

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

*For consideration at the Standing Committee meeting on Policy and Strategic Priorities
May 6, 2026*

8. Proactively Protecting Residents from Dangerous Heat

Submitted by: Councillor Maloney

WHEREAS

1. Environment and Climate Change Canada projects 2026 to be one of the hottest years on record, consistent with a long-term trend of warming summers in British Columbia ([B.C. government](#), 2026);
2. Hotter summer temperatures place residents at heightened risk of prolonged heat exposure;
3. Indoor temperature in Vancouver's older buildings regularly exceed health authorities' safe indoor guidelines as early as June, and consistently surpass outdoor temperatures even overnight ([Vancouver Indoor Heat Study](#), 2024; [Extreme and prolonged indoor heat in Vancouver's Single Room Occupancy Hotels](#), 2025);
4. The lack of access to nighttime cooling, and prolonged heat exposure increases health risks associated with heatwaves ([Kenny et al.](#), 2024; [Henderson et al.](#), 2022);
5. While the City operates seasonal cooling infrastructure in line with regional heat alerts, current measures remain largely focused on delivering emergency heat relief during extreme heat alerts and depends on resource availability and activation thresholds being met ([BC HARS](#), 2025; [City of Vancouver](#), 2026);
6. Existing barriers to accessing community cool spaces include limited opening-hours, hot and unreliable transportation ([Climate Lived Experience and Resilience \(CLEAR\) Report](#), Vancouver Coastal Health, 2026);
7. The uncertainty of access to cooling for vulnerable residents is compounded by the diminution in funding for preventive heat relief measures, such as the distribution of cooling kits;
8. Research has shown that more reliable access to cooling spaces and clean air in Vancouver — during and outside of declared extreme heat alerts — could be achieved by expanding the City's existing services through the opening of extended-hours cooling centres from June to August, the provision of cooling transit, the deployment of accessible mobile outreach; and sustained funding for translated services and other cooling supports, such as cool kits ([Staying Cool: Experiences and Challenges Using Cooling Centres in Metro Vancouver](#), 2025);

9. Some of these solutions have already been established by community organizations and would benefit from continued and reliable municipal support and funding ([Vancouver Emergency Management Agency, 2023](#); [CBC, 2025](#));
10. Ensuring Vancouver's preparedness for warmer summer months will necessitate dedicated and sustained funding to cooling programs and services; and
11. Expanding data collection would support a better understanding of inequities in access to cooling services — as underlined by federal climate justice objectives — as well as the evaluation of program outcomes and the identification of staff training needs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council affirm its commitment to delivering extended access to cooling centres, spaces, and related infrastructure throughout the summer months, acknowledging the life-threatening impact of prolonged heat exposure on the City's residents.
- B. THAT Council approve funding from the operating budget, or appropriate City reserves, contingency funds, or other available sources to ensure sufficient resources are available to support vital cooling infrastructure throughout the summer months of 2026, including:
 - a. Additional funding to operate cooling centres with extended hours and capacity beyond declared extreme heat events;
 - b. Support for additional staff training in cooling spaces to better support service users; and
 - c. Sustained funding to other vital cooling projects, such as cool kits for those who are unable to reach community cooling spaces.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to:
 - a. Report back on the feasibility to repurpose existing City vehicle as a dedicated mobile cooling resource, ensuring accessible heat relief for vulnerable and unhoused residents during declared extreme heat alert periods;
 - b. Identify and pursue partnerships to expand the number of cooling centres in neighbourhoods disproportionately impacted by urban heat;
 - c. Include dedicated funding in the 2027–2030 capital plan to close tree canopy gaps and advance the urban forest strategy; and
 - d. Collect disaggregated data from heat relief services to strengthen future climate policy and programming.
- D. THAT Council request the Mayor write to TransLink advocating for the deployment of air-conditioned transit vehicles throughout the summer months, to ensure

vulnerable residents can safely access cooling centres, especially buses operating in areas of Vancouver that are disproportionately impacted by urban heat.

- E. THAT Council request the Mayor write to the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness and TransLink for a collaborative approach to fund fare-free transit during declared extreme heat alerts.

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