



Parks within the DVBA boundary map include Centennial Square, Ship Point Park, Centennial Park, Peter Pollen Waterfront Park, Reeson Park (sheltering prohibited), Cridge Park (sheltering prohibited), and Quadra Park (sheltering prohibited).

Staff received feedback from the DVBA regarding sheltering within the boundaries of their business improvement area and the impacts to businesses.

Based on business feedback the DVBA collected over the last several months in relation to the encampments and the increase in unhoused individuals congregating downtown, businesses downtown have been impacted in the following ways:

- Beginning from the early weeks of the pandemic, downtown saw a significant increase in criminal activity affecting businesses, including break and enters, smash and grabs and shoplifting. Much of this is reflected in the crime statistics for downtown
- Staff at many downtown businesses have complained about the impacts of street disorder and open drug use on their sense of safety and well-being
- Many businesses had to resort to adding private security to assist staff and protect both their inventory and property, all at a time when revenue was at an all-time low
- The DVBA received the greatest number of phone calls and emails from the general public commenting on their negative views of downtown, and that they no longer felt safe to come down and shop, and
- There are 17 hotels within the DVBA boundaries, some of them reported directly to the DVBA that they had guests arrive, see the encampments and cancel their rooms, or heard about the encampments via the media or online reviews and cancelled their reservations.

Businesses have also reported directly to City staff and Council with the same concerns outlined above from the DVBA.

Businesses are heading into what is traditionally called the 'shoulder' or 'off' season when tourism slows down, afternoons become darker, and weather is more inclement. The DVBA is concerned that the combination of this year's shoulder season during the ongoing pandemic, coupled with the DVBA reported sheltering impacts to business could have a further negative effect on our downtown.

### *Impacts to Financial Plan*

The financial impacts associated with the City's efforts to mitigate the risks relating to outdoor sheltering are significant. Over the past four years, the City has invested between \$250,000 and \$370,000 annually on dedicated cleaning, security, and waste removal for parks and open spaces, in response to the growing number of homeless individuals. Due largely to the pandemic, these City costs are projected to reach at least \$1 million in 2020.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the business feedback received by the DVBA and to City staff and Council, it's evident that businesses have been impacted by sheltering within the DVBA boundary.

Respectfully submitted,

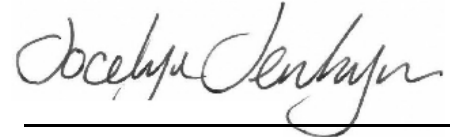


Kerri Moore  
Head of Business & Community Relations



Thomas Soulliere  
Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

  
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Date: November 4, 2020

**List of Attachments**

**Appendix A: Parks Regulation Amendment Bylaw No. 20-102**