

Strathcona Park Neighbours: Update five

March 11, 2021

Direction and overall plans

- The City, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and BC Housing continue to take collective action to address the critical needs of people experiencing homelessness - both in the encampment in Strathcona, as well as other neighbourhoods across the city. We are working together to finalize plans for moving people out of the encampment and into accommodation by the end of April.
- Renovations are underway on two new shelters that will be opening in the coming weeks.

Park access

- The work to relocate people from the west side of Strathcona Park has been completed and Park Operation crews continue to work removing debris and remediating the west side of the park including work to the shrubs and turf.
- The park is open and accessible while the remediation work is completed.

Update on RVs

- This week the City's Parking Enforcement team has begun issuing an advanced notice to RV owners who are parked on the streets surrounding the park, letting them know that the City will begin enforcing four by-laws in the coming weeks. The notice explains that anyone who is leaving structures or person belongings on the streets, whose RV is uninsured, who has an unattached trailer, or has parked an oversized vehicle on the street overnight is in contravention of City by-laws.
- Vehicle owners will be given ample notice to engage with the City's Outreach Team and/or make necessary repairs to their vehicle.
- The enforcement of these by-laws in the Strathcona area is part of a plan to address similar by-law offences across the city.

Hearing from you

- As you may be aware, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation has recently assigned a Community Engagement Manager to meet with residents on an ongoing basis about the park. The first meeting took place on March 2 and we are grateful to everyone who attended and contributed to the conversation about plans for park activation and how residents can be involved in visioning for the park. If you would like to be part of these community conversations, please email strathconapark@vancouver.ca
- Thank you also to Strathcona Resident's Association for inviting representatives of our three organizations to attend your recent virtual meeting, we hope that we answered your questions but if not please feel free to email them to homelessness@vancouver.ca and we will respond to them in the next update.



Questions arising from the community

- **What remediation will occur on the west-side of the park and when will the west-side of the park be open for use?**
 - Operations have removed the shrubs and debris within these locations.
 - The turf fields are being top-dressed with soil and sand, fertilized and seeded.
 - The pathways will have the mud removed and re-screened.
 - The softball diamonds are safe to use as is.
 - The crews will attend to the softball diamonds as the weather dries; as the surface requires for it to be dry, to have affective maintenance completed.

- **What are the plans for the north-east (dog off-leash) area? It is currently fenced with no tents occupying the space.**
 - The area is fenced off while machines are working in the area to ensure the site is operationally safe.
 - Fencing off the area also allows us to manage the size of the encampment.

- **Who is responsible for cleaning up the areas in and around the park?**

Sanitation crews from the City service Strathcona Park seven days a week, this includes emptying and cleaning the three temporary garbage enclosures, servicing the garbage carts for the warming tent and washroom trailers, removing litter, debris and material around the perimeter of the park, and providing support for Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation crews removing material within the park. The team also responds to requests to clear abandoned garbage and debris within the surrounding neighbourhood and clear the curb and portions of the boulevard on the perimeter of the entire park.

The cleaning within the encampment at this time is the responsibility of the people living within the park, supported by peer groups working with these individuals. Peers, who are funded by BC Housing, initiate the removal of garbage and debris around tents and structures and place the material in large roll off containers supplied by the City. This work represents a significant increase in the work done by Sanitation in the area. Previously, the team serviced six carts, two to three days a week, but they are now handling 60 carts and additional large items seven days a week, on top of their usual routes. We are working to keep the area around the park as clean as possible but unfortunately debris can often pile up quickly again right after the crews have cleaned the area.

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.

