



BRITISH COLUMBIA
CROWN COUNSEL
ASSOCIATION

IS IT TIME TO RELOCATE VANCOUVER'S DOWNTOWN EAST SIDE PROVINCIAL COURT?

Friday's random attack on a Crown counsel walking to work reinforces the dangers plaguing the public in this neighbourhood: Adam Dalrymple, President, BC Crown Counsel Association

Vancouver, B.C. (February 5, 2024): Friday's random attack on a Crown counsel walking to work at the 222 Main Street courthouse has the British Columbia Crown Counsel Association asking if it is time to relocate Vancouver's largest provincial courthouse to a safer neighbourhood, in the interest of public safety.

"Last Friday morning, one of our Crown prosecutors was walking to work after parking her car at a nearby parkade when she was randomly attacked in broad daylight, and ended up in hospital," said Adam Dalrymple, President of the BC Crown Counsel Association which represents the province's 450 prosecutors.

"The attack reinforces growing public concerns about public safety in the neighbourhood where things have gone from bad to worse in recent years. That staff in the courthouse have security guards that walk them to work should be a big red flag about the overall public safety in the Downtown Eastside. It's not normal to have security walk you to work, and we shouldn't try to normalize it as though it's just part of the job."

Dalrymple said while the province provides security guards for people working in the courthouse there is no security for witnesses, victims, or the general public coming to court.

"Friday's attack reinforces the chronic street disorder in the neighbourhood, and it raises real concerns about overall public safety because without that how can you ensure that justice is safe and accessible for victims and witnesses who come to court and don't get security to walk them to the courthouse. That things are so bad that people working in the courthouse need security to walk them to work speaks volumes and reinforces the danger that has grown out of the serious addiction and mental health issues hurting the Downtown Eastside."

Dalrymple said a courthouse is a pillar of our provincial justice system and shouldn't have to be a fortress to carry out its work on behalf of the people of British Columbia.

"Our association has been raising safety and security issues related to the Downtown Eastside with the provincial government for years, but it's time for a serious discussion about whether Vancouver's Main Street courthouse should be relocated to a safer neighbourhood that poses less of a threat to the public," said Dalrymple. "Moving a courthouse out of a neighbourhood for safety reasons would be a last resort, but it would be irresponsible to ignore the very real threat to the public and those who work there."

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Media contact:
Trevor Pancoust
tpancoust@pacegroup.com
778.386.0843