

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"
"Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>
"Bromley, Malcolm" <Malcolm.Bromley@vancouver.ca>
"Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
Date: 3/12/2019 4:15:32 PM
Subject: RE: BOARD DECISION - Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services

Greetings Mayor and Council,

In follow up to my last message, City staff have reviewed the attached motion regarding Oppenheimer Park that was adopted by Park Board yesterday evening. By way of an initial response, we can provide the following comments:

- Over the past winter, the City has operated 3 warming centres in the DTES, including 1 adjacent to Oppenheimer Park with adequate capacity to support everyone who has been staying in the park overnight. Also, there has been capacity available at the Extreme Weather Response shelters for people to come indoors when weather conditions trigger the activation of those shelters.
- Staff are interpreting the intent of the motion that the proposed warming tent in Oppenheimer would be activated under the same conditions as our other warming centres (feels like -5). With the change in weather, we do not expect the warming centres to be open again this year.
- Based on the staffing required to operate the City's other warming centres, the estimated cost of operating the proposed service in Oppenheimer Park would be \$3700 per night, independent of costs associated with the purchase of tents and equipment or costs associated with the setup and takedown of the tents.
- Staff have discussed the use of large tents with other cities that have deployed them and would be prepared to share these findings with Council.
- At this time, staff do not recommend the operation of an additional warming centre in Oppenheimer Park. As an alternative measure to support homeless residents in the DTES, staff have been advocating that BC Housing fund additional year-round shelter capacity in the neighbourhood, including some storage. Staff are also engaged in discussions with BC Housing regarding funding for a navigation centre. The navigation centre model has been implemented in other cities and involves the provision of interim shelter for people coming off the street, coupled with coordinated supports to transition to more appropriate housing as quickly as possible.
- As the washrooms at Oppenheimer Park are under the control of Park Board, we are not clear as to the role Park Board is contemplating that City staff would play in relation to 24 hour washroom access. However, from past experience, staff would not recommend that the existing washrooms be left open 24 hours per day without dedicated resources (2 staff) to monitor the facilities and mitigate damage and safety concerns overnight. Absent a staff presence, we expect the washrooms would be rendered unusable. VPD has also expressed particular concern regarding the safety of individuals using those washrooms overnight.
- With respect to the personal property of people camping in Oppenheimer Park, we can confirm that neither the City nor Park Board removes tents or other property from the park during the night. Periodically, individuals who have erected tents in the park are requested to take down their tents for the day. These requests are consistent with the current BC jurisprudence and are intended to allow for the park to be cleaned up. Significant amounts of garbage, construction materials and abandoned property accumulate in the park over time and give rise to health and safety concerns. As such, the ongoing clean-up efforts are necessary to preserve the use of the park by campers and other residents.
- Staff understand that storage of belongings is a challenge for many people living on the street. For some individuals, the volume of their personal property is actually an impediment to accessing housing. Based on the experience of

other cities, we understand that the provision of storage facilities presents a number of operational complexities related to location, accessibility, capacity and cost. Of note, we do not expect it would be feasible to limit access to a storage facility to people in camping in Oppenheimer Park and, as such, this proposal may necessitate consideration of a more comprehensive program.

- Staff are also cognizant of the critical role that Oppenheimer Park plays as green space in relation to liveability for DTES residents. Given the limited access to parks in the neighbourhood, the allocation of this space to other uses warrants due consideration.
- Staff from ACCS, VFRS, Engineering, Parks, VPD, BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, along with other service providers, work together closely to support individuals who are living outdoors in the DTES and across the City. We recognize the stigma that these vulnerable residents face and the need to address that stigma as a foundational element of our approach to the complex causes and effects of homelessness.

I hope the above information is useful.

Sadhu

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

From: Johnston, Sadhu
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2019 8:54 AM
To: Direct to Mayor and Council - DL
Cc: City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL; Singh, Sandra; Bromley, Malcolm; Mochrie, Paul
Subject: FW: BOARD DECISION - Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services

Greetings Mayor and Council-

Please find attached the motion regarding Oppenheimer Park as approved by the Park Board last night. City staff will review it this morning and will provide Council with our assessment on this motion.

Best

Sadhu

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

From: Bromley, Malcolm
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2019 8:46 AM
To: Johnston, Sadhu; Mochrie, Paul
Subject: Fwd: BOARD DECISION - Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services

Malcolm Bromley
General Manager - Vancouver Park Board

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Chan, Cheryl" <Cheryl.Chan@vancouver.ca>
Date: March 12, 2019 at 8:42:08 AM PDT
To: "Bromley, Malcolm" <Malcolm.Bromley@vancouver.ca>
Cc: "Kulchyski, Jessica" <Jessica.Kulchyski@vancouver.ca>
Subject: BOARD DECISION - Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services

Hi Malcolm,

Attached, please find a copy of the Park Board's final amended motion for Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services. The recommendation reads:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT Park Board staff work with City staff to temporarily implement a warming station in Oppenheimer Park, or other city-owned land within close proximity, with large heated tents;
- B. THAT Park Board staff work with city staff to provide washroom facilities for park patrons including 24 hour access when the temporary warming station is activated;
- C. THAT Park Board staff explore options so that campers may securely keep their possessions onsite; and
- D. THAT Park Board staff continue to communicate with City staff about other possible solutions to help solve and humanize homelessness.

We will have links to this decision & video clips posted later today.

Thanks,

C.

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**Cheryl Chan** | *she, her, hers*  
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*I respectfully acknowledge that I live, work and play in the traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Coast Salish peoples.*