



December 4, 2018

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Malcolm Bromley  
General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks Recreation

SUBJECT : **Warming Centres at Park Board Facilities**

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Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide Commissioners with information on Warming Centres at Park Board Facilities and inform of the initiation of the Warming Centre as of December 3, 2018 at West End Community Centre.

Winter conditions in Vancouver can give rise to the need for emergency warming centres to be open and available for the use of residents on an overnight basis. Extreme Weather Response (EWR) is the legislated responsibility of the Province of British Columbia as laid out in the Assistance to Shelter Act.

The Park Board has jurisdiction over public assets that are suitable for use as warming centres. The General Manager or designate has the discretion to direct that one or more facilities under the jurisdiction of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation be made available for use as extreme weather response centres should the need arise.

The City will be activating the City of Vancouver Warming Centres as a life-saving response for people sleeping outside, as the temperature is due to drop to -5°C or below (or it feels like -5°C or below). This is in addition to the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) activation by Homelessness Services Association of BC (HSABC), due to prolonged frigid conditions (0°C or below or it feels like 0°C or below).

- Warming centres are part of City of Vancouver's Winter Response Strategy.
- In response to extreme cold weather, warming centres are activated as a life-saving response for people sleeping outside during the city's coldest months.
- Warming centres are activated when the temperature reaches -5°C or below (or it feels like -5°C or below).
- Warming centres are welcoming to all, and visitors may bring their pets, bikes, and carts with them. Hot drinks and snacks will be available, and those with their own bedding may choose to sleep at the centre.
- Each site will have space for at least 20 individuals
- The City, the Park Board, Vancouver Public Library, Britannia Community Centre and Lookout Housing & Health Society have committed to work together to open warming centres in extreme weather conditions, for the 2018-2019 winter season.
- This is the first activation of the 2018-2019 season, and warming centres will be open Monday, December 3 and Tuesday, December 4 with possible extensions, should the temperature remain below activation threshold.



- Warming centres are an additional Winter Response Strategy, and open to service homeless individuals in addition to the 298 Temporary Shelter beds that City of Vancouver and BC Housing have partnered to open each year since 2009.
- In conjunction with Warming Centre activations, the Overdose Prevention Society at 58 East Hastings will be extending their operating hours to remain open during the night as a life-saving response to overdose deaths. Operating costs will be funded by the City of Vancouver.
- Warming Centre Locations:
  - Britannia Community Centre -1739 Venables Street
  - West End Community Centre – 870 Denman Street
  - Vancouver Public library – 350 West Georgia Street
  - Powell St Getaway – 528 Powell Street

Park Board staff have been working closely with Community Services staff, the West End Community Centre Association and community partners in order to prepare for the upcoming winter season. Staff are prepared to support the operation of a Warming Centre at the West End Community Centre.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malcolm Bromley".

Malcolm Bromley  
General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

Dr/dc

Copy to: PB Senior Management Team  
PB Communications