



**AGENDA**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING**

April 5, 2018, 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM  
Board Room, Service and Resource Centre,  
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

Pages

1. **CALL THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE TO ORDER:**
2. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:**
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**
4. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**
  - a. **Minutes** 3 - 7

Minutes of the Public Safety Committee Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, Thursday, 2018-MAR-01, at 3:30 p.m.
5. **PRESENTATIONS:**
  - a. **Report from Vancouver Island University Re: Public Safety Community Engagement Session** 8 - 27

To be introduced by Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety.
6. **REPORTS:**
  - a. **Verbal Update Re: Status of Cameras in Taxi Cabs**

Introduced by Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety.
7. **OTHER BUSINESS:**
  - a. **Homelessness Issues and Garbage Concerns** 28 - 33

To be introduced by Al Britton, Manager of Parks Operations.

Document provided in response to the Public Safety Committee's request at the March 1, 2018 Public Safety Committee Meeting regarding needle hotspots in Nanaimo.

**b. 2018 Public Safety Committee Strategic Priorities Discussion**

To be introduced by Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety.

**8. QUESTION PERIOD:**

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MINUTES**  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING  
BOARD ROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE  
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC  
THURSDAY, 2018-MAR-01, AT 3:30 P.M.

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PRESENT:   Members:   Councillor Armstrong, Chair  
                              David Holmes  
                              David Lemire  
                              Muir (Thomas) Meredith  
                              Bruce Parker  
                              Robert Whitton

                  Absent:   Alexis Petersen  
                              Councillor Yoachim (Alternate)

                  Staff:     K. Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety  
                              A. Britton, Manager, Parks Operations  
                              J. Horn, Social Planner (arrived 4:10 p.m.)  
                              S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer  
                              G. Whitters, Steno, Legislative Services (vacated 4:35 p.m.)  
                              J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

1.    CALL THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m.

2.    INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a)    Agenda Item 6(b) – Community Engagement Task Force - correct agenda heading to Direction from Council: Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to Schools and Playgrounds (Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22) and add delegation from Katherine Rollwagen.
- (b)    Add Agenda Item 7(b) – Correspondence from Zoe Ann Larsen, dated 2018-FEB-26, regarding homelessness and derelict buildings downtown.
- (c)    David Lemire advised that he would be bringing forward an item under Agenda Item 7 – Other Business, regarding Discussion Regarding Modular Housing Process.
- (d)    Councillor Armstrong advised that Alison Evans was in attendance and wished to address the Public Safety Committee as a late delegation regarding Agenda Item 6(b) - Direction from Council: Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to Schools and Playgrounds (Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22).

It was moved and seconded that Agenda Item 7(a) - Correspondence from Zoe Ann Larsen, dated 2018-FEB-26, regarding homelessness and derelict buildings downtown, be added to the Public Safety Committee Agenda, 2018-MAR-01. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that Agenda Item 7(b) – Discussion Regarding Modular Home Process be added to the Public Safety Committee Agenda, 2018-MAR-01. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that Alison Evans be permitted to address the Public Safety Committee as a late delegation regarding Agenda Item 6(b) - Direction from Council: Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to Schools and Playgrounds (Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22) with a five-minute time limitation. The motion carried unanimously.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Public Safety Committee Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, Thursday, 2018-FEB-01, at 3:30 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

(a) Community Engagement Session February 28, 2018

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, provided a verbal update regarding the Community Engagement Session held February 28, 2018, and provided a presentation regarding Strategic Plan Update 2016 – 2019 and how it is linked to committee priorities.

Committee discussion took place regarding suggestions from the public surrounding safety concerns from the public safety engagement session and the pros and cons associated with these suggestions. It was recommended that any roadblocks to proposed ideas be explained so that people know why these suggestions were not pursued.

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, advised that once the summary of the engagement session is compiled the Public Safety Committee will be provided a copy prior to their next meeting.

- (b) Direction from Council: Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to Schools and Playgrounds (Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22)

Introduced by Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety.

Committee discussion took place regarding the following motion that Council requested the Public Safety Committee reword:

"It was moved and seconded that Council direct Staff to:

- identify schools, parks and spaces that experience a high volume of drug paraphernalia, feces, urine, condoms and other associated debris;
- develop resources to address these issues and security issues; and,
- explore the option of implementing a contract with the John Howard Society for needle pick up at Ecole Pauline Haarer Elementary School."

Committee discussion took place regarding the third bullet item. It was noted that the third bullet should be deferred to School District 68. Discussion took place regarding possible motions the committee could put forward to explore working with School District 68 regarding needle pick up and increased security measures around schools within the City.

Delegations:

1. Katherine Rollwagen spoke regarding actions taken to address safety concerns in parks and playground at Pauline Haarer Elementary School, the impact this is having on the perception of the park, and the changes made to facilities at the school.
2. Alison Evans spoke regarding Comox Park, the amount of needles present and other concerns which affect the safety of children.

It was moved and seconded that Rick Hyne be permitted to address the Public Safety Committee regarding Agenda Item 6(b) - Direction from Council: Councillor Armstrong re: Safety Concerns Related to Schools and Playgrounds (Discussion from Special Council Meeting 2018-JAN-22) with a five minute time limit. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Rick Hyne requested that the Public Safety Committee act on facts and not emotional reactions when considering how to assist with homelessness and needle safety.

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, spoke regarding the changing perceptions and education paths relating to drug users and homelessness.

J. Horn entered the Boardroom at 4:10 p.m.

John Horn, Social Planner, spoke regarding a previous attempt to operate an open space type of shelter and the issues that arose from that.

Committee discussion took place regarding the amount of needles being picked up on a daily basis. Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, spoke regarding the amount of calls the fire department received in 2017 compared with 2018. Drug use is a complex problem and is becoming more apparent. Approximately 1200 people within the community are intravenous drug users according to Island Health estimates. It is estimated that 240 needles are picked up per week.

Committee discussion took place regarding the need to prioritize strategies and work with various resources to develop a strategy to deal with the social issues facing Nanaimo.

Committee discussion took place regarding a report from John Horn, Social Planner, titled “Responses to Health, Social, and Safety Issues Downtown” that is scheduled to be presented to Council at the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting, 2018-MAR-14.

The Public Safety Committee requested that Staff provide the committee with a list of current hot spots within the City of Nanaimo.

It was noted that the Public Safety Committee encourages Council to continue to prioritize and consider the report scheduled for the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting, 2018-MAR-14, titled “Responses to Health, Social, and Safety Issues Downtown”.

The Public Safety Committee requested to receive a copy of the report titled “Responses to Health, Social, and Safety Issues Downtown” as soon as it becomes available, and prior to the beginning of the next Public Safety Committee Meeting.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) Correspondence from Zoe Ann Larsen, dated 2018-FEB-26, regarding homelessness and derelict buildings downtown

Karen Fry, Fire Chief and Director of Public Safety, spoke regarding the removal of camps and a fire set outside of the former A&B Sound building downtown. She explained that an order has been sent to the owners of the building. The order requires the owner to secure the alcoves, to have a structural engineer ensure the structure is sound, to ensure there are no hazardous materials inside the building, and to keep it secure.

G. Whitters vacated the Boardroom at 4:35 p.m.

- (b) Discussion Regarding Modular Housing Process

David Lemire requested an update regarding the Modular Housing Process after Council decided not to proceed with the Cranberry Avenue location during the Regular Council Meeting 2018-FEB-19.

Councillor Armstrong spoke about the public engagement efforts that Staff are doing to try to gain feedback about the modular housing proposal.

John Horn, Social Planner, explained that his understanding of the criteria for the proposed development has changed, and this changes his interpretation of what type of clients would be housed in the building. There still may be an opportunity to proceed with the Modular Housing Process, but a suitable location has not been selected.

It was requested that the Public Safety Committee be updated if there are any changes relating to the Modular Housing Process.

7. QUESTON PERIOD:

It was moved and seconded that Dean Gaudry, Owner, Greenrock Liquor Store, be permitted to speak regarding licencing of recreational marijuana businesses, with a five minute time limit. The motion carried unanimously.

1. Dean Gaudry, Owner, Greenrock Liquor Store, spoke regarding concerns for the distribution and licencing of recreational marijuana businesses, and suggested that the City use the model that is currently in place for liquor licences in Nanaimo as a template for processing recreational marijuana business licence applications.

Committee discussion took place regarding how current dispensaries could expand with the proposed legalization of recreational marijuana. It was suggested that zoning regulations will need to be reviewed regarding the production and growing of marijuana products.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:00 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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CORPORATE OFFICER

# City of Nanaimo Public Safety Engagement Session Final Report

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Date: March 28, 2018

## Background

The City of Nanaimo, with the support of graduate students from Vancouver Island University's Master of Community Planning Program, conducted a Public Safety Engagement Session on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at Beban Park Auditorium.

The session was held using a modified World Café method with assigned topics on 12 tables. This method was selected as it encourages conversations among participants instead of the one-way flow of information characteristic of a public hearing or town hall-style event; this is a method best used to scope out issues or discuss a range of potential solutions.

Students staffed each table as facilitators and note takers, and also served as the lead facilitators for the event. The table themes/topics included:

- City Bylaws
- Emergency Management
- Future of the Community Policing and Services Office (this theme was established before recent decisions were made on this location)
- RCMP Priorities
- Public Safety Education
- Home Safety
- Empty and Derelict Buildings
- Public Disorder.

There was also a "Wild Card" table that was intended to attract participants who were interested in discussing topics outside of those identified for the event.

The event was divided into four timed segments: the first two (approximately 20 minute) segments sought to identify *issues* relating to each table topic, while the second two segments related to discussing potential *solutions*. Participants were invited to join a first table discussion and were then free to move to any other topic or to stay at their original table.

Approximately 65 individuals attended the event, which was also supported by staff from the City of Nanaimo as well as representatives of Island Health, the RCMP, various social agencies, and members of Nanaimo City Council. These expert attendees were stationed at the various tables and were available to respond to questions from the participants.

The event was video recorded, and can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/7NddTdDXxbM>.



## Findings

Appendices 1 and 2 detail the findings from the table discussions and the facilitated reporting back to the plenary at the end of the event.

A key word/phrase analysis was conducted for each of the topics/themes from all of the findings (note that Home Safety is not included as there were no participants at that table).

Attendees cited the following issues:

| <b>Identified Issues</b>                                    |   |
|---|---|
| <b>City Bylaws</b>  | Enforcement, training, security, mental health issues   |
| <b>Emergency Management</b>                                 | Sharing information/getting information out as soon as an issue is happening, school safety, involving the public |
| <b>Future of the Community Policing and Services Office</b> | Define the mandate of the site, better branding, draw more uses into the site                                     |
| <b>RCMP Priorities</b>                                      | Crime prevention, increase in street drugs, inter-relationship of issues  |
| <b>Public Safety Education</b>                              | Dangerous driving, poor signage, keeping public informed of issues  |
| <b>Empty and Derelict Buildings</b>                         | Need to secure buildings, consider new ways to occupy buildings, concerns with vandalism, safety                  |
| <b>Public Disorder</b>                                      | Safety, protection for schools, mental health, ongoing assessment, focus on downtown                              |
| <b>Wild Card</b>  | Homelessness, safety, drug use, inter-related issues  |

And the following solutions:

| <b>Identified Solutions</b>                                 |   |
|---|---|
| <b>City Bylaws</b>  | Revitalize downtown, consistency in approaches, focus on education and positive approaches            |
| <b>Emergency Management</b>                                 | Increasing neighbourhood presence (Neighbourhood Watch), access all forms of communication, education |
| <b>Future of the Community Policing and Services Office</b> | Address a wider range of issues, make the building more accessible to a wider audience                |
| <b>RCMP Priorities</b>                                      | Address homelessness, public safety, harm reduction, public presence                                  |
| <b>Public Safety Education</b>                              | Improve infrastructure (lighting), education in schools, outreach across community                    |
| <b>Empty and Derelict Buildings</b>                         | Create new bylaws, incentives for building owners   |
| <b>Public Disorder</b>                                      | Security, public safety, safe housing   |
| <b>Wild Card</b>  | Lighting, holistic systems, education   |

**Conclusions**

There was general discussion at many of the tables indicating that the issues identified were not going to be resolved at a two-hour event. It was also noted at several tables that many of the issues are interrelated, and any solutions will have to consider the range of potential impacts that could result from implementing changes. Overall, there were positive comments on the format of the meeting and support for holding future events that encourage exchanges of ideas over more adversarial meeting methods.

**Recommendation**

1. That the findings from this event be provided to the Public Safety Task Force for review and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Shaw PhD MCIP RPP FRCGS

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*Appendix 1*  
*February 28 Public Engagement Session*  
*Notes from Tables*

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**Public Disorder**

Round 1

Illegal Grow Operations  
Youth on street  
    Busy streets safety concerns  
Inebriated individuals in public realm – frightening/offensive  
    Not criminal behaviours but raises safety concern  
    Education to comprehend mental illness  
Quesnal (?) Square – Epicentre in downtown core  
Collaboration with businesses/amenities for upgrades  
“Hot Route”

Round 2

Schools  
    Increased incidents compared to prior years  
    More frequent disorder – drug paraphernalia  
    Increase security on school grounds – reduced traffic?

Public Areas  
    Where do homeless/drug users go?

Resistance to leave public areas  
    Using throughout day to continue high

CPTD  
    Many opportune areas to hide  
    Lack of day programs  
    Safe injection site open certain hours  
        Alternatives  
        Where do homeless go?  
        Some prefer to be on street – pets  
    Need long term treatments  
    Start mandatory mental health assessments in high school

- Solutions
  - Long-term *affordable* treatments
    - Safe housing
    - After care
    - Supportive housing
  - Facilities that address specific needs
    - Preparing Community for Treatment Centres ie. Chase River

- Education
  - Neighbourhood meetings
  - Testimonials
  - Security Guards – provides reassurance
- Mental Health & Addictions outreach for short/long term
- Feedback from peers to adjust behaviours
- Central registry for new comers
  - Money?
- Safe consumption sites and Regulations
  - Mobile safe injection side?
  - How to find it?
- Needle deposit program
  - Similar to bottle return
- School Security
  - A “No-Go” zone

### **RCMP Priorities**

- Policing – prevent crimes
- Homelessness population rising
  - Remaining on streets
- Crime prevention
  - Finding housing
- Youth
  - Crime prevention early
- Traffic
  - 11 fatalities 2 years ago - 6 last year
    - Improving
  - Does traffic policing take away from other areas?
- Concern of Downtown being unsafe/uncomfortable
  - Diana Crawl Plaza
  - No RCMP during night
- Engage with people on street
- Prolific offender management
  - Mental health liaison
- VIHA for help
  - Work alongside
- Drug concern
  - Fentanyl
  - Marijuana grow ops becoming legal
  - Marijuana stores emerging issues
  - Grow ops and fire concern
  - Undercover?
    - Appear to not be catching/prosecuting
  - Crime prevention – Hells Angels
- Solutions
  - Cyclists & Road Space

- Road for Cars
- Jay walking as an issue for safety
- Distracted driving
  - Stiffer penalties
- Harm reduction and Drug enforcement
  - Fentanyl
  - Education
  - VIHA
  - Mental Health
  - Drug & homelessness
  - Drug team
  - Target whom is bringing it in/moving through community
- Priorities for RCMP
  - Presence in community
  - Undercover
  - More officers – population growth
- Increase of homeless persons/drug users
- Increase first responders
  - Police, Medic, and Fire
- Homelessness as 1<sup>st</sup> solution
  - Increased funding for housing
- Prolific offender management
  - VIHA
  - Liaison
- Mental health not a police matter, law is, but work together for prevention
- Advocating for children/youth safety
  - Addiction and Safety
  - Giving out needles – VIHA
  - Public works to clean needles

## Round 2

- Youth
  - School liaison
    - School development
  - Youth empowerment and prevention
    - Build confidence
  - Pedestrian Safety
    - Parent and children relationships
  - Prolific Offender
    - 80/20 Rules
  - Gang Association
    - Problematic lower mainland
  - Adult bullying
  - Crime free multi-housing

- Making buildings safe
- Safe by design

## **Emergency Management**

- Educating public
  - Youth engagement
    - Work with Red Cross and NGO's
    - Visit primary schools
      - Kids will inform parents
- Advertisements
  - Facebook Ads
  - YouTube
- Familiarity with Voting areas
- Accessibility
  - Are Emergency meeting areas fully accessible?
  - What about homeless or blind/deaf people etc.
- Phone lines
  - Dedicated to personas with disabilities
- Persons associated with a group or non-profit? Are they accounted for?
- Neighbourhood level communication
  - Sign up for emergency contact
- Learning from previous disasters
  - Avoiding misinformation
- Igniting Discussion
  - Neighbourhood level
    - Crime watch
  - Use city mail outs
    - Survey or questionnaire
    - City Garbage to relay information
  - School notice system

## **Bylaws**

### Issues – Session 1

- Snow Clearance on sidewalks
  - Hazardous, cyclists
- Lack of bylaw enforcement
  - Limited staff
  - Few officers
- Secondary Suites
  - Lack of parking space on narrow streets
    - Accessibility problem
- Loitering
  - Drug related, disorderly conduct

- No response to bylaw inquiries from City (confidentiality)
- Safety within retail stores
  - New bylaw needed?
  - Building code
  - Abandoned shopping carts

## Session 2

- Bylaw Officers responsibilities
  - Not only parking tickets
  - Mental health issues
  - Dealing with new issues
    - Highly unpredictable people
  - No Weapons
    - RCMP training – no formal training
    - Have radios
  - Vacant building bylaw in process for commercial/residence
    - Fees for inspection
  - City enforcement
    - Camping in public
  - Homeless offered help
    - Not compliant
  - Mental health & training bylaw?
    - Crime increasing
  - Mall Security
  - Centralized Communications System for Security
  - Bar Watch
  - Road blocks for enforcement
  - Bylaws outdated
    - 11 for 90,000 people
    - Not revised
      - Marijuana/vaping
      - Dogs on leashes
      - 2 animal control officers
  - Solutions
    - No more taxes
    - Educate people on bylaws
    - Learn your responsibilities
    - Consistency/jurisdiction of bylaws
    - Unnecessary permits
    - Update Bylaws
      - Business licence
      - No regulation for air bnb
    - Prevention costs
    - Legal non-conforming building
    - Close streets during Summer
      - Commercial St., Gordon St., Terminal St., Wharf St.

- Bring in community/culture
- Improve signage bylaws
- Downtown improvements
  - Unique features
- Re-Design Diana Krall Plaza
- Revitalize downtown
  - Markets
  - Festivals
  - Restaurants
- Cruise ships
  - Business open
- Stronger local leadership

### **Public Safety Education**

- Issues
  - Driving safety
    - General driving etiquette
    - Speeding in school zones
    - Running stop signs
    - Not signalling
    - Following too close
  - Sidewalks
    - Safety for pedestrians
  - Street lights
    - City is too dark
  - Roadways poorly marked
    - Need painting
  - Better understanding of in-home safety equipment
    - Knowing when and how to test
    - When to replace
  - Landlord vs. Renter responsibilities
  - Commercial spaces
    - Ensuring safe practices in stores
  - Parking on bike lanes (uplands drive)
  - Speeding and parking in City Parks & Facilities
  - Needles and Disposal
  - Hell's Angels
- Solutions
  - In-school driving training
  - Stronger penalties for driving infraction
  - More lights along pathways and parks
  - Prevention education and care facilities for addiction



## **Wild Card**

- Clean streets creating safe place for children
- We need to help!
  - Facilities/Housing
  - Assessment
- Trail/Walkway Safety
  - Pedestrian path ways – lack of connectivity
    - Negative impact – “hangouts”
- Increase lighting
  - Convert to LED
  - Opportunity to “catch” criminals
  - More lighting on medians
  - Dark road signs
- Lack of shelters
  - Increase of homelessness
- Need variety of social housing locations
  - Near bus routes
- Improved public washroom infrastructure
- Access to Health supporters
- Charity transparency
- Solutions
  - LED lighting
    - Long life span
    - Cut down on light pollution
  - Program dedicated to keeping city lit
  - Homelessness
    - Housing
    - Chase River declined
      - Why?
    - More Education
      - Peer Council
    - Shortage of detox facilities
  - Holistic system
    - Supportive of low income individuals/families
  - Stigma education

## **Empty and Derelict Buildings**

- Target empty buildings
  - convert into shelters
  - Convert to affordable housing
- Secure derelict buildings - safety
- Scout Hut
  - Can hole be patched?
- Provide variety
- Tax owners unwilling to use vacant buildings
  - Larger tax

### Round 2

- Occupy buildings
  - Incentive- new businesses
- Tax exemptions for xx amount of years
- Penalty for vacant buildings
- Enforcement for vacant derelict buildings – complaint driven
- Owners not compliant
  - City forces demolition at owner's expense
  - Cost rises for each year building is vacant
- Create bylaw for unsightly buildings
- No Standards for what is 'Derelict'
  - All complaint driven
- Building has to be considered a "nuisance" to be City control
  - Nuisance calls to City – Owner is charged
  - Need more action
    - Bowen property has over 100 calls

### Solutions

- New Bylaw re: Vacant buildings
- Fines/higher taxes
  - Long-term vacant buildings
- Address Community problems
- Incentive for new owners to rebuild/renovate in-line with community plans
- City pro-active
  - Buying lots/buildings
  - Partnering with social agencies to provide market housing
  - City exemptions to occupy buildings
    - Tax exemptions
  - Housing for homeless
  - Research other communities - what's working for them

## **Public Disorder**

### Issues:

- Drug paraphernalia throughout parks and schools
  - Affected parks accessibility
  - Increasing
  - Children are vulnerable
- Homelessness
- Public Parks have lost their purpose
- Pauline H. School has no playground
  - Uses City property
    - Used by homeless
- Needle disposals not being emptied
- The “Do no Harm” Dogma
- Justice System failing

### Solutions

- Gate and lock affected areas
- Proper lighting in public spaces
- Treatment centres
- Specifically designate areas for children and families
  - Restrict entry
- 24 hour injection sites
  - Provide Wi-Fi
- Facility for homeless
  - Sports activities etc.
  - Boot Camps
- Accountability!!!
- Education
- Mental Health

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## *Appendix 2*

### *February 28 Public Engagement Session*

### *Report Back Summaries*

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#### Future of the Community Policing & Services Office

##### Issues:

- Misunderstanding of original mandate
- Confusion of why the office is there?
- What is the purpose of building?
- Lack of Community Policing out of office
  - Office is not designed to be for policing
- Policing on window – confusion

##### Location:

- Does money need to be focused elsewhere to keep building?
- The building is not secure
  - Does not support Community Policing
- Health care crisis
- Hours of operation – need to be marketed better
- Why is this building here?
- The larger issues are not the building
  - Poverty, Mental Health, Homelessness etc.
- What is the purpose?
  - Does it make downtown attractive

##### Solutions:

- Re-Brand
- Bust use of the building
- More Community Policing
- Make building Community service
- Keep building as a focal point
- Outreach ( crime prev) (resources)
- “Community Services”
  - Re-Brand- Informational Building
- Have a more visible front/active
- More volunteer/information
- Part-time bike police and part-time in office
- Make building attractive
- Partnerships to keep building open
- Private security form

- Ambassador program
- Comfort Building
  - Day place- get homelessness off of street
- Walking service
- Working Centre
  - Have building open for service other than policing
- Professionals
  - VIHA, Mental health Etc
  - Walk-ins
- Take building cost/operating monies and give to RCMP
  - More Bike RCMP Officers
- Have a physical RCMP Officer walk in streets
- Relationships

### Public Safety Education

#### Issues and Solutions

- Driving – Generally not following rules
  - Parking in bike lanes
  - Running through stop signs
  - speeding
  - Mandatory lessons in school
  - Higher penalties
  - Pedestrian friendly – more sidewalks
- Pedestrian Safety
  - More lights
  - Prioritize certain areas
    - Trees on lights
  - Sidewalks
  - Street lighting
- Drug Paraphernalia/Homelessness
  - More support for people
    - More prevention/housing
  - Education
  - More safe injection sites
  - Decentralize
    - Spread out downtown to let other areas absorb the issues

### Public Disorder

- Grow operations
  - Youth on the street

- Education of Mental Health illness – real and perceived threats
- Public Spaces
  - Issues for schools – more frequent drug use
- Solutions
  - Long term treatments
  - Alternative spaces – drop in spaces
  - Facilities that address peoples specific needs
  - Central registry top understand which services are need

### Wild Card

#### Session 1 - Issues

- Homeless
  - Homeless camps
    - Fire Safety
  - Drug paraphernalia
    - Needles on school grounds
  - Pollution/Debris
    - Wasted materials
  - Safety/Wellbeing
    - Lack of shelters
    - Low income housing
    - Inadequate toilet facilities
      - Human fecal matter on sidewalks/public areas
  - Pure Involvement
    - Treatment for mental health
    - Promote safety – clean needles
      - Disease
- Lack of housing
  - Community building
  - Property prices too high
    - Bus transit?
  - Who is responsible?
    - Levels of government
- Public Safety
  - Women safety at Westwood
  - Pedestrian pathways not effective
    - Promotes crimes
    - Theft
    - Drug use
    - Public indecency

- Issues of Transparency and Spending
  - Matters of spending
  - Too much transparency
  - Lighting
  - Wages of workers
- Lighting in City of Nanaimo
  - Street lights far apart
    - Vision limited during dark hours
    - Promotes crimes?
  - LED lighting
    - Easier maintenance
    - Less power consumption
    - Less light pollution
    - Less collisions
  - Dark Signs
    - Better signage
    - Security
    - Loiterers
    - Effects tourism
- Archive
  - Better platforms
  - Better promotion
  - Safe place for communication
    - Fear of communication
  - How to participate
    - Social Media
- Buy Property
  - Homelessness
  - Reconciliation area
  - Facility to promote recovery
- Solutions
  - Safe Injections
    - Personal Collection Boxes
    - Education
      - Impeded by safety/Security
      - Distribution of clean needle cites
      - Form Community
        - Pass information from person to person
        - Peer users information
    - Uplands block
      - Supportive Housing
    - Housing programs with supportive systems
      - Counselling/group sessions
    - Chase River

- Supply areas for upward transition
- Comprehensive Housing Projects focused on Food/Heath
  - Supportive housing: Supportive systems and housing
  - Provide both long term and short term housing
- Housing First Aid
- Cost Benefit Analysis
  - Keep people on the streets vs. housing people

## **Bylaws**

- Snow/Sidewalks
  - Over 1000 kms
  - Call public works
  - Sidewalk plows
  - Parkway / E&N
- Building Division Safety
  - Public Safety
  - Dog safety

## **RCMP Priorities**

- Traffic issues
  - Distracted driving
- Youth Engagement
  - Children safety
  - Youth empowerment
  - Safety on streets
- Solutions
  - Prevention
  - Presence
    - Interactivity with the public
    - Police presence
      - Growing population
    - Work in collaboration
      - Health Authority
    - RCMP in high schools – liaison

## **Emergency Management**

- Large program
  - Immediate need
    - Staff are interested, inter-agency
  - Who's really prepared?
  - Major cities will concern themselves first
- Populations as a whole
  - Associations & Non Profit on us on themselves



- Locations
  - Schools, Beban, Bowen, Oliver Woods
- Questions for Community
  - How to get information to community
  - Where to go?
  - How to get there?
  - Do we have the resources?
- Youth Engagement
  - Work with Red Cross Etc.
  - Visit schools – Primary and Kindergarten
- Accidents Occurring
  - Whose jurisdiction is clean up of oil, broken glass etc.
- Accessibility
- How to get people to take this seriously
  - Neighbourhood scale discussion
  - Capitalize on awareness during global incidents
  - Get children involved
  - Creative use of social media
    - YouTube, Facebook Ads

### **Empty and Derelict Buildings**

- Why aren't empty buildings targeting low income housing
  - Working poor
- Derelict buildings must be secure to fire code
- Property maintenance bylaw
  - Looking for compliance – then ticket
- Vacant buildings structurally unsound
  - Inspected by Inspector
    - City can take action for owner to remove or bring into compliance
- Mould issues unaddressed
- Scout Hut building damage patched
- Buildings with free Wi-Fi
  - Homeless congregate nearby
- Bylaw Officers complete 2 person sweep daily
- What appropriation power does Municipality have?
  - Taxation powers for owners unwilling to use space
    - AB & Sound building

## **Public Disorder**

### Session 1 – Issues

- Drug Paraphernalia in parks
- Homeless
  - Housing project rejected
    - Needs to go somewhere
- City vs Government
  - Who's responsible?
    - Jurisdiction issues
- Pauline H.- no playground
  - Playground is on city property
- Bowen Park
  - Children picking up used needles
- Downtown unenjoyable
  - Vulnerable area
- Public not seeing benefit of housing
  - Public speaking events
    - People need to attend – educate people

### Session 2

- One housing unit approved, another not
  - Timing with election\
- Neighbourhood/community engagement
- Closed/Gated schools at night
  - Not affordable long-term
- Treatment solution
  - Mental health care
- Scouts hut
  - Lack of proper lighting
  - Usage agreement between Scouts and City?
- 24 hour safe injection site
  - Public Wi-Fi
- Exchange system

### Session 3

- Disposal sites
  - Empty more frequently
- Supportive Community
  - Nursing home facility for example
    - Food, clothing, community kitchen
  - Supervised injection sites
- Reality therapy

- Holding people accountable/responsible
- Outward bound camps Vs. prison
- Justice System
- Positive activities
  - Sports
  - Positive experiences
- Needs not being met
  - Loaves and Fishes

#### Session 4

- Crime prevention
  - Penalties
- Harm Reduction
- City wants new injection site/ VIHA doesn't
- Education/Training

CITY OF NANAIMO  
PARKS AND RECREATION

HOMELESSNESS ISSUES & GARBAGE CONCERNS

Parks and Recreation is responsible for maintaining 1,200 hectares of parkland, over 120 km of trails, grounds at City Hall & SARC, and portions of the downtown including Diana Krall Plaza, etc., as well as all recreation centres throughout the City of Nanaimo.

2017 saw an increase in volume of garbage collected, numbers of needles removed, and the amount of vandalism and break-ins. It also saw an increase in negative interactions with the transient population. This continues to have an impact on workload for both staff and an increased reliance on contractors. With the increasing homeless population in Nanaimo, presence of homeless in parks has increased significantly.

The following is a summary of how garbage, sharps, encampments, and vandalism are handled by the Parks and Recreation department.

#### STAFF RESOURCES

Within the Parks and Recreation Department, the need for sharps and garbage clean up vary by area.

- 25 Parks Operations staff are trained and do clean up on a daily basis. There are an additional 10 seasonal staff through the summer that are also involved in the clean up.
- On the Recreation Services side of the department, finding needles is less common, especially since the installation of the needle boxes in the recreation centres. All Facility Operations staff, Custodians and Lifeguards will do needle clean up on an as-needed basis.

#### QUICK FACTS – P&R department

- 424 garbage cans in parks
- Daily clean up in the downtown core (& Comox Park)
- 34 needle boxes

**Parks & Recreation make needle clean-up their number #1 priority at all times. Staff will attend as soon as possible once a needle(s) is reported or sighted.**

#### STAFF TRAINING & ACCESS

- Sharps disposal and garbage are discussed formally monthly at tailgates.
- **Sharps containers are at every staff location, every parks vehicle (including lawnmowers, tractors, etc.), and a minimum of one per recreation centre in staff areas. These sharps containers are disposed of at Harris House.**
- Documentation provided to staff including the sharps containers map, information on disposal, safework procedures, etc.
- PPE provided through managers & Stores – Personal protective equipment – gloves, sharps-rated gloves, sharps containers, tongs, etc.
- All staff are able to receive the Twinrix vaccine. Personal choice, but most staff who have interaction with Bloodborne Pathogens have taken advantage of the program.

### Changes in 2017

- Discussions at safety meetings regarding exposure to powder/airborne drugs, contaminated transient debris, use of naloxone, how to deal with exposure, etc.
- Large deposits of needles contaminated with debris make clean up difficult.

### CPTED – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Parks and Recreation staff have been employing CPTED principles throughout parkland and around recreation centres to reduce issues. CPTED is the design, maintenance, and use of built environment in order to enhance quality of life and to reduce both the incidence and fear of crime.

- Measures have been mainly taken with improvements to lighting and vegetation measures. Both measures have taken steps to remove areas that offer concealment or hiding spots and to increase visibility, allowing the public to observe their surroundings more easily.
- Principle of Territoriality, designating clearly the start of parkland, have been employed at areas such as Deverill Square Gyro Park with children's artwork placed on the perimeter fencing.
- Prompt repair of vandalism or removal of graffiti: P&R staff deal with the issues promptly to display that the property is maintained and unwanted behavior is not permitted.
- Irrigation: Staff have employed the use of irrigation to deter stopping in downtown park areas due to safety concerns. Grass will be made wet, making it uncomfortable for someone to stop and rest on.



Italian Fountain site prior to CPTED (above) and after (below)



### Meetings

Parks and Recreation staff meet bi-annually with RCMP, Bylaws, Animal Control and others to discuss and mitigate ongoing issues and discuss trends and prevention methods.

### CONTRACTOR SERVICES

#### GARBAGE CONTRACT

Public garbage cans are provided throughout City parkland and trails. All **424 garbage cans** are serviced by a contractor. Cans are serviced based on location and volume from a weekly service to a daily servicing. The contractor also picks up any litter debris in a 3m radius of the can and will remove any graffiti on cans. Any other issues are reported promptly (same day) to the Parks Operations staff. **Needles are picked up by this contractor on a routine basis.**

## ON DEMAND FOR ENCAMPMENT & CONTAMINATED DEBRIS

Encampments, once cleared with the assistance of the Bylaw Department, are mainly cleaned up by a contractor. Staff have now also been utilizing contractors when there is the risk of the transient debris being contaminated with drug powder and/or needles.

Work has been split between Acer Landscaping and Lone Pine Landscaping. Both companies have experience in removing the debris and will use equipment/machines where needed.

## SHARPS DISPOSAL UNITS

There are now 34 units provided by Parks and Recreation divided by 22 units in 8 recreation centres, 7 units on parkland, and 5 units in the city-operated Community Services Building. Five units in parks had to be replaced with heavier duty anti-vandalism units after several thefts and tampering incidents. These units are serviced by a contractor, with a minimum of a monthly basis, depending on season and location.

## JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY

Picking up garbage on hard surface trails (E&N Trail, etc.). **Picks up sharps as needed.**

## PARKS OPERATIONS – Changes in Work Habits

### Sweep of downtown parkland and gardens

The downtown grass crew routinely did a sweep of the downtown areas on a Monday. With ongoing issues, this was increased to a Monday / Friday sweep, then a 3-day a week sweep, and then a daily sweep. The clean up started to take too much time, so through the winter months, 1 staff person has been doing a daily sweep for a minimum of two hours, cleaning up needle debris and other garbage. Larger deposits of garbage are cleaned up by contractors. This amount of time spent on clean-up is not sustainable as we move into the busy summer season.

## CHANGES AND TRENDS IN 2017 & 2018

### LANDSCAPE HORTICULTURISTS

The Landscape Horticulturists have modified their work practices.

- Prior to starting work in a garden bed, depending on the size of the bed, they will devote 10 to 20 minutes doing a sweep for needles or other debris.
- Employees used to work in garden beds alone. Employees working downtown now work in pairs or teams.
- Work conducted in the early morning is now always done in teams.
- Modification of planting beds: Plantings are now spaced out more to reduce hidden areas. Types of plants have been switched to more streamline plants, reducing hiding spots.



Example of a needle found in a garden bed.

### PARKS CUSTODIANS

Significant changes have taken place for the Parks Custodians. Parks Custodians used to work graveyard shifts on their own. Custodians, as of January, now work in pairs and now work an early morning shift. Venting is being installed in their vehicles to reduce the risk of being exposed to noxious fumes and risk of exposure.

### FACILITY CHANGES - Bowen East washrooms

Washrooms on the east side of Bowen Park have been closed since November 2017 due to vandalism and misuse. Transient populations were using it as a shelter at times throughout the day. Since closing, the locks have been snapped off 3 times.

This washroom is not the first to be locked due to vandalism. Staff have used it as deterrent and will either lock completely or shorten opening hours.



## HOT SPOTS

Most of the worse areas are in the downtown core. Maffeo Sutton Park, Nob Hill Park, Diana Krall Plaza & Wharf St Loo, City Hall / SARC, Anchor Way, Piper Park, and Comox Gyro Park. Other areas checked daily are Robins Park, Beaufort Park, and Bowen Park along the Millstone River.

Issues in Maffeo Sutton Park are concentrated around areas that offer concealment and/or shelter, including, washrooms, Lions Pavilion, Memorial Wall, etc.

Issues with encampments occur in Caledonia Park, Comox Park, Bowen Park, Colliery Dam Park and May Richards Bennett Pioneer Park.

Parks Operations has been in the process of removing all dugouts to remove shelter areas. Issues with dugouts are focused at May Richards Bennett Pioneer Park and Sid Clark Gyro Park.



Stash of brand new needles found in Maffeo Sutton Park

## AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

The transient population is becoming increasingly aggressive and confrontational towards City staff members. There were several incidents this past summer with Parks Operations staff that were reported through the Violent Incident process. Staff were assaulted in a few incidents while they were in the process of cleaning up areas of the downtown. There have also been incidents with a transient group that have dogs at May Richards Bennett Pioneer Park. Other times, staff have been threatened and then vacated the area prior to further confrontation.

Needles are being jammed into toilet paper rolls, presenting a risk to staff and the public. Needles that are concealed and not found through the safety check have been sent flying when staff are operating weed eaters. A knife was found concealed in a washroom stall in Maffeo Sutton Park.

## ACROSS PROPERTY LINES

Network connections and reporting structure built up with other private property owners with issues including, but not limited to, Regional District of Nanaimo, Island Corridor Foundation, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Transportation. These areas always prove challenging as the transient population seems to recognize where property lines start and end.



## VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Volunteer programs have been utilized for assisting with the maintenance of parks for several years. In the past, volunteers were focused on cleaning up garbage and reducing invasive plants and reporting issues to Parks Operations. Interaction with “sharps” was broken glass. There is now concern from staff whether it is still safe to have these groups working in certain areas and we are currently looking at revising documents to include information about drug paraphernalia and exposure risk.

### PARK AMBASSADORS

We have 12 active Park Ambassadors and 24 others who participate on a casual basis. Park Ambassadors are individuals who frequent a park or trail on a regular basis. Some of them will utilize sharps containers and clean up needles but that is not expected from them. Parks Operations will clean up as soon as they are reported.

### ADOPT-A-PARK

We have 4 active Adopt-A-Park groups who are specifically looking after one park each and 4 other groups who are doing consistent work parties. Sharps containers are provided to them but there is no expectation to clean up needles or drug paraphernalia.

### WORK PARTIES

Work Parties are one-off groups who wish to do a clean-up in our parks. These groups range from children to adults and various areas from woodland areas to beaches.