

Strathcona Park Neighbours: Update eight

April 22, 2021

We want to thank you for your continued patience and let you know that the movement of people from the park and into accommodation has begun in earnest this week in preparation for the expiration of the GM order which asks people to move from the park by April 30.

Residents can keep updated on the progress of people moving into housing from Strathcona Park [here](#).

Work in the park

- In recent weeks, staff from the City, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, Vancouver Fire Rescue Service, Park Rangers and VPD have been in the encampment, ensuring compliance with the Fire Chief's Order and removing debris that posed a risk to life safety.
- Outreach teams from the City and BC Housing are working with people in the park to provide them with offers of housing and help them prepare to move. It is our aim to move everyone out of the park by the end of this month and BC Housing will be posting regular updates on [their website](#) including the number of people who have moved from the park into accommodation.
- As people move from the park, City Sanitation crews and Park Rangers will be on hand to clean the park and secure the spaces ready for remediation.
- The west and north east sections of the park remain clear City and Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation staff will be monitoring Strathcona Park and other locations closely to ensure that new encampments do not occur.

Accommodation options

- Over the last week, outreach staff have been working with people in the park to understand their housing needs and sharing housing and shelter options.
- Over recent weeks, BC Housing has secured a number of housing and shelter spaces to support moving people from Strathcona Park inside, as well as people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in other parts of the City. Spaces include the Patricia Hotel, the Ramada, the Holiday Inn, the Plaza of Nations shelter. Other spaces, including two new shelters and additional SRO rooms, will become available in the next few weeks to support bringing people inside.

RV enforcement

- Following three weeks of notices, Parking Enforcement Officers began ticketing non-compliant RVs that were parked in the area around the park last week. The majority of the RVs and large vehicles have now moved with some owners moving their vehicles and other being towed. Abandoned vehicles that have been towed are being stored for free for up to 30 days. Owners of the remaining RVs are actively working with Outreach teams on housing placements. Movement of their vehicles is deferred until they have moved into housing.



Questions we have received since last update

- **What has been the process for ticketing RVs, which streets have you been ticketing and why haven't some of the notices had dates on them?**
The City issued three general notices to vehicles that were not in compliance with by-laws, and our most recent final notice was delivered by Parking Enforcement April 8th with a specific date of April 15 after which time the vehicles were subject to ticket and tow. The multi-stage notice process is to allow people as much time as possible to find alternative arrangements. The notice was delivered to vehicles on both Raymur and Malkin and both streets are subject to the same process and timeframes. The majority of vehicles have now moved and staff are working with the remaining few to ensure they move.
- **Will you have enough accommodation for everyone? I have heard that there will not be enough spaces available by the end of April.**
BC Housing and the City are confident that there will be enough spaces to make an offer to everyone by April 30th. In the last week, approximately 260 new spaces have become available and additional spaces are due to open up in the next few weeks creating enough accommodation options for everyone who is sleeping in the park.
- **Why didn't you issue a GM order in June when the first tent appeared in the park?**
The current by-law governing camping in parks was not enacted until fall of 2020. The issuance of a GM order is dependent on the provision of other accommodation options being available. The recent purchase of several properties, has ensured that we can move everyone who is sleeping overnight in the park into warm, safe accommodation.
- **Will people get job training? Are all the people receiving accommodation from Vancouver?**
The City, Vancouver Board and Parks and Recreation, and BC Housing ask people to show compassion to others and not make assumptions regarding people who are living in the park. The City and BC Housing's outreach teams are working to match everyone in the park with options that best meet their needs and circumstances. The accommodation that is available is run by non-profit operators who will offer supports to people, including connections to training and employment opportunities. People experiencing or at risk of homelessness are not all the same - they can be young people, seniors, people with disabilities, and anyone who has experienced trauma, poverty, or has struggled with the high cost of housing. As reported in the 2020 Point in Time Homeless Count, a disproportionate amount of people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous, racialized, and from other marginalized identities. Homelessness continues to be a persistent issue in Vancouver, the region and the country. We do not restrict the movement of people and everyone in our country has the right to relocate for employment opportunities or other personal reasons. It is important to note that the 2020 Homeless Count found that more than 82 per cent of respondents were already living in Vancouver when they found themselves without a home.

The City, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and BC Housing remain committed to updating you regularly regarding our work in the park. Prior to our next update, if you have any questions, or would like to be added to our mailing list, please email homelessness@vancouver.ca.

