

MOTION ON NOTICE

3. Reopening 800 Robson Street for Transit Buses and Active Transportation

MOVER: Councillor De Genova

SECONDER: Councillor Ball

WHEREAS

1. On April 20, 2016, Council voted to permanently close Robson Street to all traffic and create a Permanent Public Plaza;
2. January 22, 2018, the Vancouver Police Department arrested four individuals and recommended charges for a fifth individual, who were vending marijuana on City of Vancouver property;
3. Metro News published an article on January 23, 2018, titled "Despite arrests, Robson Square marijuana sellers say they won't stop." The article states "Over a two-month operation, police found evidence that the vendors had sold marijuana to minors and that harder drugs such as cocaine had also been offered to customers to purchase.";
4. A Vancouver Police Department Media Release issued on January 23, 2018, stated "Our response has been incremental. However, at each stage, the vendors have refused to co-operate, and concerns around public safety have increased. As such, we have had to escalate our response." The release went on to outline "Vancouver Police have seized:
 - more than nine pounds in dried bulk marijuana;
 - more than \$4,000 in cash;
 - 23 pounds of edible marijuana products, including gummies, lollipops, baked goods, and liquid oils;
 - a bat, pipe, and baton;
 - used drug paraphernalia, including scales, bongs, and grinders; and
 - six tents and ten tables";
5. On the City of Vancouver website under news, a page published April 13, 2016, states that "Improvements to Robson Plaza will enable residents and visitors to socialize, engage, and display civil democracy and creative expression.";
6. Prior to the Vancouver Police Department arrests in Robson Plaza for illegal Marijuana vending, City of Vancouver Staff and the Vancouver Police Department spent weeks trying to compel illegal marijuana vendors to leave the area;
7. The City of Vancouver staff report dated April 11, 2016, suggests that closing 800 Robson Street permanently requires rerouting the East/West #5 Robson/Downtown Bus and "provides a less direct connection from the West End to some key destinations on Granville Street.";

8. The permanent closure of 800 Robson Street was mandated to provide a free and all ages public space for the public to enjoy;
9. Council has received correspondence outlining complaints regarding the illegal activities that make some people feel uncomfortable and unwelcome.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to move forward with plans to reopen Robson Plaza for cyclists and buses within 60 days and report back to Council at the March 14, 2018, City Finances and Services Committee Meeting.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to consider options for opening the road to motorized vehicles in the future.
- C. THAT the temporary closure of 800 Robson be considered for events and festivals;

FURTHER THAT staff engage and consult with relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to: TransLink, The Vancouver Police Department, City of Vancouver Seniors' Advisory Committee, Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, the Active Transportation Policy Council, the Downtown Business Improvement Association and Viva Vancouver.

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