



Council Member Motion

For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 21, 2020

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** May 19, 2020
From: Councillor Sarah Potts, Councillor Ben Isitt and Councillor Jeremy Loveday
Subject: Sheltering-in-place during Covid-19 Pandemic

Background:

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought BC under a dual public health emergency. This has created additional risk and uncertainty for those in our community already made vulnerable through their lack of access to housing and health care.

Our Provincial Health Officer has asked British Columbians to stay home to reduce the possibility of spreading COVID-19 to others. For those who don't have a home the directive is to shelter-in-place.

Distinct from the Provincial response in regards to the Topaz and Pandora sites is the City of Victoria's response to sheltering-in-place outside of the aforementioned locations.

The harms associated with the reduction of access to regular services once relied upon and months of uncertainty in the midst of a pandemic have undeniably impacted our unhoused community members. The intention of this motion is to provide clarity around the existing direction of bylaw and to address unintended harms stemming from directives within Covid-19 Response – Parks Notice (attachment A).

Recommendations:

1. That Council reaffirms the existing direction, consistent with advice of Public Health Officials to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19, of sheltering-in-place through deferred enforcement of the 7 am – 7 pm bylaw provision in locations where overnight sheltering is permitted (outside of Topaz and Pandora) for the duration of the public health emergency.
2. That Council adopts the following Policy relating to regulation of sheltering-in-place in locations where overnight sheltering is permitted] during the public health emergency:
 - a. That Council directs staff not to remove shelters and belongings that are abandoned or unoccupied until 72 hours after they have been tagged by a Bylaw Officer, and ensure that any notices are consistent with this policy.
 - b. That Council directs staff to store impounded items in a secure facility, for retrieval by the owner for up to thirty (30) days, to the extent that this policy is consistent with workplace safety requirements, and ensure that any notices are consistent with this policy.

3. Maintain and improve dialogue between the City of Victoria Bylaw Division, people living outside and the people who work with them regarding sheltering-in-place in locations where overnight sheltering is permitted, under the purview of the City Bylaw division, to mitigate unintended harms of City bylaws to those who are living outside.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Potts



Councillor Isitt



Councillor Loveday