



April 2021 Update North Park

In Your Neighbourhood

New Supportive Housing in North Park

One of BC Housing's four new housing facilities is to be located in the North Park neighbourhood at 953 Balmoral Street. Approximately 60 self-contained studio apartments and support services will be provided on the site. Candidates will go through a thorough assessment procedure to qualify for residency. Residents will sign a program agreement and will pay monthly rent.

BC Housing has "...committed to building a safe community both inside and outside the housing...." Victoria Cool Aid Society will operate the facility and staff will be onsite 24/7 to respond to any concerns that may arise. Design and maintenance of the property will be prioritized and access will be controlled. A Community Advisory Committee, including neighbourhood representatives, will be established to ensure the successful integration of the housing project into the community.

Engagement details will be shared on BC Housing's Let's Talk Housing page: <https://letstalkhousingbc.ca/capital-region>

My Great Neighbourhood Grants

Beginning April 1 residents can apply for a "My Great Neighbourhood" Grant. The City provides up to \$5,000 in matching funds for placemaking and community recovery projects and up to \$1,000 for activities. Any residents can apply, although a sponsor must be in place for those without not-for-profit society status.



City staff are available to help residents through this process. For more information check out our [webpage](#).

Tiny Homes Village

Council approved the Tiny Homes Village on Caledonia Street following a public hearing on March 18. The Tiny Homes Village will provide 30 people at a time with a temporary place to call home on their journey to permanent housing. The facility will be built from re-purposed shipping containers on City of Victoria land with funding from the community and BC Housing. It will operate for 18 months and be managed by an experienced service provider - Our Place Society.

The Tiny Homes Village has been designed to minimize neighbourhood impacts and ensure the safety of its residents. There will be a single controlled entrance and access will be limited to residents and staff only. Residents will be selected through a thorough assessment process to make sure there is a mix of residents with the right supports in place. Residents will be required to sign a program agreement connected to a personalized



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plan. Staff will be on-site 24/7 to support residents, manage the site and respond directly to concerns in a timely manner. Security personnel will monitor conditions at the site and the immediate neighbourhood.

Construction of the facility has begun and it is scheduled to begin operation at the end of April. To support the successful integration of the building and tenants into the surrounding community, Our Place Society and its partners are establishing a Community Advisory Committee. Our Place will host a virtual neighbourhood meeting on Tuesday, April 13 from 5:00-6:30pm to introduce the Tiny Homes Village to the community. Please register to attend at www.victoriahomelessness.ca/tinyhomes.

Camping in Parks and Addressing Homelessness

On May 1, camping in parks will return to previous bylaw restrictions of night-time only (7pm-7am). At their March 18 Council meeting, Council also passed a resolution to sustain the permanent prohibition on sheltering in Centennial Square, Central Park and Cecelia Ravine Park.

The Province and the City of Victoria have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that formalizes their commitment to work together to end current homeless encampments and help prevent encampments in the future. The MOU clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Province and City in securing accommodation for people currently living outside to decamp parks and other public spaces by April 30, 2021.

As part of the MOU, the City is to take the lead on managing sites when encampments are dismantled, in co-ordination with BC Housing and other partners. This includes installing fencing and providing bylaw enforcement to prevent people from moving back into parks. The City will also apply for funding through the new Strengthening Communities' Services Program, which offers grants to local governments to address the impacts of homelessness. In addition, the City is to work with the Capital Regional District to bring forward available land and buildings for housing or shelter, and to expedite land use decisions necessary to rapidly respond to housing need. The Province will work with the city and other partners to develop temporary and permanent housing options to meet community needs.

For more information about temporary sheltering in parks, visit victoria.ca/sheltering.

Community Virtuals

The City is continuing with the Community Virtuals presentation series in 2021 with "Neighbours Helping Neighbours in Community Preparedness" on Wednesday, April 21, noon – 1:30 p.m. Neighbours are often the first responders in an emergency. Join us for this (free) session where we'll talk about how neighbours can get organized, learn about some great projects already happening in the City, and learn about some resources to get started. [Register here](#). You can also view past Community Virtual sessions on the City website.





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Governance Review

As part of their 2021 Strategic Plan, at their April 1 Committee meeting, Council will consider a staff report recommending that Council direct staff to initiate the procurement process for selecting consultant services for a Governance Review and report back to Council with the work plan once the consultant is selected. The Governance Review will consider such themes as embedding equity into governmental processes, transparency, specific roles of Council (e.g. what is the role of councillors as a neighbourhood liaison?) and building public trust.

Connect and Prepare

If you are inspired by the Community Virtual session, you may want to take advantage of Connect & Prepare. Experts from Building Resilient Neighbourhoods and VictoriaReady will support you through a series of virtual workshops designed to build community and improve emergency preparedness. You will receive helpful information, tools, materials and micro-grants to support you, as well as up to \$500 in shared emergency supplies. Find more information [here](#).

BYOBAG

The City of Victoria's revised Checkout Bag Bylaw is scheduled to come back into effect April 15th, 2021. This means businesses in Victoria will no longer be providing single-use plastic checkout bags and paper bags will have a minimum fee of 25 cents. You can help our local businesses by remembering to bring your clean reusable bags when going shopping!



City Council Meetings

Committee of the Whole meets on April 1, 8, 15 and 22 at 9:00am with Council evening meetings on April 8 and 22 at 6:30pm.