

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"

"LaClaire, Lon" <lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca>

"Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>

"Scollard, Taryn" <taryn.scollard@vancouver.ca>

Date: 8/6/2020 9:34:58 AM

Subject: RVs parked on City streets

Attachments: CMO - Memo to Mayor and Council - RVs - April 2019 - FINAL.PDF

Good morning Mayor and Council,

I am writing in response to a councillor's inquiry regarding our response to individuals who are living in RVs parked on City streets.

For reference, I have attached a memo provided in April of last year that outlines the general approach that our staff take in responding to complaints regarding RVs and other large vehicles. Although many people staying in RVs do not require or are not interested in housing supports, our first priority is connecting those who may require assistance with the Carnegie Outreach team.

As a general principle, the City does not take any enforcement action simply on the grounds that an individual may be living in a vehicle. However, vehicles remain subject to traffic and parking bylaws. In the case of repeated complaints, vehicles are issued multiple warnings, including connections to Outreach, before any enforcement action is taken. Ticketing or towing are employed a last resort.

Given the pandemic and the guidance received from the Provincial Health Officer to minimize displacement of individuals experiencing homelessness, we are pursuing a very measured approach to large vehicles on City streets. Where such vehicles have been identified as problematic (e.g. accumulation of garbage and other materials, human waste), staff are making every effort to persuade vehicle residents to address such matters, short of enforcement action. You may have received correspondence recently regarding vehicles parked near Van Tech High School; we are taking steps to address those issues and staff will be responding to the residents who have reached out with concerns.

We have also been asked whether the City has considered designating a parking lot for individuals to reside in RVs on an ongoing basis. I can confirm that staff have reviewed this concept in detail, including direct observation of such lots and discussion with our counterparts in other West Coast cities. Cities that have implemented such lots have recommended against them. There is a very poor rate of transitioning individuals from RVs into suitable housing and, over time, there have been significant safety issues in such lots. The concept is more applicable for individuals who are living in cars (as opposed to vans or RVs) however, unlike many US cities, we do not have evidence of a significant number of people living in cars in Vancouver.

I hope the foregoing information is useful.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie | Deputy City Manager
Office of the City Manager | City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca
604.873.7666



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

April 26, 2019

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Jerry Dobrovolny, General Manager, Engineering Services
Taryn Scollard, Director, Streets
Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services
Tobin Postma, Director, Strategic Initiatives

FROM: Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Large Occupied Vehicles - Parking Complaints

The purpose of this memo is to update Mayor and Council on the City's response to large vehicles that are parked illegally on City streets and, in some cases, are being utilized as housing. We understand that members of Council have received complaints from businesses and residents regarding these vehicles and the City response to date.

Background

The use of large vehicles with the capacity for occupancy (e.g. recreational vehicles) as a source of housing is a function of the cost and constrained supply of alternate accommodation in Vancouver. This circumstance is common in other West Coast cities that share similar housing pressures. The City of Vancouver's primary goal in responding to this issue is to support individuals living in vehicles to access appropriate housing and it is not currently City policy to ticket vehicles solely on the grounds that someone may be living in them. However, many of these vehicles are parked illegally and, in some instances, the activities of the occupants have considerable neighbourhood impacts.

This memo focuses on illegally parked large vehicles with the capacity for occupancy such as Recreational Vehicles (RVs). While we understand that there may be people living in smaller vehicles (e.g. cars) around the city, it is very difficult to gather information regarding the numbers or circumstances of those individuals.

In July 2018, a week-long count by Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs) identified over 150 RVs parked illegally in various parts of the city. At least 50% of those RVs had previously been ticketed for parking violations and less than half of those tickets were paid.

In September 2018, Parking Enforcement Dispatch implemented a specific reporting function for complaints related to large vehicles (including RVs). The following table summarizes the complaints received over the past seven months:

	<u>RV Complaints</u>		
	Total	Individual RVs	Groups of RVs (3+)
September 2018:	71	59	12
October 2018:	70	57	13
November 2018:	55	42	13
December 2018:	42	31	11
January 2019:	49	44	5
February 2019:	47	42	5
March 2019:	57	45	12

Locations that have been the subject of large numbers of RV-related complaints include Locarno/Spanish Banks, the False Creek Flats, and Southeast Vancouver near Grandview Highway and Boundary Road. Complaints originate from residents and businesses and can be classified as being related to the impacts on available parking for residents, staff and customers, and the impact on surrounding areas as a result of debris, noise and improper waste/sewage disposal.

Under the City's Street and Traffic Bylaw 2849, large vehicles, such as RVs and campers, are not permitted to be parked on any street between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am, and may not be parked longer than three hours between the hours of 6:00 am and 10:00 pm. All vehicles in the City of Vancouver require valid insurance in order to be on the street.

City Response

The City's response to large vehicles that are parked illegal varies depending upon the circumstances. While many people parking and living in RVs do not require support to access housing, the City is committed to those who require assistance. Upon receipt of a complaint regarding an individual living in an RV, staff investigate the matter and determine the appropriate response, ranging from intervention by the Carnegie Outreach staff to standard parking enforcement actions. Towing and impounding RVs is considered to be a last resort.

In late October 2018, Parking Enforcement staff issued warning letters (Appendix A) to over 55 illegally parked RVs across the city; the letters notified occupants that they were illegally parked and advised them to find alternate parking. The warning notice included contact details for the Carnegie Outreach Team for any vehicle occupant(s) requiring housing support. Parking Enforcement Officers have continued to issue this initial warning letter to new illegally parked RVs that are brought to their attention.

In early 2019 (January-March), Parking Enforcement issued second and final warning notices (Appendix B) to over 35 RVs that continued to park illegally after receiving the initial warning letter. This final warning notice reiterated the contact details for the Carnegie Outreach Team as well as an offer to discuss towing options should the vehicle not be in running condition.

Both warning notices were served to RVs during daylight and late night hours. To date, no one has contacted the Carnegie Outreach Team for support upon receiving either of the warning notices, and no one has contacted the City to request assistance regarding towing.

Recently, staff have been alerted to individuals renting RVs on a monthly basis from owners who advertise them on websites such as Craigslist. Outreach staff are working with a couple of individuals who have rented RVs and the advertisements have been shared with Licensing staff for further investigation.

Parking Enforcement is now undertaking enforcement action against RVs that received two warning notices, with an immediate focus on those that do not have valid insurance, those that generate the highest number of complaints and those who are negatively impacting the surrounding areas as a result of debris, noise and improper waste/sewage disposal.

Occupants of illegally parked RVs who agree to work with the Carnegie Outreach Team are expected to comply with the City's Street and Traffic bylaw but may be given a temporary grace period while that engagement is in process. Those who do not engage with the Outreach team or do not qualify for housing support will be subject to enforcement actions including ticketing and towing. In cases where an RV has no insurance or expired licence plates, the owner is given 48 hours to obtain valid insurance or move to an offsite location before being towed.

Engineering staff are also working to install signage confirming parking bylaws in areas that are subject to ongoing complaints (where such signage is not already in place).

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Jerry Dobrovolny

Paul Mochrie
Deputy City Manager

604.873.7666 | paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca