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VANCOUVER: Issue Overview

Background

The Province takes a Housing First approach to homelessness and encampments, prioritizing access to supports and safe and secure housing. Since the COVID-19 pandemic started there has been an increased concentration of people in Oppenheimer Park and the surrounding area due to the closing of drop in centres, capacity issues at emergency shelters, guest restrictions enforced in surrounding congregate housing, and the closure of local indoor markets that has pushed vendors out onto the street. The increased density in the area has resulted in increased risk to public safety, as reported by service providers in the area and police, and a reduced ability of people in these areas to maintain physical distance, self-isolate, access sanitation and hygiene facilities and access food and shelter.

Objective

To transition people from homeless encampments in Vancouver's Oppenheimer Park and surrounding area into safer shelter and housing in accordance with Public Health orders and guidance, and the Provincial State of Emergency (PSOE), declared under the Emergency Program Act (EPA) by early to mid-May 2020.

Approach

Given these circumstances, the Province is acting to quickly transition the people camping in Oppenheimer Park and people experiencing homelessness in the immediate surrounding area to safer indoor locations and secure the Oppenheimer Park site. ^{s.13}

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VICTORIA: Issue Overview

Background

The Province takes a Housing First approach to homelessness and encampments, prioritizing access to safe and secure housing and supported by wrap-around health, mental health, and other services. Since the COVID-19 pandemic started there has been increased concentration of people in the Pandora Street Corridor and surrounding area due to the closing of drop in centres, medical restrictions and capacity issues at shelters coupled with high level of discretion being exercised regarding bylaw enforcement to mitigate the health risks. The increased density has resulted in increased concerns about public safety, and the ability of people in these areas to maintain physical distancing, self-isolate, access sanitation and hygiene facilities and access food and shelter.

In response to the initial densification of campers in the Pandora Street Corridor, the City of Victoria, agreed to permit the development of an encampment at Topaz Park with services and supports. This encampment included a tent layout plan and a level of services, including: hygiene facilities, physical distancing of tents, basic security, food services, outreach, health and other supports. BC Housing funded a non-profit to work with the City of Vitoria to support Topaz, but it did not directly manage or oversee the effort. In addition to Topaz Park, BC Housing has been working closely with the City of Victoria over the past 6 weeks to house particularly at-risk individuals by housing people in available social housing (where there is capacity and a fit (e.g. women's housing) as well as securing temporary hotels rooms. BCH currently has 180 rooms secured and mostly occupied, and it has another 300 under negotiation.

Police and service providers are reporting that the Pandora and Topaz homeless encampments in Victoria have become increasingly unsafe and public health mitigation measures so untenable that the Province is acting to quickly transition the people to safer locations and secure the sites. The City and BCH are reporting approximately 350 campers between both the Pandora Street Corridor and Topaz Park.

Objective

To transition people from homeless encampments along Pandora Avenue and Topaz Park into safer shelter and housing in accordance with Public Health orders and guidance, and the Provincial State of Emergency (PSOE), declared under the Emergency Program Act (EPA) by early to mid-May 2020.

Approach

Given the volume and physical distribution of people across public spaces, it may be difficult to disperse both locations in the same way and on the same schedule.

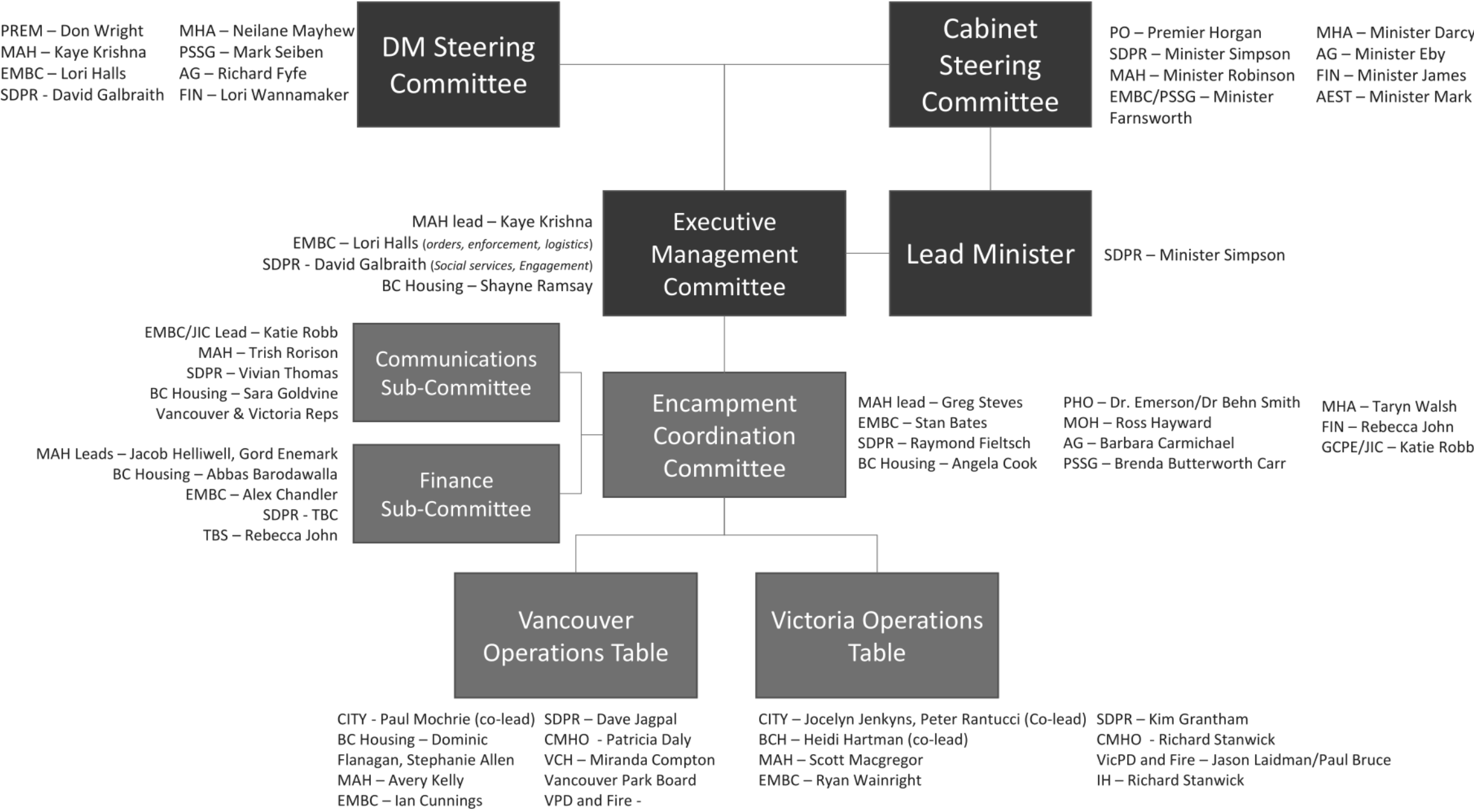
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Governance Structure



Governance Responsibilities

Cabinet Steering Committee

- Meet 1x per week or every other week
- Key policy decisions
- Key implementation and stakeholder feedback
- Receive executive reports on progress and outcomes

Lead Minister

- Manage stakeholder relations
- Provide policy feedback and operational feedback
- Receive reports on status, issues, communications, finance
- Liaison and issues escalation with Cabinet Steering Committee

DM Steering

- Meet 1-3x per week
- Key policy feedback and direction
- Input into operational planning and implementation
- Support respective operational teams and issues resolution
- Receive reports on status, issues, communications, finance
- Liaison and issues escalation with Cabinet Committee

Executive Management Committee

- Meet 3-6x per week
- Key policy direction
- Oversight of operational planning and implementation
- Receive reports on status, issues, communications, finance
- Liaison and issues escalation with PREM (Don Wright) and DM Committee
- Liaison and issues escalation with Lead Minister and Cabinet Committee

Encampment Coordination Committee

- Meet daily PM
- Key operational direction
- Receive reports on: city status, communications, legal issues
- Escalation to DM's (ESC)
- Broad Ministry Representation
- Daily report back to ESC lead

Communications Subcommittee

- Meet as needed
- Coordinate communications framework
- Common messaging
- Topic specific comms plans
- Coordinate stakeholder engagement.
- Report to ECC

Finance Subcommittee

- Meet as needed
- Identify costs associated with near term vulnerably housed actions (decampments, food security, shelter thinning)
- Secure approval of funding via TB
- Monitoring of decampment costs
- Identification of long term funding needs and approval

Vancouver/ Victoria Operations Tables

- Meet daily AM
- Detailed planning
- Operational mobilization and implementation
- Coordination of service providers
- Daily reporting to Executive Management Committee

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Provincial Coordination Teams

ADM Strategic and Coordination Team

Health/PHO: Ross Hayward
 MAH: Greg Steves
 BCH: Shayne Ramsay
 EMBC
 PSSG/AG
 SDPR
 MMHA
 MCFD

Operational Teams

	Victoria	Vancouver	Provincial
BCH leads	Heidi Hartman	Dominic Flanagan, Stephanie Allen	Angela Cook PHO
Housing Policy	Scott McGregor	Avery Kelly, Sarah Petrescu	Greg Steves
Health			Ross Hayward
Health Authority/PHO	Richard Stanwick	Patricia Daly	Brian Emerson
Partner Ministries	Kim Grantham, SDPR	Dave Jagpal, SDPR	Raymond Fieltsch or Daryn Martiniuk, SDPR
Financial	Gord Enemark, MAH Abbas Barodawalla, BCH	Gord Enemark, MAH Abbas Barodawalla, BCH	Gord Enemark, MAH Abbas Barodawalla, BCH, Rebecca John, TBS
Communications/ Media Relations	JIC Katie Robb, Trish Rorison, MAH, Vivian Thomas, SDPR	JIC Katie Robb, Trish Rorison, MAH, Vivian Thomas, SDPR Sara	JIC PHO
Local Government Tables (incl. police)	City of Victoria, Island Health, Coalition to End Homelessness, Dandelion Society, VICPD	PHS and peers, BC Housing (Orange Hall), City of Vancouver, Carnegie outreach providers, VPD	MAH, SDPR, PSSG, Health, MMHA, MCFD, EMBC

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Hunt, Charlotte PSSG:EX

From: Hunt, Charlotte PSSG:EX
Sent: May 8, 2020 11:10 AM
To: Brown, Tom G EMBC:EX
Cc: Maartman, William PSSG:EX; Douglas, Andrew PSSG:EX; Halls, Lori D EMBC:EX; Roe, Sandra EMBC:EX; Sanderson, Melanie PSSG:EX
Subject: RE: EPA order - encampments order #2
Attachments: MO - Encampment Health and Safety No 2.pdf

Good morning Tom,

Please find attached a signed copy of MO – Encampments Health and Safety Order #2.

Kind regards,



Charlotte Hunt

*Senior Administrative Assistant to the
Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
and Government House Leader
Direct Line: 250 356-2178*

From: Sanderson, Melanie PSSG:EX
Sent: May 8, 2020 11:01 AM
To: Brown, Tom G EMBC:EX
Cc: Maartman, William PSSG:EX ; Douglas, Andrew PSSG:EX ; Halls, Lori D EMBC:EX ; Roe, Sandra EMBC:EX ; Hunt, Charlotte PSSG:EX
Subject: FW: EPA order - encampments order #2
Importance: High

Hi All,
MMF has approved. Charlotte, could you please e-sig?

Thanks,
Melanie

From: Brown, Tom G EMBC:EX <Tom.Brown@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 8, 2020 8:21 AM
To: Sanderson, Melanie PSSG:EX <Melanie.Sanderson@gov.bc.ca>; Maartman, William PSSG:EX <William.Maartman@gov.bc.ca>; Douglas, Andrew PSSG:EX <Andrew.Douglas@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Halls, Lori D EMBC:EX <Lori.D.Halls@gov.bc.ca>; Roe, Sandra EMBC:EX <Sandra.Roe@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: EPA order - encampments order #2
Importance: High

Hi there - attached please find the s.10 ministerial order that addresses the revised deadline for the City of Victoria encampments.

Can you please have MMF consider approving as soon as possible? Please have the order dated today, May 8 and pdf'd back to me.

Thanks very much
Tom

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ORDER OF THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

Emergency Program Act

Ministerial Order No.

WHEREAS a declaration of a state of emergency throughout the whole of the Province of British Columbia was declared on March 18, 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic;

AND WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic poses a significant threat to the health, safety and welfare of the residents of British Columbia, and threatens to disproportionately impact the most vulnerable segments of society;

AND WHEREAS section 10 (1) of the *Emergency Program Act* provides that I may do all acts and implement all procedures that I consider necessary to prevent, respond to or alleviate the effects of any emergency, including causing the evacuation of persons and the removal of personal property from any area of British Columbia that is or may be affected by an emergency, and making arrangements for the adequate care and protection of those persons and personal property;

AND WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a reduction in the necessary supports available to people experiencing homelessness in encampments such as outreach, shelter, housing, food, income, access to day programs, harm reduction and health services;

AND WHEREAS the conditions in the encampments that have been established in Oppenheimer Park, Topaz Park and the Pandora Avenue corridor (the “Encampments”) pose a risk to the health, safety and welfare of the persons in the Encampments;

AND WHEREAS efforts to relocate persons from the Encampments to alternative housing and to improve sanitation within the Encampments have not been sufficiently successful;

AND WHEREAS the conditions in the Encampments present health and safety risks for first responders, health care workers, and the staff and volunteers of support agencies, who must attend at the Encampments for emergency, injury or health reasons or to otherwise ensure that the complex needs of the vulnerable populations in the Encampments are met;

AND WHEREAS changes to how financial and social supports are being delivered during the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated pre-existing safety and public order issues within the Encampments;

Date

Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General

(This part is for administrative purposes only and is not part of the Order.)

Authority under which Order is made:

Act and section: Emergency Program Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 111, s. 10

Other: MO 73/2020; MO 83/2020; OIC 207/2020

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has developed a comprehensive plan in consultation with the Cities of Vancouver and Victoria, associated police, fire and other agencies, non-government organizations and other stakeholders, to provide adequate alternative living arrangements and other health and social supports for persons currently residing in the Encampments, including the care of their personal property;

AND WHEREAS measures are needed to address the risks to health, safety, and welfare associated with the conditions in the Encampments;

I, Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, order that

- (a) the Encampment Health and Safety (COVID-19) Order made by MO 128/2020 is repealed, and
- (b) the attached Encampment Health and Safety (COVID-19) Order No. 2 is made.

ENCAMPMENT HEALTH AND SAFETY (COVID-19) ORDER NO. 2

Application

- 1** (1) This order applies during the period that starts on the date this order is made and ends on the date on which the last extension of the declaration of a state of emergency made March 18, 2020 under section 9 (1) of the *Emergency Program Act* expires or is cancelled.
- (2) This order replaces the Encampment Health and Safety (COVID-19) Order made by MO 128/2020.

Evacuation of encampments

- 2** All persons camping in, residing in or occupying any of the areas listed in the attached Appendix must evacuate the area as soon as practicable, but
 - (a) in the case of Oppenheimer Park, no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) on May 9, 2020, and
 - (b) in the case of Topaz Park and the Pandora Avenue Corridor, no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) on May 20, 2020.

Entry to encampments prohibited

- 3** A person must not enter any of the areas listed in the attached Appendix for the purpose of camping in, residing in or occupying the area.

APPENDIX

- 1 The area known as Oppenheimer Park in the City of Vancouver, having a legal description of:
PID 015-585-395, Block 54 (Explanatory Plan 6556), District Lot 196, Plan 196, Vancouver District.
- 2 The area known as Topaz Park in the City of Victoria, having a legal description of:
PID 003-652-297, Lot 4, Sections 4 and 5, Victoria District, Plan 19667, except Part in Plan 3718 RW;
PID 003-854-752, Lot 1, Section 4, Victoria District, Plan 17978; and
PID 004-040-210, Lot A, Section 4, Victoria District, Plan 16258.
- 3 The area in the City of Victoria shown outlined in bold on the attached map ("Pandora Avenue Corridor"), being
 - (a) the portion of Pandora Avenue between Blanshard Street and Chambers Street, and
 - (b) the portion of Vancouver Street between Pandora Avenue and Johnson Street.

Pandora Avenue Corridor



Hunt, Charlotte PSSG:EX

From: Sanderson, Melanie PSSG:EX
Sent: May 8, 2020 9:21 AM
To: Farnworth, Mike PSSG:EX
Subject: For Approval - EPA order - encampments order #2
Attachments: MO - Encampment Health and Safety No 2.docx

Importance: High

Minister,

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Pandora Avenue Corridor



Hunt, Charlotte PSSG:EX

From: Farnworth, Mike PSSG:EX
Sent: May 8, 2020 10:12 AM
To: Sanderson, Melanie PSSG:EX
Subject: Re: For Approval - EPA order - encampments order #2

Good to go

Sent from my iPhone

> On May 8, 2020, at 9:20 AM, Sanderson, Melanie PSSG:EX <Melanie.Sanderson@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

>

>