

DATE OF MEETING JUNE 1, 2020

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SUBJECT **RECREATION & CULTURE SERVICE DELIVERY DURING COVID-19**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To share with Council how the Recreation & Culture Department has been supporting and engaging with the community, and adapting to health regulations, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

BACKGROUND

There have been many moving parts as the City adapts to a new way of doing business during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the BC Government's Restart Plan, it is a good time to share some of the creative work being done by Recreation & Culture Staff.

Innovative recreation and culture service delivery has aimed to provide a sense of social connection, support for safe and creative ways to spend leisure time, a sense of pride in the community, and education on the importance of health and well-being during this time of physical and social isolation.

DISCUSSION

The provision of Parks, Recreation & Culture facilities, amenities, programs and services is even more important today, than it ever has been. The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted our health, our economy, our communities, our families, our jobs, our lifestyles, and our quality of life. The access to city parks, trails, green spaces, recreation, and cultural amenities and activities have been critical in supporting community members to stay healthy and resilient as we all navigate through these uncertain times.

Beginning 2020-MAR-16, the Recreation & Culture Coordinator team quickly adapted to the new reality to provide the **Isolation Recreation** program. Each day, tips, challenges, and activities have been communicated through a variety of platforms including; news releases, emails, phone calls, presence at parks and trails, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and an Isolation Recreation webpage on the City's website. Examples of these activities are included in Attachment A.

Although recreation facilities have been closed since 2020-MAR-16, careful consideration and support was given to a variety of community groups providing essential or key services to the community. Examples of some support provided are included in Attachment A.

Going forward, returning services as fully, safely and quickly as possible will be key to supporting the community to return to whatever the “new normal” is going to look like. To this end, Staff have been attending multiple BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) and Cultural organization meetings and confabs with other coordinators, managers and directors from other municipalities and regional districts around the province. Discussions have focused on adapting programs and services, and planning for the re-opening of facilities and services. This has been an incredible display of collaboration and idea-sharing to support getting parks, recreation and cultural services up and running. In addition, the BCRPA has been asked by the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture to prepare a guiding document for re-opening parks and recreation facilities and services. This document was delivered to the Province on 2020-MAY-20 and will subsequently be approved and distributed to parks and recreation service providers around the province.

In the meantime, Recreation & Culture Staff have cancelled the regular summer camp programming and created a **Summer Plan B** slate of camps and programs, which have been adapted to ensure provincial health regulations are adhered to, and which supports the gradual reintroduction of programs and services. Registration for these programs will begin on 2020-JUN-02. Examples of some of these modifications are included in Attachment A. Other summer programs, for children and adults, that are one-offs, will be maintained for now and decisions will be made about them closer to when they are scheduled.

CONCLUSION

As Dr. Bonnie Henry has suggested – “*we need to choose to be leaders in modifying how we do business during COVID -19*”. Fortunately, Recreation & Culture Staff have risen to the occasion, demonstrating adaptability, flexibility, creativity, and commitment to providing services that contribute to individual and community health and well-being. Although the pandemic has been challenging, it has also been beneficial. It has opened us up to new ways of doing business, and possibilities that can exist when we are given the chance to look at doing things differently.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Recreation & Culture Staff have been providing innovative recreation and culture service delivery through the **Isolation Recreation** program.
- The Isolation Recreation program has aimed to provide a sense of social connection, support for safe and creative ways to spend leisure time, a sense of pride in the community, and education on the importance of health and well-being during this time of physical and social isolation.
- The Recreation & Culture Department has cancelled the regular summer camp programming and created a **Summer Plan B** slate of camps and programs. Registration will begin on 2020-JUN-02.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: PowerPoint Presentation – Recreation & Culture Service Delivery During COVID-19

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