

## COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

### 3. Enabling Outdoor Cold Plunges and Saunas

Submitted by: Councillor Dominato

#### WHEREAS

1. Outdoor cold plunging and saunas are common in Nordic cultures. The practice typically involves alternating between the intense heat of a sauna and the invigorating chill of a cold plunge. Cold plunging is believed to offer a wide range of health and wellness benefits such as increased circulation and blood flow, faster muscle recovery, and general mental and physical refreshment;
2. Spirit baths and sweat lodges, which hold profound significance in Coast Salish culture for physical purification, spiritual renewal, and community bonding, share similarities with the growing cold plunge and sauna culture in Vancouver, which offer an approachable way to promote physical wellness and communal experiences while ensuring that more citizens of Vancouver have access in their communities to these important health and spiritual modalities;
3. There is a growing interest and demand for outdoor cold plunges and saunas among the residents of Vancouver, and a number of small businesses in the city focused on holistic wellness, self-improvement, and personal growth have either expressed an interest in the growing trend and/or have added cold plunging to their health and wellness services;
4. At present, the City's land use policies and zoning and licensing by-laws do not allow for the operation of outdoor cold plunging and saunas. Under the City's policies and by-laws, cold plunges – where they may exist in the city – must be located within a completely enclosed building;
5. In addition to the City's licensing and zoning policies and by-laws, cold plunging has various public health implications that are of interest to and under the jurisdiction of Vancouver Coastal Health;
6. The City of Vancouver is committed to supporting small businesses, including those that contribute to the health and well-being of the city's residents; and
7. Council has devoted considerable time and energy seeking to modernize and streamline zoning and licensing policies and objectives, such as allowing pop up retail and other services in underutilized public spaces.

#### THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to review, develop, and propose for consideration by Council amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law and Licence By-law, and other by-laws if necessary, to allow for the operation of outdoor cold plunges and saunas in appropriate locations within the city, including, for example, underutilized commercial and industrial spaces, while ensuring they meet all necessary health, safety, and environmental standards, and report back

by Q1 of 2025;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to explore and report back on options for interim measures to enable existing cold plunge and sauna businesses to operate while staff update the city's zoning and licensing by-laws.

- B. THAT Council direct staff to engage with Vancouver Coastal Health to request the health authority develop an appropriate regulatory framework for enabling outdoor cold plunges and saunas to protect the health and safety of users.

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