



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** January 2, 2020

From: Elizabeth Ayers, Director, Recreation and Sport Services **File:** 11-7143-01/2019-Vol 01

Re: **Response to Request to Expand Steveston Outdoor Pool Operating Hours**

Staff Recommendation

1. That Option 1 – Maintain Temporary Increase in Operating Hours, as outlined in the report titled “Response to Request to Expand Steveston Outdoor Pool Operating Hours,” dated January 2, 2020 from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services be approved for the operation of Steveston Outdoor Pool for the summer of 2020 and the Consolidated 5 Year Financial Plan (2020-2024) be amended accordingly; and
2. That an update on 2020 operations at Steveston Outdoor Pool including usage, costs and revenues be provided in the fall of 2020.

Elizabeth Ayers
 Director, Recreation and Sport Services
 (604-247-4669)

Att. 4

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Facility Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

At the November 26, 2019, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting, staff received the following referral:

That staff review extending the Steveston Pool's schedule from May to September and the budget implications of such an extension and report back to the December 18, 2019 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting.

The purpose of this report is to respond to this referral.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #4 An Active and Thriving Richmond:

An active and thriving community characterized by diverse social and wellness programs, services and spaces that foster health and well-being for all.

4.1 Robust, affordable, and accessible sport, recreation, wellness and social programs for people of all ages and abilities.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #5 Sound Financial Management:

Accountable, transparent, and responsible financial management that supports the needs of the community into the future.

This report supports the following focus areas from the City of Richmond Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019-2024:

Focus Area #2: Recreation and sport opportunities are accessible, inclusive and support the needs of a growing and diverse population.

Focus Area #3: Richmond residents have the fundamental movement skills, competence, confidence and motivation to move for a lifetime.

This report supports the following focus areas from the Wellness Strategy 2018-2023:

Focus Area #1: Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.

Focus Area #3: Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods.

Background

The Steveston Outdoor Pool opened to the public in 1972, and underwent extensive repairs to replace the pool liner in 2016. The repair cost of \$450,000 was expected to extend the service life of the pool for approximately 10 years based on the current usage. The pool typically opens for public swimming on the Victoria Day weekend and remains open until late September to accommodate users during Watermania's annual shutdown. Public hours vary depending on the month, with more available hours during the months of July and August when the weather is generally hotter and children are out of school. Attachment 1 outlines the 2019 operating hours for Steveston Outdoor Pool.

At the November 26, 2019, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting, a delegation presented a petition signed by 109 individuals that requested the following regarding the Steveston Outdoor Pool:

1. Be open to the public from the beginning of May until the end of September, 7 days a week beginning in 2020.
2. Have length swimming hours protected and continued for the duration of the Pool opening; and
3. The new hours of operation should be:
 - Weekends and Statutory Holidays: Length swim from 10am to noon. Public swim from 12:00 pm to 7:00 pm.
 - Weekdays: Length swim from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm. Public swim from 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Analysis

Governance

The City of Richmond created the Aquatic Services Board, a Council-appointed policy body, in 1996 to maximize the effectiveness of aquatic services. The Board's mandate is to represent the public interest in ensuring comprehensive and efficient aquatic services within the community. The Board works with staff to develop a policy framework for areas that include hours of operation, setting fees and allocating facility pool space.

Budget

The annual operating budget for the Steveston Outdoor Pool has total revenues of approximately \$94,000. This is comprised of \$49,000 from swimming lessons, \$27,000 from rentals/other users and \$18,000 from public swimming. The total operating subsidy for the pool is \$74,900.

Attendance

Steveston Outdoor Pool has three primary users: public swimmers, children's swimming lessons and the Richmond Kigoos Swim Club. The Richmond Kigoos Swim Club has 230 active members that swim daily from May 1 to the end of August each year. Additional users of the pool include high school swim teams, a synchronized swim club, school groups, day camps and the Richmond Rapids swim club that relocates to this facility when Watermania undergoes its

annual three-week shutdown in September. Of the almost 37,000 visits each year to the Steveston Outdoor Pool, the majority of swims are by swim club members and children learning to swim. Table 1 below outlines visits by user type for 2019.

Table 1: Steveston Outdoor Pool – 2019 Visitation

	Visits	Percentage of Overall Visits (%)	Total Visits / Hour
Public Swimming	8,355	23	16.00
Lessons	6,119	17	81.16
Kigoos	19,353	52	32.85
Other: Groups/Rentals	2,965	8	49.41
Total	36,792		

In response to previous requests from members of the community for increased lane swimming, the Aquatic Services Board approved the addition of 88 hours of lane swims at a cost of \$13,500 on a trial basis for the 2019 swim season (Attachment 2). This was funded from the 2019 Aquatic Services budget due to the delayed opening of the Minoru Centre for Active Living.

The increase in 2019 operating hours represented a 20 per cent increase in public swimming hours and produced an increase of just over one per cent in overall public swim visits, from 8,244 visits in 2018 to 8,355 visits in 2019. The average number of visits per hour declined from 18.9 per hour to 16.0 per hour. This showed evidence that the same people were attending as in previous years but were now swimming for longer periods of time or attending at different times rather than coming more times in the season. In addition, many of the lane swimmers are pass holders from the indoor pools; and therefore, little additional revenue was generated from these swimmers.

Metro Vancouver Outdoor Pools

An external scan was conducted of the surrounding Metro Vancouver cities' opening and closing dates for outdoor swimming pools. From the Metro Vancouver comparisons (Attachment 3), there are currently no pools that open to the public before the Victoria Day weekend, with most outdoor pools not open until late June. The City of Vancouver is the only other city that operates outdoor pools past Labour Day with a closing date in mid-September.

It should be noted that the Vancouver Park Board, at its November 18, 2019 meeting, requested "...the analysis of the budget and human resource implications of extending the outdoor pool season..." At the time of writing this report, there had been no staff report in response to the request.

Options for Consideration

In response to the request for additional hours staff have prepared three options (Attachment 4) for Council's consideration that include the full complement of hours requested by the delegation, a more moderate increase in operating hours and a continuation of the 2019 trial.

Option 1 – Maintain Temporary Increase in Operating Hours (Recommended)

This option would retain the 2019 hours of operation at the Steveston Outdoor Pool which includes 88 hours of additional lane swimming from the Victoria Day weekend through mid-September. The financial impact is approximately \$13,500 which, depending on attendance, would result in an increase in the operating subsidy of up to 18 per cent for the Steveston Outdoor Pool. If Council chooses this option, then \$13,500 of funding would be required, which could be reallocated from within existing Community Services budgets for 2020 only due to the delayed opening of the Minoru Centre for Active Living. Any changes to hours for 2021 will be considered in the fall of 2020, in advance of the 2021 budget process.

This option maintains an operating season that is consistent with other pools in Metro Vancouver, provides additional lane swim opportunities, has the most reasonable financial impact, and responds to the current demands on space as related to actual attendance.

If an increase in operating hours is supported, staff will work with the Aquatic Services Board and user groups to implement an extensive marketing plan to help increase participation. This may include special promotions and incentives to entice new users to the facility. Staff would report back to Council in the fall of 2020 to report on the usage and recommend any proposed changes in the operating hours and financial impact for 2021.

Option 2 – Modest Temporary Increase in Hours (Not Recommended)

This option includes opening the pool at the beginning of Victoria Day weekend until the end of September. During this period, the pool will offer an increase in both Length and Public Swimming, however not to the full extent requested. The total increase is 136 operating hours over what was offered in 2019, which represents an increase of 26 per cent. The financial impact would be approximately \$45,000 which, depending on attendance, would result in an increase in the operating subsidy of up to 60 per cent for the Steveston Outdoor Pool. If Council chooses this option, \$45,000 of funding would be required from the Rate Stabilization Account for 2020. Any changes to hours for 2021 will be considered in the fall of 2020, in advance of the 2021 budget process.

Option 3 – Temporary Increase in Full Hours Requested (Not Recommended)

Without displacing other user groups including the Richmond Kigoos and public swimming lessons, this option most closely matches the request for additional hours from the delegation. It contains an additional 308.5 operating hours, which represents an increase of 59 per cent and would have a financial impact of approximately \$95,000 which, depending on attendance, would result in an increase in the operating subsidy of up to 127 per cent for the Steveston Outdoor Pool. If Council chooses this option, \$95,000 of funding would be required from the Rate

Stabilization Account for 2020. Any changes to hours for 2021 will be considered in the fall of 2020, in advance of the 2021 budget process.

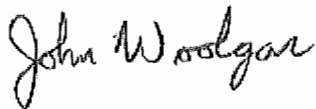
Financial Impact

If Council chooses to temporarily increase hours as outlined in the recommended Option 1, there would be no financial impact as the increased cost can be accommodated from within existing budgets. However, a realignment of budget would be required and the Consolidated 5 year Financial Plan (2020-2024) would be adjusted accordingly.

Conclusion

The Steveston Outdoor Pool is utilized by many different groups in the community, some of which may have overlapping demands for time and space. Balancing these demands with the appropriate level of service and corresponding cost to the taxpayer is a challenging task.

Based on the results from the trial increase in operating hours for 2019, staff recommend Option 1 – Maintain Temporary Increase in Operating Hours, which provides additional lane swimming from May through September 2020. If approved, staff would work with the Aquatic Services Board and user groups to increase the attendance at the pool, and study the potential for a future increase in operating hours if warranted.



John Woolgar
Manager, Aquatic and Arena Services
(604-238-8041)

- Att. 1: Steveston Outdoor Pool – 2019 Operating Hours
- 2: Steveston Outdoor Pool – 2019 Increase in Operating Hours from 2018
- 3: Metro Vancouver Comparison of 2019 Operations
- 4: Comparison of Steveston Pool Operation Options

Steveston Outdoor Pool – 2019 Operating Hours

	Periods	Monday to Friday	Saturday/Sunday/Stat Holidays
May	First two weeks	None	None
	Last two weeks	None	12:00-5:00
June	First two weeks	None	12:00-5:00
	Last two weeks	12:00-2:00	12:00-5:00
July and August		12:00-5:00 ^a	10:00-6:00 ^b
August	Last two weeks	12:00-7:00 ^a	10:00-6:00 ^b
September	Long weekend	N/A	10:00-6:00 ^b
	First three weeks	12:00-2:00	None
Statutory Holidays	August and September	None	12:00-6:00 ^b
Total Hours			523.0 Hours

^a 12:00-1:00 p.m. – Lengths Only Swim (tot pool is open)

^b 10:00-11:30 a.m. – Lengths Only Swim (tot pool is open)

Steveston Outdoor Pool – 2019 Increase in Operating Hours from 2018

		Monday to Friday	Saturday/Sunday/Stat Holidays
May	First two weeks	None	None
	Last two weeks	None	None
June	First two weeks	None	None
	Last two weeks	2.0 hours = 18 hours (9 days)	None
	Last weekend	None	2.0 hours = 4 hours (2 days)
July¹ and August		N/A	2.0 hours = 28 hours (14 days)
August	Last two weeks	2.0 hours = 20 hours (10 days)	2.0 hours = 6 hours (3 days)
September	Long weekend	N/A	2.0 hours = 2 hours
	First three weeks	30 minutes = 9.5 hours (19 days)	None
Statutory Holidays	August and September	None	None
Total Hours		87.5 hours increase from 2018	

Public swim attendance 2018: 8,244

Public swim attendance 2019: 8,355

Public swim hourly visit 2018: 18.9 visits

Public swim hourly visit 2019: 16.0 visits

¹ Closed July 1

Metro Vancouver Comparison of 2019 Operations

	Richmond	Vancouver	Delta	Burnaby	Surrey	New Westminster	Coquitlam
Public Opening Weekends	Victoria Day	Victoria Day	End of June	Victoria Day	End of June	Mid-June	June 1
Public Opening Weekdays	Last two weeks of June	Victoria Day	July 1	June 1	End of June	Mid-June	June 1
Public Close	After third week of September	September 15	Labour Day Monday	Labour Day Monday	Labour Day Monday	Labour Day Monday	Labour Day Monday

Comparison of Steveston Pool Operation Options

Options	Number of Days Open	Number of Public Hours	Increase in Hours from 2019 (%)	Approximate Budget Cost (2019 dollars)	Increase in dollars (from 2019 budget)
Option #1 (Current)	103	523.0	--	\$168,762.00	\$4,512.00
Option #2	134	659.0	26.0	\$205,317.00	\$41,067.00
Option #3	155	831.5	59.0	\$247,562.00	\$83,313.00

		Option 1 (Current)		Option 2		Option 3	
		M-F	Sa/Su	M-F	Sa/Su	M-F	Sa/Su
May	First two weeks	None	None	None	None	12:00-3:30	10:00-7:00
	Last two weeks	None	12:00-5:00	12:00-2:00	12:00-5:00	12:00-3:30	10:00-7:00
June	First two weeks	None	12:00-5:00	12:00-2:00	12:00-5:00	12:00-3:30	10:00-7:00
	Last two weeks	2 Hrs TBA ¹	12:00-5:00	2 Hrs TBA ¹	12:00-5:00	2 Hrs TBA ¹	10:00-7:00
	Last weekend	N/A	10:00-6:00 ²	N/A	10:00-6:00	N/A	10:00-7:00
July & August		12:00-5:00 ³	10:00-6:00 ²	11:00-5:00 ⁴	10:00-6:00 ²	11:00-5:00 ⁴	10:00-7:00
August	Last two weeks	12:00-7:00 ³	10:00-6:00 ²	11:00-7:00 ⁴	10:00-6:00 ²	11:00-7:00 ⁴	10:00-7:00
September	Long Weekend	N/A	10:00-6:00 ²	N/A	10:00-6:00 ²	N/A	10:00-7:00
		12:00-2:00	None	12:00-2:00	12:30-2:30	12:00-2:30	None
Statutory Holidays	August and September	N/A	12:00-6:00	N/A	10:00-6:00 ²	N/A	10:00-7:00
Total Hours		523 Hours		659 Hours		831.5 Hours	

¹ June public swim time pending school rentals

² 10:00-11:30 Lengths Only Swim (tot pool is open)

³ 12:00-1:00 Lengths Only Swim (tot pool is open)

⁴ 11:00-1:00 Lengths Only Swim Time (tot pool open 12-1 only)