

MOTION ON NOTICE

9. **A Collaborative and New Approach to Oppenheimer Park and Other Public Spaces**

Submitted by: Councillors Wiebe and Dominato

WHEREAS

1. Vancouver is experiencing unprecedented housing and mental health and addiction issues;
2. In recent years, we have seen regular annual encampments in parks and sites across the city, including Oppenheimer Park;
3. There are a significant number of persons currently living on the city's streets, or out of their cars, due to the shortage of appropriately affordable housing who simply require access to shower and washroom facilities to support them on their path to permanent housing and employment;
4. All levels of government need to work together to address the systemic factors that prevent people from accessing safe, secure housing and basic health care, along with appropriate mental health and addiction services.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council request that the Mayor write a follow up letter to the Park Board, on behalf of Council, expressing Council's collective hope that the current impasse at Oppenheimer Park, and the various health and safety issues evident in the park at the present time, can be resolved swiftly and respectfully for all concerned, with an expression of support and encouragement for the Park Board to take all reasonable steps within its jurisdictional powers and work collaboratively with the City to facilitate the decampment of those currently living in the park.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to develop an urgent, collaborative decampment plan to go to the Vancouver Park Board for approval with the goal of restoring the park for broad public use, including the expansion of the positive activations program.
- C. THAT the City, in partnership with key partners, create a dedicated, coordinated cross-jurisdictional Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST) that serves to connect unsheltered and sheltered people to appropriate housing, health and support services.
- D. THAT Council, for its part, direct staff to seek urgent operating funding from the Province of British Columbia for the establishment of a low barrier shelter in the city that can suitably address the specific needs of those currently encamped in Oppenheimer Park and provide them with an alternative to the park in order to facilitate decamping the park.

- E. THAT the City and the Park Board explore opportunities to collaborate, and potentially expand upon, the initial success of the peer-based Park Stewardship pilot program with the aim to provide access to daily showers and washrooms at specific field houses in city parks for those in need of this specific form of support, with the facilities to be kept clean and supervised by peer stewards.

FURTHER THAT the City and Park Board explore options for identified needed services, such as a community kitchen, additional accessible laundry and drying facilities, and 24-hour sanitation facilities with running water.

- F. THAT the City commit to supporting and seeking funding from the Provincial and Federal governments to enable and expand supported employment initiatives such as the aforementioned Park Stewardship Program, street ambassadors, and other employment opportunities for individuals to gain income, build skills and foster esteem.
- G. THAT Council direct staff, in collaboration with community service agencies, to undertake a review of Downtown Eastside services, with the goal of creating a coordinated service delivery framework that effectively delivers a range of services, including a coordinated outreach strategy, critical mental health and addiction treatment, as well as access to appropriate housing, basic health care needs, and other services.
- H. THAT Council support the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) in its call for increased mental health support through a new improved method of delivering Cars 87 and 88, and related funding from Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH).
- I. THAT Council call on the Province to increase vital wraparound services (mental health, addiction treatment, social assistance etc.) in the next provincial budget cycle.

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