

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: April 19, 2021
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Ed Wolfe, Fire Chief
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Proposed Prevention Measures

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receives this report for discussion on potential COVID-19 community safety prevention measures that may be considered for implementation on the waterfront.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The primary purpose of this report is to provide Council with options for consideration that would support the recommendations of the Public Health Officer and help reduce the transmission or spread of the COVID-19 virus.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Motion # & Meeting Date	Motion Details
#TBD, April 12, 2021 Regular Council Meeting	Council direct staff to report what measures the City should put in place, if any, to help address keeping with Health Orders during the pandemic at the waterfront.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 cases in the Fraser Health region are the highest in the province and the Provincial Health Officer is advising the public to stay home and remain in your neighborhood. White Rock is a destination community that attracts many visitors to the waterfront and beach especially with the restrictions imposed to reduce viral transmission during the pandemic. In support of the Provincial Health Officer's recommendations and to promote the health and safety of White Rock residents, staff have generated a list of options for Council consideration, following Council's direction, to try and reduce or limit visitation to the City's waterfront at a critical time during the pandemic.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost to deliver a stronger, comprehensive communications and messaging plan would be approximately \$2100. In addition, any closures of parking at the waterfront will result in lost revenues of up to \$95K per month, depending on the combination of closed lots. Lost revenues from parking can be recovered as it qualifies through the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The proposed COVID-19 prevention measures, if implemented along the waterfront, may impact public access, and therefore impact local businesses or prompt responses from residents that had prepaid for parking passes or experiencing changes to traffic patterns along other routes.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

The Engineering and Municipal Operations Department along with Planning and Development, Human Resources, Finance, Recreation and Culture, Communications, RCMP and Fire have worked together to explore options that are included in this report.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Not applicable.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. Develop a comprehensive communications plan. Communication would be an integral part of any significant change. Some potential communication approaches include:
 - LED signs at the Waterfront (1 day).
 - Website update (1 day).
 - Social media posts — Twitter, Facebook (1 day).
 - Information for staff (1 day).
 - News release (2 days).
 - Facebook/Instagram advertising (2 days).
 - Information for community partners (2 days).
 - Signage on site (if new, 5-7 days).
 - Ad in Peace Arch News (5-7 days).
 - Banner at the Pier arch (5-7 days).
2. Fence off the entire Promenade. The estimated timeline to implement this would be one week and dependent upon contractor availability. The cost would be approximately \$30K depending on the extent of the closure. Fencing would only be necessary if people are to be kept off the Promenade.
3. Close parking lots. This would be accomplished with concrete barriers and the timeline to implement this would be one week with an approximate cost of \$5K, recoverable through the COVID-19 Safe Restart Program.
4. Create parking spaces specifically for the pickup of takeout in designated lots adjacent to restaurants.
5. Limit waterfront parking lots to White Rock residents with parking decals only.

6. Reserve a parking lot for restaurant patrons only. Restaurants would issue temporary passes that patrons would display on their vehicles while dining in the restaurant.
7. Fencing off specific problematic areas including areas in front of restaurants where lineups occur.
8. Close the Pier. The timeline to implement a closure would be one day with limited cost.
9. Installation of additional signage. Some signs are available within current inventory and would take one week to implement.
10. Close Marine Drive. Physical barriers would be required with one week to install, along with detour signage and communication. It may be possible for some of the signage from the Marine Drive Hump Stabilization Project to be utilized. There would be considerable impact to residents along the detour routes of Columbia and Victoria. In addition, emergency response access would be required.
11. Marine Drive be designated to one way traffic only as was done during the Marine Drive Hump Stabilization Project. The unused lane could be offered to local businesses to expanded patio services, as what was carried out by the community of Deep Cove. Since parking lanes are not part of existing sidewalk use licences, a bylaw may be required to allow liquor consumption in these public areas if the direction is to allow restaurants to use this space for takeout liquor service and consumption.
12. Close the West Beach Parkade. The timeline to implement this would be immediate with no additional cost, other than loss of revenue.
13. Hiring private security to help with enforcement efforts. Private security would not have the ability to issue fines for public health order violations. While their presence may potentially deter COVID-19 non-compliance, any issuance of fines would still require an RCMP member. The approximate cost for private security is \$250 per 8-hour shift, per guard or \$1000 a week for two guards working two days for eight hours. This option is not recommended as communication around conduct and performance must take place through the employer rather than the individual.
14. Initiate communication with Semiahmoo First Nation to consider a partial or full closure of their public parking lot.
15. Add one or more additional RCMP officers on the weekends dedicated to the waterfront and to conduct proactive COVID-19 safety checks, assist bylaw officers when required and have a general uniformed presence in the area. Cost for two days of coverage is \$1600 per officer. Recommendation is two officers be utilized for safety reasons while on foot patrol in dense crowds at a cost of approximately \$3200 for two officers for two days.
16. Adjust the bylaw schedule to allow for more flexibility with hours to assist with enforcement efforts. There are three regular full-time Bylaw Enforcement Officers with shifts that cover the entire week. Bylaw Enforcement Officers do not have the authority to issue fines for non-compliance of public health orders. Shifts could be adjusted to reflect coverage of our busiest days and times (typically weekend afternoons and evenings).
17. Hire additional Bylaw Enforcement Officers. The recruiting for additional Bylaw Enforcement Officers would likely take 1-2 months with these positions currently being in high demand. The current draft Financial Plan includes approximately \$28,000 for casual Bylaw Enforcement Officers, who are used to cover vacation or absences. Some of the casual officers have other jobs and may not always be available. The City is currently recruiting for

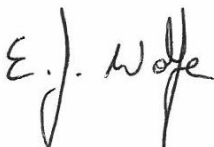
a Bylaw Patroller level position that would specifically target afternoon and weekend hours and enforcement of the no dogs on the promenade. The Bylaw Patroller position is expected to be filled in May/June 2021 at the earliest.

18. Request the province consider the City of White Rock for community vaccination as other communities in the province. The popularity of our community as a destination has greatly increased our vulnerability.
19. Initiate communication with BNSF police regarding the need for uniformed officers from their organization to assist with enforcement efforts along the railway and initiate communication with the province for enforcement at the beach.

CONCLUSION

The popularity of White Rock as a destination community particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and desire to be outdoors has resulted in regular crowding on the waterfront. The influx of people in our community during the pandemic creates additional risk of COVID-19 exposure and transmission. In support of the Public Health Officer's recommendations and to protect the health and safety of White Rock residents, following Council's direction, staff have generated a list of COVID-19 prevention measures included in this report for Council's consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Ed Wolfe
Fire Chief

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

The corporate report is provided for Council's consideration.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer