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To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 8/24/2022 9:08:25 AM
Subject: [Upcoming information bulletin: Hastings St. progress update \(August 24, 2022\)](#)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below information bulletin following the press conference this morning, August 24, 2022, on efforts to remove structures from East Hastings Street and support those sheltering outdoors. The press conference will begin at 10:00 am and we will issue the information bulletin at 11:00 am. Please keep this information embargoed until the information bulletin goes live from the City media email account.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x^mməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
Information Bulletin
August 24, 2022

East Hastings St. Progress Update

City staff have been working with non-profit partners and other levels of government to support those sheltering outdoors on East Hastings St. in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) while working on the removal of structures that pose a significant risk.

Staff have made steady progress to carry out the voluntary removal of structures from high priority areas along East Hastings St., such as building entryways and exits, and removing high-risk flammable materials. Engineering staff have also been removing more than 2000 kgs of materials per day.

We are approaching this in a manner that respects the challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness, while remaining committed to maintaining the health, safety, cleanliness and accessibility of City streets in the DTES.

Since the Fire Chief's Order was issued on July 25, 2022, the City has increased staffing and resources to encourage and assist people to voluntarily remove their structures, store their personal belongings and move from the area. These efforts were underway prior to the issuance of the Chief's Order and are continuing with the aim of addressing the serious life safety risks, as well as to ensure that sidewalks remain accessible and sanitary and to ensure continued access to adjacent buildings.

The risk of fires resulting in further losses of affordable housing in the DTES remains a serious

concern. Most recently, on Monday, August 22, a fire that started on the exterior of 568 Powell St. resulted in extensive damage to three buildings, displaced 59 residents, sent one person to the hospital and injured one firefighter.

The City acknowledges that some people sheltering on East Hastings Street and in other public spaces do not have options to move indoors and we have been working closely with BC Housing to urgently find places for people who are sheltering outdoors.

The City also understands that some people moving off East Hastings Street may need to shelter overnight in public spaces. This is a near-term option as the City continues advocating and working with senior governments for more housing and support services.

While the assisted removal of structures is ongoing, getting important resources and supports in place on Hastings for those who are sheltering outdoors and for other area residents and businesses has been a priority for the City.

The City is currently providing or working on the following support:

- **The City's Homelessness Services Outreach Team** continues to engage regularly with individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, to support their needs as related to accessing income, housing and other supports.
- **Counselling/Mental Health & Healing and Wellness Supports for Indigenous peoples:** the City is working with Aboriginal Front Door to provide cultural supports, counselling and access to healing circles for Indigenous peoples.
- **Food Services:** the City is providing funding for food services for hundreds of daily meals. Meals are being provided through A Better Life Foundation and with community partners working with Aboriginal Front Door.
- **Access to Storage/Drop-In Spaces:** Funded by the City, Aboriginal Front Door and Atira have initiated daily storage programs as part of their drop-in and outreach programs. This week (Aug 22) the Aboriginal Front Door (AFD) Drop-In at 390 Main will be open 4 hours (10am-2pm), increasing to 8 hours next week and 16 hours until end of October 2022. The Atira SheROes Outreach team supporting storage for women and gender diverse people receives drop-offs from Monday to Friday from 8:30am-10:30am, with access 7 days a week from 4-6pm. The City is also working with CleanStart to gather, label, track and move belongings for people who choose to move into storage. Longer-term storage facilities and additional sites are being explored.
- **Gender and Sex Worker Safety:** Due to the increase in gender-based violence along the blocks, the City has been and will continue to fund Mission Possible for community navigator support 13 hours/day, 7 days/week. This program supports safe access to the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DEWC) and to the Olivia Skye residence at 41 East Hastings. PACE is also providing outreach to sex workers who are living unsheltered along East Hastings.
- **Access to Washrooms:** Washroom hours have been increased so that these will be accessible nearly 24 hours/day. The City has allocated funding to operate a new mobile washroom on Gore and Hastings, replacing the Overdose Prevention Society (OPS)-operated washroom at 99 West Pender as part of the City's Washroom Trailer Program. An Automated Public Toilet at Pigeon Park that had broken down is being replaced and both the toilet and mobile trailer will be fully operational by next week. There is City-funded peer supervision at both the mobile trailer and Pigeon Park washrooms to ensure safe access. Additional indoor washrooms are available at Drop-In spaces.
- **Sanitation Crews:** City crews continue to increase street and sidewalk cleaning daily, and the community partnerships have been integral as we work to address the life safety risks as identified in the Fire Chief's Order.

Poverty, homelessness, mental health and substance use are a result of systemic drivers and we are working closely with senior government who have the mandate and funding to address these

underlying issues. This is a complex effort and the City appreciates the work of the many community organizations and social enterprises who have been contributing expertise and effort as well as the support of BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health.

We recognize that this work will have an emotional impact on the community and everyone involved. City staff are conducting the work with thoughtfulness and care of the residents and their circumstances.

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