

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL" <CCDTMACDL@vancouver.ca>

Date: 12/17/2016 5:24:33 PM

Subject: Fw: News Release: City to open warming shelters Saturday, Sunday nights

Greetings Mayor and Council

In order to ensure that no one is forced to stay in the cold this evening, the City and Park Board are opening additional warming locations. Please see the release below for additional information.

Best
Sadhu

City of Vancouver
News Release
December 17, 2016

City to open warming shelters Saturday, Sunday nights

The City of Vancouver is providing additional warm and welcoming space for anyone who needs to get out of the cold tonight and Sunday night. Two community centres will be open extra hours (Creekside, 8 p.m. to 7 a.m., and Britannia, 9 p.m. to 7 a.m.) as warming shelters, supported by staff and volunteers.

"The permanent and temporary shelters in Vancouver are at capacity and turning people away, and we need to take further steps to help keep people safe during the cold weather," says Mayor Gregor Robertson. "The City and Park Board are working closely to do what we can, with the resources we have, to step in and help our most vulnerable residents who have no place to go."

"I also want to thank all of the faith community leaders who are providing space in their facilities during this urgent time, including the Khalsa Diwan Society, who are providing 20 shelter spaces tonight within hours of being asked," Robertson adds. The Khalsa Diwan Society is located at 8000 Ross Street in South Vancouver.

Hot drinks and water will be available at the two community centre locations however no cots will be set up. Those with their own bedding may choose to sleep at these locations.

"We are happy to work with the City on support for homeless residents by opening up Britannia and Creekside community centres overnight so they can come out of the cold for a cup of coffee and some warmth this frigid weekend," says Park Board Chair Michael Wiebe.

There are 956 permanent shelter beds in Vancouver, an additional 195 temporary winter shelter beds, and up to 234 beds available during extreme weather. Those looking for shelter space can call 2-1-1 to check availability. Due to the recent cold snap, however, many shelters have had to turn people away.

Community centres and other public buildings are also available during their open hours as spaces to warm up.

Over the last eight winters, the City of Vancouver and BC Housing have partnered to open temporary winter shelters so people experiencing homelessness can find the support they need. Winter shelters save lives by connecting homeless residents with necessary health, social, and housing services.

Visit the City's website for more information on the [Winter Response Shelter Strategy](#):

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City of Vancouver
Corporate Communications
604.871.6336
media@vancouver.ca