents. By 7pm, ~28 tents are built, and only a few have platforms, and they are mostly unoccupied.</p> <p>Janine, Jen, and one previous Central Park resident “Joe”, are supporting the assigning of tents. Tents are only supposed to be given to those relocating directly from Central Park. Janine, Jen, and the resident all leave the site at 7pm. They are not on site again until Dec. 30. Janine still has the original drawings.</p>	<p>2 sides of the encampment, as well as 1 portable washroom, a handwash sink, and a sharps disposal box. They do not install any garbage or recycling receptacles.</p> <p>The City is not on site again until December 28, 2020, and there is limited responsiveness when requests are made.</p> <p>No drinking water No electricity No garbage receptacles</p> <p>A limited number of extra cots and a few tents were left over and stored at RAP facilities. Tarps, sleeping bags, and winter supplies were not made available.</p> 
<p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusion and chaos. Because no one was on site to assign tents, many tents were taken over by people from other parks. Some tents are stolen altogether. Most tents were placed directly on the pavement leading to some tents taking on water and having to be cleaned out by volunteers.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Inadequate methods of communication (ie. relying on word of mouth) leads to confusion and miscommunication.○ Lack of leadership, and not knowing “who is in charge” contributes to confusion and miscommunication.		

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Intervention Point: A relocation effort of this scale required dedicated onsite support from the moment the announcement took place until the new encampment was established. This would ideally be an inter-governmental team that includes, or has access to the right departments at the City, Province, BC Housing, VIHA, EMBC. Leaving the site largely unoccupied and not set up with no one responsible for assigning remaining tents and handing out necessary supplies left the site in chaos.

**December 24 -
December 30,
2020**

Community led
establishment of
encampment

Dec. 24

On Christmas Eve, reports come in via Twitter that tents are blowing away in the parking lot because they are not occupied, and not secured. NPNA board members spend Dec. 24 until 11pm securing tents in the parking lot.

Dec. 25 - 30

NPNA board members and community volunteers spent 8-12 hour days at 940 Caledonia setting up the encampment so that the structures were adequately waterproof and secure.

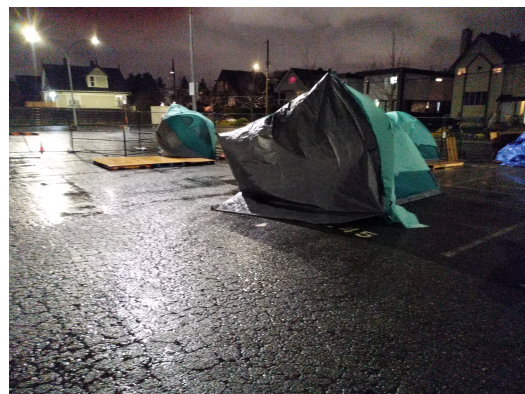
On Dec. 29 when the NPNA requested more tents from the Fire Department to accommodate those still needing to move over from Central Park, we were asked why there were not enough from the original drop on Dec. 23.

By end of day on Dec. 30 there were 36 self contained structures with a complete platform + tent + tarp set. Park residents worked alongside volunteers.

The NPNA board and volunteers felt as though we were abandoned by the City, BC Housing, and the service providers overseeing this relocation.

There was no support from City staff, provincial government, emergency services, or service providers.

Tents were not of adequate quality and could not stand up to wind or rain. This left people sleeping in tents collapsing around them. Some tents had torn within the first few days of being set up.



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NPNA provides supplies with Red Cross funding	<p>NPNA provides supplies which included:</p> <p>encampment set up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Every tent is provided with a platform made of donated pallets and purchased plywood- Every tent is provided with at least one heavy duty tarp secured to the platform with lumber, screws, and nails. <p>water, light, winter supplies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- NPNA provides bottled water in addition to large jug of water with pumps (NPNA volunteers visit 940 Caledonia daily to refill the water jugs at their homes.)- Everyone is given a<ul style="list-style-type: none">- rechargeable hand warmer- battery operated LED lantern- Laundry bag- Small fire extinguisher <p>First aid and fire safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- NPNA creates laminated Naloxone, First Aid, and Fire Extinguisher signs to post on tents where supplies are located- NPNA provides supplies for garbage collection (grabbers, buckets, garbage bags, gloves, etc) and PPE (masks) <p>Ongoing tent & encampment maintenance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- NPNA purchases poly-sheeting vapour barrier and tuck tape to insulate the summer weight tents.- NPNA continues to purchase additional lumber, screws, tarps, for better waterproofing individual tents as needed- NPNA continues to purchase bleach and anti-mold spray for tents as they start to mold from the condensation	
<p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A volunteer run neighbourhood association with no training and no support set up an encampment for 50 unhoused individuals using personal credit cards to purchase the necessary supplies● The NPNA spent \$14,268.73 purchasing the supplies necessary to establish an adequate		

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encampment with no support from the City, BC Housing, the Fire Department, Bylaw, or service providers. BC Housing instructed the NPNA to purchase whatever was necessary and save the receipts for reimbursement.

- **Total cost spent by the NPNA between December 23, 2020 - February 19, 2021 including staffing for the warming tent, daily honorariums for park residents, and supplies is approximately \$98k.**

Intervention Point: [Standards for temporary encampments are supported by public health guidelines.](#)

Inter-governmental team (City, Province, BC Housing, VIHA, EMBC) is needed to adequately set up a temporary encampment.

December 28, 2020
City of Victoria returns

The Bylaw Department arrives on site to coordinate the assignment of tents. This requires considerable catch up as many tents have been occupied by those not from Central Park.

Outcome:

- This caused some stress and conflict at 940 Caledonia. Bylaw quickly establishes daily logistics meetings for 8:30am at 940 Caledonia. These are attended by Bylaw, Facilities, Public Works, Police liaisons, 940 Caledonia residents, Footprints Security, nearby housed residents, and the NPNA. These meetings prove to be very useful right away and are effective ways of addressing some issues and concerns quickly.

Intervention Point: The daily logistics meetings and assignment of park liaisons early on streamlines communication and helps address issues as they arise.

December 28, 2020 - January 28, 2021
Warming Tent requests until establishment

Residents at 940 Caledonia continue requesting a warming tent. This is a repeat request, first made in August during circle meetings at Central Park.

Dec. 28: BC Housing says that opening the Save on Foods Memorial Arena is 10-15 days away.

Dec. 30: The City says that a warming tent is not possible.

Dec. 31: BC Housing says that there are no updates on the arena and clarifies that the timeline for opening the arena is 10-15 days from a signed deal.

- The NPNA requests that in light of the slow progress on the arena, the

Delays were caused by Peers Resource Society needing to take on the permitting and insurance process.


Any tents that were in the City's inventory (including tents on-site at Royal Athletic Park) were not offered.

As of January 29, 2021 there is still no electricity at the warming tent.

Electricity is set up on February 13, 2021 paid for by Peers.

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	<p>City and BC Housing work together to find an operator and open a warming tent immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NPNA offers \$18,200 worth of funding from the Red Cross for staffing. <p>Dec. 31: The City identifies Peers Resource Society as the operator, BC Housing offers to buy the warming tent.</p>	
<p>Outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A warming tent was installed on January 28, 2021 nearly a full month after this meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The original permit allowed for opening the tent from 10am-4pm. This was extended to 8pm on Jan. 26. 		
<p>December 31, 2020- February 19, 2021 Stipend supported community leadership roles</p>	<p>After the initial establishment of the encampment was complete, the residents at 940 Caledonia began organizing themselves and taking on roles and responsibilities. With funding from the Red Cross, the NPNA helped the residents establish stipend supported roles to care for the community. These included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 x park liaison (communicating with Bylaw and service providers) - 3 x park clean team (cleaning the encampment and sidewalks around) - 2 x park maintenance (securing tarps, fixing platforms and tents, etc) - 2 x food distribution (accepting morning and evening meal and distributing to all tents) <p>Through the morning logistics meetings, park residents requested, and received the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - additional fencing on the remaining two sides of the encampment 	<p>The facilitation of the stipend supported roles is a significant undertaking. It requires being on site daily for sign up, in addition to 2x per week for stipend pay out. It also requires a lot of collaboration, problem solving, and mediation.</p>


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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Garbage receptacles at both entrances- 3 additional portable washrooms- 24/7 on site security- Securing one of the entrances at night to reduce unwanted visitors	
January 8, 2021 Proposed Tiny Home Village at 940 Caledonia announced	<p>A proposed community made up of 30 shipping containers is proposed for the parking lot at 940 Caledonia.</p> <p>This land use development will undergo a circumvented public consultation process and will be on site from March 31, 2021 until September 31, 2022. It will be operated by an experienced local housing operator.</p>	
January 12, 2021 Wind Storm	<p>A wind storm with 90 km/h winds flattens 6 of the new tents. Community volunteers, NPNA board members, in addition to Bylaw officers are in the parking lot until 8pm trying to secure tents and tarps.</p> <p>The NPNA is on a Zoom call with City staff when the wind starts knocking down tents at 940 Caledonia. The NPNA requests that the Fire Department be deployed to help. They don't come.</p> <p>The NPNA purchased 6 additional tents (\$1500) on Jan. 13 and the residents in the park maintenance roles replaced broken tents immediately.</p>	<p>What emergency response measures are in place to support unhoused community members? Based on all of these events, there are none.</p> <p>Where is the Extreme Weather Protocol during this?</p> <p>See the wind and rain at 940 Caledonia from that night here.</p>

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January 25, 2021 Death of 940 Caledonia resident	<p>On January 25, a park resident was found dead, from a suspected drug overdose, in their tent. It was another park resident who found their friend.</p> <p>The Police Officer who attends the scene calls the NPNA's executive director to ask how wellness checks are handled at 940 Caledonia. I explain that this is an unmanaged encampment without an operator, and without any organized wellness checks or on site supports.</p>	 <p>Source: Times Colonist</p>
January 27, 2021 The Save on Foods Memorial Arena will re-open	<p>An announcement was made on Wednesday, January 27 that the Save on Foods Memorial Arena will reopen as a temporary, 45 bed shelter with wraparound supports and an experienced housing operator by March 1, 2021. The current lease goes until May 30, 2021 with the possibility of extension.</p>	

3) Case Study: Three 940 Caledonia Residents

Case Study #1: "John" 60 year old man undergoing chemotherapy

- "John" is 60 years old, undergoing chemotherapy for the second time.
- He has been living in a tent in Central Park since June.
- On January 13, 2021 the NPNA paid for a hotel room for 30 days for him so that he does not have to undergo his chemotherapy treatments while living in a tent in a parking lot.
- The NPNA has been bringing John's case before BC Housing, VIHA, and Pacifica Housing several times a week since December 31. No progress has been made.
- As of February 13, 2021 John was offered a permanent placement, and has been moved into his new home. John is thrilled.

Case Study #2: "Jane" Mid 20s woman with multiple development, mental health, substance use co-diagnoses

- "Jane" is a woman in her mid-twenties, associated with several case workers and agencies.
- She has severe developmental, mental health, and substance use diagnoses.
- Her tent has been replaced twice in the past two weeks by her support workers, in collaboration with Bylaw, as she is unable to care for herself and the tents become soiled.
- Every single resident at 940 Caledonia agrees that Jane is not getting the care she needs at 940 Caledonia.

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- She is often found sleeping outside of her tent because her tent is dirty, or she does not feel safe sleeping in her own tent.
- Jane has now been relocated to another park in Victoria, and residents of 940 Caledonia are concerned about her well-being

Case Study #3: "Joe" 70 year old man

- Joe arrived at the encampment in Central Park in September having received an eviction notice from his affordable market rental apartment in North Park, Victoria.
- Joe had not filed taxes for 10 years, had ceased formally working at age of 65, and until COVID had managed to get by on savings, food banks, and the odd cash job.
- With COVID, those odd jobs were gone. He stopped being able to pay his rent in April 2020, and ran overdraft on his bank account until the bank blocked that and eventually closed his account.
- An NPNA board member helped Joe get up to date on his taxes, enrol for entitlements, and negotiated him back into his apartment at the same rent.
- We are preparing a more detailed case study outlining the successful outcome of Joe's situation

4) Volunteer Impact Statements:

December 21

- Rowena: Heavy rain starts in the morning. While driving to an appointment I can barely see through my windshield and I am thinking about all the people in tents and particularly in Central Park. I leave an appointment at Noon and the rain is starting to turn to snow .
- John: I had an appointment and waited for the Bus from about 11:30 to 12:30 as the wind and heavy rain changed to snow and with the wind it was quite cold. John reflects how horrible it would be to be in a tent right now.
- 5:30 pm: Sean and Sophia document flooding and send an email update with photos
- Sheila: 6:12 p.m. Sheila Potter of Friends of Central Park writes Counc. Charlayne Thornton Joe asking the Cold Weather Protocol, writing "Is there somewhere for people to go? I'm up for some type of moving help. I just don't know what to do." There is no response.
- Katie: 9:45 pm Councilor Jeremy Loveday asks how many tents are flooded and says he's emailed the City Manager inquiring about activating the City's emergency response function

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December 22

- Krista Loughton posts [video of park resident Tina Dawson and destroyed tents](#) on Facebook and Twitter



Source links:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10225255080184730&id=1253507837&sfnsn=mo

- Katie [tweets photos](#) of the morning situation at Central — mud, snow, ice. People trying to dry out their belongings



- NPNA sends a follow-up letter urging officials to watch video and look at photos of what is happening. Includes this call to action: ***"Please, open the Save on Foods Memorial Arena immediately. Let us know how we can help. We want to help our neighbours in Central Park stay safe and alive. They are soaking wet, sick, and losing hope."***
- 4:29pm BC Housing [announces](#) that people will be allowed to move to RAP parking lot
- 5:00pm City sends press release announcing [City and Province Working to Move People from Central Park Due to Flooding](#)

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- Evening: some supplies outreach workers and service providers are dropped off to residents at Central Park



- Katie: sends personal emails to MLAs, MPs, councillors, BC Housing etc. (Murray Rankin's office replies telling me to get in touch with Grace Lore as she is my MLA. I reply that as Min of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Mr. Rankin very much has responsibility to act here, and that Oak Bay Lodge is in his riding and needs to be opened immediately. No response to that haha)
- Rowena: contacts NPNA to see if there is anything we can do to help with the move with our car.
- Media: [Capital Daily](#), [Victoria Buzz](#), [CHEK News](#), CBC's [All Points West](#) with Mayor Helps and NPNA Board member, Allison Ashcroft

December 23

- Site set up at RAP begins
- John and Rowena: come with their car and some tools to help set-up tents. We move pallets with other volunteers. We run out of pallets. John asks city to help ferry pallets in their gator cart and they agree to move one pile. The pallets are wet and heavy and some are a few hundred feet from where they are needed. Winds picks up a bit. We leave before the plywood arrives. John feels overall it was hard to be organized and the focus was to get as many tents together as possible. There are a fair number of City folk around - like 5 or 6 (plus bylaw and others at Central Park). They install a sink and sharps container.
- Volunteers set up tents
 - NPNA puts out a call for volunteers and about 30 volunteers arrive to help put up tents. They are directed by Janine, Jen, and "Joe". Most volunteers leave by 4.



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- Castle drops off pallets, NPNA volunteers purchase plywood and volunteers begin to build platforms ([video](#))



- 11am, NPNA email to Bill Eisenhauer (CoV) asking that they commit to having city engagement staff do some doorknocking asap on the 20 or so homes along Green and Caledonia and to drop a flyer in the mailboxes of these single family homes and couple of multifamily buildings to provide people with info re: the temporary establishment of an outdoor shelter in RAP parking lot and provision of a go-to white glove phone service for any issues that may arise over the holidays (while many city hall staff are taking time away from the office). 4pm, Bill confirms that city staff will be notifying nearby residents. This notification begins to take place on aft of Dec 24th.
- Allison calls around to the city public works street lights/electricians group to enquire about means to obtain power to site to enable charging and warming. Meets with Houle electric who assesses the site and calls bc hydro to determine timing for a temporary pole to be erected (14days). Public works requires facilities/Thomas Soulliere to sign off on application for a permit to initiate the installation of temporary power service to RAP parking lot. Allison emails City Manager Jenkyns requesting this approval be granted, receiving the following response, *"With regard to power, the City hasn't provided unsupervised electrical access in any parks, although we reviewed similar requests earlier in the year. The risk of harm including electrocution was deemed to be too great. Portable (personal) power options have typically been suggested as a viable alternative. To that end, as a starting point, we've provided 10 quick chargers to the Coalition to provide to folks. Chief Bruce dropped those off to Janine late this afternoon. We are sourcing more of these chargers this evening. Bylaw staff are also sourcing hand warmers for distribution tomorrow."*
 - Handwarmers were not dropped off
 - 9 chargers were distributed by Janine personally, no more were sourced
- Resident of adjacent townhouses comes to site to yell at campers and volunteers and says he hopes that the campers all burn to death in a fire
- **Media:** Sean does [Time Colonist interview](#)
- [Heidi Hartman of BC Housing on CBC All Points West](#)
- **Onsite:** Sean, Allison, Katie, Grace Lore, Sarah Potts (all day), Janine, Rowena, John, Todd, Sarah

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Both taken at the end of night before leaving, around 6-7pm.

December 24

- City staff drop off leaflets at nearby residences midday
- A previous Central Park resident “Joe”, on behalf of Coalition, is onsite at Central Park making lists of residents and their interest/willingness to move to RAP. He is also tasked with staying up overnight at RAP to ensure no one steals tents or moves into them from other areas of town. Unfortunately, “Joe” goes home for 2 days to rest, and does not leave the list behind with anyone onsite. He directs Sheila to buy 35 luggage locks for campers to lock their tents.
 - [Clarification: Joe was not working on behalf of the GVCEH - he stepped into the role - he was encouraged to go home and not stay for the night, but chose to stay.]
- Around 11 a.m., Janine tells campers that “Joe” has the list of which tent locations had been assigned to whom. Janine still has these drawings. On December 23rd, Joe had created a grid aligned with the numbers on the parking stalls and would connect with Central Park campers and ask them to come and pick a spot. He then wrote it on the diagram he had created, to support campers knowing they had a spot to move to when they moved over to the camp. Any new campers would check with “Joe” to ensure they were not moving in to a place someone was planning on, or starting to move in to and will manage who gets a tent when he comes back. Janine tells a camper from Stadacona Park that “Joe” can probably find him a spot. She tells this camper to spread the news that no new tents in Central Park, but the berm will stay open.
 - [Clarification from Janine: I told him that 'Joe' could find him a tent - I remember this clearly, as I did tell him to find 'Joe' and then took care of another task - I then asked where the guy went and did a bit of my typical calling out for 'tent guy' to try to locate him before I left - I also gave a tent to a man from Cecelia Ravine and another who may have also been from Cecelia Ravine. I can say with sincere certainty, I would not have told anyone who wasn't at Central Park that they could stay at the site - even within the intensity of the situation, I would really want to hold integrity to the space being assigned as 'promised']
- Janine leaves with the keys to the RAP where cots are stored, and “Joe” does not return with the list.

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- Rowena has her Mom coming to stay for Christmas from an assisted living home and needs to focus on her. Feels she should be down at RAP helping and wonders what kind of Christmas the tenters will have.
- Allison emails Jocelyn Jenkyns, city manager and asks for a call. Jocelyn promptly calls back and notes that her war room is full and is on speaker with Colleen Mycroft, Thomas Soulliere and Bill Eisenhauer. Concerns are raised that there are no staff on site from City or BC housing, there is no service providers onsite, that there is no organization of transition, that tents left in boxes are summer tents, that no one is actively moving, that there is no Bylaw helping people to move, and we are looking at ending up with 2 unmanaged encampments 1 block from one another with a net increase in unhoused residents. Colleen informs that Bylaw are on site all day (they left at 10:30am), that Coalition and EWP are on site (they are not, and they are 1 person each in any case). Promises are made that there will not be two encampments, that Central Park will be shut down in its entirety, but reiterate that RAP, like Central, is an unmanaged site so there is no responsibility/requirement of the City to staff this transition or the site itself.
- At 2:00pm Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness lets us know that Bylaw is headed to RAP to distribute tarps for all tents.
 - No tarps are dropped off.
 - No city staff or Coalition staff from about noon on.
- Sean locks the unused tents, keeping a record of the combinations to be given to Central Park residents as they move in. He tells this to Bill Eisenhauer, who says Sean cannot do that and to take the locks off again.
- Sheila, Sophia, Trevor and James build pallets from noon to dark.
- Laurel Collins organized pallet drop off from Castle, and fetched some from Castle in Esquimalt, but all were used up by 4 p.m.
- They do not buy tarps because they are told they are coming (or already there, but they were not.)
- People drop off clothing, food, rain gear throughout the day.
- 4:30 Sheila is so tired and discouraged, she declines to be filmed by Krista. She updates Councillor Stephen Andrew, warning that with no management of the transfer of people from flooded tents, we may get two tent cities. Also, that the set up is in disarray. Tents are not fixed, not tarped, will fill with water and blow away or be occupied before Central Park tenters move. City and Coalition staff are home for Christmas.
- **Onsite:** Jason, Sean, Allison, Katie, Sheila, Sophia, Trevor, Laurel, John

December 25

- Pouring rain and wind, tents blowing across parking lot
- Tarps were never dropped off by bylaw, it is now Christmas day; we cannot source any supplies
- 6:30 pm Sean and Katie go to RAP to secure tents that are blowing away

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- Some tents have holes in the sides/floor from wind damage, poor tent quality
- Neighbours coming by with dinner for people sheltering
- Katie's notes:
 - 8 pm Joel arrives from Central Park with nothing aside from a broken tent and a table. I stay to help him set up a tent and nail it down to a platform.
 - Other residents trying to secure their shelters — elderly man trying to nail his tent down but doesn't have a hammer and is using a piece of broken wood to hammer in nails, I get him a hammer from my house.
 - Everything is very wet, very cold, very sad. An awful Christmas night for these people. I go home just before 11pm.
- Onsite: Sean, Katie

December 26

- Email Bylaw urgently asking for tarps to be delivered. No response, no one is working in Bylaw 25th/26th and no one on site at Central or RAP since 10:30am Dec 24th.
- NPNA volunteers continue building platforms and weather proofing shelters. Shortage of pallets, scrambling to find tarps and find ways to secure tarps. Urgent need to weather-proof as many shelters as we can before nightfall.
- Police car drops off a man and all his belongings:
 - Rowena and John witnessed the police drop off the man and his possessions when they arrived.
 - Katie is also there and speaks to two men who announce they have arrived from downtown after being directed to do so by VicPD officers.
 - Camper explains that police picked him up downtown and told him he could claim a tent at RAP. He confirms he had NOT been staying at Central but that the police told him to claim a tent and platform. He asks for harm reduction supplies. There are none. Ten minutes later another man arrives and tells us that he too was sent from downtown by police and that he'd walked. The second man also takes a tent.
 - [940 Caledonia] residents very concerned from a personal safety perspective; both new arrivals seem very intense

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- Katie texts Mayor Helps because we are concerned that a mass relocation of people from downtown will mean that there is no space for people displaced by flooding. Simultaneously, Allison also emails Chief Del Manak, Mayor Helps and Jocelyn Jenkyns about the Boxing Day shopping relocation of unhoused residents from downtown to the RAP parking lot.
 - Mayor Helps phones Katie back and is concerned and she calls Del Manak
 - Chief Manak replies to Ashcroft's email that the police did NOT drop off anyone at RAP (which is... untrue), and states that VICPD have been told not to send people to RAP from other neighbourhoods.
 - Bill Eisenhower also replies and says that VICPD are not dropping people off and we have misinformation, states defensively, "Everyone is doing their utmost to make this relocation a success and support the vulnerable residents needing to move from Central".
- 1:26 pm Email from Bill Eisenhower: *"Tarps- we have been in contact with Janine at the Coalition and she has told us that she has been to the site and has a plan for getting tarps. Some of you may already know this or saw her there. She will be updating us on this and when I have more to share I will."*
 - Tarps never arrive)
 - [Clarification from Janine: This is incorrect]
- Allison asks the Fire Department for tarps but they only have canvas tarps
- People say they are cold and need bedding, volunteer Trevor brings bedding from home to give to people
- It is clear that no tarps are coming. John and Sean go to Home Depot to purchase 19 heavy duty tarps using a personal credit card, plus 1x2 cedar and screws to secure tarps to platforms.
- Rowena's notes:
 - There is no one point person. As an "unmanaged" camp no level of government wants to take responsibility. Every level of government has failed the tenters at Central Park/RAP and other parks. As of the 24th afternoon all paid staff are on vacation and only volunteers remain on the ground until the 27th.
 - The volunteers spend many hours of their holiday at the RAP. While there is camaraderie, it is cold, often rainy and windy. We get to go home and warm up at the end of the day, the tenters do not.
 - I reflect that I now have no faith that in the event of a natural disaster there will be a well managed response.
- John observes a conversation between a volunteer and a camper in a tent not on a platform. The camper is too stressed to deal with the request to move heavy items for a few minutes so the tent can be placed onto a platform.
- Volunteers work into the night

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- **Onsite:** John, Rowena, Tina, Sean, Allison, Perry, Darrin, James, Ben, Trevor, Stephanie, Basil, Joel. Janine/coalition drop-in.

December 27

- Volunteers continue to build platforms and set up shelters



- Unhoused residents ask for drinking water, Katie brings water bottles from home and fills up a large container in my kitchen sink.
- Allison brings large 5 gallon water bottles with pump dispensers in the afternoon.
- Volunteer Trevor brings a folding table and camping stove to make hot tea for unhoused residents
- Krista posts video update asking for a warming tent, tent warmth improvements, and above all, indoor shelter at SOFMA
- Shortage of tools, we do not have enough drills. A volunteer brings a drill and shares some expertise with ropework to help us tie things down properly — the nylon rope we were able to source wouldn't hold a knot
- NPNA buys more totes, combination locks, and flats of water because there is no water and people are asking for it
- John goes back to home depot to purchase rope, more 1x2, more plywood and crews and zip ties for campers to secure tarps. Also some toilet paper as there is none since yesterday?

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- John has two people ask how to sign up for a tent but has no way to direct them to Janine or “Joe” ?
 - [Clarification: the GVCEH was not managing the site or access to the tents - the GVCEH was part of the community mobilization through December 24th - see comments above re initial tent 'assignment' via lot spots]
- John observes same tenter as 26th has not yet been able to get his items together to move the tent onto a platform
- John lends his electric screw driver and a tenter assembles his own platform so that his tent can be moved onto it. He does a good job and notes he used to be a drywaller.
- Rowena shares a tea provided by Trevor and chats with a tenter about his former trade as a press operator which was ended due to an injury. There are so many stories in each encampment.
- No garbage - told there is garbage by city hall, there is no garbage receptacles, none. Dumpster was removed and no cans were delivered. Sheila took some bags and collected loose garbage and took it home to go with their garbage.

December 28

- 8:30am Shannon Perkins (Bylaw) returns from time off. During the 8:30am phone call with Shannon, NPNA updates her about how the relocation has been going.
- 11:00am Meeting with BC Housing about the arena, RAP, the supplies purchased by NPNA
 - We are told to submit receipts to BC Housing and we will be reimbursed
- Volunteers continue to build platforms and secure tarps
- Volunteers drive around picking up more pallets from around town



- There is a lot of confusion about how much of Central Park will be closed for remediation.
 - At first, we are told that it is just the worst flooding parts of Central Park that will be closed, and that the berm will remain open
 - By the end of the day it is clarified and confirmed that it is the entire park.
 - We never hear anything directly from Thomas Soulliere
- I was looking for details of the 2nd flood. I don't know what day it was, but shortly before January 4 when Parks moved the last of the campers. So there were a few campers left behind the fences and they went underwater again. I saw a camper come out. I was on the other side of the fence, but when she came my way she was whimpering and shivering. I told her you've got to get out of the water and cold -- go over to RAP and claim a tent. She

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said there wasn't one for her. I assured her there was, but she veered off and left. Those last campers were underwater for another night or two, and I don't think they had the wherewithal and support they needed to get out of that situation.

December 29

- Bylaw establishes daily logistics meetings for 8:30am at 940 Caledonia. These are attended by Bylaw, Facilities, Public Works, Police liaisons, 940 Caledonia residents, Footprints Security, nearby housed residents, and the NPNA.
- Fire Department drops off 10 more tents - after a request from NPNA through Bylaw.
 - The Fire Department had originally dropped off 36 tents, only 28 were constructed. They were originally hesitant to provide any more tents because they didn't think we needed any more. Obviously, some of the tents went missing in the chaos
 - Fire department also brings 30 tarps by. But they are too small, and not high enough quality to be helpful (the generic blue tarps)
- City installs fencing on other 2 sides, daytime security starts, garbage receptacles installed
- NPNA volunteers purchase more plywood (Sleggs), rounds up more pallets (delivered by Sleggs), and purchases more building supplies
- Volunteers continue building platforms
- Fencing goes up in Central Park. Photo below shows the pathway through the middle of Central Park. The park is closed to everyone, not just campers. The playground, which is not flooded, is also fenced off.
- Media: Sarah does interview with [Times Colonist](#) and [CTV](#)



December 30

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- 8:30am meeting - this time the Fire Department attends to discuss the importance of separation between the structures. Fire offers this direction, but doesn't bring labour to help support the building or the adequate separation of structures.
- 24/7 static security starts
- Volunteers continue building the pallet and plywood platforms
- Circle meeting at 2 pm facilitated by Janine from GVCEH
 - Meeting is attended by Bill Eisenhauer, Jocelyn Jenkins, Colleen Mycroft, Michael Hill
- 940 Caledonia residents ask for a warming tent
 - Bill Eisenhauer states that no electricity or warming tent is planned

December 31

- Work continues
- Meeting with BC Housing, City takes place on Zoom.
 - NPNA indicates that we don't want the level of responsibility that has been foisted upon us, and that we request the City and BC Housing step in to fill the many gaps.
 - Warming tent is promised. By 3pm there are plans for BC Housing to rent/purchase a tent, and the City to work with Peers Resource Society to staff it. NPNA will contribute honorarium funding through Red Cross grant
- Sarah on CFAF December 31, [CFAF: Neighbours help flooded campers in Central Park move to Royal Athletic Lot](#)



January 4

- This morning I read the Mayor's blog post about the response to Central Park Flooding. This is the main excerpt:
 - *"And this isn't all. When the flood hit in Central Park, the North Park Neighbourhood Association and dozens of North Park residents stepped up to help. They spent hundreds*

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of hours over their holidays building platforms for tents, procuring tents, sleeping bags and other necessities. One nearby resident even set up a laundry sign-up sheet for people in the RAP parking lot with slots every two hours and planned to spend her holiday doing people's laundry."

- This positive spin drives me nuts and completely side steps responsibility. We did not step up to help, we were forced into managing the situation with almost no help from City of Victoria or other levels of government. This is not just a "heartwarming" feel good story about plucky neighbourhood associations filling a gap, it is about a systemic failure that has been going on for too long.