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## Island's first long-term substance-use recovery program for women to open in late fall

ROXANNE EGAN-ELLIOTT  
Times Colonist

Piles of concrete blocks and fixtures fill a former youth detention centre in View Royal, but in a few months, it will be transformed into the Island's first long-term recovery centre for women struggling with substance use.

Our Place Society has nearly completed its demolition phase inside the former detention centre and is preparing to renovate the space, in anticipation of a late fall opening date, said Cheryl Diebel, director of New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community for men, which is also in the former detention centre. Diebel will be the director of the women's recovery community when it opens.

When completed, the women's centre will have 18 single rooms and one double room, for a total capacity of 20 people, Diebel said while giving a tour of the space to reporters Wednesday.

There are currently no long-term recovery programs available for women on the Island, so women have to travel to the mainland for treatment, Diebel said.

"That means they're separated from their family. It means they're separated from their community supports and it also means that when they get to the end of that treatment program transitioning back to their home community is harder."



New Roads director Cheryl Diebel gives a peek behind the scenes of the demolition and renovation at New Roads Therapeutic Recovery Community. DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

The new program will operate much like the men's community, which offers a nine- to 24-month program in which participants can take their Grade 12 equivalency, take part in therapy, learn how to care for their health, learn to regulate their emotions and integrate back into society without the need for substances.

People will follow a routine, starting each day with a morning meeting and a walk with all the women in the community, before going into daily programming, she said.

"One of the things that happens for people in addiction is that their life is chaos. There's lots of things that are unknown throughout the day, on an ongoing basis. That kind of stops here and we make sure that things are structured, and that they're predictable and that they're safe

and they're grounded."

The women's program will likely have a strong emphasis on family counselling and family reunification, Diebel said.

The men's and women's programs will be separate, Diebel said.

Criteria for eligibility in the program include severe addiction issues, mental health challenges, an experience with homelessness and a connection to the criminal justice system.

The intake process will begin about a month before the space is ready, Diebel said. Applicants will have to apply for the program and then go through detox, unless they're coming from the jail system, she said. In that case, people generally have to be seen by a judge to be released into the program.

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## Hornby Island ecosystem in danger due to proposed campsite, say residents

Too little consultation, Islanders allege

DENISE RYAN  
Vancouver Sun

Tribune Bay on Hornby Island could become the next Fairy Creek if B.C. Parks pushes ahead with a plan to develop a campsite without ecological impact assessments and community consultation, says island resident Petra Chambers.

B.C. Parks is planning a development that will affect 23 acres of forested ecosystem and ecologically important wetlands in a forested area of Tribune Bay Provincial Park. But Chambers said the community has been shut out since plans were unveiled in January — plans that she said are significantly different than what was presented to the community in 2022.

"At least 100 community members have written to B.C. Parks with concerns since the new plan was revealed, and we were told the window for community consultation had closed," said Chambers.

Chambers said B.C. Parks is withholding information and has not completed required hydrological and ecological impact assessments.

She and others in the community are not opposed to an expansion of camping for visitors, but what was presented to the community after B.C. Parks purchased the privately run Tribune Bay campsite in 2021 and an adjacent wetland is significantly different than what they are moving ahead with now.

"The original plan was to do a campsite expansion, targeting carless transportation, bikers, boaters, kayakers — super-low impact and ecologically friendly," said Chambers. "B.C. Parks said all the right things. Then they released their plan and it was completely different."

The new plan includes a 34-acre campsite along with a

60-stall parking lot on 23 acres carved out of the "legacy portion" of the park that is a habitat for diverse endangered species. Chambers said it would have to be nearly clearcut due to the shallow-rooted trees that could present a danger to workers and campers.

The new plan will develop the campground on land that is set aside for the Agricultural Land Reserve and in an area designated as environmentally sensitive by Hornby's official community plan and is a protected area under the Gulf Islands Trust.

Chambers has filed numerous Freedom of Information Act requests to glean more information about what impact assessments have been completed, but none have been answered.

"Their plan is to issue RFPs this month and have that work start right after the summer," said Chambers. "The downside of this development is the destruction of a coastal Douglas fir ecosystem that is in the process of regenerating."

Residents have documented nesting eagles, northern red-lighted frogs, pileated woodpeckers and rare fauna in the area.

Chambers said the B.C. government is not following its own planning guidelines.

"We need B.C. Parks to hit pause on this project. We are not opposed to an expansion, but there are other locations that are much better suited for this kind of development."

A change.org petition to preserve the Tribune Bay ecosystem can be found here.

A B.C. Parks spokesperson said the new campsite was going ahead and that B.C. Parks had been consulting with First Nations and residents for three years. They said work on Phase One (walk-in campsites) is expected to start in the fall.

## Crash sends vehicle passenger to hospital

Times Colonist

A driver has been detained on suspicion of impairment after a single-vehicle crash early Wednesday sent a passenger to

hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Victoria police said the vehicle struck a power pole in the 1300-block of Finlayson Street, near Cook Street,

just before 3:30 a.m.

The crash led to power outages in the area.

Police said the investigation is in its early stages and no further information is available.

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