



Joint statement on the encampment located at Fairview Road and Highway 97

(snpink'tn January 14, 2025) The City of Penticton, the snpink'tn Indian Band and the Province are working to find solutions to the encampment located at Fairview Road and Highway 97.

"We want to ensure for the safety of everyone in our community and have taken steps, in partnership, to make that happen," says Mayor Julius Bloomfield. "Working with 100 More Homes, BC Housing and Interior Health, we've established a winter shelter that provides support and connections for those experiencing homelessness. We're also working with the provincial government and the snpink'tn Indian Band on the encampment located along the channel."

The encampment's management falls outside of City and snpink'tn jurisdiction, leaving administrative responsibility with the Province. The lands are part of unsurrendered syilx Nation Territory and were once snpink'tn Indian Band reserve lands, however, they were appropriated by the Federal crown in the 1950's and then transferred from the Federal Crown to the Province in 1955 for flood control and infrastructure projects. These lands were intended to revert to Reserve status but were never returned. The lands are now provincially registered and not classified as Reserve lands, leaving administrative responsibility for the encampment with the Province.

Although responsibility for the encampment falls with the province, all parties are seeking a solution.

"All lands within our Territory must be treated with respect and reciprocity and the individuals encamped on the property deserve the same. The snpink'tn Indian Band is working with the City of Penticton and the Province to find solutions with respect to the encampment. We want to see the land cleaned up, the sensitive waters at Ellis creek protected and the people at the encampment re-homed and treated with respect" says Chief Greg Gabriel of the snpink'tn Indian Band "The snpink'tn community, Province and the City of Penticton have shared values relating to the need for community safety, mental health and housing solutions, we are working together to address these issues over both the short and long-term".

The City's Bylaw department and the snpink'tn Guardians have provided regular support but do not have the legal authority or the necessary capacity to deal with the encampment. Discussions with the Province are ongoing.

While discussions with the Province are ongoing about the encampment, the City continues to work towards long-term solutions to ensure there is sufficient housing for people.

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