



REPORT TO COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON CITY FINANCE AND SERVICES

FEBRUARY 7, 2024

A meeting of the Standing Committee of Council on City Finance and Services was held on Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 9:30 am, in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall. This Council meeting was convened by electronic means as authorized under Part 14 of the *Procedure By-law*.

- PRESENT:**
- Councillor Rebecca Bligh, Chair (Leave of Absence – Civic Business 9:30 to 10:30 am)
 - Mayor Ken Sim*
 - Councillor Christine Boyle (Leave of Absence – Civic Business 3:30 to 6:30 pm)
 - Councillor Adriane Carr
 - Councillor Lisa Dominato
 - Councillor Pete Fry
 - Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung*
 - Councillor Mike Klassen
 - Councillor Peter Meiszner*
 - Councillor Brian Montague
 - Councillor Lenny Zhou, Vice Chair (Leave of Absence – Civic Business – 1 to 5 pm)
- CITY MANAGER’S OFFICE:**
- Paul Mochrie, City Manager
 - Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
 - Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
- CITY CLERK’S OFFICE:**
- Tina Penney, Deputy City Clerk
 - David Yim, Meeting Coordinator

* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

WELCOME

The Vice Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh People. We thank them for having cared for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great city together.

The Vice Chair also recognized the immense contributions of the City of Vancouver’s staff who work hard every day to help make our city an incredible place to live, work, and play.

PROCLAMATION – LUNAR NEW YEAR

The Mayor proclaimed the week of February 10 to 16, 2024, as Lunar New Year Week in the City of Vancouver and invited Helen Qian, President of the Chinese Benevolent Association to the podium to accept the Proclamation and say a few words.

MATTERS ADOPTED ON CONSENT

There were no items adopted on consent.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Vancouver Parks and Recreation Services: Proposed Governance Transition - Planning Update

Staff from City Manager's Office provided a presentation, and responded to questions.

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During questions to staff, it was

*MOVED by Councillor Fry
SECONDED by Councillor Carr*

THAT under section 5.4(d) of the Procedure By-law, Council ask a second round of questions to staff.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor Bligh assumed the Chair.

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2. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Annual Update

Staff from Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability provided a presentation, and responded to questions.

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During questions to staff, it was

*MOVED by Councillor Carr
SECONDED by Councillor Boyle*

THAT under section 5.4(d) of the Procedure By-law, Council ask a second round of questions to staff.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Subsequently, the Committee recessed at 11:59 am and reconvened at 1:05 pm.

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**MOVED by Councillor Dominato
SECONDED by Councillor Carr**

- A. THAT Council endorse staff's continued advocacy and engagement with BC Hydro with respect to the Distribution Extension Policy update process to ensure that the cost allocation of new electrical connections is more predictably and equitably applied to support the timely construction of a greater number of affordable new homes by removing barriers to electrification;
- FURTHER THAT Council request that the Mayor write to the Minister of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation, as well as the Minister of Housing, to urge the Ministers to work with BC Hydro and the BC Utilities Commission to prioritize and expedite the Distribution Extension Policy update process such that the costs of new electrical connections are more predictably and equitably allocated to support the construction and delivery of more homes for Vancouverites and British Columbians alike.
- B. THAT members of Council holding positions on the Metro Vancouver Board be encouraged to raise the issues surrounding current barriers to achieving the City's and Province's electrification objectives and seek the broader endorsement by and advocacy from elected officials across the Metro region for prioritizing and expediting the BC Hydro and BC Utilities Commission Distribution Extension Policy update process.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 09791)
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)
(Councillor Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business)

REPORTS

1. Gastown Summer 2024 Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot January 17, 2024

Staff from Engineering Services provided a presentation, and responded to questions.

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During questions to staff, it was

*MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung
SECONDED by Councillor Meiszner*

THAT under section 5.4(d) of the Procedure By-law, Council ask a second round of questions to staff.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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The Committee heard from one speaker who spoke in support of the recommendations, four speakers who spoke in opposition to the recommendations and one speaker who spoke to other aspects of the recommendations.

MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung
SECONDED by Councillor Meiszner

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council direct staff to proceed with a pedestrian-first pilot on Water Street in July and August as generally outlined in Appendix B of the Report dated January 17, 2024, entitled "Gastown Summer 2024 Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot".
- B. THAT Council direct staff to report back in fall 2024 on pilot outcomes and how they will inform the Gastown Public Spaces Plan and the approach to future city programs, including seasonal pedestrian-first streets.

amended

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Boyle
SECONDED by Councillor Carr

THAT the following be added to end of A:

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to consider extending the pedestrian-first pilot on Water Street through September if the summer weeks of the pilot are going well.

LOST (Vote No. 09792)
(Councillors Bligh, Dominato, Meiszner, Montague, Kirby-Yung, Klassen, and Mayor Sim opposed)
(Councillor Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business)

The amendment having LOST, the motion was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 09793) with Councillor Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTIONS

1. Requests for Leave of Absence

MOVED by Councillor Dominato

SECONDED by Councillor Boyle

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

THAT Councillor Kirby-Yung be granted a Leave of Absence for civic business from meetings on September 25, 2024, from 9:30 am to 12 pm;

FURTHER THAT Councillor Bligh be granted Leaves of Absence for civic business from meetings from on March 5 to March 7, 2024, May 8, 2024, from 9:30 am to 12pm, June 5, 2024, from 3 pm to 5pm, and July 17, 2024, from 3 pm to 5pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(Councillors Meiszner, Kirby-Yung and Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

(Councillor Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business)

2. Housing is Healthcare

The Committee heard from five speakers in support of the motion.

MOVED by Councillor Fry

SECONDED by Councillor Carr

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

WHEREAS

1. In Canada, the right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right, and all residents of a province or territory are entitled, on uniform terms and conditions, to the publicly funded health services covered by provincial/territorial plans.
2. Every year hundreds of British Columbians are diagnosed with chronic conditions and diseases including cancers, organ, and stem transplants that necessitate specialized medical treatment requiring long term stays near, but not in hospital.
3. In 2022, there were 465 organ transplants in BC, 34% of those transplant patients were from outside of the Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health Authorities, and 100% of those transplants occurred in Vancouver. Over the course of their treatment, the typical transplant patient is required to stay near, but not in hospital for three months.¹

¹ BC Transplant | 2022 Organ Donation and Transplantation Summary

<http://www.transplant.bc.ca/Documents/Statistics/2022-BC-Organ-Donation-Transplant-Summary.pdf>

4. In BC, urban centres typically provide high acuity care for regional patients, and Vancouver with its major medical centres at BC Children's Hospital, Vancouver General Hospital and St Paul's Hospital respectively provide complex and highly specialized treatment for the entire Province. High acuity cases and procedures like transplantation will often require patients to travel with very little advance notice or planning.
5. There exists significant challenges to securing accommodations near, but not in hospital for British Columbians needing to travel to Vancouver for specialized medical treatment. Challenges are variously exacerbated by: low vacancy rates and housing unaffordability; changes to short term rental legislation; hotel room shortages; and development related pressures in hospital adjacent areas like the Broadway Plan, Cambie Corridor, and new St Paul's Campus. These challenges can create significant barriers to timely treatment, causing patients stress and anxiety. In some cases, patients are reported to forgo treatment for want of secure affordable accommodations.
6. In 2023, delegates overwhelming supported UBCM Resolution SR1 "Health Equity for Rural and Remote Communities" calling on the Province to:
 - Identify reasonable travel distances from each community to health care services and facilities, to ensure transparent, accountable, and equitable health care access for those living in rural and remote communities in BC; and
 - Conduct a thorough policy review and reform to ensure equitable healthcare access for all residents of British Columbia, in compliance with the Canada Health Act; and
 - Collaborate with healthcare providers, patient advocacy groups, and other stakeholders to gather data, improve service delivery, and address systemic healthcare challenges in rural and remote areas.
7. Many jurisdictions with universal healthcare provide subsidies for travel and accommodation. Ontario, for example provides the Transplant Patient Expense Reimbursement (TPER) Program² and up to \$2,500/month for accommodation. Similar programs have been replicated in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Nunavut, Yukon and Newfoundland and Labrador.
8. Many jurisdictions with universal healthcare provide subsidized accommodation options. Australia for example variously provides Medihotels³ and Red Cross Medical Accommodations⁴ with low cost accommodation, minimal patient supervision, and support and facilities for patients, a family member or carer, for self-caring patients including rural patients who require short-stay accommodation.

² Ontario Health | Transplant Patient Expense Reimbursement Program Bulletin 2023
https://www.giftoflife.on.ca/resources/pdf/transplant/TPER_Background_January_2023_Final.pdf

³ Victoria Department of Health | Medihotels <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/medihotels>

⁴ Australian Red Cross | Medical Accommodations <https://www.redcross.org.au/services/medical-accommodation/>

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council direct staff to consider, in the course of area planning and regular rezoning and permit applications, opportunities where density bonusing and similar incentives could stimulate the creation of housing and accommodations for patients needing to travel to major medical centres in Vancouver for longer-term specialized medical treatment near but not in hospital;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to share with relevant authorities in the Provincial Ministries of Health and Housing respectively, the substance of this motion and City's willingness to consider the needs of British Columbians requiring longer-term accommodations for specialized medical treatment, in our planning and permitting processes, especially in transit-oriented areas adjacent and proximate to major medical centres including BC Children's Hospital, Vancouver General Hospital and the new St Paul's Campus;

AND FURTHER THAT the following be submitted to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association for consideration as a resolution at the Union of BC Municipalities 2024 Convention, with the above whereas clauses submitted as background:

Housing is Healthcare

WHEREAS every year hundreds of British Columbians are diagnosed with chronic conditions and diseases that necessitate specialized medical treatment requiring long term stays near but not in hospital, there are disparities in health outcomes between rural and urban patients;

AND WHEREAS residents of rural and remote communities in British Columbia requiring specialized medical treatment for complex care in urban centres face significant challenges including high travel and accommodation costs, the psychosocial impacts of healthcare away from home and community, the loss of income during treatment period, and increasingly limited availability of affordable accommodations, hotel rooms, or short term rentals;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia, reflected in its 2024 mandate, is committed to both improved health care for British Columbians when they need it, and attainable and affordable housing to deliver more homes for people faster:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM advocate for the Provincial Government of British Columbia to alleviate the financial and logistical burdens associated with seeking specialized medical care far from home by developing and implementing comprehensive policies and programs to assist patients needing to travel for healthcare, and ensure that patients have access to affordable, comfortable, and convenient accommodations.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province consider and implement ways to deliver and dedicate subsidized accommodations in and adjacent to large urban health centres specifically purposed for longer term specialized medical treatment.

amended

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Montague
SECONDED by Councillor Fry

THAT the following be added as the third clause:

FURTHER THAT Council request the Mayor write a letter to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Housing, expressing the City of Vancouver's willingness to help support the creation of this important longer term medical housing stock, provided the provincial government has an interest in funding, and administering housing of this nature.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 09794)
(Councillor Meiszner absent for the vote)
(Councillors Boyle and Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business)

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Carr
SECONDED by Councillor Fry

THAT in the first clause, the words "including for hotels" be added after the words "permit applications".

LOST (Vote No. 09795)
(Councillors Bligh, Dominato, Montague, Kirby-Yung, Klassen, and Mayor Sim opposed)
(Councillor Meiszner absent for the vote)
(Councillors Boyle and Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business)

The amendments having either carried or lost, and prior to the vote, the Committee agreed to separate the components of the motion as amended. The amended motion was put with the first clause having LOST (Vote No. 09796) with Councillors Bligh, Kirby-Yung, Klassen, Montague and Mayor Sim opposed, Councillor Meiszner absent for the vote, and Councillors Boyle and Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business, and the remaining clauses having CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 09797) with Councillor Meiszner absent for the vote, and Councillors Boyle and Zhou absent for the vote due to Civic Business.

FINAL MOTION AS APPROVED

WHEREAS

1. In Canada, the right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right, and all residents of a province or territory are entitled, on uniform terms and conditions, to the publicly funded health services covered by provincial/territorial plans.
2. Every year hundreds of British Columbians are diagnosed with chronic conditions and diseases including cancers, organ, and stem transplants that necessitate specialized medical treatment requiring long term stays near, but not in hospital.
3. In 2022, there were 465 organ transplants in BC, 34% of those transplant patients were from outside of the Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health Authorities, and 100% of those transplants occurred in Vancouver. Over the course of their treatment, the typical transplant patient is required to stay near,

but not in hospital for three months.⁵

4. In BC, urban centres typically provide high acuity care for regional patients, and Vancouver with its major medical centres at BC Children's Hospital, Vancouver General Hospital and St Paul's Hospital respectively provide complex and highly specialized treatment for the entire Province. High acuity cases and procedures like transplantation will often require patients to travel with very little advance notice or planning.
5. There exists significant challenges to securing accommodations near, but not in hospital for British Columbians needing to travel to Vancouver for specialized medical treatment. Challenges are variously exacerbated by: low vacancy rates and housing unaffordability; changes to short term rental legislation; hotel room shortages; and development related pressures in hospital adjacent areas like the Broadway Plan, Cambie Corridor, and new St Paul's Campus. These challenges can create significant barriers to timely treatment, causing patients stress and anxiety. In some cases, patients are reported to forgo treatment for want of secure affordable accommodations.
6. In 2023, delegates overwhelmingly supported UBCM Resolution SR1 "Health Equity for Rural and Remote Communities" calling on the Province to:
 - Identify reasonable travel distances from each community to health care services and facilities, to ensure transparent, accountable, and equitable health care access for those living in rural and remote communities in BC; and
 - Conduct a thorough policy review and reform to ensure equitable healthcare access for all residents of British Columbia, in compliance with the Canada Health Act; and
 - Collaborate with healthcare providers, patient advocacy groups, and other stakeholders to gather data, improve service delivery, and address systemic healthcare challenges in rural and remote areas.
7. Many jurisdictions with universal healthcare provide subsidies for travel and accommodation. Ontario, for example provides the Transplant Patient Expense Reimbursement (TPER) Program⁶ and up to \$2,500/month for accommodation. Similar programs have been replicated in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Nunavut, Yukon and Newfoundland and Labrador.
8. Many jurisdictions with universal healthcare provide subsidized accommodation options. Australia for example variously provides Medihotels⁷ and Red Cross

⁵ BC Transplant | 2022 Organ Donation and Transplantation Summary
<http://www.transplant.bc.ca/Documents/Statistics/2022-BC-Organ-Donation-Transplant-Summary.pdf>

⁶ Ontario Health | Transplant Patient Expense Reimbursement Program Bulletin 2023
https://www.giftoflife.on.ca/resources/pdf/transplant/TPER_Background_January_2023_Final.pdf

⁷ Victoria Department of Health | Medihotels <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/patient-care/medihotels>

Medical Accommodations⁸ with low cost accommodation, minimal patient supervision, and support and facilities for patients, a family member or carer, for self-caring patients including rural patients who require short-stay accommodation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council direct staff to share with relevant authorities in the Provincial Ministries of Health and Housing respectively, the substance of this motion and City's willingness to consider the needs of British Columbians requiring longer-term accommodations for specialized medical treatment, in our planning and permitting processes, especially in transit-oriented areas adjacent and proximate to major medical centres including BC Children's Hospital, Vancouver General Hospital and the new St Paul's Campus;

FURTHER THAT Council request the Mayor write a letter to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Housing, expressing the City of Vancouver's willingness to help support the creation of this important longer term medical housing stock, provided the provincial government has an interest in funding, and administering housing of this nature;

AND FURTHER THAT the following be submitted to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association for consideration as a resolution at the Union of BC Municipalities 2024 Convention, with the above whereas clauses submitted as background:

Housing is Healthcare

WHEREAS every year hundreds of British Columbians are diagnosed with chronic conditions and diseases that necessitate specialized medical treatment requiring long term stays near but not in hospital, there are disparities in health outcomes between rural and urban patients;

AND WHEREAS residents of rural and remote communities in British Columbia requiring specialized medical treatment for complex care in urban centres face significant challenges including high travel and accommodation costs, the psychosocial impacts of healthcare away from home and community, the loss of income during treatment period, and increasingly limited availability of affordable accommodations, hotel rooms, or short term rentals;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia, reflected in its 2024 mandate, is committed to both improved health care for British Columbians when they need it, and attainable and affordable housing to deliver more homes for people faster:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM advocate for the Provincial Government of British Columbia to alleviate the financial and logistical burdens associated with seeking specialized medical care far from home by developing and implementing comprehensive policies and programs to assist patients needing to

⁸ Australian Red Cross | Medical Accommodations <https://www.redcross.org.au/services/medical-accommodation/>

travel for healthcare, and ensure that patients have access to affordable, comfortable, and convenient accommodations.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province consider and implement ways to deliver and dedicate subsidized accommodations in and adjacent to large urban health centres specifically purposed for longer term specialized medical treatment.

The Committee adjourned at 4:03 pm.

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**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON
CITY FINANCE AND SERVICES**

FEBRUARY 7, 2024

A meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 4:03 pm, in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall, following the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting, to consider the recommendations and actions of the Committee.

PRESENT:

Mayor Ken Sim
Councillor Rebecca Bligh
Councillor Adriane Carr
Councillor Lisa Dominato
Councillor Pete Fry
Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung
Councillor Mike Klassen
Councillor Brian Montague

ABSENT:

Councillor Christine Boyle (Leave of Absence – Civic Business)
Councillor Peter Meiszner
Councillor Lenny Zhou (Leave of Absence – Civic Business)

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:

Paul Mochrie, City Manager

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:

Tina Penney, Deputy City Clerk
David Yim, Meeting Coordinator

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of Standing Committee on City Finance and Services
Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Council considered the report containing the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services. Its items of business included:

Presentations

1. Parks and Recreation Transition Planning Update
2. Climate Emergency Action Plan – Annual Update

Report:

1. Gastown Summer 2024 Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot

Council Members' Motions

1. Requests for Leaves of Absence
2. Housing is Healthcare

MOVED by Councillor Montague
SECONDED by Councillor Bligh

THAT the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services at its meeting of February 7, 2024, as contained in Presentations 1 and 2, Report 1, and Council Members' Motions 1 and 2, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

URGENT BUSINESS

MOVED by Mayor Sim
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT Mayor Sim be granted a Leave of Absence for civic business from meetings on February 8, 2024, from 3 pm to 5 pm.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councillor Bligh
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Council adjourned at 4:05 pm.

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