

NEWS RELEASE

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Council approves extra downtown and parks security and cleaning

Preparations for the closure of the tent city at 1 Port Drive moved ahead on Monday night when, at their regular meeting, Nanaimo City Council approved additional funds for extra cleaning and security downtown and in city parks.

"I want to thank the businesses and residents near 1 Port Drive for their patience over the past four months or so. With the closure date for tent city getting closer the City wants to ensure our downtown is clean and safe," said Mayor Bill McKay, "We also know that more people are using our parks, including as overnight camping spots, so we're extending and adding to parks maintenance and cleaning to ensure everyone feels safe using the trails and playing fields."

Extra services to pick up needles and garbage, provide security and cleaning services were extended in recognition of the impact of the tent city on Nanaimo's downtown.

Extending parks custodians and auxiliary workers to the end of December will help mitigate the use of parks for overnight camping and the use of downtown parks by occupants of the tent city.

Downtown cleaning and security costs are estimated at \$190,800; parks cleaning and maintenance are estimated at \$111,000. The total authorized expenditure of \$301,800 will be drawn from the 2018 budget surplus.

A recent Court decision grants the City an interim injunction against trespassers on 1 Port Drive and allows the RCMP to remove people from the site after October 12, 2018. Work is underway to determine how best to manage closure of the camp to minimize further disruption to businesses and residents as BC Housing and the City consider immediate and longer term housing options for Nanaimo's homeless population.

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