

Submission by Dayna Forsgren

**NO SMOKING
NO LOITERING**

Working Toward System Change

**Assessing Courtenay's
Approach
to Homelessness**



*We are gathered on the Unceded
Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks, the
Pentlatch, and the Ieeksun First Nations,
including the Sathloot, the Säsitla, and
the Xa'Xe people.*

Introduction

The Current Situation

Ensuring Clarity and Equity in Bylaw No. 3121

Considerations for Council: Meeting the City's
Strategic Goals

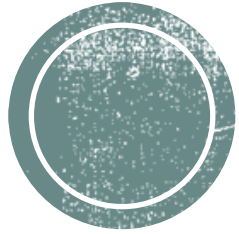
Topics Being
Covered



“I am over 70 years old, and I cannot keep one thing. This is ridiculous. I spent my life working, and now I am walking the streets with nowhere to go and with nothing.”

– A community member experiencing homelessness in Courtenay





“I tried to read the Bylaw, but it didn’t make sense. It’s confusing, and it makes it hard for me to be comfortable anywhere.”

– A community member experiencing homelessness

Ensuring Equity and Clarity in Bylaw 3121

INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION

Imperative: Review Bylaw No. 3121 with Indigenous partners for genuine reconciliation

Uphold Rights: Align with UNDRIP to ensure Indigenous entitlements to housing, non-discrimination, and self-determination are honored



“Just a quick word on reasonable adjustments here
- they are not a privilege, they are not intended to
be annoying, or to create extra work for other
people - they are a human right.”

-Luke Beardon



Preventing subjective interpretation and implicit bias:

- X Disorderly, Dangerous, or *Offensive* Behaviour
- X Permit for camping, *with or without* shelter
- X Preventing or Obstructing Others' Use of Parks
- X Leaving Temporary Shelters *Unattended*



Unintended Consequences:

The Impact of Language in Bylaw Enforcement



Identified Gap:

Clear expectations for the public, but
Absence of clear directives governing city employees' conduct



Actionable Amendments:

Incorporate language from the Bylaw Compliance Policy to uphold consistent professionalism.
Explicit language on trauma-informed practices to enhance public trust and empathy in enforcement procedures.

Elevating
Accountability:
Fostering Trust in
Public
Interactions



Amendment to Section 5.8: Substance Use

Current Prohibition

- Consumption of cannabis
- Smoking or vaping (including e-cigarettes)

Amendment Proposal

- Align with harm reduction principles.
- Allow regulated cannabis consumption.
- Implement designated smoking and vaping areas

Why Amend?

- Enhances harm reduction efforts.
- Provides therapeutic options.
- Aligns with evolving substance use strategies.



Ensuring Public Safety and Effective Support

Amendment to Section 10.2 Enforcement

Qualified

Ensure enforcement is by trained officials to protect public and staff safety.
Exclude untrained city personnel from enforcement.

Support

Emphasize partnerships with social services for effective support.



Considerations for Council

Consultation,
Engagement
& Relationships

- Ensure equal participation for all.
- Engage vulnerable groups.
- Collaborate with consultants who use a social justice and trauma-informed lens.

Clarity,
Accessibility,
Transparency

- Make documents accessible.
- Test language clarity.

Addressing
Homelessness
Today

- Commit to collaboration and equity, starting with Bylaw 3121

