



City of Port Moody

Report/Recommendation to Council

Date: July 8, 2020
Submitted by: Planning and Development Department – Policy Planning Division
Subject: Planning for Extreme Heat Preparedness

Purpose

To discuss potential municipal responses to reduce the impacts of extreme heat on the community.

Recommended Resolution

THAT staff be directed to proceed with the Short-term Approach for Summer 2020 outlined in the report dated July 8, 2020 from the Planning and Development Department – Policy Planning Division regarding Planning for Extreme Heat Preparedness.

Background

On June 11, 2019 Council discussed a letter from Dr. Ingrid Tyler, Medical Health Officer with the Fraser Health Authority (FHA) regarding the impacts of extreme heat in the Tri-Cities region (**Attachment 1**). The letter included reference to a 2017 [publication](#)¹ from the BC Centre for Disease Control that is intended to raise awareness and provide guidance to municipalities to protect their residents from the impacts of extreme heat due to climate change.

In response, Council passed the following resolution:

RC19/285

THAT the letter dated May 22, 2019 from the Medical Health Officer – Medical Director, Fraser Health Authority regarding Impacts of Extreme Heat Preparedness be forwarded to staff for evaluation and implementation.

This report provides additional information and potential options to respond to extreme heat events in Port Moody.

Given current COVID-19 restrictions, there are concerns that more people than normal will remain in the City for the summer. Extreme heat can exacerbate health risks as residents may turn to the outdoors, or otherwise need support. In non-COVID-19 times, respite from heat

¹ [http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines and Forms/Guidelines and Manuals/Health-Environment/BC Municipal Heat Response Planning.pdf](http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Health-Environment/BC%20Municipal%20Heat%20Response%20Planning.pdf)

could have been provided within civic buildings. At this time, most civic buildings are closed, and those that are open have reduced public hours and no seating areas available.

Given the current pandemic and anticipated change in weather conditions, there is increased need to prepare for extreme heat.

Discussion

Best Practices Recommended by BC Centre for Disease Control

The Provincial guide outlines a planning process that creates an inventory of existing physical assets (fountains, air-conditioned public buildings). In addition, cities are advised to create networks or partnerships with local groups or volunteers, particularly those groups that are already serving vulnerable populations. The goal is to create a response plan that is pro-actively activated and connects resources to people that need it most. A thorough plan also outlines activation criteria, pre-prepared materials, and actions for smooth implementation in the case of extreme heat.

At the moment, the City does not have the resources available to create a complete response plan.

Current Situation

The City's Emergency Operation Centre has been investigating sourcing options for cooling/misting equipment (**Attachment 2**); however, there is currently no City budget for purchasing or renting this type of equipment.

There is a 2020 Cultural Services capital budget item to purchase water bottle filling stations to support City events. Even though community and City events are on hold due to COVID-19, staff proceeded with this purchase as the water bottle filling stations can also be used for Emergency Support Services or extreme heat support if required. Two water bottle filling stations have been delivered and will be operational in the next few weeks. At this time, there are some initial ideas of where this equipment could be placed (e.g. Rocky Point Park and the Recreation Complex) based on observed pedestrian traffic, but no planning process has occurred to investigate other areas within the community that may also have need for access to water. Staff is also in the process of getting information from Health Authorities with respect to the use of these stations during COVID-19 to ensure the City and the public are properly protected.

These two water bottle filling stations may support the City's heat response plan. This response is especially important in 2020 with water fountains remaining closed. At this time, staff is not aware of any planning in the City of Port Coquitlam or the City of Coquitlam for cooling stations.

Potential Approaches

Taking into consideration the current timing, existing pandemic conditions, as well as resourcing, the following approaches are presented:

Short-term approach – Summer 2020:

- low-cost, timely option;
- clarify a process and guidelines defining an extreme heat emergency and when this would be activated;
- communicate extreme heat information, including:
 - extreme heat preparedness and heat-illness symptoms;
 - helpful hints/tips to reduce heat indoors and general best practices to limit heat exposure;
 - ongoing heat emergency information during extreme heat events;
 - in the event of a heat emergency, sending notifications via social media regarding potential compounding factors such as power outages, water shortages, or air quality alerts; and
 - encouraging neighbours to look after each other and vulnerable members of their family/community;
- deploy the two water bottle filling stations to public areas where there is a demonstrated need;
- install City tents in public areas (e.g. parks) to create shaded areas (capacity would be limited due to current physical distancing requirements); and
- portions of city facilities that are now closed could be re-opened specifically for a cooling station function, controlling access, and physical distancing – this involves additional costs to meet associated staffing and cleaning needs.

Long-term approach – in preparation for Summer 2021

- involves preparation of a Heat Response Plan (in coordination with community partners, such as the Tri-Cities Healthier Communities Partnership); and
- would be considered a new project to be funded in the 2021 budget.

Components of a long-term approach include:

- identifying areas that are most affected (e.g. highly dense urban areas with high heat island effect like Newport Village, Suter Brook, Klahanie or buildings that lack air conditioning or cooling, or areas where people have reduced mobility or social supports);
- identifying populations that are most affected – seniors, especially those living in older apartments that lack air conditioning or cooling; residents with underlying medical conditions, particularly heart and respiratory conditions (extreme heat also linked to poor air quality), new Canadians with language barriers, low income families with young children, people living in low-income housing, socially isolated, homeless, and residents living with mental illnesses;
- connecting with non-profits, public agencies, and service providers to incorporate their assets into an extreme heat response (including schools which are typically closed during extreme heat). Directing residents to sites managed by external partners which expand potential cooling sites across the City and are familiar places for those who are already connected to these services;
- planning for cooling stations on city-owned land and/or in facilities – typical cooling stations are inside existing city facilities e.g. library, recreation centre, other civic facilities;

- providing bottled water to at-risk and homeless populations;
- opening all pools (at a reduced price, or make it free) and spray parks and extending hours of operation (possibly even overnight);
- creating temporary shade structures – tents/canopies (with or without misters or portable air conditioning units) – located in parks and most affected areas (areas with high heat island effect and most vulnerable residents);
- installing permanent or temporary cooling oasis/misting stations in high pedestrian areas (parks, civic facilities, plazas e.g. Queens St plaza);
- mapping out cool spots or places to beat the heat (cooling stations, misting stations, treed areas, pools, spray parks, cooling tents) and posting this information to the city's website and through other social media outlets; and
- working with strata councils and businesses to help them create on-site cooling areas (e.g. inside amenity areas, above grade outdoor shared areas, green roofs); or ground level outdoor areas (plazas, parks, playgrounds, green space).

Other Option(s)

1. THAT the report dated July 8, 2020 from the Planning and Development Department – Policy Planning regarding Planning for Extreme Heat Preparedness be received for information.
2. THAT an alternative short-term approach for Summer 2020 be provided that includes.....
3. THAT staff be directed to proceed with the preparation of a Heat Response Plan to be completed for Summer 2021.

Financial Implications

The costs associated with planning for an extreme heat response will vary depending on the level and scale of the response. Staff can report back with more detailed costs and staffing implications following further Council direction on the desired level of response.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Subject to Council's direction, a communication plan may be required to inform residents and a municipal response to extreme heat could involve engagement with neighbouring municipalities, non-profit service providers, School District No. 43, and local businesses.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

The 2019-2022 Council Strategic Plan priority of Health City includes a focus on providing local services and access to amenities to meet the needs of all residents, ensuring community safety and emergency preparedness.

Attachment(s)

1. Letter from Dr. Ingrid Tyler, Medical Health Officer, Fraser Health Authority dated May 22, 2019.
2. Cooling Station Options Summary.

Report Author

Mary De Paoli
Manager, Policy Planning

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Planning for Extreme Heat.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - Letter from Dr. Ingrid Tyler, Medical Health Officer, Fraser Health Authority dated May 22, 2019.pdf - Attachment 2 - Cooling Station Options Summary.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jul 13, 2020

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

André Boel, General Manager of Planning and Development - Jul 9, 2020 - 9:17 AM

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Jul 9, 2020 - 5:20 PM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jul 12, 2020 - 4:30 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jul 12, 2020 - 6:36 PM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Jul 13, 2020 - 11:25 AM