

NEWS RELEASE

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Court extends deadline for tent city closure with City's preferred conditions

Occupants of the tent city encampment at 1 Port Drive can stay on the site until November 30, 2018, after the Honourable Justice Ronald Skolrood issued a second order in BC Supreme Court today in response to an application from lawyer Noah Ross, representing some occupants of the tent city. The order includes conditions that will improve the safety of residents in the tent city, and those who live and work nearby. Most of the conditions set by Nanaimo City Council to permit the extension of the Court's deadline for closing the encampment at 1 Port Drive were included in the order.

The application sought by Ross requested occupants be allowed to stay until December 31, after BC Housing opens 170 units of temporary modular housing on two sites in Nanaimo. The City opposed the application to extend the deadline for closure, but provided conditions to protect public safety and reduce the number of occupants.

The second interim order will be finalized next week and will include the following conditions:

1.

No vehicles, trailers or structures permitted on the site, effective immediately.

2.

No one under 19 years of age is permitted on the site, effective immediately.

3.

Fire Service orders from May 30 and September 13, can be enforced except for removal of tarps beginning October 25.

4.

Beginning October 26 at 5pm any occupant who is genuinely homeless and seeks transition to housing (qualifying occupant) must identify themselves to the City, BC Housing or its agents with photo identification or if they don't have ID, by agreeing to be photographed and providing their full legal name.

5.

By 5 pm Friday, October 26, all occupants except qualifying occupants must vacate the property. Anyone who remains will be escorted off the property by the City, RCMP or its employees.

6.

All occupants, including qualifying occupants, must vacate by 2 pm Friday, November 30, 2018.

"The Court recognizes the public safety hazards on the site and disruption to neighbouring residents and businesses and has given us some tools to alleviate the stress on people inside and around the camp," said Mayor Bill McKay, "The conditions will help Fire Safety, Bylaws enforcement and police tackle some of the major public safety concerns and give us some tools to control who lives there."

Justice Skolrood issued an interim order on September 21, 2018, which took effect October 12 and would have ended the encampment at 1 Port Drive.

Continued... Court extends deadline for tent city closure with City's preferred conditions

Beginning today, October 19, 2018, BC Housing will provide 24/7 security along the perimeter of 1 Port Drive until the camp is closed to support public safety of the community.

Earlier this month, BC Housing announced it would provide 170 units of temporary modular housing in Nanaimo at 250 Terminal Avenue and on an available portion of the City's public works yard on Labieux Road. BC Housing has not provided a date as to when such housing will become available.

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