

Strathcona Park Neighbours: Update nine

May 6, 2021

We would like to provide you with an update on the encampment in Strathcona Park.. We also want to thank everyone who has taken the time to contact us about the encampment and speak with us about this issue.

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

Update on the park

- The General Manager order that was issued requiring all tents, temporary structures and shelters be for the park expired on April 30th and signage has now been installed stating the park is closed.
- Over the weekend of May 1, staff focused on installing fencing around the perimeter of the park with the goal of securing the park and establishing a controlled entry / exit point. Staff also began removing remaining debris from an area in the park where people had signed waivers or given verbal confirmation that any items left behind after they moved indoors could be disposed of.
- In discussions with leadership in the encampment, as well as community advocates, staff have paused removing debris from the rest of the park until Thursday, April 5th at noon in order to allow people to continue to access any belongings that they may have left in the park. We have strived to take a trauma-informed approach to moving people from the park and feel this is an important step to bringing the encampment to a close.
- Since October 2020, almost 300 people have moved from the park and the surrounding area into accommodation, including approximately 230 people in the last two weeks.

Repairs and work to the park

- Some of our planned work has been delayed but we continue to monitor and repair damaged fencing and are striving to maintain controlled entry to park. We have begun some debris removal and are assessing the remediation needs of the park. The findings of this assessment will determine how long the park will need to be closed for but we hope to reopen the park fully as soon as possible. Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation staff are planning engagement activities and meetings with different groups from the Strathcona community to discuss aspirations for the park and we will provide an update on these conversations shortly.

Questions from the community

- **Can you share any detail about future investment in the park?**
This project is a high priority for the Park Board and we recognize the urgency. We are assembling a team to advance the planning process, that will build upon what we have heard so far through conversations with community members. We are committed to continuing these conversations all throughout the process.
- **Will the "temporary fencing" enclose the entire park or just the current encampment area?**
Ensuring that public have access to the park remains a priority for us and we will not be



fencing off the entire park. As sections of the park are vacated, we will fence them off to allow us to conduct remediation work and then reopen them to the public as we have done on the west side of the park.

- **Will there be a set timeline for removing this fencing or will it be permanent like Oppenheimer?**

The timeline for reopening all sections of the park will depend on the remediation work required but we hope to have the park fully open as soon as possible. Oppenheimer Park has required far more remediation than we anticipate Strathcona will need but staff hope to reopen the west side of Oppenheimer Park in June. The Oppenheimer fieldhouse will open at a later time.

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.

