



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: December 17, 2020
Submitted by: Environmental Protection Committee
Subject: Forest and Nature Therapy Opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy

Purpose

To provide Council with information regarding a resolution passed by the Environmental Protection Committee requesting the inclusion of forest and nature therapy opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy.

Recommended Resolution

THAT the report dated December 17, 2020 from the Environmental Protection Committee regarding Forest and Nature Therapy Opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy be received for information.

Background

At the November 16, 2020 Environmental Protection Committee meeting, the Committee received a presentation from the Director of the BC Parks Foundation's Parks Prescriptions Program, and learned about the benefits of nature and forest therapy and the "Prescription for Nature" program. The Committee passed the following resolution:

EPC20/022

THAT the Environmental Protection Committee recommend that Council direct staff to explore forest and nature therapy opportunities as part of the Urban Forest Management Strategy.

Discussion

Dr. Melissa Lem, Director of the BC Parks Foundation's Parks Prescriptions Program, cited studies which conclude that there are benefits to spending time in natural environments, including stress reduction, improvements in health and well-being, increased health and economic perceptions, and improved performances in children with ADHD. The Prescription for Nature program allows professional health care practitioners to prescribe nature experiences as remedies. Ronna Schneberger from the Association of Forest and Nature Therapy Guides noted that the program is seeking partnership opportunities, such as City sponsorships and the creation of forest therapy trails in local parks, at the City's own expense. Ms. Schneberger noted that Committee members can help by raising awareness of the program and identifying

local prescribers. The Environmental Protection Committee noted that incorporating nature therapy spaces in local parks would benefit the community and take advantage of the City's unique natural assets. It should be noted that the Urban Forest Management Strategy considers the psychological benefits of forests and natural spaces, and could incorporate this type of project as a pilot.

Other Options

1. THAT the report dated December 17, 2020 from the Environmental Protection Committee regarding Forest and Nature Therapy Opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy be referred to staff for information.
2. THAT the report dated December 17, 2020 from the Environmental Protection Committee regarding Forest and Nature Therapy Opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy be referred to staff for action.

Financial Implications

Further information on financial implications would be provided by staff should this report be referred to staff for action.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Further information on communication and civic engagement requirements would be provided by staff should this report be referred to staff for action.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

Including Forest and Nature Therapy Opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy aligns with the 2019-2022 Council Strategic Plan Objectives:

- expand and make the most of our parks and green spaces and design them to create positive and diverse experiences throughout the community;
- encourage lifelong healthy and active living; and
- bring people together by activating public spaces.

Attachment

1. PaRx - A Prescription for Patient and Planetary Health Presentation.

Report Author

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Committee Coordinator

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Forest and Nature Therapy Opportunities in the Urban Forest Management Strategy.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - PaRx - A Prescription for Patient and Planetary Health Presentation.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jan 18, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tracey Takahashi, Deputy Corporate Officer - Jan 11, 2021 - 4:35 PM

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Jan 11, 2021 - 5:46 PM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jan 12, 2021 - 9:38 AM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jan 12, 2021 - 9:43 AM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Jan 18, 2021 - 10:42 AM