

From: Myra Thomson
Sent: December 21, 2020 8:45 AM
To: Mayor and Council <mayor.council@nanaimo.ca>

Dear Nanaimo Mayor and Council,

Re: The homeless population displaced from Wesley Street encampment

We the undersigned urge our Nanaimo Council and City staff to take immediate action to ensure the most basic amenities are available to people who lost their homes when evicted from the Wesley Street encampment earlier this month due to fire.

The three most basic amenities that the City must ensure, for reasons of both human rights as well as community public health while in midst of a global pandemic, are:

- 1) Access to drinking water.
- 2) Access to toilets.
- 3) Access to dry shelter (encampment) for sleeping in winter.

Access to Drinking Water

The City must ensure that all public drinking fountains in the downtown and Bowen Park areas are repaired and turned on. If vandalism occurs, the fountains must be swiftly repaired at City expense. This is simply the cost of running a City in 2020. Vandalism committed by one is not a legitimate basis for voiding basic human rights of an entire population.

The City must also ensure that City staff do not remove drinking water or water containers brought to the homeless by community volunteers. Whatever the reason was for staff removing these donated water containers, it must stop.

Access to Toilets

All currently locked portapotties erected by the City in the downtown and Bowen Park areas must be unlocked and, if necessary, repaired and cleaned and emptied so they are usable. As with the public fountains, if a portapotty is tipped over or vandalized, it must be swiftly repaired and put back into service. Furthermore, more portapotties must be set up in these areas. Sanitation of our streets and parks and the people living outdoors is crucial during this global pandemic.

Access to Dry Shelter for Sleeping

The City must immediately designate an area where this displaced homeless population can erect tents and leave them up—not have to take them down each morning. This will, at minimum, provide reasonably dry sleeping, as well as some continuity and greater safety in the lives of the occupants.

We are all aware of the many problems and concerns and community complaints associated with homelessness and specifically homeless encampments.

However, we are also living in a unique time as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Sanitation is paramount right now. We are no longer talking merely about the human rights of the homeless members of our community. By ensuring that their most basic needs for water, toilets, and tents are met, we reduce Covid transmission for the entire community. These measures are all within the authority of Nanaimo City Council, and it is Council's responsibility to use these municipal measures to prevent the spread of Covid.

Signed,

Kim Goldberg

Myra Thomson

Dyane Brown

Fred Pattje

Eva Manly

Jim Manly

Holly Bright

Adrianne Dartnell

Rick Lennert

Jesse Birch

Rev. Frances Deverell

Rev. Peggy Jensen

Rev. Kris Jensen

Mary Ann Moore

Kevin Midbo

Antoinette Spoor

Kate Burns

Liza Potvin

June Ross

Robyn Kemp

Janet Hicks

Audrey West

Lynn Burrows

Kari Fetherston

Lavonne Garnet

Nick Dudink

Noelle Hanuse

Maria Gomes

Terre Flower

Leanne McIntosh

Kristin King

Barbara Johnston

Donna Birkinshaw

Linda Stedfield

Catherine McKenzie

Christine Arcand

Wiseman Mnguni

Mariam Mnguni

Sandra Leigh

Dee Fontans

Theresa Hood

Susan Garcia

Bari Precious

Gloria Jorg

Nansey Sinclair

Patricia Boyden

Alan Boyden

Ken Wilson

Barbara A. Smith

Lianne Smithaniuk

Karen Max

Sonja Billiard

Shelley Serebrin

Noel Lewis Watts

Patricia Robison

Hermine Hicks

Anne Manikel

Randy Manikel

Kassandra Hamilton

Dale Perkins

Hugh McLeod

Kathryn-Jane Hazel

Ian Gartshore

Julia Roberts

Ann Ronald

Paulette Roscoe

Linda Braid

Larry Whaley

Marilyn Huffman

Philip Huffman

Phil Little

Anne Marie McDonell

David Tyler

Lawrence Atkinson

Ken Young

Eve Reinarz

Gerry Bates

Pauline Johnson

Myrna Broughton

Michelle Auffredou

Dennis Lacusta

Norman Abbey

John (Joon-sang) Oh

Julie (Young-joo) Oh

Pam Atkinson Brown

Vic Batchelor

Germaine Batchelor

Jackie Moad

Ingrid Bolin

Bob Hollies

Myra Thomson