

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 7/25/2022 3:45:34 PM
Subject: Upcoming IB: East Hastings St. Structures Removal Update

Dear Mayor and Council,

Following on my communication last Thursday evening regarding the situation on East Hastings, I am writing to confirm VFRS has now issued its Order related to structure removal along East Hastings. The City shortly will be issuing the below information bulletin regarding the City's response to the Order and next steps. Local community groups and businesses also have received updates regarding this matter.

Please keep this news release embargoed until it is issued from the City's account this afternoon.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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City of Vancouver
Information Bulletin
July 25, 2022

East Hastings St. Structures Removal Update

The City is responding to a Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (VFRS) order to immediately remove tents and structures along East Hastings St., due to numerous urgent safety concerns.

The order was issued today, **July 25, 2022**, by VFRS Chief Karen Fry and signals the urgent need to accelerate structure removal on East Hastings St. Should a fire occur in the area in its current condition, it would be catastrophic, putting lives at risk and jeopardizing hundreds of units of much-needed housing.

The City acknowledges that since July 1, the situation on East Hastings St. near Main St. in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) has grown significantly more unsafe due in part to increased structures and decreased accessibility.

Structures-removal planning had been underway to increase street safety, passage for sidewalks and roadways, increase access to buildings and reduce fire hazards. While today's order will expedite this process, the situation is complex and the City will continue to take a thoughtful approach that considers the needs of those sheltering outdoors as we do this work.

In the coming days, the City will work with the community, non-profit organizations and partner government

organizations to expedite structure removal and to offer additional support for those sheltering outdoors. Supports will include day storage of personal belongings, and increasing public washrooms, misting stations, handwashing stations and water fountains in the area.

The City will also continue working with the community on developing and implementing a community-led approach to street cleaning while maintaining safe and clean streets for everyone who lives, visits and works in the area.

The conditions in the DTES are representative of a systemic failure to meet the needs of low-income, marginalized residents and communities, a crisis requiring urgent cooperation of all levels of government. The City has and will continue to advocate to senior government partners who have the jurisdiction, funding and responsibility for meaningful, life-changing interventions that are needed to address the key drivers of homelessness, including faster delivery of housing and emergency shelter, income and mental health supports, and **additional service supports for people sheltering outdoors.**

Street Cleaning Background

City crews remove garbage and structures on East Hastings with the intent to minimize obstructions and to keep sidewalks passable, clean and safe for everyone in the DTES. In the past, when conducting this work along East Hastings near Main St., these crews have been accompanied by Vancouver Police Department (VPD).

As of July 1, VPD ceased accompanying City staff while they carry out regular, day-to-day work.

City crews remain committed to keeping streets in the DTES clean and accessible for all in a manner that also respects the rights and challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness.

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