



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

VIA EMAIL

June 28, 2021

Ref. 618382

His Worship Lyn Hall and Council
1100 Patricia Blvd
Prince George BC V2L 3V9
Email: mayor@princegeorge.ca

Dear Mayor Hall and Council:

Re: Encampment in Prince George

This morning I had the opportunity to meet with front line service providers in Prince George to discuss the difficult situation of the growing encampment in Prince George. I have also met with Mayor Hall to discuss how we can work together to address this public health and safety issue. The situation on the ground is obviously aggravated by the extraordinary heat, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the opioid overdose public health emergency. Service providers also noted the trauma associated with residential schools as having a significant impact on the largely Indigenous homeless population.

I understand this evening you are voting on a suite of measures to respond to the encampment. I am grateful for our shared understanding that many street disorder bylaws will be difficult to enforce, and any application for an injunction will not be granted by a Court, when there is no space for those who are homeless to come inside.

Whether service providers, the Province or the city, we have a shared goal: the closure of the encampment and dignified inside spaces available for those living outside.

Working with BC Housing and the public service, our government has had good success in working with local governments and service providers in Victoria and Vancouver to address growing and unstable encampments by bringing people inside. I would like very much to have the same opportunity with Prince George. I believe that by working together, we can find solutions that respect people's inherent dignity and right to shelter, but also enhance the rights of all residents of Prince George – housed and unhoused – to safe streets.

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The best way to move forward would be for city council to appoint a designate to work with my office and BC Housing on a defined and realistic strategy marked with clear deadlines that we can endorse mutually, and which will have the benefit of minimizing harms to the community and the campers as we wait for the 150 supportive housing spaces in Prince George to be complete by next spring.

If you are agreeable to such an approach, I respectfully request that you consider appointing a delegate to begin this work as part of your motion today.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DEBY', written in a cursive style.

David Eby, QC
Attorney General and
Minister Responsible for Housing