



Community Invited to Share Ideas at *Sheltering Solutions Workshop* on September 16

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — Victoria is a community that cares for its residents, and unfortunately, many in our community have nowhere to take shelter at night. Let's talk about options.

The community is invited to share ideas and help identify considerations and potential solutions to providing temporary housing options to those without homes at the hands-on *Sheltering Solutions Workshop* on Wednesday, September 16 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the Crystal Garden. Free parking is available on-street and at the Broughton Street Parkade nearby, located below the Central Library.

"The residents of Victoria have been incredibly generous and compassionate with their time and energy in sending proposed temporary sheltering solutions to Council over the summer," said Mayor Lisa Helps. "This workshop will bring residents - both housed and unhoused - together with Councillors and City staff, to roll up our sleeves and further develop the proposed solutions."

Over the summer, the City received many suggestions for short-term sheltering solutions from members of the public. These suggestions will be the starting point for discussion at the workshop, where participants will come together and break out into facilitated groups to brainstorm and share ideas. Input collected will be evaluated by City staff, informing a report to Council on temporary housing options that the City could explore.

The City of Victoria recently developed an action plan for addressing the needs of people without housing, and reducing impacts arising from sheltering activities in City parks. The action plan proposes that the City facilitate alternative temporary housing options, recognizing it will take several years to build an adequate supply of permanent housing.

Two temporary housing options the City has identified to date are designated temporary sheltering (tenting) areas in City parks, and a micro-housing village, which can include sleeping facilities such as huts and semi-permanent wooden structures on private or public land, with possible communal eating/gathering spaces.

Topaz Park was identified as a location that might be suitable for a tenting area. This option generated extensive community dialogue and concerns related to designated areas in parks, or specifically in Topaz Park. As a result, City Council passed a motion on August 5 directing staff to consult the public on options for all forms of sheltering before Council considers any proposal for a temporary designated tenting area in any park.

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For More Information:

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