



Background

The Nanaimo tent city at 1 Port Drive was established by activists in mid-May 2018. Soon after the illegal encampment began, the City of Nanaimo applied to the Supreme Court for an injunction aimed at closing down and removing the 'tent city'.

On Sept. 21, the Court granted the City an interim injunction allowing the RCMP to begin closing the camp, but with a 21-day notice period so that campers could disperse in an orderly way.

Since May, the City has been working with BC Housing and service agencies to find immediate and lasting solutions for the many vulnerable people living at 1 Port Drive and in other smaller camps around the city.

BC Housing announced Oct. 5 that they would provide 170 units of temporary, modular housing to be placed at two locations in Nanaimo, and stated that future permanent supportive housing would be constructed at 250 Terminal Avenue. Letters from BC Housing were sent to residents near both sites.

The lawyer representing some tent city occupants filed an application with the Supreme Court Oct. 12, requesting that tent city occupants be allowed to remain at 1 Port Drive until Dec. 31, 2018 by which time the 170 units of temporary, modular housing are expected to be ready for occupancy.

The Court agreed to hear the application at 9 am Friday, Oct. 19. Respecting the Court's process, City Council voted to defer the existing court order for closure until after the outcome of the new application is known.

Over the past two weeks, additional public health nurses, social workers and outreach workers at 1 Port Drive have provided medical and other supports to assist camp occupants in their move away from the site. City and agency staff are also ensuring recreational and other vehicles on the site are removed and do not return.

City staff provide garbage removal, sanitary services and potable water as required to maintain public health. RCMP and Bylaw officers attend the site regularly to provide security for City staff and to respond to calls for assistance or reports of possible crimes and bylaw infractions.

On Oct. 1, Council approved spending \$301,000 for additional security, needle pick-up and street cleaning in Nanaimo's downtown, and extended custodial and garbage removal in City parks in recognition of the ongoing impact of the downtown 'tent city' and other homeless camps.