



WHISTLER

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2015, STARTING AT 5:30 PM

In the Franz Wilhelmsen Theatre at Maurice Young Millennium Place
4335 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V0N 1B4

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Adoption of the Regular Council agenda of November 17, 2015.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Adoption of the Regular Council minutes of November 3, 2015.

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

MAYOR'S REPORT

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Zoning Bylaw
Amendments Regarding
Parking Use In
Residential Zones
Report No. 15-138
File No. RZ 1068

A presentation by municipal staff.

That Council consider giving first and second readings to "Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015"; and further

That Council authorize staff to schedule a public hearing regarding "Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015", and to advertise for same in a local newspaper.

DVP 1112 – 8633 Drifter
Way & 8637 Drifter Way
– Frontage Variance
Report No. 15-136
File No. DVP 1112

That Council approve the issuance of Development Variance Permit DVP 1112 to vary the parcel frontage at 8633 Drifter Way and 8637 Drifter Way as described below to facilitate an adjustment to a property line:

1. Vary the minimum parcel frontage to the existing 4.57 metres at 8633 Drifter Way.
2. Vary the minimum parcel frontage to the existing 4.57 metres at 8637 Drifter Way.

All as shown on the subdivision plan dated received August 31, 2015, prepared by Doug Bush Survey Services Ltd. attached as Appendix B to Administrative Report No. 15-136.

Community Cultural Plan Implementation: *A presentation by municipal staff.*

Home-Based Artist Studios, Community Cultural Facilities And Artist/Artisan Markets
Report No. 15-139
File No. 7467.01

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2096, 2015; and,

That Council authorize staff to schedule a public hearing regarding Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Homebased Artist Studios) No. 2096, 2015 and to advertise for same in a local newspaper; and,

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits for Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2097 2015; and,

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Homebased Artist Studios) No. 2098, 2015; and,

That upon adoption of Bylaw 2096, Council pass a resolution pursuant to s. 45.1 of Zoning Bylaw 303 appointing one member of Council to the advisory committee for Home-based Artist Studios; and further,

That Council direct staff to conduct a review of the temporary use permit program within one year of date of adoption of bylaw 2096 and bring forward any recommended changes to relevant bylaws at that time.

Meadow Park Sports Centre Admission And Pass Rates: 2016 to 2019
Report No. 15-141
File No. 7737, Bylaw 2107, 2015

A presentation by municipal staff.

That Council consider giving first, second and third readings to "Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2107;

That Council authorize staff to provide annual Meadow Park Sports Centre Squash passes to all Whistler Grade 5 and Grade 10 students at the beginning of each school year.

Whistler's Refugee Response
Report No. 15-140
File No. 3100.02

A presentation by municipal staff.

That Council direct staff to convene a public information session with community members, local groups and immigrant and refugee organizations to discuss how best to coordinate a local response, and

That Council support the neighbouring community initiatives underway by encouraging the Whistler community to form additional Group of Five refugee sponsorship groups in Whistler; and further;

That Council direct staff to report back with recommendations resulting from the information session in regards to what resources and commitments the RMOW may contribute to the Whistler Refugee Response.

POLICY REPORTS

Parks and Recreation
Fees and Charges
Council Policy Update
Report No. 15-137
File No. 7737

A presentation by municipal staff.

That Council rescind Council Policy I-6 “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy” dated July 3, 2007, and replace it with Council Policy I-6 “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policies” dated November 17, 2017, attached to Administrative Report No. 137 as Appendix B.

BYLAWS FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS

Zoning Amendment
Bylaw (Amendments to
Parking Use in
Residential Zones)
Bylaw No. 2102, 2015
File No. RZ1068

The purpose of Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) is to amend references to parking use area in several residential zones.

Zoning Amendment
Bylaw (Temporary Use)
Bylaw No. 2096, 2015
File No. 7647.01

The purpose of Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits) is to amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow the issuance of temporary use permits to authorize home-based working studios in residential areas.

Land Use Procedures
Amendment Bylaw
(Temporary Use Permits)
Bylaw No. 2097, 2015
File No. 7647.01

The purpose of Land Use Procedures Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits) is to amend procedures and fees for temporary use permits and to delegate the authority to issue temporary use permits to the General Manager of Resort Experience.

Sign Bylaw Amendment
Bylaw (Home-Based
Artist Studios)
Bylaw No. 2098, 2015
File No. 7647.01

The purpose of Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Home-Based Artist Studios) is to permit freestanding and sandwich board signs for approved home-based working studios.

BYLAWS FOR FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

Parks and Recreation
Fees and
Charges Amendment
Bylaw No. 2107
File No. 7737

The purpose of Parks and Recreation Facility Rental Charges Amendment Bylaw is to amend Parks & Recreation Fees & Charges Regulation Bylaw no. 1807, 2007.

OTHER BUSINESS

CORRESPONDENCE

Provincial Eating
Disorder Awareness
Week (PEDAW)
File No. 3009.1

Correspondence from Kimberly Strain, Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) Committee member dated October 28th, 2015, requesting that February 1- 7, 2016 be proclaimed Eating Disorder Awareness Week (EDAW) and the Annual Launch of the BC Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) campaign.

Human Trafficking and
Sexual Exploitation in BC
File No. 3009

Correspondence from Cathy Peters dated November 1, 2015 regarding raising awareness for Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in BC.

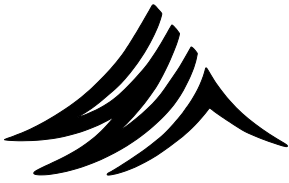
RCMP Complaint
File No. 3009

Correspondence from Mike Suggett dated November 4, 2015, regarding an incident with RCMP.

GivingTuesday
File No. 3009.1

Correspondence from Carol Coffey, Executive Director Community Foundation of Whistler dated November 11, 2015 requesting that December 1, 2015 be proclaimed GivingTuesday.

ADJOURNMENT



WHISTLER

MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING OF MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2015, STARTING AT 5:32 PM**

**In the Franz Wilhelmssen Theatre at Maurice Young Millennium Place
4335 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V0N 1B4**

PRESENT:

Mayor N. Wilhelm-Morden

Councillors: S. Anderson, J. Crompton, J. Ford, J. Grills, A. Janyk,
S. Maxwell

ABSENT:

Chief Administrative Officer, M. Furey
General Manager of Infrastructure Services, J. Paul
General Manager of Corporate and Community Services, N. McPhail
General Manager of Resort Experience, J. Jansen
Director of Planning, M. Kirkegaard
Corporate Officer, S. Story
Library Director, Lindsay Debou
Fire Chief, G. Playfair
Manager of Communications, M. Comeau
Manager Resort Parks Planning, M. Pardoe
Manager of Transportation and Waste Management, J. Hallisey
Manager of Building Department, J. Mooney
Senior Planner, J. Balobaba
Parks Planner, K. McFarland
Planner, R. Brennan
Emergency Program Coordinator, E. Marriner
Legislative Services Coordinator, N. Best
Recording Secretary, M. Kish

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Councillor J. Crompton
Seconded by Councillor J. Ford

That Council adopt the Regular Council agenda of November 3, 2015.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by Councillor S. Anderson
Seconded by Councillor J. Ford

That Council adopt the Regular Council minutes of October 20, 2015 as amended to change the mention of Lil'Wat First Nation in the Mayors Report to Squamish First Nation and the Public Hearing minutes.

CARRIED

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

There were no questions from the public.

PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

Civic Service Awards	A presentation by Mayor Wilhelm–Morden of the Civic Services Awards to Bob Brett, Mike McCarville and Stephanie Sloan.
Service of Remembrance	A presentation by Brian Buchholz regarding Remembrance Day – Service of Remembrance.
Community Foundation of Whistler	A presentation by Carol Coffey, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Whistler and board member Carole Stretch, regarding an update on the Community Foundation of Whistler and Vital Conversations.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Wilhelm-Morden commented that there was over 800 children and parents who took part in the Tapley's Farm Halloween celebrations on Saturday. She commented that despite the rain, the event went well and there were some incredible costumes. The Municipality and BC Transit provided a free shuttle, which was organized by Fast Park. Mayor Wilhelm-Morden offered special thanks for the shuttle's decorations to the Whistler Waldorf School, especially Ms. Hamilton, Ms. Reynold's grade four class and Ms. Berringer's grade five class. She also thanked Nesters for supplying the fireworks and Whistler Fire Rescue for their work with the display. Councillor A. Janyk wanted to thank the communities of Cheakamus Crossing and Rainbow who held their own Halloween events.

Mayor Wilhelm-Morden welcomed three new members of the Transportation Advisory Group: Bill Murray, Ben Smith and Janusz Sobieniak. She informed that this group will be working to identify transportation issues within Whistler and the surrounding area, and to advise on strategic options. The three volunteers are joined by Mayor Wilhelm-Morden, Councillor Anderson, Councillor Janyk and representatives from the Municipality, the Whistler Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Whistler, Whistler Blackcomb, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and BC Transit.

Mayor Wilhelm-Morden related that there is a screening of the documentary, Marinoni, on Thursday, November 5 at Millennium Place. The event is dedicated to the memory of Kelly Blunden and Ross Chafe and part of the proceeds will be donated to the B.C. Cycling Coalition to promote safety. Tickets can be purchased in advance from Race and Co., located above TD Bank as well they can be bought online at marinonimovie.com.

Whistler's food and drink festival, Cornucopia, begins on Thursday and continues until November 15. Cornucopia continues to evolve and expand each year, and is one of the successful showcases of cultural tourism in our community. It features gala tastings, chefs, winery dinners, breweries, seminars, parties, a health and wellness series, and a retreat. Tickets can be purchased from whistlercornucopia.com.

Mayor Wilhelm-Morden offered her condolences on behalf of council and the Resort Municipality of Whistler to the family and friends of Michael Charles Low, who died while hiking in Joffre Lakes Provincial Park.

Mayor Wilhelm-Morden also offered condolences to the family and friends of Katie Taylor. Katie passed away in Tofino in a boating accident.

INFORMATION REPORTS

Planning & Building
Department Application
Activity Report – 2015
Third Quarter
Report No. 15-135
File No. 7006.01

Moved by Councillor J. Ford
Seconded by Councillor J. Crompton

That Information Report No.15-135 summarizing the Planning Department and Building Departments application activity for the third quarter of 2015 be received.

CARRIED

Fire Services Review
Report No.15-129
File No. 4800

Moved by Councillor A. Janyk
Seconded by Councillor J. Grills

That Information Report No.15-129 regarding the fire service review and related recommendations contained within, be received.

CARRIED

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Renaming Of Maurice
Young Millennium Place
Report No. 15-131
File No. 8236

Moved by Councillor J. Crompton
Seconded by Councillor J. Ford

That Council endorse the renaming of the Maurice Young Millennium Place to the Maury Young Arts Centre as attached in Appendix A to Administrative Report No. 15-131; and,

That Council authorize staff to change the existing building signage.

CARRIED

RZ 1111 – 1310
Cloudburst Drive – 1st
and 2nd Readings of
Zoning Amendment
Bylaw
to Amend the RM65
Zone
Report No.15-133
File No. RZ1111, Bylaw
2101

Moved by Councillor A. Janyk
Seconded by Councillor J. Grills

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Zoning Amendment Bylaw (1310 Cloudburst Drive) No. 2101, 2015; and,

That Council authorize staff to schedule a public hearing regarding Zoning Amendment Bylaw (1310 Cloudburst Drive) No. 2101, 2015 and to advertise for same in the local newspaper;

That Council direct staff to advise the applicant that before consideration of adoption of Zoning Amendment Bylaw (1310 Cloudburst Drive) No. 2101, 2015, the following matters shall be completed to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Resort Experience;

1. Registration of a Section 219 covenant in favour of the Resort Municipality of Whistler to:
 - a. Ensure the proposed development is consistent with the Green Building Project Checklist and with the objectives and goals of the municipality's Green Building Policy G-23;
 - b. Ensure the proposed development is consistent with the Cheakamus Area Legacy Neighbourhood Design Guidelines Council Policy G-22,
 - c. Ensure the Whistler Housing Authority development is subject to an employee housing agreement; and
2. Payment of outstanding rezoning application fees.

That Council authorize the Mayor and Corporate Officer to execute any necessary legal documents for this application; and further,

That Council authorize proceedings for the disposition of the proposed Lot 1a (as generally shown on the drawings included in this report) to the Whistler Housing Authority.

CARRIED

Tapley's and Crabapple
Drainage/Flood Protection
Improvement
Recommendations
Report No.15-134
File No.501.4

Moved by Councillor S. Maxwell
Seconded by Councillor A. Janyk

That Council endorse Option 1 for the Tapley's Farm neighbourhood area and the only developed option for the Crabapple Drive neighbourhood which will improve drainage and flood protection in these areas, and;

That Council direct staff to undertake a screening study for larger scale flood protection improvement options to address concerns of many of the residents of the Tapley's Farm and Crabapple Drive neighbourhoods.

CARRIED

Zoning Regulations For
Shipping Containers
Report No. 15-132
File No. RZ1107, Bylaw
2093

Moved by Councillor A. Janyk
Seconded by Councillor J. Grills

That Council consider giving third reading to Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Shipping Containers) No. 2093, 2015 as amended.

CARRIED

MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Forest and Wildlife
Advisory Committee

Moved by Councillor S. Anderson
Seconded by Councillor J. Crompton

That the minutes of the Forest and Wildlife Advisory Committee meeting of July 8, 2015 be received.

CARRIED

BYLAWS FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS

Zoning Amendment
Bylaw (1310
Cloudburst Drive)
Bylaw No. 2101, 2015
File No. RZ1111

Moved by Councillor J. Ford
Seconded by Councillor J. Crompton

That Zoning Amendment Bylaw (1310 Cloudburst Drive) Bylaw No. 2101, 2015 to modify the RM65 Zone receive first and second readings.

CARRIED

BYLAWS FOR THIRD READING AS AMENDED

Zoning Amendment
Bylaw (Shipping
Containers) Bylaw No.
2093, 2015
File No. RZ1107

Moved by Councillor A. Janyk
Seconded by Councillor J. Grills

That Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Shipping Containers) No. 2093, 2015 to amend the Zoning Bylaw to prohibit shipping containers in residential areas, permit temporary uses of containers under certain circumstances and to add a new safety regulation for container venting receive third reading.

Opposed: Councillor J. Crompton, Councillor J. Ford

CARRIED

ITEMS HAVING PRIOR NOTICE OF MOTION

SLRD Solid Waste &
Resource Management
Plan

Moved by Councillor S. Maxwell
Seconded by Councillor A. Janyk

That WHEREAS the SLRD has asked for comments from Council on the draft Solid Waste & Resource Management Plan (SWRMP);

WHEREAS the draft SLRD SWRMP includes an option to explore waste incineration;

WHEREAS incineration is defined as any thermal treatment of waste such as mass burn, pyrolysis, gasification or others that is used on mixed waste at

non-biological temperature and pressure for the creation of heat, gas or other forms of energy and ash or slag;

WHEREAS the use of waste incineration as a disposal option is:

- contrary to the principles of zero waste and sustainability,
- known to emit more GHGs than recycling/compost and landfill options,
- known to be more harmful to human and environmental health than recycling/composting and landfill options,
- creates fewer jobs than recycling/compost and landfill options, and,
- directly competes for staff and financial resources with zero waste alternatives;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to recommend changes to the draft plan that eliminate the option for waste incineration (also known as waste to energy) of mixed municipal waste be adopted.

CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of Other Business.

CORRESPONDENCE

Tapley's Farm/Whistler
Cay Flood Control
File No.501.4

Moved by Councillor J. Ford
Seconded by Councillor J. Crompton

That correspondence from G.Dyson dated October 19, 2015 regarding Tapley's Farm/Whistler Cay Flood Control be received.

CARRIED

Neighbourhood Parties –
Whistler Centre For
Sustainability
File No. 3009

Moved by Councillor A. Janyk
Seconded by Councillor S. Maxwell

That correspondence from C. Lamont dated October 21, 2015 regarding Neighbourhood Parties – Whistler Centre for Sustainability be received and referred to staff.

CARRIED

Snowridge Bridge
Replacement
File No. 508.3

Moved by Councillor J. Crompton
Seconded by Councillor J. Ford

That correspondence from S.Bayly dated October 18, 2015 requesting the Snowridge Bridge replacement and requesting that the municipality share in the replacement cost along with the Snowridge Bareland Strata, the Snowridge Townhouse Strata, and Whistler Blackcomb be received and referred to staff.

CARRIED

Sea to Sky Clean Air
Society New Annual
Membership Program
File No. 3009

Councillor S. Maxwell left the meeting at 7:02 p.m. due to a conflict as she is a non-council appointed board member on the Sea to Sky Clean Air Society.

Moved by Councillor J. Crompton
Seconded by Councillor J. Ford

That correspondence from Kim Slater, Executive Director, Sea to Sky Clean Air Society dated October 8, 2015 requesting membership to New Annual Membership Program and continued support be received and referred to staff to continue to support.

CARRIED

Councillor S. Maxwell returned to the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

British Columbia
Professional Firefighters
Association All Hazard
Response Support
File No. 3009

Moved by Councillor A. Janyk
Seconded by Councillor J. Grills

That correspondence from Mike Hurley, President of the British Columbia Professional Firefighters Association dated October 19, 2015 requesting support of the all hazard response of municipal firefighters be received.

CARRIED

Pedestrian Bridge on
Lorimer Rd
File No.3009

Moved by Councillor J. Crompton
Seconded by Councillor J. Ford

That correspondence from T. van Wollen dated October 24, 2015 requesting the construction of a pedestrian bridge over Highway 99 at Lorimer Road be received and referred to staff with respect to the length of the light.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by J. Crompton

That Council adjourn the November 3, 2015 Council meeting at 7:07 p.m.

CARRIED



REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 17, 2015

REPORT: 15-138

FROM: Resort Experience

FILE: RZ 1068

SUBJECT: ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENTS REGARDING PARKING USE IN
RESIDENTIAL ZONES

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council consider giving first and second readings to “Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015”; and further

That Council authorize staff to schedule a public hearing regarding “Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015”, and to advertise for same in a local newspaper.

REFERENCES

Locations: All properties within the RMOW boundaries that are zoned as follows:

- RS1 (Single Family Residential One)
- RS2 (Single Family Residential Two)
- RS3 (Residential Single Family Three)
- RTA1 (Residential/ Tourist Accommodation One)
- RTA2 (Residential/ Tourist Accommodation Two)
- RTA8 (Two Family Residential/ Tourist Accommodation Eight)
- RS-E1 (Residential Single Estate One)
- RS-E2 (Residential Single Estate Two)
- RS-E3 (Residential Single Estate Three)
- RS-E5 (Single Estate Five)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report requests that Council consider giving first and second reading Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015 which would amend Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303, 1983. The proposed miscellaneous amendments would correct a number of issues having to do with parking use in Section 11, Residential Zones.

DISCUSSION

Zoning Bylaw Amendments Regarding Parking Use In Residential Zones

November 17, 2015

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As staff work with the Zoning Bylaw on a daily basis, they become aware of certain issues that, while not warranting the time and expense of immediate attention, do need to be dealt with in a timely fashion. These issues are tracked and consolidated into a Miscellaneous Zoning Amendment Bylaw on a periodic basis. The amending bylaw before Council corrects a number of issues with respect to parking uses in residential zones. More specifically, this amending bylaw addresses the incorrect use of the term “gross floor area” as applied to parking uses in certain residential zones in Section 11.

The term “Gross floor area” is defined in Section 2 of the Zoning Bylaw as follows:

*“**Gross floor area**” means the total area of all floors in all buildings on a parcel, measured to the outside surface of the exterior walls of the building including stairwells, basements and cellars but excluding areas specified in subsection 25 of section 5.”*

The Zoning Bylaw expressly excludes parking areas from the calculation of gross floor area in subsection 25 of section 5, “Gross Floor Area Exclusions”; however an inconsistency has found its way into the Zoning Bylaw, which has perpetuated over time with the result that multiple zones now make reference to parking area as “gross floor area”. This results in considerable confusion of staff and the public.

Each zone typically sets a maximum gross floor area (“gfa”) for development on a parcel by means of a floor space ratio, site coverage, parcel frontage, and/or other means. As noted, parking area is meant to be excluded from gfa and should be additional to (and separate from) gfa. Staff have been consistent in interpreting the parking regulations for each zone, but seek to clarify the language in the Zoning Bylaw as any misinterpretation could result in buildings that may significantly alter existing neighbourhood character.

Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015

The following table addresses the changes proposed by “Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015” by specifically identifying each individual section proposed to be amended:

Zone	Subsection	Existing Wording	Proposed Change
RS1	11.1.2.5	Notwithstanding s. 5.3.1 (a) the maximum gross floor area of an auxiliary building containing both auxiliary parking use and an auxiliary dwelling unit is 110 square metres and the maximum permitted gross floor area for an auxiliary building containing only an auxiliary residential dwelling unit is 90 square metres.	Delete the word “gross” in the first instance only.
RS2	11.2.2.5	As above.	As above.
RS3	11.5.2.3	As above.	As above.
RTA1	11.7.2.3	The maximum gross floor area to be used for parking use is 40 square metres where a parcel has a frontage of less than 18 metres and the maximum gross floor area to be used for parking use is 70 square metres	Delete the word “gross” in both instances.

Zoning Bylaw Amendments Regarding Parking Use In Residential Zones

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		where a parcel has a frontage of 18 or more metres.	
RTA2	11.8.2.4	As above.	As above.
RTA8	11.19.2.4	The maximum permitted gross floor area used for auxiliary parking in a building on a strata lot shall not exceed 65 square metres for each dwelling unit on a strata lot.	Delete the word "gross".
RS-E1	11.34.2.5	Notwithstanding s. 5.3.1 (a) the maximum gross floor area of an auxiliary building containing both auxiliary parking use and an auxiliary dwelling unit is 110 square metres and the maximum permitted gross floor area for an auxiliary building containing only an auxiliary residential dwelling unit is 90 square metres.	Delete the word "gross" in the first instance only.
RS-E2	11.35.3.5	The maximum permitted gross floor area of an auxiliary building used for parking is 50 square metres, plus the area of any auxiliary residential dwelling unit.	Delete the word "gross".
RS-E3	11.36.2.2	The maximum permitted gross floor area for an auxiliary building for parking use is 56.7 square metres.	Delete the word "gross".
RS-E5	11.38.2.3	The total gross floor area for all parking uses on a parcel and in any combination of principle or auxiliary buildings or structures is 135 square metres.	Delete the word "gross".
	11.38.2.4 (b)	The maximum gross floor area of an auxiliary building containing both auxiliary parking use and an auxiliary residential dwelling unit is 158 square metres and the maximum footprint is 79 square metres.	Delete the word "gross".

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Built Environment	Limits to growth are understood and respected.	The proposed changes to Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303 will clarify the confusing situation regarding parking areas and gross floor area that currently exists in the specified zones.
W2020 Strategy	AWAY FROM Descriptions of success that resolution moves away from	Mitigation Strategies and Comments
	None	

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Correcting inconsistencies and/ or oversights in municipal bylaws streamlines operations which may lead to increased efficiencies for business and government.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

A public hearing, which is subject to public notice requirements, is required as part of the statutory process for bylaw consideration and adoption.

SUMMARY

This report presents “Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015”, a bylaw to correct inconsistencies with respect to parking areas in certain residential zones and asks for Council’s consideration of first and second readings of “Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015”.

Respectfully submitted,

Roman Licko
PLANNING TECHNICIAN
for
JAN JANSEN
GENERAL MANAGER OF RESORT EXPERIENCE



REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 17, 2015
FROM: Resort Experience
SUBJECT: DVP 1112 – 8633 DRIFTER WAY & 8637 DRIFTER WAY – FRONTAGE VARIANCE

REPORT: 15-136
FILE: DVP 1112

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the issuance of Development Variance Permit DVP 1112 to vary the parcel frontage at 8633 Drifter Way and 8637 Drifter Way as described below to facilitate an adjustment to a property line:

1. Vary the minimum parcel frontage to the existing 4.57 metres at 8633 Drifter Way.
2. Vary the minimum parcel frontage to the existing 4.57 metres at 8637 Drifter Way.

All as shown on the subdivision plan dated received August 31, 2015, prepared by Doug Bush Survey Services Ltd. attached as Appendix B to Administrative Report No. 15-136.

REFERENCES

Location: 8633 Drifter Way and 8637 Drifter Way

Legal: Plan Vap12781 Lot 63 District Lot 7250 New Westminster District Group 1
Plan Vap12781 Lot 62 District Lot 7250 New Westminster District Group 1, LMP52326.

Owner: Barratt, William J

Zoning: RI1 (Residential Infill One)

Appendices: "A" Location Map
"B" Subdivision Plan
"C" Letters from neighbours

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks Council's consideration of Development Variance Permit DVP 1112, a request for variances to "Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303, 1983" for parcel frontage relaxations to facilitate an adjustment to a property line at 8633 and 8637 Drifter Way.

Section 922 of the *Local Government Act* allows Council to vary regulations contained in a Zoning Bylaw by way of a development variance permit.

DISCUSSION

The owner is proposing to adjust a section of shared property line between 8633 Drifter Way and 8637 Drifter Way to increase the size of one parcel and reduce the size of the other parcel.

8633 Drifter Way and 8637 Drifter Way are located in the Alpine Meadows neighbourhood. The existing parcels are “panhandle” parcels with narrow 4.57 metre wide frontages, with the developable portions of each parcel located behind the neighbouring parcels. A location map is attached as Appendix A.

The property line adjustment will add a portion of 8637 Drifter Way to 8633 Drifter Way. 8633 Drifter Way will increase in lot area from 1337 m² to 1702 m², while 8637 Drifter Way will decrease in lot area from 1685 m² to 1324 m². Both properties are owned by the same owner, and their rationale for the property line adjustment is to provide 8633 Drifter Way with a greater majority of trees, enabling the owner greater control over potentially removing trees for landscaping or fire protection purposes in the future.

The proposed property line adjustment will not alter the existing parcel frontage width for either parcel, however, to facilitate the property line adjustment, frontage variances are required for both parcels as the existing 4.57 metre wide frontages do not meet the minimum parcel frontage requirements of the R11 Zone for parcels greater than 928.6 square metres in parcel area. The requested variances are identified on the subdivision plan attached as Appendix B and described in the table below.

Variance Request	Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 1983 Regulation				
1. Vary the frontages as follows: a) Vary the minimum parcel frontage to the existing 4.57 metres at 8633 Drifter Way. b) Vary the minimum parcel frontage to the existing 4.57 metres at 8637 Drifter Way.	Section 11.52.4.1 – Site Dimensions				
	The minimum required parcel area, usable site area and frontage are as follows:				
	Type of Dwelling	Gross floor area	Minimum parcel area	Minimum usable site area	Minimum frontage
	Detached or Duplex Dwelling	325 square metres or less	695 square metres	465 square metres	18 metres
	Detached or Duplex Dwelling	Greater than 325 square metres	928.6 square metres	575 square metres	24 metres

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Built Environment	Limits to growth are understood and respected	The proposal respects the limits to growth by complying with density and all other regulations of the Zoning Bylaw with execution of the subdivision.

W2020 Strategy	AWAY FROM Descriptions of success that resolution moves away from	Mitigation Strategies and Comments
None.		

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

DVP Criteria

Staff have established criteria for consideration of development variance permits. The proposed variances are considered to be consistent with these criteria as described in the table below.

Potential Positive Impacts	Comment
Complements a particular streetscape or neighbourhood.	The proposal complements the neighbourhood as the property line adjustment will not result in an increase in the number of parcels, or the ability to build larger dwellings on the parcels from what the existing lot configuration and zoning permit.
Works with the topography on the site, reducing the need for major site preparation or earthwork.	Not applicable.
Maintains or enhances desirable site features, such as natural vegetation, trees and rock outcrops.	Not applicable.
Results in superior siting with respect to light access resulting in decreased energy requirements.	The parcel line adjustment will increase the size of the parcel located at 8633 Drifter Way, resulting in increased owner control over the existing vegetation to the southeast of their dwelling. This will improve the owner's ability to modify light access.
Results in superior siting with respect to privacy.	No impact.
Enhances views from neighbouring buildings and sites.	Not applicable.

Potential Negative Impacts	Comments
Is inconsistent with neighbourhood character.	Not applicable.
Increases the appearance of building bulk from the street or surrounding neighbourhood.	Not applicable.
Requires extensive site preparation.	Not applicable.
Substantially affects the use and enjoyment of adjacent lands (e.g. reduces light access, privacy, and views).	Not applicable.
Requires a frontage variance to permit greater gross floor area, with the exception of a parcel fronting a cul-de-sac.	Not applicable.
Requires a height variance to facilitate gross floor area exclusion.	Not applicable.
Results in unacceptable impacts on services (e.g. roads, utilities, snow clearing operations).	Not applicable.

Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303

The property is zoned RI1 (Residential Infill One). The requested variances to “Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303, 1983” are described in the Discussion section of this report. With

execution of the subdivision, the properties will remain in compliance with all other regulations of the Zoning Bylaw.

The proposed lot configuration will not enable any increased future development or subdivision beyond what the existing lot configuration permits.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

There are no significant budget implications with this proposal. Development Variance Permit application fees provide for recovery of costs associated with processing this application.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

A sign describing DVP 1112 is posted on the property.

Notices were sent to surrounding property owners in October 2015. At the time of writing this report, two letters have been received from neighbours, all attached as Appendix C.

A first letter received from owners at 8617 Drifter Way describes concern about the potential for the variance or subdivision facilitating any new development. This is addressed in the Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303 section of this report.

A second letter from owners at 8309 Needles Drive describes concern with the potential for future removal of trees. Staff note that although the subdivision would change tree ownership, this application does not constitute approval for tree removal, and no consent for tree removal is required by the municipality.

SUMMARY

Development Variance Permit DVP 1112 proposes variances to “Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303, 1983” for parcel frontage relaxations to facilitate an adjustment to a property line at 8633 Drifter Way and 8637 Drifter Way for Council’s consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Brook McCrady
Planning Analyst
for
Jan Jansen
General Manager of Resort Experience

APPENDIX A Location Map



Subject Properties

PLAN SHOWING PROPOSED SUBDIVISION OF LOT 62 AND LOT 63, D.L. 7250, GP. 1, N.W.D., PLAN VAP12781

Vary the minimum required frontage in the R11 zone from 24 metres to 4.57 metres, at 8633 and 8637 Drifter Way.

	DESIRED FLOOR AREA	LOT AREA	USABLE SITE AREA	FRONTAGE	SITE COVERAGE
			0-40%	> 40%	
LOT 1	325m ²	1702.1m ²			19.1%
LOT 2	325m ²	1324.4m ²			24.5%

NOTE:

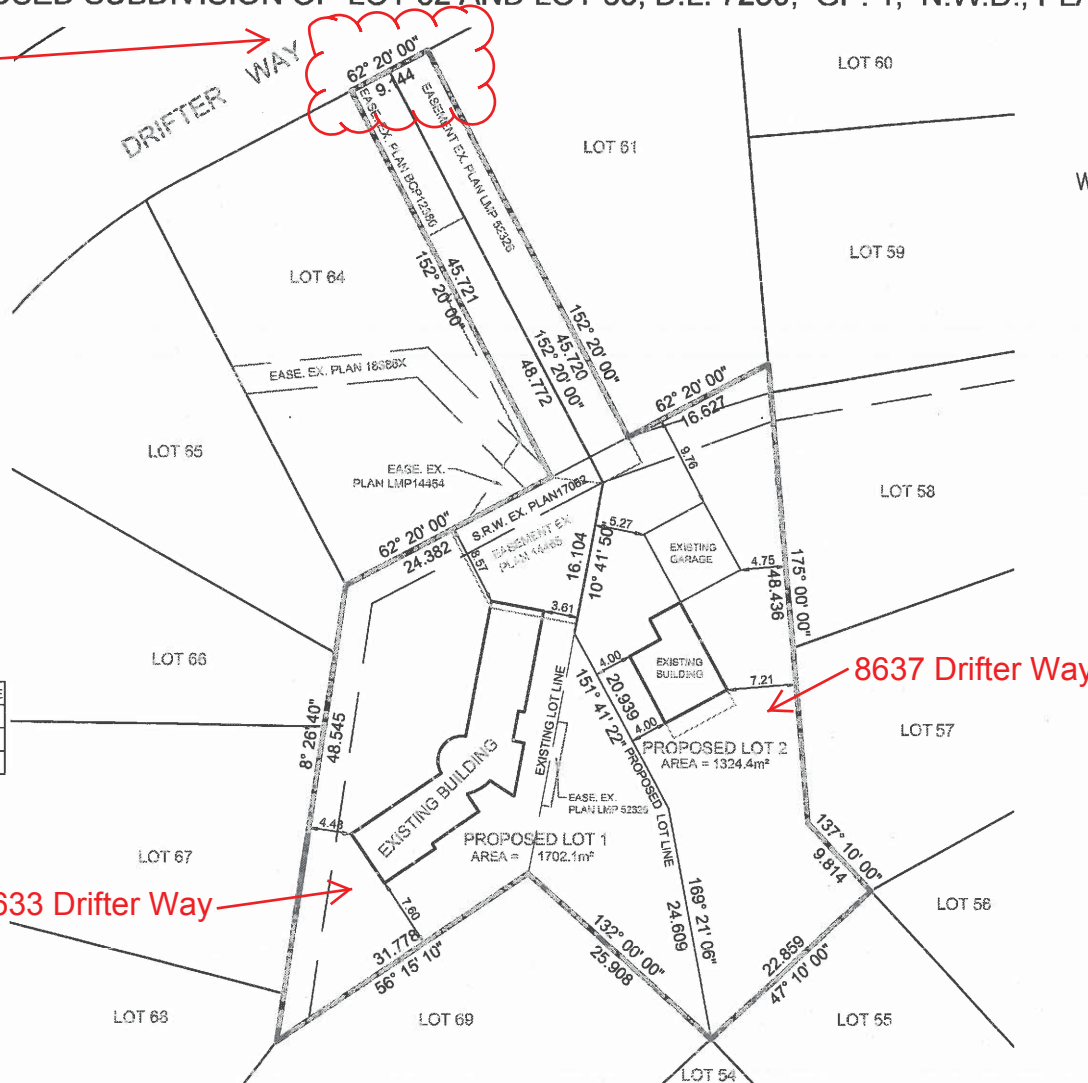
- FIELD SURVEY COMPLETED AUGUST 10, 2014
- BEARINGS ARE DERIVED FROM L.T.O. RECORDS

RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

GRAPHIC SCALE METRES 1 : 500
All distances are in metres

8633 Drifter Way

8637 Drifter Way



DOUG BUSH SURVEY SERVICES Ltd.
Douglas J. Bush, ASCT, RSIS
Applied Science Technologist (Geomatics)
Unit 18, 1370 Alpha Lake Road, Whistler, B.C. VON 1B1
Phone 932-3314 / Fax: 932-3039
E-mail: dougb@dbss.ca / http://dbss.ca

REVISION:

Notes:

Client:

BILL BARRATT

Project:

8633 & 8637 DRIFTER WAY

Date:

August 10, 2015

Files:

14233.CRD

SCALE: 1:500

JOB NO.: 15019

DWG.: 15194B

SHEET:

AUG 31 2015

RESORT EXPERIENCE PLANNING
RESORT MUNICIPALITY
OF WHISTLER

Brook McCrady

From: Mark Gilbert <markgilbert@me.com>
Sent: Friday, October 09, 2015 4:48 PM
To: Planning
Subject: development variance permit application No. DVP 1112

Hi Brook,

My wife Michele and i own the property at 8617 Drifter Way.

We live in our home with our 2 children Sascha and Lola.

In looking at the development variance permit application No. DVP 1112 it appears that any further building on lot on 8633 Drifter Way would have a negative and direct impact on our property. We love the privacy of our home and cherish the little bit of a view that we currently have.

The existing home is already very wide and takes up a great portion of our view corridor. Adding another structure to the property would, in our opinion, decrease the value of our home as it would decrease the view from our property and decrease the amount of privacy that our home currently has.

In fact, 8633 already has an overhanging covered area that extends their building envelope directly in our view corridor...so any more structures seems excessive.

If the purpose of the variance is to build other structures or put some sort of road way or drive then we are definitely NOT IN SUPPORT of the variance.

thank you very much for considering our perspective on the variance.

Mark and Michele Gilbert

(i can be reached at 604-760-7750)

MARK GILBERT
 Director

STATION FILM> LOS ANGELES / NYC

UNTITLED FILMS> TORONTO

US mobile 310.857.9029
 CDN mobile. 604.760.7750

Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC, V0N 1B4
Tel: 604-935-8167
Email: bmccrady@whistler.ca

Brook McCrady
Planning Analyst
Planning & Development

October 12, 2015

Attention: Mr. McCrady,

Regarding: Subdivision Lot 62/63

Thank you for sending our family the letter of intent from our neighbour, Bill Barratt, in regards to a proposed subdivision of lots 62/63. Our family built our cabin almost 50 years ago, and we enjoy the current treed landscape and privacy. We have three generations in our cabin, and it holds a very special spot in our hearts. It is not clear to us why it is necessary to subdivide the parcels. The letter states that the rationale is to enable future removal of trees for landscaping and fire protection. We currently value the treed landscape. When we originally built the cabin, the landscape was desolate and barren, and we had to plant many trees to give it the lovely 'Whister' forested look that we now enjoy. This is, after all, not the city!

Our bedrooms are on the back side of the lot, and we do not wish to have any development or subdivision occur that will disrupt our quiet neighbourhood.

Please call us if you wish to discuss this further, at 604-261-3986.

Regards,



Kirsten, Kevin and Ed Rose
8309 Needles Drive,
Whisler, BC



REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 17th, 2015

REPORT: 15-139

FROM: Resort Experience

FILE: 7647.01

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY CULTURAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION: HOME-BASED ARTIST STUDIOS, COMMUNITY CULTURAL FACILITIES AND ARTIST/ARTISAN MARKETS

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2096, 2015; and,

That Council authorize staff to schedule a public hearing regarding Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2096, 2015 and to advertise for same in a local newspaper; and,

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits for Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2097 2015; and,

That Council consider giving first and second readings to Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2098, 2015; and,

That upon adoption of Bylaw 2096, Council pass a resolution pursuant to s. 45.1 of Zoning Bylaw 303 appointing one member of Council to the advisory committee for Home-based Artist Studios; and further,

That Council direct staff to conduct a review of the temporary use permit program within one year of the date of adoption of bylaw 2096 and bring forward any recommended changes to relevant bylaws at that time.

REFERENCES

Community Cultural Plan 2013

Economic Partnership Initiative (EPI) 2013

Administrative Report 13-080: Council Report from September 3rd 2013 (not attached)

Administrative Report 14-078: Council Report from July 2nd 2014 (not attached).

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of recent policy work undertaken to implement recommendations of the Community Cultural Plan and to present bylaw amendments to Council that will support Home-based Artist Studios. These include Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist

Studios) No. 2096, 2015 for first and second readings, Land Use Procedures and Fees Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits for Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2097, 2015 for first and second readings and Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2098 for first and second readings.

DISCUSSION

Background

On September 3rd 2013, Council received the Community Cultural Plan which contained 31 recommendations to promote arts, heritage and culture in Whistler including:

- Recommendation # 4: Provide opportunities for local artists to develop and showcase their work.
- Recommendation #5: Ensure local artists have opportunities to earn income from their work.
- Recommendation # 7: Create a program of self-guided tours of artists' home based studios.
- Recommendation #28: Revise existing by-laws that prohibit sales through home-based studios.
- Recommendation #14: Create a more visible community art gallery featuring Sea to Sky artists.

In 2014, together with the Community Cultural Officer, staff began working on implementing the above recommendations. Council received a presentation from the Community Cultural Officer at the October 7th Committee of a Whole meeting outlining a general implementation and engagement strategy for the Community Cultural Plan. Among other things, the presentation identified sales from Home-based Artist Studios, Artist and Artisan Markets, and sales from Community Cultural Facilities as potential focus areas for 2015.

Since these focus areas were similar and interrelated, staff felt that they should be bundled into a single project. Staff developed a comprehensive, consensus-based engagement process focusing on all three topics. Stakeholder representatives from Whistler's arts community, including artists and gallery owners were identified to participate in the process. This process is described in greater detail under 'Community Engagement and Consultation' below.

The engagement process revealed that there was general support for sales from Home-based Artist Studios and associated sales, Artist and Artisan Markets and sales from Community Cultural Facilities. Generally, stakeholders felt that these offerings, if equitably supported, would contribute and be complementary to Whistler's broader arts product. The supported concept for each offering can be summarized as follows:

- Artist and Artisan Markets: Build upon existing events (e.g. Farmers Market, Art Walk) with a single, annual art event located in the Village and open to both local artists and galleries.
- Community Cultural facilities: Generally support retail sales from Community Cultural Facilities with a focus on local and emerging artists whose work is not yet easily marketable.
- Home-based Artist Studios: Expand the range of these studios by allowing customer visits and signage while mitigating impacts on neighbourhoods. Recognize that these studios are not the only facilities that can (or should) support local and emerging artists.

A set of guiding principles (Appendix A) were developed to address questions of exactly how this expanded range of arts-related land uses should be regulated. Existing and available regulatory tools (e.g. zoning, Temporary use permits etc.) were examined to determine the best approach.

For Artist and Artisan Markets, zoning amendments approved in July 2014, allowing special events in the Village, already allow this type of programming. Any new initiatives related to Artist and Artisan Markets beyond those that currently exist (e.g. Bizarre Bazaar, Farmers Market) will be brought forward for Council's prior consideration.

For Community Cultural Facilities, it was determined that most existing and proposed facilities are permitted through zoning. However, for some locations, zoning amendments may be needed to authorize ancillary activities such as retail. Staff intend to bring forward some of these amendments, Such as allowing for retail sales in the community gallery in the Maury Young Arts Centre early in 2016.

It was revealed that a number of bylaw and permitting changes are required to further support Home-based Artist Studios. Currently, these studios are permitted as home occupations under the Zoning Bylaw. However, the sale of art directly from these studios is prohibited. Signage is also limited to a single fascia sign. Feedback during the stakeholder engagement process also uncovered a desire that products sold from Home-based Artist Studios be of high quality and appropriate to Whistler's broader cultural objectives. An initial trial program was seen as a desirable test for sales from Home-based Artist Studios.

There are essentially two regulatory options available to the RMOW to legalize sales from Home-based Artist Studios: Zoning and temporary use permits. The pros and cons of both tools were reviewed with temporary use permits emerging as the preferred approach.

Temporary use permits are authorized under Section 921 of the *Local Government Act* and allow the RMOW to temporarily permit a use that is not specifically authorized in the Zoning Bylaw. The proposed regulations set maximum time limit for a temporary use permit of two years. A municipality must designate areas where temporary use permits may be issued and may establish guidelines for considering and approving them. Temporary use permits were used briefly during the Olympics to permit games-related activities but have not been used since.

Temporary use permits were seen as the most advantageous option for the following reasons:

1. Temporary use permits are considered on a case-by-case basis, incorporate flexible decision making guidelines, are discretionary and can contain site-specific conditions. The combination of these characteristics provides greater flexibility when responding to unique proposals while ensuring any undesirable proposals can be refused.
2. Unlike uses permitted through zoning, temporary use permits are valid for a limited period of time. When the permit expires the municipality can choose to renew the permit or that the use be discontinued.
3. Because temporary use permits do not establish any permanent uses they are an ideal tool to test new land uses before considering allowing them permanently.

Proposed Bylaws

The proposed bylaws are focused primarily on legalizing sales from Home-based Artist Studios. There are three bylaws presented for Council consideration.

Zoning Amendment Bylaw

The proposed zoning amendment bylaw would amend the Zoning Bylaw to authorize sales from Home-based Artist Studios through the issuance of a temporary use permit. Under the proposed zoning amendments, Home-based Artist Studios in existence before November 17th 2015 will be eligible for a temporary use permit. The new rules establish guidelines for considering permits, including nuisance abatement and application requirements, and allow conditions to be imposed to ensure compatibility with surrounding neighbourhoods. The guidelines also establish a committee of representatives that will review the quality and appropriateness of the works proposed to be sold from the studio.

Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw

The proposed amendment to the Sign Bylaw will allow a Home-based Artist Studio holding a valid temporary use permit to install one freestanding sign and one sandwich board. These signs must be located on the same property as the Home-based Artist Studio. Currently, only a single fascia sign is permitted for a home occupation. It was felt that amending the sign bylaw to allow these signs for Home-based Artist Studios would result in unique and creative signage that would enhance the visitor experience.

Land Use Procedures Amendment Bylaw

The land use procedures amendment bylaw will create procedures for approving temporary use permits and delegates the authority to approve temporary use permits to the General Manager of Resort Experience. The proposed bylaw also establishes \$750 fee to issue a temporary use permit and a \$300 fee to renew a temporary use permit.

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Arts Culture & Heritage	A range of authentic and creative arts, cultural and heritage opportunities are meaningful, accessible and financially affordable to residents and visitors.	The proposed bylaws allow a new, complementary cultural offering that elevates Whistler's overall cultural product.
Arts Culture & Heritage	Arts, cultural and heritage opportunities attract visitors and contribute to the experience and local economy.	The proposed bylaws expand the mix of cultural offerings and will support emerging artists. In turn this will support a diverse product that will attract more visitors.
Arts Culture & Heritage	Arts, culture and heritage, and their local creators and contributors, are appreciated and supported as cornerstones of the resort community's health, vitality and economic prosperity.	Home-based Artist Studios support emerging and local artists.
Arts Culture & Heritage	There is a physical and organizational focal point for the diversity of arts, culture and heritage activities that spread throughout the community.	The proposed bylaws limit the scale and location of art offerings outside of Whistler Village. The scale of commercial uses outside of the Village will remain appropriate and complementary.
The Built Environment	To maintain vibrancy, Whistler Village is the core of the resort community.	
The Built Environment	The built environment is attractive and vibrant, reflecting the resort community's character, protecting viewscape and evoking a dynamic sense of place.	The new regulations will ensure the form and character of neighbourhoods is not impacted.

Economic	Locally owned and operated businesses thrive and are encouraged as an essential component of a healthy business mix.	Local and emerging artists will benefit from the proposed bylaws. As a whole, the profile of Whistler as a tourism destination will be elevated; attracting more visitors and generating economic activity for all local businesses.
Economic	Whistler has a diversified and year-round tourism economy.	Home-based Artist Studios are not weather or season dependant this supports Whistler's more traditional recreational offerings.
Visitor Experience	A diverse range of year-round activities is developed and offered.	
Visitor Experience	Whistler proactively anticipates market trends.	The Community Cultural Plan and EPI recognized arts and cultural offerings as a key component of Whistler's economic diversification and adaptation strategy. Implementing these recommendations is a proactive step into emerging markets.
Visitor Experience	The resort community's authentic sense of place and engaging, innovative and renewed offerings attract visitors time and time again.	Home-based Artist Studios will be a new and ever-evolving contribution to the visitor experience.

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

	Policy	Comments
Official Community Plan	4.3.3 Other commercial development will be limited to small amounts of space for local convenience commercial uses, personal service uses, and food and beverage uses associated with commercial accommodation. These uses should be scaled to meet only the needs of the immediate area and should not adversely affect commercial uses in the Whistler Village, Blackcomb Bench, and Whistler Creek areas.	Home-based Artist Studios support local and emerging artists who live in residential neighbourhoods. The proposed bylaws limit the scale of these businesses so as not to conflict with commercial offerings in core commercial areas.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

All costs of preparing the bylaw, and notifying property owners can be covered under the existing planning department budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The proposed bylaws have been developed after consultation with stakeholders representing private art galleries, artists, artisans and home based studio operators. Two stakeholder sessions were held to determine principles and ideas that would inform the bylaw development process. The first session was held on April 13th 2015 and the second was held on May 27th 2015. Council also received a progress update at the Committee of the Whole meeting on May 26th 2015.

The first session consisted of two separate workshops with identical formats; one for artists and one for representatives representing commercial galleries and similar businesses. In each session, participants were given an overview of the issues, existing regulatory framework and cultural planning process to date. Then, in small groups, principles and ideas were brainstormed for each of the three categories. These were then presented to the larger group and recorded by staff.

In the second session, the two stakeholder categories (artists and businesses) were combined. A summary of the principles collected from the first session was presented and participants were asked to build upon staff's summary and confirm if the summary accurately reflected the results of the first session. Staff refined the principles and ideas (Appendix A) after the session and these principles were used to guide the bylaw drafting process.

A public hearing will be required prior to adoption Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2096, 2015. Staff also intend to report back to the stakeholder group on the new temporary use permit program once the proposed bylaws are adopted.

Once the temporary use permit program has been in operation for one year, staff intend to evaluate the success of the program to determine if the program should be expanded and report back to Council at that time.

SUMMARY

Adopting the proposed temporary use permit system for Home-based Artist Studios provides a flexible approval system that promotes and supports local and emerging artists, diversifies cultural offerings and supports the guest experience; while ensuring compatibility with residential neighbourhoods.

Temporary use permits allow proposals to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Conditions can be imposed for studios which have a higher potential for neighbourhood conflict (e.g. wood carving) or waived for studios likely to have minimal impact (e.g. writing). The limited duration of temporary use permits adds to this flexibility. The RMOW can remove or require new conditions when the permit comes up for renewal to address issues that have emerged during the studios operation. Ultimately, the flexibility of the proposed system ensures that unique and desirable cultural offerings are not unintentionally excluded, while undesirable uses of residential properties remain prohibited.

Establishing a diverse committee to provide recommendations on the quality and appropriateness of products ensures a skillful and equitable evaluation. Products sold under this new program can be expected to add to Whistler's existing inventory of high-quality art and artisan works.

The proposed signage regulations are reasonable and appropriate. The regulations would allow for modestly sized signs and it can be expected that artists will endeavor to craft stylish and creative signs reflective of the products they sell. Unique and authentic studio signage is a staple in other jurisdictions such as Salt Spring Island and the Sunshine Coast which have endorsed the concept of Home-based Artist Studios.

Overall the proposed amendment bylaws are consistent with Whistler 2020, the Official Community plan and are generally supported by stakeholders. For these reasons staff recommend approving the proposed bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,

Jake Belobaba
SENIOR PLANNER
For
Jan Jansen
General Manager Resort Experience.

Appendix A: Principles Developed from Stakeholder Engagement

Category	Principles	Ideas
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistler's arts and culture sector has multiple stakeholders who have a desire to collaborate to elevate the arts sector in Whistler. Whistler enjoys a range of cultural offerings; success in one area will not detract, but rather contribute to, success of the entire sector. Support for all stakeholders should be equitable. Artists must be part of the "business" aspect of art, being responsible for promoting, selling, and evolving their product. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalize process for ongoing dialogue Cultural hosts Cultural tours
Home-based artist studios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General support for home-based studios as a valuable component of Whistler's cultural offerings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desire to broaden the concept to "working studios" inclusive of a wider range of opportunities. Sales and similar activities should be allowed in studios. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts such as noise, traffic, safety must be addressed. Encouraging home-based studios is important. But they are not the only facilities that can support emerging local artists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update zoning regulations Support a variety of venues for emerging artists
Artist Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General support for existing markets; i.e. Bizarre Bazaar; Farmers'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support should continue for these offerings. Avoid "diluting" the market product with too many different options. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on existing offerings and a single annual arts festival. General support for a multifaceted <i>annual</i> "art festival" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal: ensure all stakeholders have an opportunity to benefit. Model: build on existing cultural offerings, markets, other events Could: be resort-wide Should: include all stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop annual art/artisan festival
Community Cultural Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General support for community cultural facilities including sales from those facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Programming, developing and promoting community cultural facilities should support emerging and local artists○ Particularly artists whose work is not easily marketable	
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REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 17, 2015

REPORT: 15-141

FROM: Corporate and Community Services

FILE: 7737, Bylaw 2107, 2015

SUBJECT: MEADOW PARK SPORTS CENTRE ADMISSION AND PASS RATES: 2016 to 2019

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Corporate and Community Services be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council consider giving first, second and third readings to “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2107;

That Council authorize staff to provide annual Meadow Park Sports Centre Squash passes to all Whistler Grade 5 and Grade 10 students at the beginning of each school year

REFERENCES

Appendix A – Comparison Recreation Centre Information on Admission and Pass Rates

Appendix B – MPSC Proposed 2016/2017 Rates Calculation Sheet

Appendix C– MPSC Proposed 2018/2019 Rates Calculation Sheet

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks Council's support of new fee schedules for admission and pass rates from 2016 to 2019 for the Meadow Park Sports Centre and adding the ability for grade 5 and 10 students to play squash as part of the free grade 5/10 pass program.

DISCUSSION

Approximately 2 years ago, Council approved a 2 year pass and admission rate fee schedule for the Meadow Park Sports Centre (MPSC). The current fee schedule was actually set to expire on April 1, 2015 but has been continued until the end of the fiscal year until staff were able to perform a comprehensive market review of pass and rates across BC and Alberta. Staff were also asked to look at some areas to improve upon resident affordability as requested by the senior management team (SMT) in the spring of 2015.

In considering MPSC future admission and pass rates, staff has considered a wide range of factors:

1. The gap between revenues and expenses at MPSC is below the recent cost recovery target set by the SMT of 60%.
2. A recent market analysis was done to determine other recreation facility admission and pass rates across the province and other resort communities in Alberta (see appendix A).

3. Energy costs, making up a fairly large portion of the annual expense cost at MPSC, continue to increase beyond the annual inflation rate.
4. Other equipment, supply and contract services cost are also increasing above the annual inflation rate.
5. Increased labour costs with recent payroll increases, anticipated future payroll increases and added payroll costs for each day the facility is open on a statutory holiday.
6. Support for adjusting MPSC fees from the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee.
7. Explore possibility of continuing and augmenting resident affordability initiatives.

In consideration of all the above, staff is recommending increasing the base rate (adult one time admission) by 25 cents (from \$8.25 to \$8.50) for 2016 and 2017 with another 25 cent increase (\$8.50 to \$8.75) for 2018 and 2019. All other admission and pass products would increase according to the change in the base rate as outlined in Council Policy I-6. Over the 4 year period, this would amount to an average 1.5% per year increase in admission and pass rates.

The Municipality would continue to support affordability at MPSC by maintaining the following discount and promotional initiatives:

- Midday/Midweek product at the same price point as the Early Bird/Late Owl product valid Monday to Friday between 11 am and 1 pm (drop in rates for this product are not available during holiday periods or statutory holidays).
- Tuesday and Friday 50% off night in an effort to better accommodate peoples individual schedules by offering a discounted access program to MPSC on two evenings of the week.
- Early Bird/Late Owl admission and pass products.
- Offering the ability for combination discounts on a variety of longer term pass products.
- Offering promotions that offer reduced rate access to MPSC at certain times of the year such as the annual National Fitness Day pass discount promotion and the late spring buy 3 months get one free pass promotion
- Providing a variety of departmental volunteer opportunities where a MPSC pass is provided in return for volunteer hours.

Further to the above, staff is also recommending adding the following products or adjusting some products to increase affordability at MPSC:

- Requesting Council make the Grade 5 and 10 MPSC pass program valid for access to squash (also valid for access to "shoot hoops" on squash court 2).
- Decreasing the calculation formula for both the 6 month and annual pass product by 5% and 10% respectively.
- Adding and annual Spirit pass product and with an incremental 5% discount on the regular annual pass product as per above providing a cumulative discount of 15% while maintaining the 6 month Spirit pass product with a cumulative discount of 10%.

Calculations sheets for both the proposed 2016/2017 and 2018/2019 MPSC Admission and Pass Rates have been included as Appendix B and C to this report which shows the adjusted products and associated calculation formulas as per above as well as the new proposed annual Spirit pass product.

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Recreation and Leisure	The cost of amenities is covered within the resort community's financial means and is equitably shared among stakeholders	User fees assist in covering the cost of operating facilities and non-resident program fees will assist with non-taxpaying users "paying their share".
Resident Affordability	Diverse and affordable opportunities for recreation, leisure, arts and culture exist	Added Midday/Midweek product creates another affordable recreation access opportunity
Health and Social	Community members and visitors maintain and improve their physical, mental, spiritual and social health through prevention and treatment services	MPSC offers facilities for promoting good health, preventing injury and rehabilitating from injury
Visitor Experience	A diverse range of year-round activities is developed and offered	MPSC offers a pool, large fitness centre, squash and an indoor arena
Finance	The long-term consequences of decisions are carefully considered	Hence the 2 year bylaw fee schedule
Economic	Physical and social infrastructure attract and support work and investment	MPSC is an important community amenity

W2020 Strategy	AWAY FROM Descriptions of success that resolution moves away from	Mitigation Strategies and Comments
Visitor Experience	Visitors choose Whistler to actively participate in recreation, learning, and cultural opportunities	Non-residents have to pay more for programs (33% surcharge) although other communities are charging up to 50% more on programs and admissions to non-residents.

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Council Policy 1-6: The Fees and Charges Council Policy outlines the formulas to be used to determine pass fees. In this regard, this policy needs to be updated accordingly to adjust the formulas for calculating the 6 month and annual pass rates. Furthermore, staff have also identified some minor edits and changes to the policy from a housekeeping perspective and consider it "best practice" to add the free Grade 5/10 pass program into this Council Policy. Please see the associated policy report that outlines the amendments to Council Policy I-6

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Provided that admission and pass sales remain consistent from year to year, it is estimated that the proposed increases (and proposed decrease on the 6 month and annual passes) will have a positive net effect on revenues of approximately \$27,000 for admission and pass sales in 2016/2017 and another positive net effect on revenues of approximately \$28,000 for 2018/2019.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee unanimously supported this proposed direction in adjusting admission and pass rate over the next 4 years at MPSC at their October 8th meeting.

SUMMARY

Staff is recommending that Council support the proposed 2016-2020 Admission and Pass Rates for MPSC by providing first three readings to the associated bylaw along with the proposed amendments to Council Policy I-6 to provide increased affordability for both the 6 month and annual pass products. Staff is also recommending adding squash to the annual free passes provided to grade 5 and 10 Whistler students.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Weetman
for
Norm McPhail
General Manager of Corporate and Community Services

Appendix A: Comparison Recreation Centre Information on Admission and Pass Rates (Spring 2015)

Town	Population	Facility	Type	Single Entry	10 time	One Month	Annual
Kelowna	179,839	Pool /gym combo rate	Adult	\$6.35	\$48.30	\$51.42	\$399.23
		pool/ gym combo	Family	\$13.65	\$104.30	\$110.18	\$762.04
		pool/ gym combo	Youth Senior	\$4.70	\$38.68	\$38.56	\$299.42
		Pool /gym combo rate	over 75	\$2.90	\$21.70	\$23.13	\$179.65
		Pool only	Child	\$2.90	\$21.70	\$23.13	\$179.65
Penticton	31,909	Pool/ gym combo	Adult	\$10.00	\$89.00	\$89.00	\$629.00
		pool only	Family	\$15.00	\$135.00	\$135.00	\$929.00
		Pool/gym combo	youth	\$7.00	\$63.00	\$63.00	\$439.00
		Pool/gym combo	senior	\$7.00	\$63.00	\$63.00	\$439.00
		Pool/ gym combo	Over 75	\$6.00	\$54.00	\$54.00	\$379.00
Vernon	58,584	pool/ gym combo	Adult	\$7.65	\$68.70	\$69.70	\$519.10
		pool only	Youth 7-18	\$4.05	\$36.30	\$44.70	\$273.15
		pool / gym combo	Youth 13-18	\$6.35	\$57.30	\$66.55	\$433.15
		Pool only	Child 3-6	\$1.80	\$16.10	\$19.85	\$121.25
		Pool only	Family	\$12.50	\$108.50	\$133.50	\$815.80
Kamloops	98,754	pool/gym combo	Adult	\$5.00		\$32.00	
		pool/gym combo	youth 14-18	\$3.75		\$32.00	
		pool/gym combo	senior	\$3.75		\$32.00	
		pool only	Child 4-13	\$3.25		\$26.00	
West Vancouver	42,694	pool/gym combo	Adult	\$6.90	\$62.00	\$78.00	\$431.50
		pool/gym combo	Youth 13-18	\$4.80	\$43.20	\$54.50	\$302.00
		pool/gym combo	Senior	\$5.90	\$52.70	\$66.50	\$366.75
		pool/gym combo	Child 3-12	\$3.80	\$34.10	\$46.50	\$260.00
		pool/gym combo	over 75	\$5.50	\$49.60	\$62.50	\$345.20
		pool only	Family	\$11.40			

Town	Population	Facility	Type	Single Entry	10 time	One Month	Annual
							seasons pass
Banff AB	8,421	Arena/ Curling	Adult	\$6.00	\$42.00		\$80.00
			Youth	\$4.00			
			Senior 55+	\$3.00			\$40
			Family				\$125.00
		All Day only					
	12,288	pool/rock wall/gym/arena	Adult 26-64	\$29.00	\$135.00	\$75.00	\$1,428.00
Canmore AB		pool/rock wall/gym/arena	student 18-25	\$12.00	\$108.00	\$55.00	\$492.00
		pool/rock wall/gym/arena	youth 12-17	\$8.00	\$72.00	\$39.00	\$372
		pool/rock wall/gym/arena	Child 3-11	\$4.00	\$45.00	\$29.00	\$276.00
		pool/rock wall/gym/arena	Family (1 adlt)	\$14.00	\$180.00	\$115.00	\$1,032.00
		pool/rock wall/gym/arena	Family (2 adlt)	\$18.00	\$261.00	\$159.00	\$1,428.00
						6week	
Jasper AB	5,236	Pool /Gym/rock wall combo	Adult	\$11.69	\$105.21	\$205.96	\$617.83
			child/youth	\$8.70	\$78.54	\$171.64	\$514.86
Revelstoke	7,924	pool/gym combo	Adult	\$8.75		\$86.75	
			youth	\$6.25		\$63.00	
			Family	\$20.50		\$200.50	
		pool only	Child	\$3.50		\$34.25	

APPENDIX B-PROPOSED ADMISSION RATES 2016/2017 CALCULATION SHEET - MEADOW PARK SPORTS CENTRE

Base Rate = \$8.50 Adjusted formulas New product

Classification		ADMIT 1				PLAYTIME CARDS*						ACTIVE MEMBER PASSES										
		Drop In		All Day		10 Time		20 Time		30 Time		Monthly		3 Month		6 Month		Annual				
		Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded			
Adult/Senior		\$8.50	\$8.50	\$12.75	\$12.75	\$72.25	\$72.25	\$127.50	\$127.50	\$170.00	\$170.00	\$76.50	\$76.50	\$187.00	\$187.00	\$318.75	\$318.75	\$535.50	\$535.50			
Youth		\$5.10	\$5.00	\$7.65	\$7.50	\$43.35	\$42.50	\$76.50	\$75.00	\$102.00	\$100.00	\$45.90	\$45.00	\$112.20	\$110.00	\$191.25	\$187.50	\$321.30	\$315.00			
Child		\$4.25	\$4.25	\$6.38	\$6.50	\$36.13	\$36.13	\$63.75	\$63.75	\$85.00	\$85.00	\$38.25	\$38.25	\$93.50	\$93.50	\$159.38	\$159.38	\$267.75	\$267.75			
Family		\$17.00	\$17.00	\$25.50	\$25.50	\$144.50	\$144.50	\$255.00	\$255.00	\$340.00	\$340.00	\$153.00	\$153.00	\$374.00	\$374.00	\$637.50	\$637.50	\$1,071.00	\$1,071.00			
Squash		\$11.05	\$11.00			\$93.93	\$93.50	\$165.75	\$165.00	\$221.00	\$220.00	\$96.69	\$96.25	\$243.10	\$242.00	\$419.90	\$418.00	\$718.25	\$715.00			
Youth Squash		\$6.63	\$6.75			\$56.36	\$57.38	\$99.45	\$101.25	\$132.60	\$135.00	\$58.01	\$59.06	\$145.86	\$148.50	\$251.94	\$256.50	\$430.95	\$438.75			
Drop In Hockey		\$11.05	\$11.00			\$93.93	\$93.50															
Youth Drop In Hockey		\$6.63	\$6.75			\$56.36	\$57.38															
Early Bird/Late Owl-Adult		\$6.38	\$6.50			\$54.23	\$55.25					\$57.42	\$58.50	\$140.36	\$143.00							
Early Bird/Late Owl-Youth		\$3.83	\$3.75			\$32.56	\$31.88					\$34.47	\$33.75	\$84.26	\$82.50							
Early Bird/Late Owl-Child		\$3.19	\$3.25			\$27.12	\$27.63															
Early Bird/Late Owl-Family		\$12.75	\$12.75			\$108.38	\$108.38															
Midweek/Midday-Adult		\$6.38	\$6.50			\$54.23	\$55.25					\$57.42	\$58.50	\$140.36	\$143.00							
Midweek/Midday-Youth		\$3.83	\$3.75			\$32.56	\$31.88					\$34.47	\$33.75	\$84.26	\$82.50							
Midweek/Midday-Child		\$3.19	\$3.25			\$27.12	\$27.63					\$28.71	\$29.25	\$70.18	\$71.50							
Midweek/Midday-Family		\$12.75	\$12.75			\$108.38	\$108.38					\$114.75	\$114.75	\$280.50	\$280.50							
Open Sport Adult		\$8.50	\$8.50			\$72.25	\$72.25															
Open Sport Youth (16-18)		\$5.10	\$5.00			\$43.35	\$42.50															
Tokens-All Ages/Family		\$0.50	\$0.50			\$4.00						\$8.00		\$12.00		\$5.00		\$15.00		\$30.00		\$60.00
Spirit Pass																			\$302.81	\$299.00	\$508.73	\$499.00
Combination Discounts								5%		5%		5%		10%		10%						

* All Playtime Cards expire after 1 year from the date of purchase

Admission Rates Formulas

User	Admission Rate	10x*	20x*	30x*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
Adult/Sen	100% of base rate=BR	8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20 x BR	9 x BR	22 x BR	37.5xBR	63 x BR
Youth	60% of base rate	*One year expiry form date of purchase.						
Children	50% of base rate	♦Spirit Pass reduction of five (5) percent: 6 month and annual adult pass						
Family	The rate equal to two adults							
All Day	1.5 x base rate							

Playtime and Active Member passes for MPSC

Squash Passes (based on squash

10x*	20x*	30x*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20xBR	8.75xBR	22 x BR	38 x BR	65 x BR

*One year expiry form date of purchase.

Drop In Hockey Passes (based on hockey base ra

10x*	No 20x, 30x or monthly passes available
8.5 x BR	

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

Early Bird & Midweek/Midday R

A discount of up to 25% off may be provided for admission or pass products whereby the facility has experienced historical low use (i.e. early morning, late evening or middle of the day on weekdays).

APPENDIX C-PROPOSED ADMISSION RATES 2018/2019 CALCULATION SHEET - MEADOW PARK SPORTS CENTRE

Base Rate = \$8.75 Adjusted formulas New product

Classification		ADMIT 1				PLAYTIME CARDS*						ACTIVE MEMBER PASSES																																	
		Drop In		All Day		10 Time		20 Time		30 Time		Monthly		3 Month		6 Month		Annual																											
		Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded	Raw	Rounded																										
Adult/Senior		\$8.75	\$8.75	\$13.13	\$13.13	\$74.38	\$74.38	\$131.25	\$131.25	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$78.75	\$78.75	\$192.50	\$192.50	\$328.13	\$328.13	\$551.25	\$551.25																										
Youth		\$5.25	\$5.25	\$7.88	\$7.88	\$44.63	\$44.63	\$78.75	\$78.75	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$47.25	\$47.25	\$115.50	\$115.50	\$196.88	\$196.88	\$330.75	\$330.75																										
Child		\$4.38	\$4.50	\$6.56	\$6.50	\$37.19	\$38.25	\$65.63	\$67.50	\$87.50	\$90.00	\$39.38	\$40.50	\$96.25	\$99.00	\$164.06	\$168.75	\$275.63	\$283.50																										
Family		\$17.50	\$17.50	\$26.25	\$26.25	\$148.75	\$148.75	\$262.50	\$262.50	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$157.50	\$157.50	\$385.00	\$385.00	\$656.25	\$656.25	\$1,102.50	\$1,102.50																										
Squash		\$11.38	\$11.50			\$96.69	\$97.75	\$170.63	\$172.50	\$227.50	\$230.00	\$99.53	\$100.63	\$250.25	\$253.00	\$432.25	\$437.00	\$739.38	\$747.50																										
Youth Squash		\$6.83	\$7.00			\$58.01	\$59.50	\$102.38	\$105.00	\$136.50	\$140.00	\$59.72	\$61.25	\$150.15	\$154.00	\$259.35	\$266.00	\$443.63	\$455.00																										
Drop In Hockey		\$11.38	\$11.50			\$96.69	\$97.75																																						
Youth Drop In Hockey		\$6.83	\$7.00			\$58.01	\$59.50																																						
Early Bird/Late Owl - Adult		\$6.56	\$6.50			\$55.76	\$55.25							\$59.04	\$58.50	\$144.32	\$143.00																												
Early Bird/Late Owl - Youth		\$3.94	\$4.00			\$33.49	\$34.00							\$35.46	\$36.00	\$86.68	\$88.00																												
Early Bird/Late Owl - Child		\$3.28	\$3.25			\$27.88	\$27.63																																						
Early Bird/Late Owl - Family		\$13.13	\$13.25			\$111.56	\$112.63																																						
Midweek/Midday-Adult		\$6.56	\$6.50			\$55.76	\$55.25							\$59.04	\$58.50	\$144.32	\$143.00																												
Midweek/Midday-Youth		\$3.94	\$4.00			\$33.49	\$34.00							\$35.46	\$36.00	\$86.68	\$88.00																												
Midweek/Midday-Child		\$3.28	\$3.25			\$27.88	\$27.63							\$29.52	\$29.25	\$72.16	\$71.50																												
Midweek/Midday-Family		\$13.13	\$13.25			\$111.56	\$112.63							\$118.13	\$119.25	\$288.75	\$291.50																												
Open Sport Adult		\$8.75	\$8.75			\$74.38	\$74.38																																						
Open Sport Youth (16-18)		\$5.25	\$5.25			\$44.63	\$44.63																																						
Tokens-All Ages/Family		\$0.50	\$0.50			\$4.00		\$8.00		\$12.00		\$5.00		\$15.00		\$30.00		\$60.00																											
Spirit Pass																\$311.72	\$309.00	\$523.69	\$519.00																										
Combination discount																10%		10%																											

* All Playtime Cards expire after 1 year from the date of purchase

Admission Rates Formulas

User	Admission Rate
Adult/Sen	100% of base rate=BR
Youth	60% of base rate
Children	50% of base rate
Family	The rate equal to two adults
All Day	1.5 x base rate

Playtime and Active Member passes for MPSC

10x*	20x*	30x*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20 x BR	9 x BR	22 x BR	37.5xBR	63 x BR
*One year expiry form date of purchase.						
♦Spirit Pass reduction of five (5) percent: 6 month and annual adult pass						

Squash Passes (based on squash base rate)

10x*	20x*	30x*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20xBR	8.75xBR	22 x BR	38 x BR	65 x BR

*One year expiry form date of purchase.

Drop In Hockey Passes (based on hockey base rate)

10x*	No 20x, 30x or monthly passes available
8.5 x BR	

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

Early Bird & Midweek/Midday Rate

A discount of up to 25% off may be provided for admission or pass products whereby the facility has experienced historical low use (i.e. early morning, late evening or middle of the day on weekdays).



REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 17, 2015
FROM: Corporate and Community Services
SUBJECT: WHISTLER'S REFUGEE RESPONSE

REPORT: 15-140
FILE: 3100.02

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Corporate and Community Services be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council direct staff to convene a public information session with community members, local groups and immigrant and refugee organizations to discuss how best to coordinate a local response, and

That Council support the neighbouring community initiatives underway by encouraging the Whistler community to form additional Group of Five refugee sponsorship groups in Whistler; and further;

That Council direct staff to report back with recommendations resulting from the information session in regards to what resources and commitments the RMOW may contribute to the Whistler Refugee Response.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – UBCM Resolutions Regarding Federal Refugee Response

Appendix B – Settlement Plan Assessment Form

Appendix C – Financial Profile Assessment Form

Appendix D – Document Checklist for Sponsoring Refugees

Appendix E - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee Report on the Context and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Syrians

Appendix F – Examples of Municipalities Leading Community Engagement and Providing Municipal Resources

Appendix G – Examples of Municipalities Providing Municipal Funds

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the Whistler community on the current state of affairs regarding the Syrian Refugee Crisis and to receive Council direction to plan a community information session to coordinate a Whistler Refugee Response.

DISCUSSION

Overview of the Syrian Refugee Crisis (Referenced from the Government of Canada website.)

Syria's conflict began with protests against President Bashar al-Assad's regime in March 2011 when the Assad regime violently cracked down on peaceful protesters, leading to many civilian deaths and injuries. A year and a half later the international Red Cross formally declared it a civil war. In Syria the death toll now exceeds 100,000 and millions have fled their homes, seeking sanctuary either in neighbouring countries or elsewhere in the country.

Since 2013, the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has been carrying out a campaign of unspeakable atrocities against civilians and all those who oppose it in areas under its control. It has been reported that ISIS has, for example, tortured and beheaded people, raped and sold women into slavery, slaughtered minorities and kidnapped innocent victims. As a result of ISIS's actions, more than 7.6 million Syrians have been internally displaced, more than 5 million have fled the country to nearby countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Kuwait. 12.2 million Syrians have been left in poor living conditions with shortages of food and drinking water.

Federal Refugee Response

In response to the crisis, the Government of Canada has agreed to resettle 11,300 Syrian refugees by the end of 2017 and 23,000 Iraqi refugees by the end of 2015. Canada has also committed to resettle 5,000 refugees who are now in Turkey by 2018. As of September 1, 2015, more than 3,500 refugees from Syria and the region have been admitted to Canada. The Government of Canada has also announced the \$100 million Syrian Emergency Relief Fund. The fund has been set up so that every eligible dollar donated by individual Canadians to registered Canadian charities between September 12 and December 31 in response to the conflict in Syria, will be matched by the government up to \$100 million to go towards the Syria Emergency Relief Fund (charities do not receive the funds directly) to support experienced international and Canadian humanitarian organizations using established Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD) channels and procedures.

As of September 19, 2015, the Government of Canada has temporarily exempted Syrians and Iraqis fleeing the current conflict from the requirement to provide proof of refugee status in order to be sponsored. This means that a Group of Five or a Community Sponsor can submit an application without a document proving recognized refugee status.

Provincial Refugee Response (Referenced from the Government of British Columbia website.)

The Government of British Columbia has created a \$1 million readiness fund for Syrian refugees settling in B.C. The fund is a one-time investment intended to complement existing provincial and federal support services for refugees. It will enhance existing provincial refugee programs and provide additional resources for private sponsors who are working to bring refugees to B.C.

The Province will work with settlement agencies, community groups and private sponsors to make sure these funds are used to achieve the best outcomes for these refugees. Specifically the funds will be used for:

- Counselling – trauma counselling through a range of psycho-social supports.

- “Groups of Five” private sponsorship supports – A “Group of Five” is made up of private citizens who come together to sponsor a refugee. These funds will assist these private sponsors to help navigate the refugee-sponsorship process.
- Community-level supports – help for local governments that will be assisting in settling Syrian refugees so there will be a welcoming community for these newcomers.
- Foreign Credential Recognition – many Syrians will arrive in Canada with work experience and credentials from their home country. Funds will be available for B.C.-based professional associations to quickly and fairly review and approve their foreign credentials so they can start working in B.C.
- Employer supports - funds to help businesses and existing immigrant settlement organizations employ, train and mentor Syrian refugees. These funds will also provide matching funds to employers who train and commit to hire a Syrian refugee.

Local Refugee Response

With the support to increase numbers and intake speeds from the Government Canada, and available funds for the settlement of refugees from the Province of British Columbia, the final piece to respond to the refugee crisis lies in the hands of local governments, resettlement communities and individuals.

In September of 2015, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) formed the FCM Task Force on Refugee Resettlement. The Task Force will lead a Canada-wide municipal response to the Syrian refugee crisis to complement federal and provincial efforts. The Task Force will allow municipalities to share information and best practices. It will also provide an efficient means of coordinating with provincial, territorial and federal counterparts to meet immediate and urgent resettlement targets. Nothing has been reported from the task force to date, however, RMOW staff will continue to monitor this initiative on an ongoing basis.

Later in September, Mayor Nancy Wilhelm-Morden on behalf of Council brought forward an emergency resolution to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) 2015 Convention to “urge the Government of Canada to act immediately to accelerate the process and to significantly increase federal commitments to receive Syrian refugees in Canada matching or exceeding historic levels” (see Appendix A). The resolution was supported by resolutions from the District of Squamish, Village of Pemberton and Squamish-Lillooet Regional District and was passed by delegates at the convention on September 25.

In October, the Squamish Refugee Response group was formed by concerned private citizens where the District of Squamish, Settlement Services BC, community organizations, church groups and the public met to discuss a plan of action to form G5s in Squamish to settle refugee families. To date, the Squamish Refugee Response group has potentially formed four groups and are looking for more involvement and partnerships.

How to Sponsor Refugees in Canada

Canadians can sponsor refugees in three different ways:

1. Sponsorship Agreement Holders and their Constituent Groups

Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) are religious, ethnic, community or service organizations that are incorporated, which have signed an agreement with the Minister for Citizen and

Immigration Canada, and are already approved to be sponsor refugees. A SAH can authorize Constituent Groups (CG) to sponsor under its agreement and provide support to the refugees.

The SAH or CG may also choose to formally partner with a co-sponsor in carrying out settlement duties. Each SAH sets its own criteria for recognizing CGs and co-sponsors. The sponsoring group or its representatives must be located in the community where the refugees are destined.

2. Group of Five

A Group of Five (G5) is any group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are 18 years of age or older and who live in the community where the refugees are expected to settle. Group members act as guarantors that the necessary settlement support, which includes financial and settlement arrangements, will be provided for the full duration of the sponsorship, which is generally 12 months. The group is expected to show that they have the necessary financial resources, expertise and commitment required to fulfill the terms of the sponsorship undertaking.

Members of the G5 must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident 18 years of age or older;
- Must have financial capacity to fulfill the sponsorship undertaking for the duration of the sponsorship period (generally 12 months);
- Must provide evidence of settlement capacity to provide emotional or social support to the refugees;
- Must be based in the community where the refugees are expected to live; and
- Must not be ineligible to be a party to a sponsorship under subsection 156(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR).

3. Community Sponsors

Community Sponsors (CS) are organizations located in the community where the refugees are expected to settle. CS make a group commitment to sponsor the refugees. CS act as guarantors that the necessary settlement support will be provided for the full duration of the sponsorship. The CS is expected to show that it has the necessary financial resources, expertise and commitment required to fulfill the terms of the sponsorship undertaking.

A CS may be:

- an organization (for-profit or not-for-profit);
- an association; or
- a corporation (incorporated or non-incorporated).

A CS must meet the following requirements:

- Must have financial capacity to fulfill the sponsorship undertaking for the duration of the sponsorship period (generally 12 months);
- Must provide evidence of settlement capacity to provide emotional and social support to the refugees;
- Must be based in the community where the refugees are expected to live.

Individual parties in the CS must meet the following:

- Must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident 18 years of age or older; and
- Must not be ineligible to be a party to a sponsorship under subsection 156(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR).

General Information on Refugee Sponsorship

Refugee sponsors agree to provide refugees with care, lodging, settlement assistance and support. Normally, this is for 12 months starting from the refugee's arrival in Canada or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first. To provide proof of these arrangements sponsors are required to develop a settlement plan (Appendix B) as part of the application process. Sponsors are required to demonstrate their ability to meet the required financial obligations of sponsorship with a Financial Assessment (Appendix C) being a required document, as well as other forms and documents listed in the sponsorship checklist (Appendix D).

All sponsors (not funded by the Government of Canada) also normally support the sponsored refugees by:

- providing the cost of food, rent and household utilities and other day-to-day living expenses;
- providing clothing, furniture and other household goods;
- locating interpreters;
- selecting a family physician and dentist;
- assisting with applying for provincial health-care coverage;
- enrolling children in school and adults in language training;
- introducing newcomers to people with similar personal interests;
- providing orientation with regard to banking services, transportation, etc.; and
- helping in the search for employment.

Before any application can be accepted, the sponsored persons must undergo a medical examination and a security check or background screening to ensure the safety and security of Canadians.

The Government of Canada has provided comprehensive tools and resources for citizens to engage in the sponsorship process, specifically the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program which provides a self-assessment tool for those wishing to sponsor families. Information on application processing, sponsorship responsibilities and training are all available for free.

What Local Governments Can Do

The following is a summary of all the ways local governments in Canada can support sponsorship groups who are settling refugees in their community:

Leading Community Engagement and Providing Municipal Resources:

- Holding public information session and community gatherings to allow groups to collaborate on sponsoring refugees.
- Meeting rooms, venues and spaces typically rented out for events and services are provided for free to groups mobilizing and planning Syrian aid or sponsorship.
- Allowing tax exemptions and waive costs of utilities for properties and rental units housing refugees.
- Provide free transit passes, recreation passes and other services for free to refugees in the community.

- Provide access to housing in resident restricted housing areas operated by the municipality.

Some of the methods above have been adopted by the District of Squamish, City of Ottawa, and the City of Mississauga (see Appendix F).

Providing Municipal Funds:

- Partner with groups who are sponsoring refugee families to help their fundraising efforts to sponsor refugee families.
- Commit to donating municipal funds directly (or start a community donation matching program) to refugee aid organizations.
- Commit to pay the Government Assisted Refugee loans that are incurred when a new family arrives (flights, transportation documents, etc.).
- Commit to a one-time budget amount to sponsor specific unmet needs of an approved settlement plan that sponsors would apply to Council for approval.
- Developing internal programs, staff roles and committees and or advisory panels coordinate local efforts.

Some of the methods above have been adopted by the City of Surrey, City of Kitchener, City of Toronto and the City of Sudbury (see Appendix G).

Other Considerations

The Squamish Refugee Response Group (SRRG) has identified that while sponsoring a family into a new community is always beneficial for that family, it will have the best benefit and success rate if at least five families arrive at the same time, thus creating a small community. This prevents isolation and helps build relations between the sponsorship groups and refugee families while integrating into a new host community. To date, SRRG has formed two G5s with a potential third and are collaboratively working with individuals from North Vancouver to compile a fourth.

Additionally, Sea to Sky Community Services Society (SSCS) and Immigrant and Settlement Services BC (ISS) recommend that the host community have a percentage of the population speaking the native tongue of refugees. Syrian and Iraqi refugees speak Arabic, and according to Statistics Canada 2011 census information, only about 15 residents (0.1%) of Whistler speak the language. Therefore, access to employment, health providers, education and other necessary services would likely require accessible translation services.

SSCS and ISS have reached out to neighbouring communities to advise them on the long-term commitment as well as many professional supports and services that are required to integrate refugees into a new community. Appendix E, is a document entitled "Culture, Context and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Syrians" reviewing the mental health and support that is vital to Syrians affected by armed conflict. This report informs psychologists, psychosocial counsellors, social workers, psychiatrists and other practitioners who will be needed to help treat Syrians. Support services mentioned in this document have been identified by SSCSS as being unavailable at this time in Whistler, but are available in neighboring communities. If families were settled in Whistler, part of the settlement plan would require transportation to access to social services.

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Resident Housing	Resident restricted housing is affordable for permanent and short-term residents, through innovative and effective policy and financial models.	A refugee family would be committed to Whistler for 12 months as per all sponsorship agreements, thus making the families residents of Whistler. Providing affordable housing to this family is one portion of settlement plan required to sponsor a refugee family.
Health & Social	Community members and visitors maintain and improve their physical, mental, spiritual and social health through prevention and treatment services provided by the Partners.	Working together with community stakeholders from information gathered at the community information session as well as commitment from local groups, the social and health services for the refugee families would become easier accessed, which may provide bridging to services for other community members and vulnerable groups.
	Community members and visitors learn about and enjoy experiences with other cultures and generations through activities and events stimulated and facilitated by the Partners	
	Community members understand and respect diverse views and are encouraged to do so through a variety of initiatives provided by the Partners	

W2020 Strategy	AWAY FROM Descriptions of success that resolution moves away from	Mitigation Strategies and Comments

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

None.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

After the initial community engagement and information sessions have concluded, staff and Council will have a better picture of the contributions and budget considerations that are needed to support an integrated refugee settlement process. Clear needs and priorities for financial assistance, resources allocation or access to municipal facilities should be identified and communicated to the RMOW from the formed community groups and potential G5s.

Staff will then compile the budget considerations and commitments to be presented to Council in the future once specific needs, resources and aid is identified by staff as the most effective and efficient use of the RMOW's staff time, budget and resources.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The first recommendation in this report speaks to planning and organizing a community information and interest gathering session. In this session, representatives from stakeholder groups regarding refugee sponsorship in the Sea to Sky Corridor will speak about the requirements, process, and expectations and introduce a plan of action to move forward if there are community members willing to engage in this process.

The main objectives of the community information session are to inform the Whistler community of the various ways to help refugees, gain interest from individuals who may commit to joining local Group of 5 and connect the Whistler community to those already engaged in refugee settlement processes. The RMOW is intending to act as the catalyst to start this process with the intention of allowing the community groups that form to take over the process.

SUMMARY

Weighing the options for municipal involvement with multiple avenues to support the refugee settlement in Whistler, Staff are recommending the RMOW convene an information session to gauge community interest and determine the most effective responses to address the needs for incoming refugee families. However, before specific funding and resources that the RMOW may commit to this effort are decided, Syrian and Iraqi families need to be approved for settlement by one of the three ways to sponsor refugees in Canada.

Therefore, staff are recommending the information session focus on the development and collaboration from community stakeholders to form G5 sponsorship groups, because this method of sponsorship is currently the fastest way to have refugee families settled into communities. This is because G5s wishing to sponsor families qualify under the temporary exemption for accreditation from the UNHCR's office, thus speeding up the process. Coordinating a community effort to develop G5s is arguably the fastest, most effective way to bring Syrian and Iraqi refugees to Whistler.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikki Best
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES COORDINATOR
for
Shannon Story
CORPORATE OFFICER
for
Norm McPhail
GENERAL MANAGER OF CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



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CERTIFIED CORRECT COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Resort Municipality of Whistler
Regular Council Meeting of September 15, 2015

Moved by Mayor Wilhelm-Morden
Seconded by Councillor J. Grills

WHEREAS the ongoing crisis for Syrians has ignited a need for a coordinated effort of aid from all levels of government in Canada,

AND WHEREAS Canada has a history of extending offers of settlement to refugees for humanitarian reasons,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the federal government to act immediately to accelerate the process and to significantly increase federal commitments to receive Syrian refugees in Canada matching or exceeding historic levels.

CARRIED

These are true resolutions of the Council of
the Resort Municipality of Whistler from the
Regular Council Meeting of September 15, 2015


Laurie-Anne Schimek
Acting Corporate Officer

DISTRICT OF SQUAMISH

RESOLUTION

SYRIAN REFUGEES

WHEREAS the ongoing crisis for Syrians has ignited a need for a coordinated effort of aid from all levels of government in Canada,

AND WHEREAS Canada has a history of extending offers of settlement to refugees for humanitarian reasons,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the federal government to act immediately to accelerate the process and to significantly increase federal commitments to receive Syrian refugees in Canada matching or exceeding historic levels.

Certified to be a true and correct copy of the Resolutions passed by the Council of the District of Squamish at the Special Business Meeting Held in the Council Chambers, Municipal Hall, 37955 Second Avenue, Squamish BC on Thursday, September 17, 2015.



Charlene Pawluk, Manager of
Legislative Services

Dated this 17th day of September, 2015
at Squamish, British Columbia.



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CERTIFIED BOARD RESOLUTION

September 18, 2015

From the minutes of a special meeting of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Board, held on September 18, 2015, in the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Boardroom, 1350 Aster Street, Pemberton, BC:

UBCM Resolution – Syrian Refugee Crisis

It was moved and seconded:

WHEREAS the ongoing crisis for Syrians has ignited a need for a coordinated effort of aid from all levels of government in Canada,

AND WHEREAS Canada has a history of extending offers of settlement to refugees for humanitarian reasons,

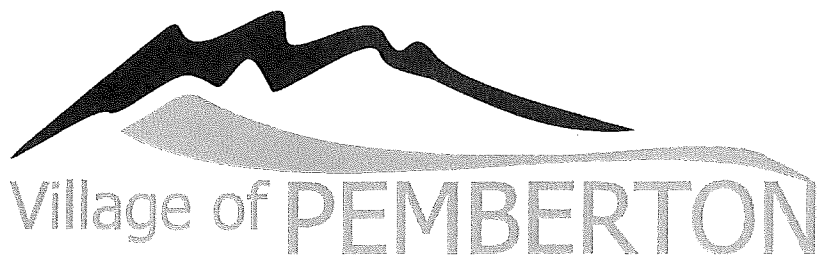
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the federal government to act immediately to accelerate the process and to significantly increase federal commitments to receive Syrian refugees in Canada matching or exceeding historic levels.

CARRIED

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Board resolution regarding this matter as passed unanimously by the Board at its special meeting of September 18, 2015.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lynda Flynn", written over a horizontal line.

Lynda Flynn, Deputy Secretary and Chief Administrative Officer



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CERTIFIED CORRECT COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Village of Pemberton
Special Council Meeting No. 1406
Friday, September 18, 2015

Moved/Seconded

THAT the Village of Pemberton co-sponsors the following resolution with the Resort Municipality of Whistler and other municipal members of the Sea to Sky Corridor for presentation to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities at the 2015 UBCM Convention;

WHEREAS the ongoing crisis for Syrians has ignited a need for a coordinated effort of aid from all levels of government in Canada;

AND WHEREAS Canada has a history of extending offers of settlement to refugees for humanitarian reasons;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the federal government to act immediately to accelerate the process and to significantly increase federal commitments to receive Syrian refugees in Canada matching or exceeding historic levels.

CARRIED

These are true resolutions of the Council
of the Village of Pemberton from the
Special Council Meeting No. 1406, held
Friday, September 18, 2015.

Sheena Fraser
Corporate Officer



SETTLEMENT PLAN AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

Group of Five

A - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of principal applicant Surname (family name)	Given names	Date of birth (YYYY-MM-DD)
Name of Sponsoring Group		

B - SETTLEMENT NEEDS CHECKLIST

* *Settlement Needs:* For each settlement need, specify if your group can provide monetary or in-kind support and give the corresponding dollar figure.

Settlement Needs	Monetary Support	Annual Amount	In-Kind	In-Kind Deduction
START-UP COSTS				
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Household start-up costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Food staples	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Hook-up costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
School start-up costs (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	n/a	n/a
TOTAL START UP COSTS	Total:	\$	Total:	\$
ONGOING EXPENDITURES				
Shelter (monthly rent X 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$
Transportation (public transit) (monthly costs X 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	n/a	n/a
Living allowance (food, incidentals, etc.) (monthly costs X 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	n/a	n/a
TOTAL ONGOING EXPENDITURES	Total:	\$	Total:	\$
GRAND TOTAL:		\$	\$	

C - SETTLEMENT CHECKLIST

Confirm, by checking the appropriate boxes, which settlement needs your group will provide to the refugees. If one or more of the settlement needs indicated below is not applicable to your group or if your group is not willing to provide one or more of the settlement needs, please provide an explanation in the box at the end of this section.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet refugees upon arrival and provide transportation to the final destination
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arrange transportation for the refugees to and from appointments and activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arrange for Interpreter services (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide orientation (public transportation, banking services, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enroll adult refugees in language training (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide assistance in finding employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide assistance in linking the refugees with community activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan for refugees to see a health care worker shortly after arrival
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assist refugees in selecting a family physician, a dentist, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assist refugees in applying for provincial and Interim Federal Health plans
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enroll children in school (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make child care arrangements (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply for child tax benefit (if applicable)

Provide further details if your group will not provide a settlement need indicated above or explain why a settlement need is not applicable.

D - SETTLEMENT PLAN - DETAILS

Please give details that your group has made or intends to make to help the refugees settle. All of these questions must be answered in full for this application to be processed.

As sponsors, you must arrange for proper accommodations for the refugees. Indicate where the refugees will reside by providing, if known, the complete address (or addresses if refugees will first reside in temporary accommodations) and provide details of the accommodations:

As sponsors, you must register the refugees for settlement activities (language training, finding a job, etc.). Indicate which immigrant settlement agencies are available and accessible to the refugees and what services they offer:

As sponsors, you must plan, if applicable, to refer refugees to support or service centres for persons dealing with a trauma or crisis. Explain if any special accommodations are required for the refugees. If accommodations are required, provide details regarding your group's plan to accommodate:

E - FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

* This section will allow the group to predetermine if it has committed sufficient funds to the sponsorship.

* Use the dollar amounts indicated on the Group's financial documents and/or individual member's Financial Profile (IMM 5373B, Section F) and the dollar amounts listed in the two cost tables below to fill out this section

Financial Commitment

Funds held in trust	\$ _____
Member 1 Financial Commitment	+ \$ _____
Member 2 Financial Commitment	+ \$ _____
Member 3 Financial Commitment	+ \$ _____
Member 4 Financial Commitment	+ \$ _____
Member 5 Financial Commitment	+ \$ _____

Total Financial Commitment : = \$ _____

FOR CIC USE ONLY**Financial Requirement**

Total Cost of Sponsorship: (column C below)	\$ _____
Total In-Kind Deduction: (from page 1)	- \$ _____

Final Cost of Sponsorship : = \$ _____

Sponsorship Cost Table (\$)

Family Size	12 Months of Income Support	Start-up Costs	Estimated Total Annual Settlement Cost (\$)
1	9,800	2,800	12,600
2	16,800	4,400	21,200
3	17,700	5,300	23,000
4	20,000	7,000	27,000
5	22,500	7,200	29,700
6	24,500	8,000	32,500
Additional member	1,550	1,000	2,500

In-Kind Deduction Table (\$)

Family Size	Shelter	Clothing	Furniture	Start-up Costs	School Start-up Costs	Food Staples
1	6,000	500	1,500	325		175
2	7,100	1,000	2,000	350		250
3	7,800	1,375	2,500	375		325
4	8,400	1,750	3,000	400		400
5	9,600	2,125	3,500	425		475
6	9,600	2,500	4,000	450		550
For each additional member, add	900	375	500	25	150 per child between ages 4 - 21	75

F - DECLARATION

I declare that the information given on this form and any attached documents are true, complete and accurate.

**SIGNATURE OF
GROUP REPRESENTATIVE**



Signature	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
-----------	-------------------

The information you provided on this form is collected under the authority of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and will be used to maintain a record of application and sponsorship undertakings by local Groups of Five or more individuals according to the requirements of the Act. It will be retained in the Personal Information Bank CIC PPU 008 identified in *Infosource*. It may be shared with other organizations in accordance with the consistent use of information under the *Privacy Act*. Under the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act* individuals have the right to protection of and access to their personal information. Details on these matters are available at infosource.gc.ca and through the Citizenship and Immigration Call Centre. *Infosource* is also available at Public Libraries in Canada.



FINANCIAL PROFILE - GROUP OF FIVE

A - GROUP NAME

Name of Sponsoring Group

B - PERSONAL DETAILS

Surname (Family name)	Given names	Date of birth (YYYY-MM-DD)
For how many people in Canada, including yourself, are you currently the primary source of financial support? ►		

C - EMPLOYMENT

Are you employed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (if yes, provide the following details) <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed		
Name of employer	Supervisor's name	Telephone no.
Supervisor's e-mail		
Address (no. and street)		
City	Province	Postal code
Your job title	Employment start date ►	YYYY-MM-DD

D - PREVIOUS EMPLOYER (if less than one year with current employer)

Name of employer	Supervisor's name	Telephone no.
Supervisor's e-mail		
Address (no. and street)		
City	Province	Postal code

E - SOURCES OF INCOME

List income earned or obtained over the last 12 months. You must attach supporting documents that attest the source and amount of this income.	
Employment income	Amount
1	\$
Other income source	Amount
1	\$
2	\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$

F - FUNDS COMMITTED TO SPONSORSHIP

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO SPONSORSHIP \$	► (to be used in section E of the Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment)
--	---

G - DECLARATION

I declare that the information given on this form and any attached documents are true, complete and accurate.	
Signature	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

The information you provided on this form is collected under the authority of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and will be used to maintain a record of application and sponsorship undertakings by local Groups of Five or more individuals according to the requirements of the Act. It will be retained in the Personal Information Bank CIC PPU 008 identified in *Infosource*. It may be shared with other organizations in accordance with the consistent use of information under the *Privacy Act*. Under the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act* individuals have the right to protection of and access to their personal information. Details on these matters are available at infosource.gc.ca and through the Citizenship and Immigration Call Centre. *Infosource* is also available at Public Libraries in Canada.



DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

Check the box to indicate whether your Sponsorship Group is a:

- ☐ Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) or Constituent Group (CG) ☐ Group of Five (G5) ☐ Community Sponsor (CS)

ALL SPONSORING GROUPS MUST ENCLOSE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN THE ENVELOPE

- * Completed and signed *Undertaking/Application to Sponsor* (IMM 5373) ☐
- * Completed and signed *Sponsor Assessment* (IMM 5492) ☐
- For SAH's, please indicate whether the Sponsor Assessment is: ☐ Enclosed ☐ On file at CIC National Headquarters
- * All forms completed and signed as required in the *Application for Convention Refugees Abroad and Humanitarian - Protected Persons Abroad* (IMM 6000) ☐
- * *Document Checklist* (IMM 5437) ☐

OPTIONAL

- * Completed and signed *Use of a Representative* (IMM 5476) ☐

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION SPECIFIC TO YOUR SPONSORING GROUP

FOR SAH AND CG

- * SAHs and their respective Constituent Groups that signed an agreement with the Minister less than two years ago must enclose a completed and signed *Settlement Plan* (IMM 5440) ☐

FOR G5 - If your group contains more than 5 members, photocopy and add an additional page to this checklist

- * *Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment* (IMM 5373A) ☐
- * Proof of refugee status recognition for the principal applicant ☐

GROUP MEMBER 1 - Name: _____

- * Proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status ☐
- * *Financial Profile* (IMM 5373B) ☐
- * Proof of funds ☐
- * *Sponsor Assessment* (IMM 5492) ☐

GROUP MEMBER 2 - Name: _____

- * Proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status ☐
- * *Financial Profile* (IMM 5373B) ☐
- * Proof of funds ☐
- * *Sponsor Assessment* (IMM 5492) ☐

GROUP MEMBER 3 - Name: _____

- * Proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status ☐
- * *Financial Profile* (IMM 5373B) ☐
- * Proof of funds ☐
- * *Sponsor Assessment* (IMM 5492) ☐

GROUP MEMBER 4 - Name: _____

- * Proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status ☐
- * *Financial Profile* (IMM 5373B) ☐
- * Proof of funds ☐
- * *Sponsor Assessment* (IMM 5492) ☐

GROUP MEMBER 5 - Name: _____

- * Proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status ☐
- * *Financial Profile* (IMM 5373B) ☐
- * Proof of funds ☐
- * *Sponsor Assessment* (IMM 5492) ☐

FOR CS - Each party to the sponsorship (Community Sponsor representative and all Co-Sponsors) must provide

- Proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status _____ ☐
- *Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment* (IMM 5515) _____ ☐
- Proof of funds - Community sponsors _____ ☐
- Proof of funds - Co-sponsors _____ ☐
- Proof of refugee status recognition for the principal applicant _____ ☐

If you are including additional documents to your application, please list them below.

Culture, Context and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Syrians

A REVIEW FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
STAFF WORKING WITH SYRIANS AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT

2015

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Culture, Context and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Syrians

A REVIEW FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT
STAFF WORKING WITH SYRIANS AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT

2015

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GLOSSARY

CBO	Community Based Organisation
IASC	Interagency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally displaced people
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex
MHPSS	Mental health and psychosocial support
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SGBV	Sexual and gender based violence
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

WHY THIS DOCUMENT?

This report aims to provide information on the sociocultural background of the Syrian population as well as cultural aspects of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing relevant to care and support. It is based on an extensive review of the available literature on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), within the context of the current armed conflict in Syria.

The document is primarily meant to inform mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) staff, such as: psychologists, psychosocial counsellors, social workers, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, and others who are involved providing individual or group counselling, psychotherapy and/or psychiatric treatment for Syrians. Other humanitarian professionals, such as general health providers working with Syrians or staff involved in public health, community-based protection, community mobilisation, child protection, sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), may find this document useful, although it is not primarily written for them. The specific information in this review complements more generic guidance, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings^[1] and UNHCR's Operational Guidance for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Programming in Refugee Operations.^[2] Together with these guidelines, this report can inform the design and delivery of interventions to promote mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Syrians affected by armed conflict and displacement, both within Syria and in countries hosting refugees from Syria.

STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The first chapters contain essential background information on the Syrian sociocultural context (chapter two), the situation of refugees from Syria and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Syria (chapter three), and mental health and psychosocial problems of displaced Syrians (chapter

four). These chapters summarise the available literature to allow mental health and psychosocial practitioners working with displaced Syrians to put their work with individual clients and families within a broader perspective. The references in this section also provide practitioners, interested in more in-depth information, with key resources to further explore relevant issues.

The last chapters of this review focus specifically on culture and context. Chapter five provides detailed information on the role of social, cultural and contextual factors in the presentation and expression of mental and psychosocial distress and how this is interwoven with cultural and religious notions of personhood. Chapter six discusses how a cultural and contextual understanding of mental health and psychosocial problems and issues can inform the design and provision of MHPSS services. Chapters five and six are particularly relevant for those involved in the provision of mental health and psychosocial services to Syrian clients. The conclusion (chapter seven) provides a concise summary of the main issues discussed in this document.

SEARCH STRATEGY

The search strategy used to create this report was designed to capture relevant clinical and social science literature examining the sociocultural aspects of mental health in the Syrian population. The main medical, psychological and social sciences databases (PubMed, PsycInfo) were searched for relevant information, until July 2015. Additionally, manual searches of the reference lists of key papers and books or articles relevant to Syrian mental health were conducted, and included Arabic, English and French language sources. The database search was supplemented with web-based searches in Arabic, English and French media, as well as Google Scholar, to retrieve key books and non-academic literature relevant to the Syrian situation. Important information on displaced Syrians was

also found in assessment reports and evaluations, by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), intergovernmental organisations, and agencies of the United Nations. Many of these were retrieved through the Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal on the Syria crisis, hosted by UNHCR.¹ This search strategy provided many useful sources, but should not be taken as a comprehensive review of all issues related to mental health and psychosocial support of Syrians as many unpublished reports and evaluations were not reviewed.

Disclaimer: this review has been commissioned by UNHCR and a wide range of experts have been involved in its drafting. The views expressed in this document do not necessarily represent the views, policies, and decisions of their employers.

¹ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

2. BRIEF SOCIOCULTURAL BACKGROUND

There is wide diversity of social, socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds among the Syrian population, which along with age and gender, influence family and community relations and dynamics, explanatory models of illness, coping mechanisms, and help-seeking behaviour. It is important that MHPSS practitioners are aware of this diversity in order to provide appropriate support to refugees and other persons of concern.^[3]

Religion, ethnicity and tribal identity are important for individual identities and group loyalties of many Syrians. These identities may contribute to creating group boundaries and accentuating differences that pose challenges to mental health.^[4] Practitioners should be aware of shifting identities and loyalties as they impact on displaced persons experience and understanding of the conflict and displacement, and their social networks and relationships.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND LANGUAGE

Over the centuries, the region that is now Syria was populated with people from a wide diversity of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and has served as a haven for a variety of groups fleeing persecution and conflict elsewhere, including, for example, Armenians, Assyrians, and Circassians.^[5] Given the lack of accurate census data, it is only possible to estimate the ethnic and religious composition of the current Syrian population. While the majority of Syrians are considered Arabs, this is a term based on spoken language (Arabic), not ethnicity.

Around nine to ten percent of Syria's population is Kurdish (close to two million people), followed by Turkmen, Assyrians, Circassians and Armenians. In addition, there are also small communities of Dom, Greeks, Persians, Albanians, Bosniacs, Russians, Chechens and Ossetians.^[5-7] Many of these have become 'Arabicised' and, as a result, may not necessarily maintain a specific ethnic affiliation.

Additionally, the Arabic speaking Bedouin tribal groups are also seen by some as a separate ethnic group.^[8]

In recent years, tribal affiliation has gained importance as a way for Syrians to identify and organise themselves, as well as to realise a sense of belonging in a country where state structures have been weakened. Tribal identity and the authority attached to traditional leaders (who, in the past, have often been co-opted by the Syrian government) continue to exist, not only among Bedouin groups, but also among other Syrians.^[8-10]

The Syrian Constitution refers to Arabic as the official language, with no mention of linguistic rights of other groups. The second most common language is Kurdish. A 1958 decree outlawed the publication of materials in the Kurdish language, and both public and private schools were barred from teaching in Kurdish. Consequently, some Kurdish Syrians are not fluent in Kurdish.^[11, 12] Developments in Kurdish areas since mid-2012 have provided the Syrian Kurds with opportunities to reassert long suppressed cultural rights. Kurdish language publications, radio and TV stations have sprung up, villages and towns have had their former Kurdish names restored and children can study the Kurdish language at school.^[13-15] Smaller numbers of Syrians have Armenian and Syriac/Aramaic as their mother tongue.^[16, 17]

RELIGION

Syrians are often categorised according to their religious affiliation (Sunni, Alawite, Christian, etc), but this does not necessarily mean an individual is devout, 'religious', or even an active practitioner. Prior to the current conflict, Sunnis accounted for the religious affiliation of approximately three-quarters of the population. Other Muslim groups, including Alawites, Ismailis, and Twelver Shi'a, constituted approximately 13 percent of the population; various Christian denominations, about

10 percent; and Druze accounted for three percent of the population. There is also a small Yezidi population of approximately 80,000 persons, who are ethnically and linguistically Kurdish, and follow a distinct religion.^[3, 18-20] The Christian population in Syria can be Arab or non-Arab, with the latter group including Syriac/Aramaic and Armenians. Most Syrian Christians belong to Orthodox Churches (Syriac Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox and Nestorian) or to Catholic Churches (Melkite, Chaldean, Maronite, and Syriac), who are in communion with the global Roman Catholic Church, but follow distinct, eastern rites of worship. There are also small groups of Protestants.

Syria have very limited flight options as they are barred from entering neighbouring Jordan and Lebanon, while Egypt requires visa and security clearance in advance.^[22-25]

REFUGEES IN SYRIA

Prior to the current conflict, Syria hosted significant numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers. The large majority originated from Iraq and Palestine, but there were also smaller groups from Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia and other countries.^[21] Traditionally, most non-Palestinian refugees resided in Damascus and its surrounding countryside, and, to a lesser extent, in Homs, Deir Ez-Zour and Dera'a. Many refugees and asylum-seekers have left Syria since the beginning of the conflict. Others have been displaced within Syria or to other countries. At the end of 2014, close to 30,000 refugees and asylum-seekers were still registered with UNHCR in Syria. Also, prior to the conflict, Syria hosted Palestinian refugees, who had arrived in successive waves since 1948.²

As a result of the current conflict, approximately more than half a million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria have been displaced within Syria, while another 70,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria have been scattered across the region and elsewhere. Palestinian refugees from

2 For more information on Palestinian refugees in or from Syria, see the website of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees: www.unrwa.org/syria-crisis

3. REFUGEES FROM SYRIA AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN SYRIA

The current conflict in Syria has caused the largest refugee displacement crisis of our time. Since March 2011, nearly half of the population has been displaced, comprising almost eight million people inside Syria and more than four million registered refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries.^[26, 27]³ More than half of those displaced are children. Repeated displacements have been a striking feature of the Syria conflict, as frontlines keep shifting and formerly safer areas become embroiled in conflict.

VIOLENCE AND DISPLACEMENT IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT

Both refugees from Syria and internally displaced people within Syria have faced war-related violence, although their current situation in terms of security, human rights, access to protection and humanitarian assistance differs. It is estimated that over 210,000 people have been killed and 840,000 injured, often resulting in long-term disabilities – with the concomitant average life expectancy being reduced from 75.9 years in 2010 to an estimated 55.7 years at the end of 2014.^[28] War crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed on a massive scale throughout the conflict. Many Syrians have suffered multiple rights violations and abuses from different actors, including massacres, murder, execution without due process, torture, hostage-taking, enforced disappearance, rape and sexual violence, as well as recruiting and using children in hostile situations. Indiscriminate bombardment and shelling have created mass civilian casualties and spread terror among civilians. Furthermore, parties have enforced sieges on towns, villages and neighbourhoods, trapping civilians and depriving them of food, medical care and other necessities. Parties to the conflict also have disregarded the special protection accorded to hospitals, and medical and humanitarian personnel.

Increased levels of poverty,⁴ loss of livelihood, soaring unemployment,⁵ and limited access to food, water, sanitation, housing, health care and education, have all had a devastating impact on the population.^[29] The situation is particularly dire for people in hard-to-reach areas (currently estimated to be 4.8 million people), and those who are trapped in besieged areas (approximately 440,000 people), cut off from basic supplies and largely inaccessible for humanitarian actors.^[29] Many Syrians are also concerned about the fate of relatives, especially those who are missing, and worry about the situation in the country including looting and/or destruction of properties left behind.^[30]

REFUGEES FROM SYRIA

Countries in the region have demonstrated great generosity in receiving refugees with over 4.1 million Syrian refugees registered in August 2015. However, there are growing concerns about the ability of persons in Syria to reach the borders, and to be admitted by, and remain in, host countries in the region and beyond.^[31] Given the scale and protracted nature of the crisis, countries of asylum, with the support of the international community, face mounting difficulties in attempting to adequately respond to the needs of refugees from Syria.

Additionally, these refugees face numerous other challenges.^[32] Increasingly they have exhausted their assets and resources and face difficulties accessing: employment, adequate housing, health services,

3 For the latest data on Syrian refugees consult the Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, hosted by UNHCR at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>. The latest data on IDPs within Syria is available at <http://www.unocha.org/syria>.

4 In 2014, four out of every five Syrians lived in poverty. Governorates with intensive conflict, and that had higher historical rates of poverty, suffered most. Almost two-thirds of the population (64.7 per cent) lived in extreme poverty: being unable to secure basic food and non-food items necessary for the survival of the household. This was particularly acute in the conflict zones. Thirty per cent of the population fell into abject poverty: being unable to meet the basic food needs of their households. See Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR), *Syria – Alienation and Violence: Impact of Syria Crisis Report 2014*

5 Syria's unemployment rate increased from 14.9 per cent in 2011 to 57.7 percent by the end of 2014. Almost three million people have lost their jobs during the conflict. See Syrian Centre for Policy Research (SCPR), *Syria – Alienation and Violence: Impact of Syria Crisis Report 2014*

documentation and education, putting them at risk of exploitation.^{[32-34]a} Community and family protection networks have been undermined and increased social tensions between refugees and host communities have limited refugees' integration into local communities, along with access to basic services.^[32, 35-43] Refugees from Syria bring substantial positive human and social capital that could benefit host communities, and contribute to economic growth, but this may be overlooked or under-utilised under the current circumstances in which host governments and communities often feel overwhelmed by the pressures on their economies, public infrastructure and resources.^[44, 45] Some displaced Syrians are particularly at risk, such as women in female-headed households, adolescents, the elderly, those lacking documentation, persons with disabilities or pre-existing health or mental health issues, survivors of various forms of violence, and those in extreme poverty.

4. MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING OF SYRIANS AFFECTED BY THE CRISIS: A BRIEF OVERVIEW FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL PROFESSIONALS

PERVASIVE PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS OF CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT

The effects of conflict on Syrian mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are profound. Experiences of conflict-related violence and concerns about the situation in Syria are compounded by the daily stressors of displacement, including poverty, lack of basic needs and services, on-going risks of violence and exploitation, isolation and discrimination, loss of family and community supports, and uncertainty about the future.

A central issue in armed conflict settings is loss and grief, whether for deceased family members or for other emotional, relational and material losses.^[46] Ongoing concerns about the safety of family members are reported to be a significant source of stress.^[37] Displaced persons often search for news about loved ones, but get contradictory or misleading information, leading to more insecurity and confusion.^[37] For relatives of people who have been forcibly disappeared, the uncertainty of their fate and the inability to adequately mourn family members who have disappeared adds further distress and complicates grief.^[47] In displacement settings, the social fabric of society is often severely disrupted by conflict, and many Syrian families become isolated from larger support structures.^[48] Feelings of estrangement, yearning for the loss of homeland, and loss of identity, run high as displaced Syrians struggle to adapt to life as refugees within a foreign community, or in camps.^[49, 50] In some countries, discrimination against refugees and social tensions also contribute to additional stress and isolation. Many refugee women and girls feel particularly isolated and rarely leave their homes, often due to concerns over safety or lack of opportunities.^[51, 52] A similar sense of isolation can affect boys, with some refugee boys rarely leaving their homes.^[53]

Daily challenges in meeting basic needs and increased poverty are reported as key sources of stress, and are a source of increasing family tension and violence.^[37, 52]

As more and more Syrians exhaust their own financial means they must turn increasingly to survival strategies that undermine their wellbeing. They may resort to illegal or informal housing, informal employment and/or enter in debt, which in turn increases risks of exploitation and abuse. Women and children may be particularly vulnerable to forced or child marriage, survival sex and child labour.^[54] Moreover, when people do not have access to safe and supportive environments, they may react with rigid behaviour that attempts to re-establish prior roles affected by displacement.^[55] In the current protracted crisis, with no end in sight, a pervasive sense of hopelessness is setting in for many Syrians.^[51, 52]

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DISTRESS AMONG CONFLICT-AFFECTED SYRIANS

Psychological and social distress among refugees from Syria and IDPs in Syria manifests in a wide range of emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioural and social problems.^[37, 54-63] Emotional problems include: sadness, grief, fear, frustration, anxiety, anger, and despair. Cognitive problems, such as: loss of control, helplessness, worry, ruminations, boredom, and hopelessness are all widely reported, as are physical symptoms such as: fatigue, problems sleeping, loss of appetite and medically unexplained physical complaints. Social and behavioural problems, such as: withdrawal, aggression and interpersonal difficulties are also common. Most of these phenomena among Syrian refugees, and for most people, are the result of ongoing violence, displacement and the difficult circumstances in which they currently live and do not necessarily indicate mental disorders. Difficult life circumstances often lead to demoralisation and hopelessness, and may be related to profound and persistent existential concerns of safety, trust, coherence of identity, social role and society. Symptoms related to past experiences have also been widely documented, such as nightmares, intrusive memories, flashbacks, avoidance behaviour and hyper arousal.^[60, 64]

All these phenomena may occur in people who feel distressed, but do not have a mental disorder. However, when distress significantly impacts daily functioning, or includes specific constellations of characteristic symptoms, the person may have a mental disorder. The rates of mental disorders among Syrians have likely gone up significantly, but there are no reliable estimates of prevalence. For planning purposes, many agencies use the projections estimated by the World Health Organization (See Box 1).

It is important to realise conflict affected Syrians may experience a wide range of mental disorders, and that these could be 1) manifestations or exacerbations of pre-existing mental disorders, 2) prompted by the conflict related violence and displacement, and 3) related to the post-emergency context, for example related to the living conditions in the countries of refuge. This document is not meant to provide an exhaustive overview of the mental disorders among Syrians, but will briefly discuss some salient aspects.

Emotional disorders

Generally, as within other populations affected by collective violence and displacement, the most prevalent and most significant clinical problems among Syrians are emotional disorders, such as: depression, prolonged grief disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder and various forms of anxiety disorders.^[61-63] Some of these would amount to a severe mental disorder if they include high levels of suffering and functional loss, but most emotional disorders fall into the category of mild-moderate mental disorders. It is important to realise that the presence of symptoms does not necessarily imply that the person has a mental disorder.^[66, 67] Evidence of impairment of social functioning and/or a high level of suffering from specific symptoms is essential for the diagnosis of a mental disorder. Mental health professionals should thus be careful not to over-diagnose clinical mental disorders among displaced Syrians, especially among those facing insecurity with many ongoing daily stressors. Difficult life circumstances may result in mental disorders or exacerbate

BOX 1: WHO PROJECTIONS OF MENTAL DISORDERS IN ADULT POPULATIONS AFFECTED BY EMERGENCIES [65]

	Before the emergency 12-month prevalence ^a	After the emergency 12-month prevalence ^b
Severe disorder (e.g. psychosis, severe depression, severely disabling form of anxiety disorder)	2% to 3%	3% to 4% ^c
Mild or moderate mental disorder (e.g. mild and moderate forms of depression and anxiety disorders, including mild and moderate posttraumatic stress disorder)	10%	15% to 20% ^d
Normal distress / other psychological reactions (no disorder)	No estimate	Large percentage

^a The assumed baseline rates are median rates across countries as observed in World Mental Health Surveys.

^b The values are median rates across countries. Observed rates vary with assessment method (e.g. choice of assessment instrument) and setting (e.g. time since the emergency, sociocultural factors in coping and community social support, previous and current exposure to adversity).

^c This is a best guess based on the assumption that traumatic events and loss may contribute to a relapse in previously stable mental disorders, and may cause severely disabling forms of mood and anxiety disorders.

^d It is established that traumatic events and loss increase the risk of depression and anxiety disorders, including posttraumatic posttraumatic stress disorder

them, but also contribute to non-clinical phenomena, such as demoralisation and hopelessness, and may be related to profound and persistent existential concerns of safety, trust, coherence of identity, social role and society.^[54, 62, 67-69] Moreover, non-clinical interventions, relating to improvement of living conditions of refugees and IDPs, may contribute significantly to improving mental health, in many cases more so than any psychological or psychiatric intervention.

Psychosis and other severe mental disorders

There is little research data on Syrian people with psychosis and other severe mental disorders. Most likely, the number of Syrians with psychotic disorders will have gone up given the increase of risk factors for psychotic disorders, such as potentially traumatic events and forced migration. Moreover, people with existing vulnerabilities who, in normal circumstances, would not have developed a manifest psychosis, may become symptomatic due to the breakdown of social support. The largest psychiatric hospital in Lebanon has seen an increase in admissions of Syrians over the past few years, with more severe psychopathology and suicidality.^[68] The International Medical Corps (IMC), a medical humanitarian organisation providing outpatient care to Syrians in five countries in the region, has treated more than six thousand people in their centres, of whom almost 700 had psychotic disorders.^[69]

Alcohol and drugs

There is limited data on the use of alcohol and other psychoactive substance in displaced populations from Syria. Consumption of alcohol in Syria has been traditionally been low.^[70] Use of alcohol may have increased: a study among Syrian refugees to Iraq found that about half of the respondents had more than five alcoholic drinks per week.^[71] Figures on the use of illegal drugs are not available, but may have increased due to the increased production and trade of illegal drugs as a result of the crisis.^[72] A worrying trend is the use of synthetic stimulants such as fenethylamine ('Captagon'), a drug that is popular throughout the Middle East and that is produced in Syria and neighbouring countries.^[73] Use of fenethylamine is reportedly popular among combatants because of its stamina-enhancing effect.^[74]

Challenges with epidemiological studies

It should be noted that results of psychiatric epidemiological studies (patterns, causes and effects on health) among conflict affected Syrians need to be interpreted with caution. Usually, standard instruments do not assess local cultural symptoms or idioms of distress, and are rarely validated for use within the Syrian humanitarian emergency.^[75] Some validation research has been done with refugees in the Middle East region, for example with Iraqi refugees,^[76] Palestinian refugees,^[77] and with Syrians before the crisis.^[78] Furthermore, most screening tools tend to focus on symptoms of pathology, with little or no attention to resilience and/or coping. However, new instruments assessing positive coping and growth are being validated for use in conflict affected populations in the Middle East region.^[79] A narrow focus on the effects of past events in Syria, without taking current life circumstances into consideration, may lead to conflating symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or clinical depression with distress generated by stressors related to the current context.^[80-83] Studies of distress in populations affected by the crises in the Middle East region have found current living contexts impact strongly on mental health.^[84, 85]

COPING WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL DISTRESS

In general, when provided safety and some external support, many families are able to adapt and adjust to the changes required by a new situation.^[57-59] For most Syrians, the first source of support is the circle of family and friends. Displacement and the dynamics of the conflict challenge and may disrupt these social support structures. Refugees and IDPs, dealing with the effects of difficult living conditions and/or exposure to violence and adversities, consistently report high levels of distress. The efforts people make to minimise or overcome distress and to solve (inter)personal problems are often called *coping*. Displaced Syrians use various ways to cope with psychosocial distress. This may include individual strategies to reduce tension and stress such as praying, withdrawal, listening to music, watching TV or drawing, as well as social activities such as seeking the companionship of family and friends, engaging in social activities, attending a community activity or school, talking with a trusted person.

Many of the common coping strategies among Syrian refugees appear to be positive such as talking to friends and family, praying, or thinking of (former) good times. However, negative coping approaches, such as withdrawal, are also extremely common. Increasingly, refugees lose hope and resort to coping strategies to deal with psychosocial stress that are less effective, or induce more stress, such as: smoking, obsessively watching the news, worrying about others still in Syria, and behavioural withdrawal or ‘doing nothing’, which may cause negative ruminating thoughts.^[37, 59, 61, 67, 68] Displaced Syrian adults may resort to such passive and individual coping methods because they have a sense there is little else they can do, feeling they have little control over their life circumstances.^[56, 86]

Syrian women also commonly use prayer and talking to family and friends as coping strategies. For Syrian women, social networks serve as an important means of coping. As well as organising charity and support groups, bazaars, and leaving the home to work together.^[56, 87] Distraction through keeping oneself busy (e.g. by cleaning the house) is often described as another way to cope. However, some Syrian women report they increasingly use passive coping strategies, such as: sleeping, crying, smoking cigarettes, and seeking time alone. Some women also try to isolate themselves, or deny that current stressors are actually happening. Such passive coping mechanisms particularly occur when the refugee situation, such as in camp settings, makes it difficult to maintain the pre-displacement regular daily routines, such as performing household chores, working, going out, or watching TV.^[88] Reinforcing women’s social networks and opportunities for active forms of coping is therefore of great importance to their wellbeing.

For displaced Syrian men living in refugee camps, praying and spending time alone are common ways of coping, both before becoming a refugee as well as while in the camps. Working, visiting family and friends, walking, and going out, used to be common forms of coping for Syrian men, but many men, particularly those living in camp settings, feel they have limited opportunities for these activities. As a result, men increasingly cope by sleeping, crying, smoking cigarettes, and “getting angry.”^[88] Many men may not feel comfortable to seek other ways of dealing with distress due to feeling helpless, or due to cultural norms

about masculinity and cultural expectations that men may not acknowledge weakness.^[50, 89] Syrian refugee men’s coping mechanisms, therefore, appear to be primarily individual and often have negative consequences. As a result, providing men with gender appropriate opportunities for collective activities would appear to be an important intervention.

Syrian adolescents in Jordan reported commonly using ‘withdrawal’ as a main coping mechanism in surveys in 2013 and 2014, although in 2014, talking to parents and friends was rated as the most common coping mechanism.^[37, 56] Other common methods of coping were thinking of (former) good times in Syria, reading the Quran, listening to music, crying, finding things to do, watching TV, joining school or community centres, sleeping, joining a support group, playing with friends, eating or drawing, and distracting themselves. A small number of Syrian adolescent youth say they use smoking, stealing and beating others as additional coping methods.^[90] The *family* can provide ways of coping, especially for youth who have experienced displacement and war-related violence. Caretakers and adults can provide a buffer from the potential negative emotional consequences of war. However, when caretakers are themselves struggling with how to cope with emotional distress, they may feel overwhelmed with the responsibility of caretaking, and youth must look for other means of support.^[37] Due to the extreme stress of social, financial and occupational turmoil accompanying the war, some Syrian parents report increasingly resorting to maladaptive coping strategies, such as beating their children or being overprotective.^[37, 91] Many Syrian adolescents, witnessing the stress and the suffering of their parents, do not want to disclose their emotional problems to their parents for fear of overburdening them.^[37]

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL DISTRESS: DIVERSITY AND VULNERABILITY

As noted above, age, gender, language, religious and ethno-cultural diversity impact on refugees’ experience of displacement. Specific groups may be particularly vulnerable and at risk, such as women headed households, adolescents, the elderly, those lacking documentation,

persons with disabilities or pre-existing health or mental health issues, survivors of various forms of violence, and those in extreme poverty.^[92] These factors affect the MHPSS issues faced by refugees, influence their coping mechanisms and may increase the risk of psychosocial problems and mental disorder. This section provides an overview of the specific mental health and psychosocial issues faced by men and women, survivors of sexual or gender based violence (SGBV), children who have experienced violence, abuse and exploitation, torture survivors and Syrians who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI). Each section provides a brief overview of the issues, followed by an explanation of the MHPSS consequences. Chapter six of this report contains essential information on ensuring that services for mental health and psychosocial support are made accessible and are culturally acceptable to all Syrian refugees, including the groups discussed in this section.

Gender roles and MHPSS issues

Violence and displacement can alter social networks and roles, which may undermine the ability to cope and lead to family tension, identity crises and psychological distress. Additionally, within a refugee context, family roles and gender roles may change dramatically. Many Syrian women have become providers for the household, as well caring for their families, as their husbands are absent, wounded or disabled, or have died.^[93, 94] These additional responsibilities, combined with feelings of lack of security, often create great stress for women.^[93] Traditional views on gender roles or stereotypes about refugees from Syria can also put great pressure on refugees of both sexes.

A study in Lebanon found that many refugee women felt uncomfortable that they had to undertake tasks not previously considered appropriate for women from their community, such as running errands and engaging in paid work, in addition to their roles as caregivers. However, other women reported that this new situation gave them a sense of empowerment and had provided them with new opportunities that would otherwise not have been available to them.^[55]

Men, who often ground their identity in their role as the families' main provider of material and financial needs,

may experience psychological distress when their ability to provide food or money for their family is disrupted. Moreover, concerns for the safety and security of their families, unemployment, exploitation and working illegally may also lead to major worries among men. Urban refugee men in Jordan frequently mentioned feeling depressed and ashamed of their inability to continue their education, and being forced by circumstance to work in very low paying and/or harsh jobs to help support their families.^[50] Moreover, men, women and children report that these additional stressors exacerbate family tensions and have led to increased domestic violence.^[52, 95]

Survivors of sexual and gender based violence

Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) has increased substantially due to the conflict.^[96] Many women and girls, and to a lesser extent boys and men, are exposed to SGBV resulting from conflict-related violence, the breakdown of law and order inside Syria, increased poverty, lack of basic needs and safe services, family separation and disruption of traditional social networks and protection mechanisms.^[52, 97-99] Refugees who have fled to other countries may be safe from conflict-related SGBV, but continue to face other forms of SGBV, including: domestic violence,^[25, 98, 100-103] sexual violence, early marriage, harassment and isolation, exploitation and survival sex.^[52, 102, 104-107] Refugees have repeatedly identified rape, and the fear of rape, as a driving motivation to flee the country.^[108, 109]

The psychological and social impacts of SGBV, in particular sexual violence including rape, can be devastating for the survivor,^[110, 111] and may have a ripple effect throughout the family and wider community.^[99] Fear of being subjected to abduction, rape and other sexual violence limits women and girls' freedom of movement. In addition to the actual ordeal of suffering sexual violence, women and girls often fear or actually face social ostracism and further repercussions, including: rejection, divorce, abuse and for a minority of cases "honour" crimes" at the hands of family members.^[112-114]

Women subjected to arrest or kidnapping are reportedly, frequently stigmatised on release because of presumed sexual abuse.^[96] Boys and men who have experienced sexual violence also face negative social consequences.

All of these factors increase the risk that sexual violence leads to psychological problems, such as depression and anxiety. Survivors of sexual abuse often experience a combination of feelings, including: injustice, a sense of guilt and self-condemnation.

Domestic violence is reported as among the most common form of SGBV. Forms of domestic violence against women and children are reported to have become more aggressive and common as a result of the conflict. Stress among men is reported to be a major cause of the increase of this form of violence, and as such, MHPSS practitioners should offer evidence based services to men (that have been shown in other contexts) to reduce domestic violence, including anger management and parenting programmes. In addition, as part of the psychosocial services provided to survivors, they should be helped to identify supportive members of their social network, further, risks of social stigmatisation and further abuse need to be carefully assessed and addressed.^[109]

Prevalence and associated risks of early marriage have both increased as a result of poverty, insecurity and uncertainty caused by displacement.^[100, 115, 116] Both inside Syria, and among refugees from Syria to neighbouring countries, early marriage of girls has become a coping mechanism and is perceived as a means to protect girls and better secure their future when faced with general insecurity, poverty, absence of male family members and uncertainty.^[116-119] However, early marriage may be a significant source of distress for girls, and is often associated with interruption of education, health risks and increased risk of domestic violence.^[118] Feelings of abandonment, loss of support from parents and lack of access to resources to meet the demands of being a spouse and a mother may create additional stress in married girls.

Survivors of torture

Many Syrians have to deal with the effects of having been tortured.^[120] While there are limited research data on the specific mental health and psychosocial problems of Syrian survivors of torture, in general, survivors of torture are vulnerable to developing psychological problems, particularly depression, posttraumatic stress reactions, chronic pain, and medically unexplained

somatic symptoms.^[121, 122] Emotional and social support can buffer the severity of posttraumatic stress disorder and depression, while ongoing insecurity, economic difficulties, and social isolation can aggravate symptoms.^[123, 124] Practitioners working with Syrian survivors of torture report that many of their clients have multiple problems, including psychological, social, economic and legal issues.⁶ Conventional diagnostic classifications are often insufficient as many clients have symptoms of various torture-related problems, including depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, panic attacks, chronic somatic symptoms and suicidal behaviour. Providing a client with multiple diagnoses may not be helpful, but symptom reduction in one area can have beneficial effects on other stress-related problems.

LGBTI Syrians

The specific challenges facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals in Syria are often overlooked. Same-sex acts among consenting adults are illegal in Syria.^[125] Overt societal discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is present throughout Syrian society. In order not to risk tainting their families' honour, gay men and lesbians are often under strong pressure to get married and to conceal their sexual orientation. The risks for LGBTI persons, particularly gay men, have increased since the conflict, resulting in high levels of stress and vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.^[126, 127] The specific protection risks faced by Syrian LGBTI refugees and IDPs, combined with difficulties accessing safe and supportive services, and extreme stigma and discrimination create very specific psychosocial and social difficulties for Syrian LGBTI persons in their social relations, integration, and identity.

Older refugees and refugees with specific needs

Older refugees, particularly those who have health problems and a limited social support network, are vulnerable to psychosocial problems.^[92] A study among older refugees in Lebanon found that 65% presented signs of psychological distress, around three times as high as in other refugees.^[128] Another survey, among older Syrian refugees in Lebanon, also found high levels of

6 Information obtained from staff working for the Centre for Victims of Torture in Jordan (dd. 2 june 2015)

feeling anxious (41%), depressed (25%), unsafe (24%) or lonely (23%).^[129] Many elderly refugees in this study felt powerless, and had a desire to return to Syria, even while realising this was now impossible. Almost a third of the older refugees in this sample said that these negative emotions caused serious impairment to their ability to do what a healthy person of their age would be expected to do. Those with poor physical health were significantly more affected.^[129]

Refugees with specific needs due to disability, injuries or chronic disease constitute another group with elevated psychological stress levels. A study by Handicap International and Help Age International among Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon found that people with such specific needs were twice as likely to report psychological distress.^[128]

As for other Syrian refugees, the distress in older people or those with specific needs is often connected to fear and anger about their own situation, compounded with worry about the situation in Syria and all that was lost. For people with specific needs and older refugees, additional distress is related to various factors, such as high levels of social isolation as well as widespread discrimination, both of which are exacerbated by displacement and poverty. Many also have fears of being separated from families or caretakers, or of being left alone when the others have to move on to other settings. Moreover, many have lost facilitating and supportive social and physical environments in Syria built up over the years, including accessible housing and social spaces for people with mobility problems. Many also reported feelings of powerless and felt they would be perceived as a burden by their caretakers.^[128]

Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Syrian children

Children continue to suffer immensely as a result of conflict and displacement. More than 50% of Syrians displaced internally or as refugees are children, and of these, nearly 75% are under the age of 12.^[119] Some have been wounded and many have witnessed conflict first-hand or endured the destruction of their homes and communities, surviving forced displacement, family separations and recurrent

violence. Inside Syria, children continue to face violations of their safety and protection, including exposure to physical and sexual violence, recruitment by armed groups and lack of access to basic services.^[130, 131]

These forms of violence and deprivation result in high levels of psychosocial distress. Although refugee children may find safety from conflict and persecution when they arrive in host countries, they and their families often need ongoing support in order to cope with the effects of conflict.^[132] In addition, during displacement, separation from friends, families and neighbours, and lack of basic services, increases the likelihood that children will be exposed to violence in their homes, communities and schools. Various parties to the conflict are involved in recruitment of children for support functions and combat, putting them at great risk of death, injury, psychological distress or torture.^[133, 134] Approximately half of displaced Syrian children, especially older children, are unable to continue their education.^[135-137] Incidents of sexual violence towards children have been widely reported in Syria, as well as to a lesser extent in refugee host countries, particularly against girls.^{[50, 138-140], [114, 140, 141]}

Generally, studies have found that Syrian refugee children experience a wide range of psychosocial problems resulting from both their experiences in the war, and their current living situation. Problems include: fears, difficulties sleeping, sadness, grieving and depression (including withdrawal from friends and family), aggression or temper tantrums (shouting, crying and throwing or breaking things), nervousness, hyperactivity and tension, speech problems or mutism, and somatic symptoms. Violent and war-related play, regression and behavioural problems are also reported among children.^[37, 131, 132, 142]

Research among Syrian refugee children in Turkey indicated high levels of emotional and behavioural problems; nearly half of children had clinically significant levels of anxiety or withdrawal, and almost two thirds were fearful.^[143] In a qualitative study among Syrian adolescents in Lebanon and Jordan, the girls mentioned that they experienced enormous physical and social isolation, as well as wide spread discrimination and harassment.^[144] Syrian adolescent boys also faced discrimination and were

commonly subject to bullying and other forms of physical violence. Adolescent boys had a profound sense of humiliation resulting from exploitation as child labourers, with poor pay and dangerous conditions as well as the mounting social tension between Syrian refugees and host communities.^[144] A recent study in Jordan found that adolescent girls face more problems overall than boys, and are more likely to feel sad, depressed and fearful, although they are also more likely than boys to feel supported by parents and friends.^[37]

Key sources of stress for children include: discrimination by members of the host community, war-related fears (including worries about family left in Syria), as well as their own traumatic experiences and educational concerns. Family violence and parental stress, economic pressures and confinement to the home are also reported to contribute to children's distress.^[145] Girls more commonly report confinement and harassment as key stressors, while boys are more likely to report physical abuse and bullying. There is some evidence that over time, and with the right support from family, the surrounding community and service providers, many aspects of refugee children's distress are reduced. For example, adolescents in Za'atari camp in Jordan were found to be less depressed and fearful than those who lived out of camps, and also felt more supported by their parents, siblings and friends in mid-2014, compared to mid-2013.^[37] Changing roles for children can be a major stress factor, with children often shouldering responsibilities and concerns well beyond their age, however, for some children, this may also be a source of pride and sense of purpose in caring for and supporting their families.^[119]

5. CULTURAL FRAMEWORKS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING

CULTURE-SPECIFIC MENTAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS AND IDIOMS OF DISTRESS

In cultural psychiatry, *cultural idioms of distress* refer to common modes of expressing distress within a culture or community that may be used for a wide variety of problems, conditions or concerns. *Explanatory models* refer to the ways that people explain and make sense of their symptoms or illness, in particular how they view causes, course and potential outcomes of their problem, including how their condition affects them and their social environment, and what they believe is appropriate treatment.^[146]

Understanding local illness models and idioms of distress will allow better communication, and in turn, this knowledge can be used in interventions designed to mobilise individual and collective strength and resilience. In general, MHPSS practitioners should avoid psychiatric labelling because this can be especially alienating and stigmatising for survivors of violence and injustice. For clinical mental health practitioners, building a solid therapeutic alliance with their clients will allow both practitioner and client to navigate among diverse explanatory models and sources of help that may include both formal and informal medical systems, religious or community resources and strategies.

In Syria, where concepts such as ‘psychological state’⁷, ‘psychological wellbeing’⁸, or and ‘mental health’⁹ are not commonly understood and often carry negative connotations, suffering is commonly understood as a normal part of life, and therefore, not necessitating medical or psychiatric intervention, except in severe and debilitating forms. Within clinical settings, people who are distressed may use indirect expressions when asked about their

current wellbeing, such as *ana ta’ban* (أنا تعبَان, ‘I am tired’, or *nafsiyti ta’banah* (نفسيتي تعبَانه, ‘my psyche is tired’). This refers to a general state of ill being and may stand for a range of emotional symptoms, but also for relationship difficulties. Such statements, therefore, need further assessment to understand what they mean for an individual within a particular context.

Patients with psychological or mental problems often first present at medical services with a physical complaint, before addressing the psychological, relational or spiritual dimensions of their predicament.^[147] Most Arabic and Syrian idioms of distress do not separate somatic experience and psychological symptoms, because body and soul are interlinked in explanatory models of illness. People may resort to images, metaphors and proverbs that assume the interconnectedness of the psychological and the physical. Some of the most common idioms of distress are described below. Understanding local idioms of distress is important for communication with refugees. Local expressions can be used to convey empathy as well as to explain and support interventions.^[148] These common expressions serve to express many forms of distress, including those associated with mental disorders. In general, there is no simple one-to-one correspondence between idioms or explanations and specific mental health problems or social difficulties.

In clinical contexts, the use of everyday expressions and proverbs or metaphors to express distress may be misunderstood as ‘resistance’ to direct communication, or even misinterpreted as psychotic symptoms.^[149, 150] For instance, some Syrians attribute obsessive rumination to satanic temptations, using the Arabic word *wisswas* (وسواس) meaning both the devil and unpleasant recurrent thoughts.^[150] Careful, systematic inquiry into the personal and local cultural meanings of these expressions is always necessary.

7 Psychological state: *al hala al nafsiyah* (الحالة النفسية), *al wad’ al nafsy* (الوضع النفسي), or *al rafah el nafsi* (الرفاه النفسي)

8 Psychological wellbeing: *al saha al nafsiyah* (الصحة النفسية)

9 Mental health: *al saha al ‘akliyah* (الصحة العقلية)

SPECIFIC EXPRESSIONS AND IDIOMS IN THE SYRIAN CONTEXT

A number of key concepts of distress are listed below that have been identified in the academic literature and MHPSS assessments used by Syrians, both prior to and following displacement. While these concepts may be grouped differently in various studies, the following reflects the most common concepts identified across the literature.

General distress

Heaviness in the heart, cramps in the guts, or pain in the stomach or in the head may all be expressions of fatigue. The experience of oppression, tightness in the chest, pain in the heart, numbness of body parts, or having the feeling of ants crawling over the skin are all common expressions in which bodily organs are perceived as unable to contain the distress.^[151]

Fear and anticipated anxiety

Habat qalbi (هبوط قلبي) or *houbout el qalb* (هبوط القلب), literally ‘falling or crumbling of the heart’, correspond to the somatic reaction of sudden fear. *Khouf* (خوف, ‘fear’) or *ana khayfan*, (أنا خائفان, ‘I am afraid’) are direct expressions of fear. *Kamatni kalbi* (قمطني قلبي, ‘my heart is squeezing’) or *atlan ham* (هم عتلان, ‘I am carrying worry’) generally refers to anticipated anxiety and worry.

Feeling nervous or tense

Syrian people use different terms to describe an anxious or nervous person: *Asabi* (عصبي, nervous) is used to describe anxiety as a character or personality trait. The word *masseb* (مُعَصَّب) is used to describe a person who is currently nervous (a temporary state). The term *mitwatter* (مُتَوَتِّر), ‘I feel tense’ is used for tension due to a specific situation, such as waiting for the results of an exam or expressing or having an opposing opinion to someone else. There is considerable variation in the use of such terms: for example, Syrian adolescents in Jordan used *asabi* to describe feeling easily irritated, angry or tense, and associated it with ‘getting upset over little things’.^[37]

Sadness and difficulty in adjustment to an acute stressor

Hozon (حزن, ‘sadness’) and difficulty in the face of an acute or sudden stressor may be referred to as *al-hayat sawda* (الحياة السوداء, ‘a black life’), or *iswadat al dounia fi ouyouni* (اسودت الدنيا في عيوني, ‘life has blackened in my eyes’). Somatic complaints may include feeling a burden or weight on the chest, resulting in pain in the chest area or inability to breathe and the need for air, as well as loss of appetite, pain in the abdomen and chest, and/or sleep disturbances. The concept of *hozon* can also be used for a state of grieving. For example, Syrian adolescents in Jordan used the term when they described how they missed their friends in Syria, thinking often about their losses and withdrawing from social life.^[37]

Depression

While *hozon* may signify a state of depression, this is more directly referred to by laypersons and mental health practitioners alike as *halat ikti’ab* (حالة اكتئاب, ‘condition of ikti’ab’). *Ikti’ab* may hold complex concepts, such as brooding, darkening of mood, aches and a gloomy outlook, and may be accompanied by a variety of medically unexplained somatic symptoms and fatigue, as well as signs of social isolation (no friends, not talking much).^[37]

Lack of resources and helplessness

Lack of resources and financial hardship is often referred to as *al ayn bassira wal yadd kassira* (العين بصيره و الإيد قصيره, ‘the eye sees but the hand is short or cannot reach’). Expressions often used by Syrians to express helplessness are: *mafi natija* (ما في نتيجة, ‘there is no use’), *hasis hali mashlol* (حاسس حالي مشلول, ‘I feel like I’m paralysed’) or *inshalit, ma a’d fini a’mel shi* (انشأليت، ما عاد فيني أعمل شي, ‘I am hopeless’ and ‘I cannot do anything anymore’), *mou tali ‘bi’idi shi* (مو طالع بإيدي شي, ‘nothing is coming out of my hands’, which refers to the inability to do anything to change an undesirable situation). Another common idiom of distress in Arab and Syrian societies, used in relation to helplessness, is *ihbat* (إحباط), which refers to a mix of

depressive feelings, frustration, a sense of defeat, disappointment and loss of hope.

Cognitive symptoms

People may also present with symptoms of loss of concentration and memory, expressed with terms such as *mou aader rakkezz* (مو قادر ركز, 'I can't focus' or 'I can't concentrate').

Anger and aggressive behaviour

Some Syrian men find it difficult to acknowledge feeling such as sadness and anxiety. Anger may be the emotion that surfaces the most easily and be expressed as aggressive behaviour, both within the family and outside of it. Syrian men may hold views that men don't cry and are not afraid or sad, associating this with weakness.^[89] In focus groups among Syrian adolescents in Jordan, the expression *mashkalji* (مشكلجي, 'troublemaker') was used to indicate children and adolescents who were often getting into trouble with neighbours or friends complaining about his/her behaviour.^[37]

Madness

In colloquial Arabic, persons with severe mental disorders and disabilities are often described as *majnoon* (مجنون), which means 'crazy', 'mad' or 'insane'. *Majnoon*, as a category for mental disorders, overlaps with the psychiatric category of psychotic disorders, such as schizophrenia, but not with those of 'common mental disorders' such as depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress disorder. Although historically derived from possession by *jinn*, the term *majnoon* is mostly used without any reference to possession or malevolent acts by *jinn*.^[152] The word *majnoon* is also used in daily language for those who generally behave in a strange, abnormal or unexpected way, but do not necessarily have a mental disorder. The word *majnoon* has strong negative connotations.

Suicidality

In Arabic-speaking cultures, in general, suicide and suicide attempts may be a source of stigma, shame and social exclusion. In addition, some aspects of *shari'a* (Islamic) law are codified in Syrian national law, making attempting suicide a crime in Syria.^[153] In some surrounding countries, mental health practitioners are required to report attempted

suicides to the authorities under national law, which can create challenges for people to disclose such attempts or thoughts and mental health practitioners' response to this disclosure. Syrians may use indirect expressions, such as they wish they could sleep and not wake up (*itmana nam mafik*, اتمنى نام ما فيق). People will be more likely to answer queries about suicidal thoughts openly once a trusting relationship is established. Mental health practitioners are usually taught to approach the topic of suicide gradually, by first asking about other aspects of distress and posing questions that may make it easier for a person to answer frankly, such as: 'have you ever thought that death is better than this life?', 'do you sometimes wish God would let you die?', or 'in such cases, some people might think of ending their life; have you ever considered it?' However, within the Syrian context, people may also express the wish that God take their lives as a way to convey that they are in distress, with no intention of ending their own lives.

Table 1 (Syrian Arabic version) and Table 2 (Kirmanji Kurdish version) give a brief overview of common expressions and idioms of distress, used by Syrian people with problems related to mental health, psychological wellbeing, social problems, and corresponding physical symptoms.

TABLE 1: COMMON EXPRESSIONS AND IDIOMS OF DISTRESS IN SYRIAN ARABIC			
Arabic term or phrase	Transcription	Literal translations	Emotions, thoughts and physical symptoms that may be conveyed through these expressions
متضايق كثير هالفتره حاسس حالي متضايق ضايح نفسى مخنوقة	- Meddayyek ketir hal fatra - Haassess haalii meddayyek - Dayej - Nafsi makhnouka	- I am very annoyed these days - I feel annoyed - To be cramped - My psyche is suffocating	- Rumination tiredness, physical aches, constriction in the chest, repeated sighing - Unpleasant feelings in the chest, hopelessness, boredom
حاسس روحي عم تطلع	- Hassess rouhi 'am tetla'	- I feel my soul is going out	- Dysphoric mood, sadness - Inability to cope, being fed up - Worry, being pessimistic
قلبي- مقبوض انعمى على قلبي	- Qalb maqboud - In'ama 'ala kalbi	- Squeezed heart - Blindness got to my heart ¹	- Dysphoria - Sadness - Worry, being pessimistic
تعبان نفسيًا- حاسس حالي تعبان- حالتى تعبانه- نفس تعبانه	- Taeban nafseyan - Hassess halii ta3ban - Halti taebaneh - Nafs ta'bana	- Fatigued self/soul	- Undifferentiated anxiety and depression symptoms, tiredness, fatigue
-ما قادر اتحمل الضغط علي كثير- مو قادر ركز من الضغوطات -	- Ma ader athammel - El daght 'alayy ketiir - Mou kaader rakkezz men el doghoutaat	- Can't bear it anymore - The pressure on me is too much - Can't concentrate because of the pressure	- Feelings of being under extreme stress or extreme pressure - Helplessness
فرطت-	- Faratit	- I am in pieces	- General state of stress, sadness, extreme tiredness, inability to open up and to control oneself, or to hold oneself together
و الله مو شايف قدامي-	- Wallah mou shayef oddaamii	- By God, I can't see in front of me	- General state of stress, feelings of loss of options, loss of ability to project into the future, - Confusion, hopelessness
-حاسس الدنيا مسكرة بوشي ما في شي عم يربط معي -	- Hases eddenia msakkra bwishi - Ma fi shi 'am yizbat ma'i	- I feel the world is closing in front of my face - Nothing is working as planned with me	- Hopelessness, helplessness, state of despair
- شو بدى إحكى...الشكوى لغير الله مذه - الحمد لله	- Sho baddi 'ehki... el shakwa le gher allah mazalleh - Al hamdullillah	- What am I supposed to say... it is humiliating to complain to someone other than God. - Praise be to God.	- Reference to shame in asking for help - State of despair, surrender
ما بعرف شو بدى إعمل بحالي	- Maa ba'ref shou beddi a'mel be halii	- I don't know what I am going to do with myself	- General state of distress - Feeling upset, edgy, helplessness - Hopelessness, lack of options
متوتر	- Mitwatter	- I feel tense	- Nervousness, tension
خيفان حاسس بالخوف مرعوب	- Khayfan - Hases bil khof Mar'oub	- I am afraid - I feel fear - Frightened, horrified	- Fear, anxiety - Worry - Extreme fear
مُعَصَّب	M3asseb	- I feel angry	- Anger, aggressiveness - Nervousness
Sources: This table is based on suggestions by Arabic speaking mental health professionals, including: Alaa Bairoutieh, Tayseer Hassoon, Ghayda Hassan, Maysaa Hassan, Hussam Jefee-Bahloul, and Mohamed el Shazli.			

TABLE 2: EXPRESSIONS IN KURDISH (KIRMANJI DIALECT)		
Kurdish terms or expressions	Literal translations	Emotions, thoughts and physical symptoms that may be conveyed through these expressions
<i>Bena mn tanga</i> <i>Nafasa mn tanga</i>	- My breath is short	- Low mood
<i>Chi béjim/ chi bikim vala ye</i>	- What am I supposed to say/to do without result	- Helplessness - Hopelessness - Loss of options
<i>Dunia lber mn tari buya</i> <i>Dunya li ber chavé min resh</i> <i>búye</i>	- The world became dark in front of me - The world is closing in front of my face	- Despair - Hopelessness - Helplessness - Depression
<i>Ez dihisim gu ezé bifetisim</i> <i>Béna min dichiki</i>	- I feel I am going to suffocate	- Restlessness - Loss of options, - Feeling constricted
<i>Dil shikestime,</i> <i>Dilé min déshe</i>	- My heart is broken - My heart is aching	- Tightness in the chest - Chest pain - Stress - Anxiety - Sadness
<i>Az taabima</i> <i>Nefsi/ westyame</i> <i>Pir westyame</i>	- I'm tired - Fatigued self - Fatigued soul	- Helplessness - Hopelessness - Fatigue
<i>Az nkarm bshughlm</i>	- I can't fulfil my duties or responsibilities	- Inability or loss of drive or motivation to perform activities
<i>Az galak dfkrm</i>	- I think a lot	- Excessive thinking /excessive worry - Could be associated with anxiety or depression
<i>Lashe mn grana</i>	- My body is heavy	- Fatigue
<i>Kharna mn tunaya</i>	- I have no appetite	- Loss of appetite that could be associated with grieving, anxiety, worry or depression
<i>Az ghaidm</i> <i>Az qahrma</i> <i>Az ejzm</i>	- I am sad - I feel sorrow - I feel incapable or impotent	- Low mood - Sadness - Incapacity - Feelings of injustice or of being defeated by unjust life circumstances
<i>Jisme mn sist dbit</i>	- My body becomes rigid	- Spasm of body parts which may occur in non-epileptic seizures and in epileptic seizures
<i>Tahamula mn kem buya</i> <i>Tahamula mn tunaya</i> <i>Nema tahmúl dikim</i> <i>Ez feritime</i>	- I feel that my ability to bear things is reduced	- Excessive stress - Easily losing control over one's emotions - Difficulty coping, handling stress or pressures
<i>Ez nizanim chi bi seré xwe bikim</i>	- I don't know what I am going to do with myself	- General distress - A state of confusion, loss of options and disappointment
Source: This table is made with expert input of Kurdish speaking mental health professionals: Rawisht Rasheed, Aram Hasan and Naz Baban.		

SYRIAN CONCEPTS OF THE PERSON

Historical, religious, ethnic and social dynamics all contribute to shaping Syrian views of the person and the relationship of the person to the world. Cultural concepts of the person influence how people experience and express suffering, how they explain illness and misfortune, and how they seek help.^[154] Within the Syrian context, cultural heritage and religious background both contribute to individual identity and to ways of understanding the place the individual inhabits within the community, and the universe. Religion and social norms are deeply intertwined in Syria, as in the Arab world more generally.

It is important to remember that, despite the general patterns summarised below, there still remains great diversity among Syrian people, as is true of any group of people.

Islamic concepts of the person

Syrian concepts of the person can be characterised as ‘sociocentric’ and ‘cosmocentric’, in that each individual is seen as linked to every other creature created by God, including the world of angels and spirits.^[155] This linkage is symbolised by the double dimension of every individual: a universal dimension that is governed by the will of God and a social dimension governed by social rules of conduct and coexistence. The notion of *qadar* (القَدَر, ‘fate’) is central to this context. This acceptance of fate should not be equated with fatalism, but can be better understood within a framework of self-abandonment, which is reflected in the value of patience in the face of helplessness and adversity, such as illness and loss. Life may be viewed as a transient phase of existence, a testing place for the eternal life that comes after death.^[155] The perception of death as a transition between two lives may also help to give constructive meaning to bereavement. In present-day Syria the word *al that* (ذات) indicates the core of a human personality and is used as a synonym for ‘self’. The term *nafs* (نَفْسٌ) denotes the internal (psychological) system.^[156] Early Arab and Muslim scholarly writings on the concept of the person used the term *nafs* for individual personality, consisting of *qalb* (قلب, ‘heart’), *ruh* (روح, ‘spirit’), *aql* (عقل, ‘intellect’), and *irada* (إرادة, ‘will’).^[154]

Within Muslim cultures, a prevailing view is that the person is created weak. This fundamental ‘weakness’ is

linked to the notion of *taslim* (تسليم), or voluntary and confident surrender to the ‘all powerful God’ (as in the phrase *Allahu akbar*, ‘God is great’)^[154]. However, *taslim* and other expressions of a human being’s weakness, as compared to infinite God’s strength and power, are inseparable from the notion of *taklif* (تكليف, ‘entrusting’), which can provide a Muslim with considerable strength. The notion of surrender may help Syrians better accept hardship as the ‘will of God’, while the notion of *taklif* may help them find the motivation and drive to cope with hardship.^[154] A widespread view among Syrian Muslims, like others, is that catastrophes and illnesses may be seen as an opportunity for growth and an occasion to strengthen one’s faith, and therefore, are not necessarily punitive (i.e. God punishing humans for their misdeeds).^[155, 157, 158]

Diversity

Other religious traditions in Syria may share this Islamic view of the person, but also have specific conceptualisations of personhood, such as the central role of the transmigration of souls (the belief that the soul of person passes from one body to another) among the Druze, a religious and social minority with its own monotheistic theology.

Of course, most people will not refer explicitly to these different philosophies. However, these core values and ideas are interwoven into many aspects of everyday life, and are part of the cultural background knowledge and popular expressions that are simply ‘taken for granted’.

EXPLANATORY MODELS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AND PSYCHOSOCIAL PROBLEMS

Cultural systems of knowledge, belief and practice provide explanatory models for illness that include ideas about causality, course, appropriate treatment and likely outcome. These explanations may be drawn from particular ideas about what makes up the person and the world, and theories of the processes of illness and healing. Explanatory models can have important implications for coping, help-seeking behaviour, treatment expectations, worries about long-term consequences of illness and stigmatisation.

Over recent decades, popular concepts of mental health in Syria have gradually changed. Awareness of mental health

care has increased, particularly in urban settings. Clients in mental health settings often express their distress in bodily terms without invoking supernatural or spiritual explanations. Many Syrians are likely to view the causes of their sufferings or mental health difficulties as emanating from the violence, losses and daily social and economic pressures. The impact of these stressors on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing has been widely reported and is consistent with the impact of war and conflict on populations.^[122, 159-161] However, more context specific religious and/or cultural explanations of distress and illness, or sources of healing, are also common. Additionally, people may use or consider multiple explanations to address different facets of their problems.

Common religious and culturally specific concepts for explanation of illness or distress used commonly in Syria are described below. The aim of this discussion is to complement the existing literature on the effects of violence and daily stressors on the mental health and wellbeing of conflict affected populations, in general, and Syrians in particular. Multiple explanatory models of symptoms and suffering commonly coexist. Mental health practitioners should realise that their own professional explanatory models of mental health problems may not be shared by their clients and that imposing them may alienate their clients and harm the relation between them. It is also important to realise that people may use various explanatory models to explain aspects of their suffering at different moments in time, depending on the context, question or concern. Moreover, while explanatory models are important they should not be used in a restrictive or over-generalising way (i.e. ‘Syrian women think X of X’) as such explanatory models vary between people and over time. Practitioners must try to understand and respect diverse explanatory models used by their clients in order to optimally engage with their clients and provide more effective support.

Numerous mental health practitioners working with refugees from Syria and IDPs have noted that explanatory models of mental disorder and attitudes to MHPSS services are rapidly changing as a result of the shared experiences of violence, loss and displacement, which tends to lessen the stigma surrounding mental health problems.^[57, 162]

Religious explanatory models

Religious value systems also play a significant role in the perception and understanding of psychological problems, and the methods of treatment. In Islamic belief, the soul is not separate from the body; rather, they are interdependent with physical and psychological aspects of experience closely intertwined. Emotional distress is perceived as located in the heart, rather than the head, and the heart is considered the vital source of human psychosomatic health. Therefore, imbalance or disharmony in the heart may be linked to mental illness.^[158, 163, 164]

Among the Druze, for whom reincarnation and the transmigration of souls is a central belief, individuals may understand suffering and mental illness as punishment for misdeeds in a previous life, or as a consequence of the violent death of the sufferer in his former life.^[165-167] Christians in Syria share some concepts and attitudes toward mental afflictions based on an Islamic framework. However, they also have distinctive ways of understanding and dealing with mental illness. There may be a common tendency to suppress emotions and prefer selective sharing of stressful conflicts or predicaments, which may be linked to the Christian tradition of confession.^[79]

Among Syrian Christians, and Muslims, a common way to cope with distress is by prayer, including: reading the Koran, attending religious ceremonies or making religious vows (*nizer*; نذر or *nidher*; نذر). For instance, adolescents in Zaatar refugee camp in Jordan reported reading the Koran as a common coping mechanism (after talking to parents/friends, withdrawal and thinking about good times in Syria).^[37] Some Christians, for example, may make a vow that a female family member will wear a special dress (*taubel adra*, توب العذرا) for a period of time, if God helps them through their difficulties. Christians in Syria also utilise churches and community support for spiritual healing and management of stress. It is common for Christian families to consult a priest to counsel a distressed family member.

Supernatural explanatory models

Some Syrians may seek causes for misfortune and illness in ‘supernatural’ forces. This type of explanation is rooted in popular traditions found in many Arab societies and preceded Islam.^[154, 168-173] People from diverse

socioeconomic, ethnic and religious backgrounds in Syria may refer to the existence of ‘evil spirits’ (*jinn*, جِن), ‘magic’ (*sihr*, سحر), or the ‘evil eye’ (*ayn al-asūd*, عين الحسود) to explain symptoms of ‘madness’. *Jinn* are described in the Quran and form an important part of the worldview of people in Syria. Indeed, believing in *jinn* may be seen an expression of faith.^[154] Some mental illnesses are attributed to *jinn*, particularly among rural communities. A lack of understanding may mean that clients who complain of being possessed, attacked, or slapped by *jinn* risk being discriminated against by some mental health practitioners. A culturally competent practitioner should explore the notion of *jinn* as an explanatory mode, and an idiom of distress.^[149]

Situations where the person uses supernatural explanations (possession, evil spirit, magic, evil eye) without having a psychiatric condition, must be distinguished from cases in which such explanations coexist with psychotic symptoms, such as thought control, thought insertion or delusion.^[174] Knowledge of local idioms, explanatory models and modes of expression can assist in making these distinctions, but evidence of other symptoms of psychosis and related functional impairment may be essential for diagnosis. As mentioned above, people often use multiple explanatory models in flexible and pragmatic ways in order to make sense of their condition and predicament.

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURE-SPECIFIC HEALING PRACTICES

While many Syrians with mental problems seek help from health professionals, expecting medical or psychosocial treatment, some may also resort to religious or supernatural healing practices and may approach them concurrently, or in succession. Common coping mechanisms identified among conflict-affected Syrians are described in the section “Coping with Psychosocial Distress” above. This section provides essential background information on religious and spiritual healing practices in Syria.

Religious healing for physical and mental illness is often sought through the mediation of saints, by visiting holy places associated with them (such as shrines where a saint is buried) and other holy sites. Some groups, particularly

Alawites and Sufis, as well as Christians, may use shrines or sacred religious icons (associated with saints) to ask for help in the event of illness. Among Shia Muslim families, visiting holy places such as the *Sayyida Zeinab* mosque in Damascus was used in the past as an important healing ritual. However, access to these sites is no longer possible. The religious *hajj* (‘pilgrimage’) may still provide an alternative for some, but lack of financial resources or inability to travel makes this impossible for most.

Common types of religious based, traditional and spiritual treatments in Syria, and other countries in the region, include *rukyah* (رُكْيَه) and *hijab* (حجاب). *Rukyah* involves reading Quranic verses or prayers, followed by *al nafth* (النفث, ‘blowing a puff of air’) on the wound or ill body part.^[175, 176] A religious leader usually performs this kind of treatment, but a family member can also perform *rukyah*. The *hijab* are amulets containing Quranic verses and written prayers, often produced by a *katib* (كاتب), a male healer, and worn on the body to ward off evil spirits.^[171] In both types of treatment, a *sheikh* (شيخ, religious or spiritual leader) will choose the verses or prayers he sees as appropriate for the type of ailment concerned. Traditional healers are also generally called *sheikh*.

Despite the fact that Islam prohibits the use of magic, the existence of magic is widely acknowledged and its potential positive and negative impacts on health can be read in the, for example, *Surat al Baqara* in the Quran. Some see magic as an alternative approach to dealing with afflictions, and it often coexists with other healing practices, including biomedicine. Explanations referring to magic may attribute an illness to the use of evil or malevolent spirits (*jinn*) by others who wish to cause harm.^[177]

Less common traditional and spiritual healers in Syria include: *al-fataha* (الفتاحه, female fortune tellers); the *dervish* or *darwish* (درويش, male or female healers who treat mental illness using a variety of religious and spiritual rituals); and the *moalj bel-koran* (معالج بالقرآن, male Quranic healers who use Islamic scripture to ward off evil spirits).^[178] Special procedures are applied for the treatment of possession by *jinn*. Many people refer to the success of the treatment as being demonstrated by seeing some physical

sign, for example, bleeding from the little toe when the spirit leaves the body. This so-called ‘spirit release’ usually leads to a sudden and spontaneous recovery. Other persons with special powers and connections to *jinn* include the *mkhawwi* (مخاوي, ‘brothering the *jinn*’) who are not necessarily consulted for treatment, but to gain knowledge from spirits as mediums (e.g. their body can be used to access and give voice to other spirits). Christians may also experience spirit possession but will usually view it as ‘demonic possession’ and approach a priest for advice and treatment.

When distress is perceived as an act of God, or caused by a supernatural agency, people may be less likely to interpret it as needing biomedical or psychological interventions.^[179] Such illness may be normalised and viewed as a challenge to endure. Assessment of the level of distress may be difficult when the person makes frequent use of proverbs, invokes religion and expresses thankfulness to God. The use of professional care services may be also hampered by the idea that ultimately God is the only healer and that the assiduous practice of one’s religious values is sufficient to cure illness, furthermore, that any ‘shortcut’ to health could actually be detrimental.^[179] Within this context, exploring how people use religious practices for coping is important. Collaboration with traditional healers may be useful to overcome barriers to biomedical and psychological interventions.^[180]

Religion and meaning making

Although, prior to the war, Syria was seen as one of the most secular societies in the Middle East, for many Syrians religious beliefs and practices continue to be an important part of their daily life. Moreover, the role of religion in people’s lives is changing as a result of the conflict, with large parts of the country now under control of armed groups with extremist ideologies. There is thus an important distinction between the politicisation of religion as part of the conflict dynamics and the everyday religious practices and beliefs of displaced Syrians. Clearly, not all people who self-identify as belonging to a religious group are equally committed, devout, or follow specific religious practices, and the broader social and political context may affect individuals views and practices, as well as how they are expressed. The massive violence and injustices of the

current conflict may deeply affect the role of religion within the personal life of people; leading some people to turn more strongly to their religious beliefs as a source of hope and making meaning, while others are left doubting or re-evaluating their religious beliefs.^[181, 182] The politicisation of religion in the current conflict may also influence how people perceive religion and religious practices. Of course, in addition to providing meaning for suffering, religion in the Middle East also functions as a major force in the social organisation of people: belonging to a particular religious group may have important consequences for political security and social support.^[183]

Mental health practitioners working with refugees from Syria report that some clients struggle with existential question such as: ‘*How can God accept this happening to my family?*’, or ‘*Why does God allow others to kill small children and elderly people?*’ It is important, therefore, to assess what religious identity and practices mean for an individual. Most people will fall somewhere on a spectrum that ranges from identifying religion as the centre of their identity and explanations for suffering, to complete secularity and rejection of religion. While religious or spiritual healing beliefs and practices may foster coping and resilience, before encouraging the use of any religiously oriented sources of support it is essential to understand the person’s attitude towards religion and spirituality and the implications of identification and practice within their current context.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR DESIGNING CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE SERVICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

This section of the document is particularly relevant for MHPSS practitioners involved in providing direct mental health services to Syrian clients. It provides a brief overview of the international standards for mental health and psychosocial support and also provides contextually specific information on important issues to take into account when developing MHPSS services for Syrians, such as: language, help-seeking behaviour and stigma surrounding psychological distress and mental illness. This chapter also provides some thoughts on ensuring access to care for specific groups and introduces concepts such as cultural safety and cultural competence.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK TO STRENGTHEN MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Since the publication, in 2007, of the *IASC Guidelines for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings*^[1] and its endorsement by major organisations involved in humanitarian operations, a clear consensus has emerged on how MHPSS services need to be developed.^[184-187] Globally, MHPSS programming has shifted emphasis from vulnerability-based frameworks to resilience and recovery-based approaches, recognising refugees and IDPs as active agents in their lives in the face of adversity.^[187, 188] An important consequence of the use of a broader and more inclusive MHPSS concept is that this cannot be the exclusive domain of some specialists but is, on the contrary, relevant for everyone involved in providing support to refugees and other conflict affected persons. UNHCR in its *Operational Guidance for Mental Health And Psychosocial Support Programming in Refugee Operations* uses the terms *MHPSS approach* and *MHPSS interventions*.^[2]

- Applying an integrated *MHPSS approach* involves providing humanitarian assistance in ways that support the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of refugees; something that is relevant for all humanitarian actors when implementing their programmes.

- Implementing *MHPSS interventions* means focusing on activities in which the primary goal is to improve the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of refugees. These are usually implemented by the health, community-based protection and education sectors.^[2]

Mental health practitioners' involvement may be focused on initial support and crisis resolution in the short term, but this should not be at the expense of addressing risks for longer-term consequences due to the profound losses and ongoing daily stressors that many displaced persons and refugees have experienced. Some of the most important factors in producing psychological morbidity in refugees may be alleviated by planned, integrated rehabilitation programmes and attention to social support and family unity.^[114]

There is also consensus that MHPSS interventions should consist of a multi-layered system of services and supports. This has important implications, for both those who work within health services (including clinical practitioners with advanced training in mental health) and those focusing on community-based psychosocial activities (who often have non-clinical backgrounds and are based in social or community work). In order to effectively support the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of people affected by the Syria crisis it is essential that MHPSS activities are formulated in a broad and inclusive way and that the various services and supports are functionally linked within a coherent system with established mechanisms for reference.^[1, 2] Key documents to be consulted when developing MHPSS programming are listed in Annex A. While it is beyond the scope of this report to present a detailed outline of how this should be done, Box 1 presents a brief overview of some guiding principles for this multi-level systemic approach.

BOX 2: MULTI-LAYERED MHPSS SERVICES*Layer 1: Social consideration in basic services and security*

Ensure that the provision of basic needs and essential services (food, shelter, water, sanitation, basic health care, control of communicable diseases) and security is done in ways that respect the dignity of all people and is inclusive of those with special vulnerabilities, but which also avoids exclusively targeting a single group in order to minimise tension among the beneficiaries, and prevents: discrimination, stigma and potential further distress.

Layer 2: Strengthening community and family supports

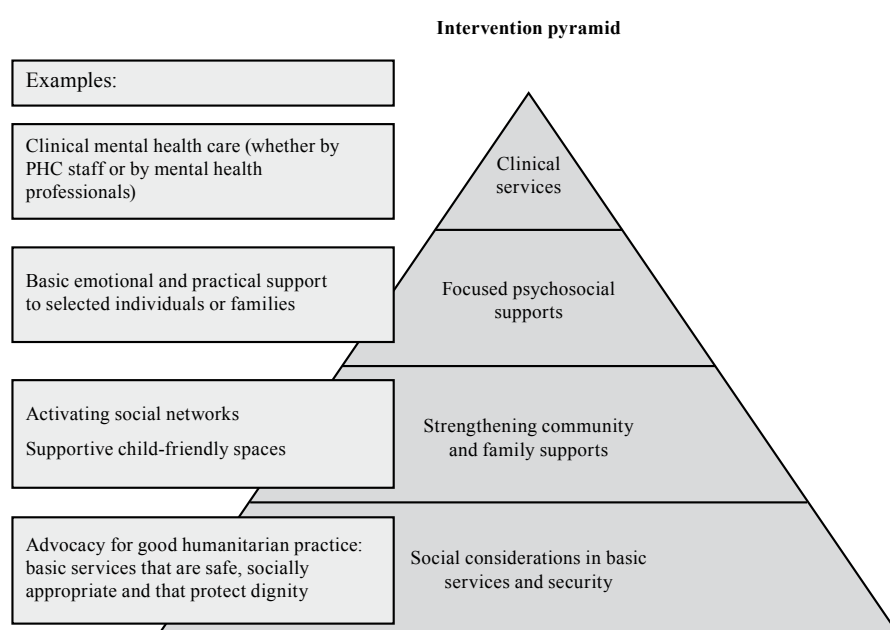
Promote activities that foster social cohesion among refugee populations, including supporting the re-establishment, or development, of refugee community-based structures that are representative of the population in terms of age, gender and diversity. This includes the promotion of community mechanisms and family supports, which protect and support members through participatory approaches.

Layer 3: Focused psychosocial support

Provide emotional and practical support through individual, family or group interventions to those who are having difficulty coping by using only their personal strengths and their existing support network. Usually non-specialised workers in health, education or community services deliver such interventions, after training, and with ongoing supervision.

Layer 4: Clinical services

Deliver clinical mental health services to those with severe symptoms or an intolerable level of suffering, which has rendered them unable to carry out basic daily functions. This group is usually made up of those with pre-existing mental health disorders and emergency-induced problems, including: psychosis, drug abuse, severe depression, disabling anxiety symptoms, severe posttraumatic stress symptoms, and those who are at risk to harm themselves or others. Mental health professionals usually lead these interventions.

FIGURE 1: THE IASC PYRAMID (ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION)

SERVICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE SYRIA CONFLICT

MHPSS services within Syria

Before the conflict, Syrian society had reasonably well-developed medical facilities, although the quality and quantity of mental health facilities were low.^[189, 190] MHPSS services in Syria have been disrupted and destroyed by the conflict, and suffer from a critical shortage of qualified staff.^[191] Although mental health services in Syria have been largely institution based,^[190, 192] several demonstration projects, focused on Iraqi refugees in Syria a few years ago, proved successful in reaching people with mental health problems and providing access to care through community-based psychosocial activities, community outreach, and mental health care integrated into primary health care.^[193-196] In addition, as part of the humanitarian response to the Iraqi refugee crisis and the Syrian conflict, humanitarian agencies have supported psychosocial services in some areas, and to a lesser extent, mental health services.^[197-199]

MHPSS services for refugees from Syria

National MHPSS services in neighbouring countries of asylum suffer from significant strain on capacity due to the increased demand and pre-existing limitations in the scale and quality of these services, which in turn, creates further barriers to refugees trying to access these services.^[200] As part of the response to the refugee situation, many international and national organisations have provided services for mental health and psychosocial support.^[69, 200-205] Many organisations are now, therefore, involved in delivering MHPSS interventions. A mapping exercise in Jordan mapped the activities of 47 different organisations involved in MPHSS, and a similar exercise in Lebanon counted the MHPSS activities of 36 organisations in Lebanon.^[200, 203] In many countries, significant investments have been made to build national capacity of MHPSS, for instance in Jordan, many child friendly spaces are implemented by international NGOs in partnership with local NGOs or CBOs, and in Lebanon and Jordan government and UN agencies cooperate to integrate mental health into general health care systems.^[69, 201, 206]

CLIENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF MHPSS SERVICES

Many Syrian displaced and refugee families live in very difficult circumstances. Within such contexts, mental health and psychosocial practitioners may be expected to help clients address issues beyond the scope of their own service. MHPSS programmes should therefore address the full range of needs and priorities of their clients by identifying their non-psychological or social needs and referring them to relevant services in their area.

People who perceive the origins of psychological distress as somatic usually expect their treatment to follow medical lines. As a result, many Syrians may be reluctant to speak in detail about their memories and experiences, because they do not see the relevance of such information to their current diagnoses. People with mental disorders, who have taken the step to visit a health facility, often expect to be prescribed medication. This may put physicians under considerable social pressure to prescribe, even when it is not medically required. Clients who attribute their ailments to bodily or social causes may also expect interventions that assist them in regaining internal and social balance, as well as control over themselves and their lives. If they feel they are 'on the verge of madness', or if they don't understand the reactions of others around them, they may hope for reassurance as to the normalcy of their own reactions or the reactions of others. For some patients suffering from severe mental disorders the desire for treatment (which may include hospitalisation), may not come from themselves, but rather from the family or others in the community.

Some people may hope for a space where they can share their experiences with others, to make sense of and find ways to deal with their past experiences and current situation and restore some moral order. This does not usually require clinical mental health services, but rather community based psychosocial support interventions that can facilitate re-establishing social support networks, engaging in meaningful daily activities, sharing problems and trying to identify solutions and positive coping mechanisms.

In precarious living conditions where daily events may be unpredictable, many people expect brief, directive and

effective interventions. This may partially explain non-adherence or dropout with longer term approaches. Some clients may not ask for explanations for, or justification of, the choice of a given intervention, especially when trust is established and the practitioner is perceived as a legitimate expert.

CHALLENGES FOR CONTEXTUALLY RELEVANT MHPSS SERVICES

Even when MHPSS services are available, displaced Syrians and refugees from Syria may still be unable to access mental health care or psychosocial services. One important reason may be lack of financial resources to pay direct or indirect costs, such as transport or medication.^[207-209] There are also other factors that may influence access to MHPSS services, as discussed below.

Language

Most Syrian refugees fled to Lebanon and Jordan where Arabic dialects are spoken that are comparable to Syrian Arabic. In Iraq, a different Arabic dialect is used than in Syria. Therefore, while Syrians understand Iraqi Arabic, the accents and local expressions may differ significantly. Kurds in Syria have been compelled to learn Arabic, but may prefer to use Kurdish dialects to express some aspects of experience related to mental health. The Kirmanji dialect of the Syrian Kurds is considerably different from the Sorani dialect spoken by many Iraqi Kurds. Refugees from Syria hosted in non-Arabic countries, such as Turkey, may face important language barriers. However, Syrians from the northern part of the country, close to the Turkish border, are usually bilingual (speaking Arabic and Turkish), which can help facilitate access to care.^[210]

A general challenge in communication for MHPSS practitioners is to avoid using scientific language and jargon that can be alienating or intimidating for clients. When interacting with clients, use clear and plain language and check whether the client and family have understood. Language problems may also arise when clinicians, who are not familiar with local Arabic terms, supervise and train Arabic speaking MHPSS staff.

When language barriers are present, collaboration with Arabic speaking colleagues or the use of a well-trained, professional interpreter who is familiar with mental health terminology may be essential for accurate assessment and treatment delivery. The use of informal or *ad hoc* interpreters from the community (or family) may be inevitable due to practical constraints, but this poses ethical and practical challenges in terms of safety, confidentiality and quality of communication because of their personal involvement in the client's social network, traumatic experiences, and/or a lack of understanding of key terms and the process of clinical inquiry and intervention.^[211] Therefore, MHPSS practitioners need to ensure that interpreters are sufficiently competent to assist, and should be aware of the associated stress for interpreters and attend to their wellbeing by debriefing after the interview, and follow-up when indicated.^[212, 213]

Gender and help-seeking behaviour

Many segments of Syrian society have sharply defined gender norms that may influence all aspects of mental health and psychosocial support, including the sources of stress, expressions of distress (see section "Stigma surrounding psychological distress and mental illness"), coping mechanisms and help-seeking behaviour. There are significant gender differences in how and when males and females access services, particularly for adolescent boys and girls, and men and women. In many Muslim societies, women have less interaction in public settings, which may limit their ability to access mental health and psychosocial services.^[214, 215] However, within the current context of conflict and displacement, women, often along with their children, may be more likely than before to seek mental health care and psychosocial support. This is particularly true if services are presented with (more) neutral terms such as 'counselling', are integrated into an overall women's programme, and are provided in safe spaces for women and children.^[52] For men, other approaches may be needed, such as providing information through routine registration or other basic service points at health centres or in religious institutions. Both men and women may be contacted and successfully engaged through basic needs provision.^[144]

Issues of pride and ‘honour’ related to gender may complicate disclosure of events that could be a source of stigma or shame (e.g. sexual abuse – see sections above). Both men and women may avoid disclosing intimate and stigmatising experiences to a male practitioner because of shame or fear of being judged. It is thus important that clients can choose either female or male mental practitioners, especially to address sensitive issues such as sexual violence.

Issues of power and neutrality

In the context of the current conflict, MHPSS practitioners may be perceived as partisan, either because of their religious denomination, ethnic affiliation, or supposed political orientation. People may feel disappointed by the international community for not helping them, which may also play out in their interaction with humanitarian staff. In addition, different social, economic and cultural backgrounds may influence the interaction between MHPSS practitioners and refugees. Moreover, experiences of the conflict and social tensions between refugees and host communities may influence the interaction between practitioner and refugee. MHPSS interventions with refugees and displaced people also raise issues of power dynamics that must be carefully considered in order to avoid creating situations where people are made to feel subordinate and dependent on the resources and expertise of the practitioner. This kind of power imbalance conveys the unfortunate message that people do not possess the means to help or heal themselves. A person-centred approach to psychosocial support and clinical dialogue, seeking genuine partnership and collaboration, can contribute to empowerment and mental health promotion.

One aim of many MHPSS interventions is to increase individuals’ confidence and self-efficacy. Many clients may experience the expert position of the helper as disempowering and disqualifying of their own agency. Displaced and refugee Syrians have been robbed of power and control over most aspects of their lives, and they are likely to gain a sense of empowerment only if they are actively involved in decision-making of the intervention plan. MHPSS practitioners must avoid being overly directive or judgemental, and listen closely to the wishes and views of the person who seeks help and

help to empower them to make their own decisions. In addition, MHPSS practitioners must be aware that their own experiences, values and beliefs may influence their interactions with their clients, and so ensure that they treat all refugees with respect and dignity.

Stigma around psychological distress and mental illness

In Syria and neighbouring countries, overt and intense expression of emotions is fairly acceptable, although men are often brought up with the idea that crying and expressing emotions are for women and girls who are more likely to discuss emotional and relational issues with friends and family. Men are socialised to suppress the overt expression of emotions associated with weakness, with the exception, perhaps, of crying for the loss of one’s child.^[55, 216] In general, however, emotional suffering is perceived as an inherent aspect of life. Instead, it is the explicit labelling of distress as ‘psychological’ or ‘psychiatric’ that constitutes a source of shame, embarrassment and fear of scandal, because of the risk of being considered ‘crazy’. ‘Madness’ casts shame on patients and their families, and affects the use of services. This makes the decision to seek professional help and adhere to treatment a complex process.^[179] Practitioners who avoid using psychological jargon and psychiatric labelling may generate less stigma, and be more easily understood. Integrating mental health care and psychosocial support into non-stigmatising care settings, such as a general medical clinic, child and family centre or community centres may facilitate better access to and utilisation of MHPSS services.^[180]

In the past, many Syrians had a sceptical view of psychology, psychiatry and of resorting to mental health services in general. This apprehension may reflect the negative perception of mental illness, as well as the fear of stigma and scandal, and in some cases, issues related to the quality and type of the services offered (for instance, lack of community based psychosocial or mental health services). Professionals working with Syrians reported that some refugees from Syria, particularly those with experiences of torture, have become wary of any professional. Many individuals are also unable to clearly distinguish various mental health practitioners, such as psychiatrists, physicians, psychologists, psychotherapists, or psychosocial counsellors. For example, Syrians may

ask for a *tabib al asaab* (طبيب الاعصاب) (neurologist) when they mean *tabib nafsi* (طبيب نفسي) (psychiatrist).

However, many refugees from Syria are increasingly willing to seek help from mental health and psychosocial support services.^[58] In needs assessments, Syrian refugees often rank services for mental health and psychosocial support as very important. For example, among Syrian refugees to Dohuk Governorate in Iraq, the majority cited mental health services as the most-needed service in their setting.^[71]

ENSURING CULTURAL SAFETY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN MHPSS PROGRAMMES

Trust and collaboration can be maximised by ensuring that service users feel that their explanatory models of illness are recognised by practitioners and integrated into the assessment and planning of care. Achieving this requires a culturally safe environment, respectful of diversity and based on mutual respect, in which the perspectives of clients and their families can be carefully explored.

The importance of the setting

The context of service delivery is often an important factor in the acceptability of MHPSS services. Psychosocial programmes are often set up in non-medical settings, such as community centres, women's programmes, child friendly spaces, schools and other places. Psychosocial interventions can contribute to broadening social support networks. Particularly for women and girls, facing physical and social isolation, safe spaces allow participants to build social capital and to discuss intimate issues related to life changes, and emotions, including more sensitive concerns like domestic abuse.^[144]

In addition, there is increasing recognition of the need to engage men in psychosocial programmes in culturally and gender appropriate ways, with a particular focus on providing meaningful activities for men in settings and timings that are appropriate for them, such as evening activities in community centres, mosques, sport activities and other social spaces.

Psychiatric treatment can be carried out in specialised settings, such as mental health outpatient departments, but

there may still be a fear of stigma. For example, a trial of psychological treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder in Turkey was done in a room in the building of a kindergarten and many clients pretended to other refugees that they were just bringing their children to the kindergarten.^[194] Many Syrians may be more comfortable visiting general health care facilities to seek treatment for psychological difficulties, because of the lesser stigma associated with seeing a physician, but also due to their recognition of the deep interconnectedness of physical and psychological suffering. This underscores the need for capacity building, training and support of primary health care providers so that mental health problems and psychosocial distress can be managed within general health care settings. Presenting physical symptoms may provide an opportunity for assessing clients' psychosocial wellbeing and potential mental health problems, particularly as physical ailments, such as headaches, nausea, and insomnia may be caused or exacerbated by psychological and social stressors and concerns.

It is important for MHPSS programmes to engage with the many qualified and educated Syrians refugees who are already working hard to improve community mental health and psychosocial wellbeing through grass roots networks. They can also provide crucial links to community and act as *culture brokers*, or mediators, within clinical and social service settings by explaining background assumptions, in order to improve mutual understanding between helper and client.

Mental health services for SGBV survivors

Because of shame, fear of social stigmatisation and reprisals, as well as concern about a lack of confidentiality, women and girls (as well as boys and men) are often reluctant to report instances of sexual violence or harassment, or to seek treatment.^[118, 217-219] Even if survivors of sexual violence were to seek help, access to safe and confidential medical, legal or psychological support is very limited inside Syria in terms of outreach and scope, and access to services is often difficult.^[98] In countries of asylum, services for survivors of SGBV may be more readily available, although access and quality varies. In health settings, such experiences of sexual violence may be expressed by survivors through somatic

or physical complaints.^[220] Services for SGBV survivors may be more acceptable if they are provided within a non-stigmatising environment, such as general health centres or women's centres, without initially addressing the issue of abuse explicitly. Providing safe, non-stigmatising and supportive services with trained specialised staff to receive and respond to disclosures of SGBV in a confidential and appropriate manner, increases the likelihood that survivors will feel comfortable to disclose and access services. Survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence have an elevated risk of developing mental disorders and therefore, offering mental health services as part of the multi-sectoral services provided to survivors of these kinds of violence, should be a priority.^[110]

Ensuring access for victims of torture

Syrians who have experienced torture often have specific mental health and psychosocial needs. Many of them have a range of psychological, social and somatic symptoms. Shame and guilt, related to the often humiliating and degrading experiences of torture, prevent some people from seeking help at general or mental health services. Presenting complaints are often somatic, such as: headache, body pains, numbness, tingling sensations, stomach-ache, or breathing problems. Often, these are a mix of problems due to organic lesions related to the torture and 'somatisation', that is, bodily expressions of emotional distress. The split between 'somatic health care' and 'mental health care' is particularly unfortunate for torture survivors as labelling problems as 'somatisation' (with the assumption that the 'real' problem is psychological) is usually not helpful. At the same time, physical diagnoses without effective treatment (for example, 'damaged spine' or 'torture-related neuropathy') may trigger a process of somatic fixation and maladaptive coping that can hinder working toward improved functionality and lead to worsening of symptoms. This can occur, for example, when a diagnostic label leaves people reluctant to make certain movements for fear it will cause further damage. Some specialised centres for treatment of victims of torture in the region, therefore, avoid diagnostic labelling and instead work with each individual client to deal with symptoms and improve physical, psychological and social functioning.

Torture survivors also commonly face a range of social issues, including difficulties in maintaining relations with friends and family, and feeling not understood or welcomed by community members. Survivors, as well as family or friends, may have strong feelings about the torture, but have difficulties discussing these issues. This may leave survivors isolated in terms of their experience, while family or friends also struggle with undisclosed feelings, such as guilt for not having been able to protect the survivor from torture. The experience of sexual violence during torture (or even the assumption that a torture survivor experienced sexual violence) can lead to social stigma and further isolation of the survivor. Providing mental health services with specialised staff and training in appropriate services for survivors of torture should therefore be a priority, particularly in areas with high concentrations of Syrian refugees.

Ensuring access for LGBTI refugees

In the Middle East, mental health practitioners are regularly approached by families, and sometimes by gay men themselves, who request that they "cure" the "disease" of homosexuality, with some mental health practitioners claiming to offer such services.^[128] LGBTI refugees have reported low levels of trust in mainstream mental health and psychosocial services due to such discriminatory attitudes and lack of confidentiality. Ensuring that mental health and psychosocial services are respectful and sensitive to the issues facing LGBTI displaced Syrians, and that confidential counselling and support groups services are available, is highly important given the very specific stressors and emotional and social issues facing LGBTI Syrians.

Culturally relevant assessments

For clinical mental health professionals, such as psychiatrists and clinical psychologists, it is critical to realise that their clients' understanding and manifestation of mental illness and psychosocial (un)wellbeing is rooted in social, cultural and religious contexts. Therefore, clinical assessments will be more accurate and appropriate when they integrate questions on the local modes of expressing distress and understanding symptoms.^[221, 222] The *Cultural Formulation Interview* in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-5) of the American Psychiatric Association

provides one simple approach to assist mental health practitioners in this aspect of assessment.^[223, 224] Moreover, clinical assessment should not only look for symptoms, but also assess whether the person has social dysfunction, as well as assess strengths and coping abilities.

7. CONCLUSION

Refugees from Syria and internally displaced people in Syria constitute a highly diverse population in terms of religious, ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds. The ongoing hardships and violence associated with the conflict have had pervasive effects on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Syrian adults and children. Experiences related to the conflict are compounded by the daily stressors of displacement, including: poverty, lack of resources and services to meet basic needs, risks of violence and exploitation, discrimination and social isolation. Many refugees and IDPs have endured conflict related violence, and women and girls have been particularly exposed to SGBV (such as domestic violence, sexual violence, early marriage, harassment and isolation, exploitation and survival sex) both in Syria and in countries of asylum. Central issues for many Syrians are loss and grief, whether for deceased family members or for emotional, relational or material losses.

For most Syrians, the first source of support is the circle of family and friends. However, displacement, violence and the dynamics of the conflict can disrupt social support structures and alter social networks and gender roles, which may contribute to undermining the ability to cope and increase levels of family violence and psychological distress. In the current protracted crisis, with no end in sight, increasing levels of poverty, lack of options for livelihood, increasing limitations on refugees' right to seek international protection and access services in countries in the region, there is a pervasive sense of hopelessness setting in for many Syrians. This may lead to negative coping strategies in dealing with stress, and addressing the daily struggle to provide for themselves and their families. Furthermore, dependency on external aid and inability to provide for themselves often negatively affects people's dignity and sense of agency.

Levels of psychological stress are high among women, girls, boys and men. People with pre-existing mental disorders

are becoming even more vulnerable, and significant numbers of Syrians are experiencing increasing levels of emotional disorders, such as depression, prolonged grief disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Cultural and religious value systems play an important role in the perception and understanding of psychological and social problems, and the methods of treatment. For practitioners, national and international, involved in mental health and psychosocial support programmes, it is important to understand and explore clients' *cultural idioms of distress* (common modes of expressing distress within a culture or community) and *explanatory models* (the ways that people explain and make sense of their symptoms or illness), which influence their expectations and coping strategies. Cultural concepts of the person also influence how people experience and express suffering, how they explain illness and misfortune, and how they seek help. To assist Syrians, MHPSS practitioners need to develop knowledge of culture and context. Understanding local illness models and idioms of distress, as well as sources of support and coping, and how these are changing as a result of conflict and displacement will allow better communication. This knowledge can be used to design interventions that mobilise individual and collective strengths, and resilience. In addition, the specific ways that gender, age, disability, sexual orientation and experiences of violence can impact on the psychosocial and mental health difficulties and coping strategies of Syrian refugees needs to be understood, and integrated, into health promotion programmes and practice.

It is essential for all humanitarian actors to use an MHPSS approach and be cognisant of the effects of their actions and attitudes on the wellbeing of refugees and displaced persons. MHPSS professionals should be careful not to over-diagnose clinical mental disorders among displaced Syrians, especially among those facing insecurity who have many ongoing daily stressors. In general, MHPSS

practitioners should avoid psychiatric labelling because this can be especially alienating and stigmatising for survivors of violence and injustice. For clinical mental health practitioners, building a solid therapeutic alliance with their clients will allow both practitioner and client to navigate among diverse explanatory models and sources of help that may include the formal and informal medical system, as well as religious, community, family and individual resources. Clinical interventions need to go hand-in-hand with interventions to mitigate difficult living conditions, and strengthen community based protection mechanisms, in order to help individuals regain normalcy in their daily lives. Interventions aimed at improving living conditions and livelihoods may significantly contribute to improving the mental health of refugees and IDPs, perhaps more than any psychological and psychiatric intervention.

There is broad interagency consensus that mental health and psychosocial support services need to go beyond clinical services to include interventions to foster community and family support and strengthen positive coping mechanisms. MHPSS interventions, therefore, should include activities that foster social cohesion among displaced populations, and provide emotional and practical support. It is essential that all MHPSS interventions are based on mutual respect and dialogue, and that the perspectives of refugees are taken seriously. Finally, in times of extreme violence, people often turn to collective cultural systems of knowledge, values and coping strategies to make meaning in the face of adversity. In this context, providing culturally safe environments for respectful dialogue and collaborative work is essential to assist IDPs and refugees from Syria to construct meaning from suffering and finding adaptive strategies to cope with their situation.

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Squamish responding to Syrian refugee crisis

Saturday meeting planned to come up with ways to help

[Jennifer Thuncher](#) / Squamish Chief

September 30, 2015 10:08 AM



Photo: Shutterstock photo

Like many Squamish residents, Geraldine Guilfoyle and Pam Gliatis are moved by the TV images of the refugees fleeing Syria, and they want to help.

“Children were having to fight each other for milk,” said Gliatis, describing what she had seen recently on the evening news. “It wasn’t just the picture of the [dead] child on the beach for me... it could be any of us, who had to flee for our lives.”

About 12 million Syrians – more than half the country’s population – have fled their homes due to the violence and conflict that began in 2011, and half of those fleeing are children, according to World Vision. More than four million Syrians have fled to neighbouring countries, the agency reported.

As of mid-September, about 4,000 children were travelling to Europe alone, but there could be as many as 8,000 unaccompanied children, according to World Vision.

Guilfoyle and Gliatis have decided to organize a public meeting to discuss possible local responses to the crisis, which is the largest movement of refugees since the Second World War.

“Communities across Canada are responding in large and small ways, and this is an opportunity for us to work together to do so as well,” reads a news release written by the two Squamish women.

Guilfoyle was involved with bringing a refugee family into Canada about 10 years ago, when she lived in Winnipeg. The Manitoba Interfaith Refugee Council, of which Guilfoyle was a member, brought in a woman and her son who had fled civil war in Sierra Leone.

"The government will sponsor a whole pile of refugees, and then you've got families who sponsor their family members, but then there's these private sponsorships that are usually out there for [refugees] who haven't gotten picked up," she said. "They still desperately need to get in."

Guilfoyle said it took a year to bring that family into Canada.

Overall, it was a great experience, Guilfoyle said, and she is still in touch with the woman, who visited her in Squamish. "She is absolutely an amazingly strong woman," Guilfoyle said. "She had been in a pretty harsh situation."

It is part of Guilfoyle's Bahá'í faith to help others, she said.

"There is a quote that says, 'The Earth is but one country and mankind its citizens,' and that explains it," she said. "We just need to see each other as one human family."

The Squamish Welcome Centre and Settlement Service are convening the community meeting with the support of the District of Squamish and other volunteers.

"We have a lot of resources in this community that a lot of other small communities don't have," said Guilfoyle.

"There is no real agenda here except there's a lot of people who are concerned, and so rather than everybody thinking and trying to work in isolation in terms of what they might do, maybe we can pool ideas and share information and experiences."

The meeting will be held on Saturday (Oct. 3) from 10 a.m. to noon at the Squamish Adventure Centre.

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Mayor Crombie Hosts Community Summit to Support Syrian Refugees

For Immediate Release

September 17th, 2015

Mayor Crombie Hosts Community Summit to Support Syrian Refugees

City Hall – The Syrian migrant crisis is a human tragedy that requires the world's attention and intervention, Mayor Crombie said today.

"I have had a number of community, faith, and business leaders reach out to me to discuss opportunities to do more to help Syrian refugees from a municipal perspective, Mayor Crombie added. "This gathering was made possible because of our generous community."

Your presence is a sign of the compassion and thoughtfulness that Mississaugans embody, Crombie said, to a room of 75 individuals, which included Councillors Jim Tovey, Chris Fonseca, John Kovac, Carolyn Parish, and Ron Starr; along with local leaders and reputable organizations including: the Canadian Red Cross and LifelineSyria.

The Community Summit identified 7 immediate next steps and outcomes to help provide support for refugee families and relief agencies:

1. Individuals and organizations in attendance committed to sponsoring 32 families;
2. LifeLine Syria will create a *Mississauga Fund* with the dual goals of attracting \$5 million in donations from across Mississauga;
3. Mayor and Council will actively encourage other groups, associations, and businesses to come together to donate to the Mississauga Fund;
4. Meeting participants, from the Muslim community, issued an "Eid Challenge" calling on each mosque to raise \$50,000 during Eid celebrations this month;
5. Community mosques will also coordinate Muslim youth groups to volunteer their time and infectious energy to coordinate this support; and
6. City of Mississauga will provide further information on its website to further engage residents on ways they can help;
7. Like Toronto and Oakville, Mississauga will host a community information session to provide detailed information about sponsoring a refugee and how to become further involved in relief efforts.

Ward 5 Councillor Carolyn Parrish said "Today, Mayor Crombie assembled 75 of the most successful individuals, religious groups and community associations in our City to address the Syrian refugee crisis. All were intensely committed to a group effort to make Mississauga a top contributor to sponsorships and relief funds for the hundreds of thousands of Syrians who are desperate for our help. The mayor inspired instant commitments to a multi-faceted plan to raise \$5 million dollars as Mississauga's contribution to this heart wrenching crisis. I'm proud of her initiative and of the Mississaugans who have stepped up to the plate!"

Mohamad Fakhri, President and CEO of Paramount Fine Foods, added "It is inspiring to see the Mayor, members of council, and community leaders, come together to pledge help to the world's most vulnerable. It speaks volumes about our values and who we are."

Dr. Hamid Slimi, Imam Resident Scholar and Founder of Sayeda Khadija Centre, added "Mayor Bonnie Crombie's summit on Syria crisis not only showcased the best of Mississauga, it also united the leadership of various communities under the spirit of humanity and generosity."

Mario J. Calla, Executive Director of COSTI Immigrant Services, said "The Syrian refugee crisis is the most significant humanitarian catastrophe of our time. I commend Mayor Crombie for bringing together community leaders to organize humanitarian relief in the Middle East and to assist with providing sponsorships for refugees."

Mayor Crombie went on to say that "We have all been moved and saddened by this tragedy. Canada has historically been a lifeline to refugees seeking safety, and shelter, and we must be so again."

Mayor Crombie added that last week her office issued a statement with links to organizations where the public can go to donate, including: Red Cross; United Nations Refugee Agency; Lifeline Syria-Toronto. Mississauga's Corporate Communications Department also shared these links to the City of Mississauga's website, so residents can more easily donate.

Mayor Crombie concluded "Together, we will explore opportunities to better help those refugees in need of support."



Mayor's Public Forum on the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Efforts

In response to the current Syrian refugee crisis, Mayor Jim Watson will host a public forum to bring together residents and community groups who wish to help, and provide them with the knowledge and contacts that will make their involvement possible.

Date: Thursday, October 1, 2015

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Note: The University of Ottawa Refugee Sponsorship Support Program will host a legal clinic at City Hall from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. following the forum.

Location: Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue West, Jean Pigott Place

The forum is open to all City of Ottawa residents. No registration is necessary, but space is limited.

Schedule of Events

Information Fair: 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Community organizations involved with the sponsorship and settlement of refugees will be available to provide information and answer questions about the services they provide.

Panel Presentations and Question & Answer Period: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Experts in refugee resettlement and representatives from frontline organizations serving refugees will give short presentations about how residents and community groups can assist in resettlement efforts. This will be followed by a Q&A session.

Legal Clinic – "Sponsoring Refugees": 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Hosted by the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers and the University of Ottawa Refugee Sponsorship Support Program, the session will provide information about the legal process for sponsoring a refugee.

For more information about the forum, please contact 3-1-1.



Refugee Transportation Loan Program



Canada charging refugees cost of getting to the country

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees refers refugees who are in urgent need for protection to Canada. Canada sponsors these [Government Assisted Refugees](#) (GAR). The refugees are chosen and brought to Canada based on Canadian targets/criteria. Refugees are selected in their respective countries before entering Canada.

The GAR Transportation Loan covers:

- The cost of pre-entry medical exams
- Transportation documents
- Transportation costs

Canada is one of the few countries to **charge refugees** the cost of getting to the country and **the only country** to charge interest. Bringing refugees to Canada is a humanitarian gesture. Reaching out and helping them begin their new lives should include paying for their transportation.

The burden of paying back these loans has a huge impact on thousands of GARs. It makes it extremely difficult for refugees to enjoy their improved lives and reach their full potential. Most of the refugees that are selected to come into Canada are coming from refugee camps in war torn areas. Many struggle to find a well-paying job in Canada in order to try to pay back the loans.

The loan payment often takes priority above food, clothing, rent, or furniture. There are many stories of youth in refugee families missing on educational opportunities because they feel obliged to go to work to help their parents make loan payments.

Refugees chosen to come to Canada are required to sign the loan documents before they arrive which states they have to pay back the loan [a year after] they've settled in Canada. However, it's uncertain whether they fully comprehend what a challenge it will be once they arrive in Canada especially when their main priority, at that time, is to **keep their family safe** and **getting away from danger**.

Many refugees fear deportation if they are unable to pay back their loan. It's a huge loan debt and an extremely stressful emotional burden for these refugees who are struggling to:

- Settle in a new country
- Learn a new language
- Find a job

Sign the Petition

Sign the [petition](#) in support of eliminating the Government Assisted Refugee Transportation Loan. Print out and sign the petition, then return the original copy to: Councillor Judy Villeneuve, City of Surrey, 13450 104 Avenue, Surrey, BC V3T 1V8.



City of Kitchener donates \$10,000 for Syrian refugee relief

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 15, 2015 12:20 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 15, 2015 12:28 PM ET

Kitchener city council has approved a motion to donate \$10,000 to the Mennonite Central Committee to help Syrian refugees who are fleeing their country's war.

The motion, which was passed unanimously on Monday night, was put forward by Ward 4 Coun. Yvonne Fernandes to donate \$5,000. Ward 9 Coun. Frank Etherington suggested upping that to \$10,000, because he did the math and says it will work out to be about four cents a person for every taxpayer.

The money will go to the MCC's S.O.S for Syria campaign to help children and families who have left Syria because of violence.

The City of Kitchener is also joining other municipal leaders in hosting an event Tuesday night to welcome refugees to Waterloo Region. The event starts at 5:00 p.m. at Kitchener City Hall.

Council votes in favour of creating Syrian refugee resettlement program



Chris Fox, CP24.com

Published Friday, October 2, 2015 12:40PM EDT

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City council has voted 42-1 in favour of spending \$600,000 on a new program aimed at helping Syrian refugees resettle in Toronto with Rob Ford casting the lone vote against the idea.

According to a staff report, the "Syrian Resettlement Program" will see the creation of an inter-division team that can help to "identify and mobilize the internal resources" that can be provided to refugees by the City of Toronto as well as an inter-agency task force that can help "coordinate and streamline" the resources that can be provided to refugees by non-profit organizations, such as the Red Cross of Canada and Lifeline Syria.

As part of the program, a website will also be created to provide more information about various supports that are available.

Meanwhile, city staff will study the possibility of creating an emergency fund that would serve as a security in the event that residents are not able to follow through on a promise to sponsor a Syrian refugee. The estimated cost of sponsoring a family's immigration to Canada is \$5,000.

"Experience shows that the greatest number of refugees settle in large urban areas, where there are supports available, as well as already established ethnic communities," a staff report on the program reads. "Although it will take another couple of months until it becomes clear how many Syrian refugees Canada will commit to resettle, it is clear that the City of Toronto needs to take urgent action to prepare for their arrival."

The staff report also asked council to approve the hiring of a permanent staff member to oversee the program; however that item was rejected in a separate vote.

Council then subsequently directed Mayor John Tory to write a letter to the federal government requesting additional funding for the refugee resettlement program in the areas of affordable housing, social assistance and child care.

In a message posted to Twitter following the votes, Ward 20 Coun. Joe Cressy said he was "exceptionally proud" of city council for helping to create "Canada's first municipal Syrian Resettlement Program."

Remember for instant breaking news follow @cp24 on Twitter.

Syria Refugee Crisis



BACKGROUND

In June 2013, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) issued its first appeal to the international community for assistance in resettling extremely vulnerable Syrian refugees who needed urgent protection. As of 6 September 2015, there were 4,088,099 registered Syrian refugees in countries neighboring Syria including 1,938,999 in Turkey, 1,113,941 in Lebanon, 629,266 in Jordan, 249,463 in Iraq, 132,375 in Egypt and 24,055 in several countries in North Africa. The number of people displaced inside Syria is estimated at 7.6 million.

Canada responded to the call and in July 2013, Canada agreed to permanently resettle 1,300 Syrian refugees. Canada met this initial commitment in March 2015. Canada has also expanded its commitment to help Syrian refugees by resettling an additional 10,000 Syrians. On September 19, 2015, the government of Canada announced changes to expedite assistance to Syrian refugees, which would result in the target being met by September 2016, 15 months earlier than previously planned. A total of 2,406 have been resettled in Canada as of September 8, 2015.

In response to the international developments and calls made by Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Mayor Brian Biggar moved a motion on September 15, 2015 at city council to create a Newcomer, Refugee and Immigration Advisory Panel to co-ordinate local efforts should some of the refugees decide to come to Greater Sudbury.



REPORT | POLICY REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 17, 2015

REPORT: 15-137

FROM: Corporate and Community Services

FILE: 7737

SUBJECT: PARKS AND RECREATION FEES AND CHARGES COUNCIL POLICY UPDATE

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Corporate and Community Services and General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council rescind Council Policy I-6 “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy” dated July 3, 2007, and replace it with Council Policy I-6 “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policies” dated November 17, 2017, attached to Administrative Report No. 137 as Appendix B.

REFERENCES

Appendix A: Council Policy I-6 “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy” dated April 16, 2013 to be rescinded

Appendix B: Council Policy I-6 “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy” dated November 17, 2015 to be adopted

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks Council adoption of an updated Council Policy that directs a variety of decisions related to Recreation Fees and Charges including pass calculation formulas, program policies, and facility rental calculation formulas for each category of user.

DISCUSSION

Council Policy I-6 has been amended to make some minor calculation adjustments for long term passes to increase affordability on these products as indicated in the associated administrative report regarding 2016-2019 MPSC admission and pass rates.

Furthermore, a couple of program specific policies have been recommended for Council to support with respect to drop in program registration and after school care/summer camp program registration. With respect to drop in program registration, a new program specific policy has been added to ensure that registration for all drop in programs would only be available just before each session for in-person registration only. The existing method of registration, where 50% of spots for each session is available for in-person or over the phone registration 24 hours prior to each session, is not optimum from a customer service perspective. Specifically, with respect to 9 am group fitness classes at MPSC, we have a high number of customers who are signing up in-person for almost all (and sometimes all) the pre-registered 9 am spots for each class on each day of the week since they are already in the facility for a class. This creates a situation where it forces customers who are already in a 9 am class on any given day to wait until those clients who are registered for that class sign up for the next day's class essentially making each class start late or

disturb the start of that class. It also negatively impacts staff's response time for call in customers. It should be noted that the 50% per-registration of daily spots 24 hours prior to the start of session was originally implemented for drop in hockey approximately 5 years ago as a means of trying to accommodate our regular users from out of town (i.e. Pemberton). The RMOW has been unsuccessful in being able to convince either the SLRD or Village of Pemberton to pay into a regional funding model for reception services provided by the RMOW for their residents, staff took this into consideration when considering elimination pre-register for spots in a drop-in session 24 hours prior to it starting. The new policy will now make all drop in programs consistent with respect only allowing in-person registration which is how it has been for drop in sports registration at our community centres for over 20 years.

Another program policy that has been added that will now require all parents who have registered their children for our licensed out-of-school care and summer camp programs must provide a minimum of one (1) calendar months' notice of any changes for their children's care (i.e. by May 31st for any changes in the month of July and by June 30th for any changes for the month of August). The current policy allows for one week notice for cancellation or changes to allow for a full refund accordingly. This policy is proving to be difficult to administer. Some customers have registered their children for many or all days for our out-of-school care program this fall and then cancel a day of care only one week out which either does not allow our staff time to call down the waitlist or, when they finally do, most of the time the parents have made alternate arrangements for care which does not allow the spot to be filled effectively or efficiently. The new program registration policy is consistent with what is required by other childcare providers such as the Whistler's Children's Centre.

As the two above program policies might be a significant change for some of our customers, staff plan to implement this as of January 2nd, 2016 to provide ample notice of the policy change. Staff plan to offer any customers who are unhappy with these changes the opportunity for a full pro-rated refund on any pass product they currently hold or a full refund on any 2016 program registration fees paid to date for our licensed out-of-school care program.

Besides the two recommended program policy additions to the Council Policy, the Council policy also required some other minor additions and edits for the following reasons:

- Some pass products have been adjusted to have reduced calculation formulas (i.e. 6 month and annual passes) can you provide a line or two explaining what this means.
- The free grade 5 /10 pass program (including access to squash) for all Whistler students is now included within the amended policy
- The ability to clear accounts that have remained inactive for 2 years is now included in the amended policy
- Various other minor edits to make the document more consistent and clear for staff

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	TOWARD Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
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Recreation and Leisure	Recreation and leisure are part of the Whistler lifestyle and all community members are able and encouraged to participate	Pass discounts, promotions, affordability measures and low use time pricing further encourage recreation facility access
Recreation and Leisure	The cost of amenities is covered within the resort community's financial means and is equitably shared among stakeholders	User fees assist in recovering significant annual operating cost for recreation services and facilities
Resident Affordability	Diverse and affordable opportunities for recreation, leisure, arts and culture exist	This policy supports recreation pass products or promotions that assist with the resident affordability strategy
Visitor Experience	Community members' passion for Whistler inspires visitors, and interaction among the two groups creates memorable experiences	MPSC and the skating rink in the village offer opportunities for locals and guest to interact
Health and Social	Community members and visitors maintain and improve their physical, mental, spiritual and social health through prevention and treatment services	Parks and recreation amenities help develop an active lifestyle

W2020 Strategy	AWAY FROM Descriptions of success that resolution moves away from	Mitigation Strategies and Comments
Partnership	Partners participate in policy making and other decisions at various levels of government where relevant	Continue dialogue with VOP and SLRD to develop a long term regional funding of recreation services solution

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The existing Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Council Policy should be rescinded when this new policy is adopted.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the proposed changes presented in this policy, staff is anticipating that there will little or no change to revenues with the proposed amended Council Policy.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee supports the amendment of formulas for long term passes that ultimately makes these products more affordable to residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications with the proposed amended Council Policy.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The updated fees and charges policy reflects the values and principles of the Corporate Plan. The policy recognizes the Recreation Assistance Program which provides low income residents Financial assistance the ability to access a wide variety of recreation services, products or

programs. The Policy includes a statement about supporting a variety of affordability measures such as, but not limited to, the Grade 5/10 free pass program, newly lowered calculation formulas for 6 month and annual passes and the addition of an annual Spirit pass product. The added program policies are aimed towards providing more equal access to program areas experiencing high demand.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

Staff anticipated significant positive impact on staff with the proposed changes including the front desk staff at MPSC, Fitness Instructors and the Recreation Programmers at Myrtle Philip Community Centre.

SUMMARY

In conjunction with the Meadow Park Sports Centre admission rates bylaw that Council is considering providing first three reading to this evening, it is appropriate to update the corresponding Council Policy. Furthermore, in an effort to improve customer service and provide more equal access to our programs, a couple of additional program policies have been added in the hopes of receiving Council's support.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Weetman
Manager of Recreation
for
Norm McPhail
General Manager of Corporate and Community Services



POLICY NUMBER: I-6

DATE OF RESOLUTION: APRIL 16, 2013

PARKS AND RECREATION FEES AND CHARGES

1.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to the delivery of recreation services in the areas of registered programs, general admissions, passes, cross country skiing, snowshoeing and facility rental.

2.0 PURPOSE

Fees and charges are established, structured and administered to ensure that...

- 2.1 The parks and recreation departments are living within their financial means,
- 2.2 Fees and charges are equitable and consistent,
- 2.3 The cost of programs and services is not a major hindrance to participation,
- 2.4 Access is not restricted for individuals who are financially challenged

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principles form a framework for effective fees and charges policies. They are based on statements from the Corporate Plan, Whistler 2020: Comprehensive Sustainability Plan, the RMOW Five Year Financial Plan and the Official Community Plan.

- 3.1 Ensure the economic viability of recreational programs
- 3.2 Enrich community life by being responsive to our citizens needs
- 3.3 Enhance the resort experience by providing high quality facilities and services
- 3.4 Continue to be more creative and innovative to achieve our goals
- 3.5 Be designed to encourage maximum participation

4.0 GENERAL FEE POLICIES

- 4.1 Fees and charges will be applied to all parks and recreation programs and facilities.

4.2 Promotional Initiatives

To encourage innovative delivery of services, and maximize revenue potential, marketing and promotion initiatives will be undertaken from time to time that may reduce rates. These initiatives will be approved by the Management Team (see section 4.5 for definition) and tracked/evaluated on a regular basis.

4.3 Recreation Assistance Program

As recreation services are considered essential to a healthy community, and the municipality recognizes residents' ability to pay varies, the department will continue to maintain the municipal recreation assistance program and update the program as required to align with the current economic reality.

4.4 Resident Affordability

To encourage participation in recreational activities, the RMOW will continue its significant investment in affordable recreation initiatives.

4.5 Waived and Reduced Fees

Fees and charges may be reduced or waived, by the General Manager of Corporate and Community Services, General Manager of Resort Experience, Manager of Recreation, Manager of Recreation Facilities, Manager of Parks Operations or the Manager of Village Animation and Events (hereby referred to as the Management Team) if significant social or substantial economic benefit to the resort community is deemed to be derived by any member of the Management Team.

4.6 User Classifications

The various age groups have been established to provide guidance in the establishment of rate structures.

Adult: 19 years of age or older

Youth: 13 through 18 years

Children: 4 through 12 years

Infant: under 4 years is free

Family: an adult, spouse and all their dependents under 19 years of age (including foster children) living within the same household

4.8 Competitive Analysis

A market analysis of; other resort communities, public and private services in the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky corridor, and similar facilities in The Resort Municipality of Whistlers will be undertaken approximately every 5 years to ensure fees and charges remain competitive.

- 4.9 Fees and charges will be increased on an annual basis on January 1st of each year for facility rental charges, April 1st for Meadow Park Sports Centre admissions/passes and at the beginning of each winter season for Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing. Program Fees will be increased as required on an ongoing basis as required to meet the requirements identified in section 6.0 of this policy.

5.0 ADMISSION POLICIES

5.1 General Admissions

The adult rate for one-time use of a specific facility will be the base rate. Rates may be adjusted to permit the rounding of rates for efficient administration.

Admission Rates Formula

User	Admission Rate
Adult/Senior	100% of base rate = BR
Youth	60% of base rate
Children	50% of base rate
Family	The rate equal to two adults
All Day	1.5 x base rate
Ultra XC	1.3 x base rate
Ultra Snowshoe	1.5 x base rate
Night XC	.5 x base rate

5.2 Playtime and Active Member passes for Meadow Park Sports Centre

10 X*	20 X*	30 X*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month**	Annual
8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20 x BR	9 x BR	22 x BR	39.5 x BR	70 x BR

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

**Spirit pass reduction of ten (10) percent from the six month pass rate for adults only.

5.3 Squash

10 X*	20 X*	30 X*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20 x BR	8.75 x BR	22 x BR	39 x BR	68 x BR

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

5.4 Drop-in Hockey Passes

10 X*

8.5 x AR N0 20 X, 30 X or monthly passes available

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

5.5 Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing Passes

Book of 5	Book of 10	Season	Early Bird	Ultra	Night
4.5 x AR	8 x AR	14 x AR*	Seas. Pass X 80%	1.3 x AR	.5 x AR

*Spirit Pass calculated at 70% Regular Seasons Pass Price for adults only.

5.6 Low use time of day and/or week Discounts for MPSC

A discount of up to 25% off may be provided for admission or pass products whereby the facility has experienced historical low use (i.e. early morning, late evening or middle of the day on weekdays).

5.7 Additional Combination Discounts

A 5% to 10% discount will be applied to any two or more people of the same family that purchase a longer term pass product as specified on the MPSC fee schedule.

5.8 Use by School District 48 and Ecole La Passerelle (Whistler)

Use of Pool, Arena and Fitness Centre during school hours by School District #48 and Ecole La Passerelle (Whistler) is at no charge except where additional staffing and equipment is necessary. Extra staffing fees and other services fees (example: skate rental fees) will be charged to School District #48 and Ecole La Passerelle (Whistler) when appropriate.

6.0 PROGRAM POLICIES

6.1 Direct Program Cost Recovery

The overall goal is to recover all direct program costs from fees and charges.

- Direct costs include materials, transportation, activities, staffing, facilities (non-municipal) or room use (municipal), plus all applicable provincial and federal taxes.
- The formula to determine the fee for each program will be based on minimum registration.
- The required percentage of cost recovery will be set for each program based on community priorities and set by the Management Team.
- Local** and non-local rates may be established for programs (see 6.3)

- Non-local rates shall always be established to achieve, at least, 100% cost recovery.

6.2 Resident Priority

Whistler residents may be given up to one week priority to register for programs.

6.3 Program surcharge for non-residents

Program fees will reflect a difference between a resident and non-resident, as deemed appropriate by the Management Team, up to a maximum difference of 33%.

6.4 Resident Program Pricing Eligibility

To be eligible for resident program pricing, proof of residency of (i.e. utility bill, property tax bill or approved identification that shows civic address and/or verifies name on account accordingly) may be required on an annual basis as determined by the Management Team.

7.0 RENTAL POLICIES

7.1 Facility Rental Rates Formula

Indoor Room Rental Rates based on room size, facility attributes and equipment included.

Adult Base Rental Rate =	RR ¹
Child Base Rental Rate =	RR ²
Local** - Adult	RR ¹
Local** - Child/Youth	RR ² (66% of RR ¹)
Local** - Commercial or admission charged-Adult	133% RR ¹
Local Commercial, admission charged or Out-of Town - Child/Youth	RR ¹
Out-of-Town - Commercial or admission charged- Adult	166% RR ¹
Registered Agencies: Gov/Edu/Charities/Non-profit- Adult	85% RR ¹
Registered Agencies: Gov/Edu/Charities/Non-profit- Child/Youth	85% RR ²
Corporate Valuing:	+200% RR ¹
-exception ice & pool MPSC: Local Youth 50% of RR1 & Youth Commercial/Out of Town	75% of RR1

** Local: individuals paying into Whistler residency tax base (renter, owner or second homeowner within Whistler), Whistler-based community groups, Whistler-based commercial businesses (permanent business location in Whistler)

Exceptions:

Local Youth Groups - Community or Recreation will not be charged for park and playfield use.

7.2 Reductions

At the discretion of the Management Team, up to a 15% reduction in the rental rate for the facilities will be considered for frequent facility users who book one month in advance. Also, reductions may be given to facility users or third party booking agents who are willing to rent a facility in predetermined blocks of time or for longer term bookings.

7.3 Facility Rental Priority

All Parks and Recreation facilities are allocated according to the following priority unless otherwise indicated by any member of the Management Team on a case by case basis:

1. Resort Municipality of Whistler (Parks and Recreation) Programs
2. Local community, recreation and school groups
3. Local commercial groups
4. Out-of-town groups

7.4 Additional Charges

The Parks and Recreation Department shall establish additional rental charges for other services, such as, but not limited to:

Setup and cleanup
Operation of a bar to sell liquor
Operation of a concession
Additional staffing (pre and post event or during a booking)
Extra equipment
Percentage of vending or ticketed event sales
Fencing
Administration

Certified Correct:

Shannon Story
Corporate Officer



POLICY NUMBER: I-6

DATE OF RESOLUTION: NOVEMBER 17,
2015

PARKS AND RECREATION FEES AND CHARGES

1.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to the delivery of recreation services in the areas of registered programs, general admissions, passes, cross country skiing, snowshoeing and facility rental.

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Fees and charges are established, structured and administered to ensure that...

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Guiding Principles form a framework for effective fees and charges policies. They are based on statements from the Corporate Plan, Whistler 2020: Comprehensive Sustainability Plan, the RMOW Five Year Financial Plan and the Official Community Plan.

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To encourage innovative delivery of services, and maximize revenue potential, marketing and promotion initiatives will be undertaken from time to time that may reduce rates. These initiatives will be approved by the Management Team (see section 4.5 for definition) and tracked/evaluated on a regular basis.

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As recreation services are considered essential to a healthy community, and the municipality recognizes residents' ability to pay varies, the department will continue to maintain the municipal recreation assistance program and update the program as required to align with the current economic reality.

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4.6 User Classifications

The various age groups have been established to provide guidance in the establishment of rate structures.

Adult: 19 years of age or older
Youth: 13 through 18 years
Children: 4 through 12 years (7 through 12 years for Cross Country)
Infant: under 4 years is free (under 7 years free for Cross Country)
Family: an adult, spouse and all their dependents under 19 years of age (including foster children) living within the same household

4.8 Competitive Analysis

A market analysis of; other resort communities, public and private services in the Lower Mainland and Sea to Sky corridor, and similar facilities to the Resort Municipality of Whistler will be undertaken approximately every 5 years to ensure fees and charges remain competitive.

4.9 Fees and charges will be increased on an annual basis on January 1st of each year for facility rental charges, Meadow Park Sports Centre admissions/passes and at the beginning of each winter season for Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing. Program Fees will be increased as required on an ongoing basis as required to meet the requirements identified in section 6.0 of this policy.

4.10 Credits on account in the Parks and Recreation Departments software system may be eliminated if not used after 2 years.

5.0 ADMISSION POLICIES

5.1 General Admissions

The adult rate for one-time use of a specific facility will be used as the Base Rate (BR) as established through bylaw adoption and item 4.8 above. Rates may be adjusted to permit the rounding of rates for efficient administration.

Admission Rates Formula

User	Admission Rate
Adult/Senior	Base Rate
Youth	60% of base rate
Children	50% of base rate
Family	The rate equal to two adults
All Day	1.5 x base rate
Night XC	.5 x base rate

5.2 Playtime and Active Member passes for Meadow Park Sports Centre (BR is the drop in rate for the Meadow Park Sports Centre)

10 X*	20 X*	30 X*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month**	Annual**
8.5 x BR	15 x BR	20 x BR	9 x BR	22 x BR	37 x BR	63 x BR

*One year expiry from date of purchase for all 10X, 20X and 30X pass products.

**Spirit pass reduction of five (5) percent from the six month and annual pass rate for adults only. Proof of annual Chamber of Commerce participation in related program required to qualify for Spirit pass purchase.

5.3 Squash (SBR based on Squash Adult drop in rate)

10 X*	20 X*	30 X*	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
8.5 x SBR	15 x SBR	20 x SBR	8.75 x SBR	22 x SBR	37 x SBR	65 x SBR

*One year expiry from date of purchase for all 10X, 20X and 30X pass products.

5.4 Adult Drop-in Hockey and Sports: Youth 16 to 18 years may also participate on a secondary priority basis provided a parental consent form has been signed and is on file.

A) Hockey: DHR based on Adult drop in Hockey rate

10 X*

8.5 x DHR N0 20 X, 30 X or monthly passes available

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

B) Drop-in (Open) Sports: DSR Drop in sports rate is same as MPSC Base Rate

10 X*

8.5 x DSR N0 20 X, 30 X or monthly passes available

*One year expiry from date of purchase.

5.5 Cross Country Skiing and Snowshoeing Passes (XCR based on Cross Country or Snow shoeing day ticket rate)

Book of 5	Book of 10	Season	Early Bird	Night
4.5 x XCR	8 x XCR	14 x XCR*	Seas. Pass X 80%	.5 x XCR

*Spirit Pass calculated at 70% Regular Seasons Pass Price for adults only. Proof of annual Chamber of Commerce participation in related program required to qualify for Spirit pass purchase.

5.6 Low use time of day and/or week Discounts for MPSC

A discount of up to 25% off may be provided for admission or pass products whereby the facility has experienced historical low use (i.e. early morning, late evening or middle of the day on weekdays). Discounted admission and pass products may be “blocked out” for statutory holidays or holiday periods (i.e. Christmas and Spring Break) and may have facility usage limitations placed on them such as, but not limited to, not allowing access to “value added” classes.

5.7 Additional Combination Discounts

A 5% to 10% discount will be applied to any two or more people of the same family that purchase a longer term pass product at the same time as specified on the MPSC fee schedule. Additional combinations discounts not available for Spirit pass products.

5.8 Use by School District 48 and Ecole La Passerelle (Whistler)

Use of Pool, Arena and Fitness Centre during school hours by School District #48 and Ecole La Passerelle (Whistler) is at no charge except where additional staffing and equipment is necessary. Extra staffing fees and other services fees (example: skate rental fees) will be charged to School District #48 and Ecole La Passerelle (Whistler) when appropriate.

5.9 Free Grade 5 and 10 annual passes

All Grade 5 and 10 Whistler (resident) students will be provided a free Squash annual pass providing unlimited free access to the pool, public skating, squash courts and to the Fitness Centre (for Grade 10's over 16 years of age or who have completed the Youth on Weights program). Passes are valid from October 1st to September 30th of each year.

6.0 PROGRAM POLICIES

6.1 Direct Program Cost Recovery

The overall goal is to recover all direct program costs from fees and charges.

- Direct costs include materials, transportation, activities, staffing, facilities (non-municipal) or room use (municipal), plus all applicable provincial and federal taxes.
- The formula to determine the fee for each program will be based on minimum registration.
- The required percentage of cost recovery will be set for each program based on community priorities and set by the Management Team.
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- Non-local rates shall always be established to achieve, at least, 100% cost recovery.

6.2 Resident Priority

Whistler residents may be given up to one week priority to register for programs.

6.3 Program surcharge for non-residents

Program fees will reflect a difference between a resident and non-resident, as deemed appropriate by the Management Team, up to a maximum difference of 33%.

6.4 Resident Program Pricing Eligibility

To be eligible for resident program pricing, proof of residency (i.e. utility bill, property tax bill or approved identification that shows civic address and/or verifies name on account accordingly) may be required on an annual basis as determined by the Management Team.

6.5 Drop in Programs registration

All Drop in program registration spots will be open 30 minutes prior to the start of each program session and is available for “in person” sign up (for that person) only. This includes, but is not limited to, Drop in (Open) Sports, Drop in Hockey and all “value added” fitness classes.

6.6 Out of School Care and Summer Camp Program Notice of Changes or Withdrawal

One calendar month’s notice, in writing, must be given to Myrtle Philip Administration office or Program Services Supervisor by the last day of the month prior to the request for changes to days of enrollment or withdrawal in the subsequent month. (i.e. Notification must be received by May 31st for any changes in the month of July)

7.0 RENTAL POLICIES

7.1 Facility Rental Rates Formula

Indoor Room Rental Rates based on room size, facility attributes and equipment included.

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-exception ice & pool MPSC: Local Youth 50% of RR1 & Youth Commercial/Out of Town	
75% of RR1	

** Local: individuals paying into Whistler residency tax base (renter, owner or second homeowner within Whistler), Whistler-based community groups, Whistler-based commercial businesses (permanent business location in Whistler)

Exceptions:

Local Youth Groups - Community or Recreation will not be charged for park and playfield use.

7.2 Reductions

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3. Local commercial groups
4. Out-of-town groups

7.4 Additional Charges

The Parks and Recreation Department shall establish additional rental charges for other services, such as, but not limited to:

Setup and cleanup
Operation of a bar to sell liquor
Operation of a concession
Additional staffing (pre and post event or during a booking)
Extra equipment
Percentage of vending or ticketed event sales
Fencing
Administration

Certified Correct:

Shannon Story
Corporate Officer

RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

ZONING AMENDMENT BYLAW NO. 2102, 2015

A BYLAW TO AMEND ZONING AND PARKING BYLAW NO. 303, 1983

WHEREAS Council has adopted a zoning and parking bylaw and wishes to amend the bylaw;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, in open meeting assembled, **ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as "Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015".
2. Italicized zone descriptions in parentheses in this bylaw have been included for reference purposes only and do not form part of the bylaw.
3. Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 1983 is amended in Section 11 by substituting the phrase "floor area" for "gross floor area" in the following sections:
 - a) 1.2.5 (*RS1 Zone*), in the first instance only;
 - b) 2.2.5 (*RS2 Zone*), in the first instance only;
 - c) 5.2.3 (*RS3 Zone*), in the first instance only;
 - d) 7.2.3 (*RTA1 Zone*), in both instances;
 - e) 8.2.4 (*RTA2 Zone*), in both instances;
 - f) 19.2.4 (*RTA8 Zone*);
 - g) 34.2.5 (*RSE-1 Zone*), in the first instance only;
 - h) 35.3.5 (*RSE-2 Zone*);
 - i) 36.2.2 (*RSE-3 Zone*);
 - j) 38.2.3 (*RSE-5 Zone*); and
 - k) 38.2.4(b) (*RSE-5 Zone*).

Given first and second readings this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Pursuant to Section 890 of the Local Government Act, a Public Hearing was held this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Given third reading this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Approved by the Minister of Transportation this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Adopted by the Council this ____ day of _____ 2015.

Nancy Wilhelm-Morden,

Mayor

Shannon Story,

Corporate Officer

I CERTIFY that this is a true copy of Zoning Amendment Bylaw

(Amendments to Parking Use in Residential Zones) No. 2102, 2015.

Shannon Story, Corporate Officer

**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER
ZONING AMENDMENT BYLAW (Temporary Use Permits) NO.
2096, 2015**

A BYLAW TO AMEND ZONING AND PARKING BYLAW NO. 303, 1983

WHEREAS Council may in a zoning bylaw pursuant to the Local Government Act, designate areas where temporary uses may be allowed and may specify general conditions regarding the issue of temporary use permits in those areas;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, in open meeting assembled, **ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as "Zoning Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits) No. 2096, 2015".

2. Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 1983 is amended as follows:

by adding the following under Subsection 12 Home Occupation Use in Section 5 General Regulations:

(e) A Home-based Artist Studio home occupation is permitted by temporary use permit only.

by adding the following text under Section 5 General Regulations:

Temporary Use Permits for Home-based Artist Studios

Definitions

28. For the purpose of subsections 28-43:

Artist: means a person who creates works of aesthetic or expressive value including paintings, sculpture, literary works or drawings.

Artisan: means a skilled craftsperson who produces distinctive, usually handcrafted, works in small quantities and which have an aesthetic or expressive value.

Customer: means a person who attends a Home-based Artist Studio to purchase, view or otherwise experience art or artisan crafts and includes a person who is attending a class, or exhibition on the property and does not include an employee of the Home-based Artist Studio.

General Manager: means the General Manager of Resort Experience or a person fulfilling the role of the General Manager of Resort Experience in their absence.

Handcrafted: means created with manual skill including the use of small power tools, printers and photo developing equipment but excluding the use of automated manufacturing systems or equipment, mass production processes and the use of heavy industrial equipment.

Home-based Artist Studio: means the use of a dwelling unit by an artist or artisan to produce, exhibit and sell artwork or artisan crafts and includes the provision arts or crafts instruction.

Designation of temporary use permit areas

29. All zones in which residential uses are permitted are designated as temporary use permit areas for Home-based Artist Studios.

Conditions of issuance

30. Subject to the terms of a temporary use permit under this part, a Home-based Artist Studio must comply with the provisions for home-occupations under Section 12.
31. Home-based Artist Studios are subject to a business licence requirement under Business Licence Bylaw 567, 1987.
32. Only Home-based Artist Studios in operation prior to November 17th 2015 shall be eligible for a temporary use permit under this part.

General Considerations

33. In considering an application for a temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio the General Manager must consider the proposal's impact on:
- 33.1. the coordinated advancement of cultural tourism development opportunities as identified in Whistler's Corporate Plan, Economic Partnership Initiative, Community Cultural Plan and Cultural Tourism Development Strategy;
 - 33.2. the quality and extent of Whistler's inventory of cultural assets and the related impact on the quality of visitors' cultural experiences;
 - 33.3. the Home-based Artist Studio's ability to contribute to Whistler's draw of visitors seeking cultural experiences;
 - 33.4. opportunities for Whistler's artists, artisans and related businesses to generate income from their work; and
 - 33.5. the cumulative impact and compatibility of Home-based Artist Studios on the surrounding neighbourhood, including the number and types of Home-based Artist Studios that have been established.
34. It is a condition of all temporary use permits for Home-based Artist Studios that the temporary use permit be valid for no more than two years.

Additional Application Information

35. Upon review of an application for a temporary use permit, the General Manager may require the applicant to provide:
- 35.1. A description of production methods proposed to be used by the Home-based Artist Studio;
 - 35.2. Hours of operation including hours where production activities will occur and hours when the Home-based Artist Studio will be open for customer visits;
 - 35.3. Information related to deliveries;
 - 35.4. Information related to customer visits;

- 35.5. Site and layout characteristics; and
- 35.6. other information related to the operation of the Home-based Artist Studio that, in the opinion of the General Manager, is necessary to evaluate potential nuisances that may be created by the operation of the Home-based Artist Studio.

Permit Conditions

- 36. A temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio may contain conditions related to noise and other nuisances including:
 - 36.1. Limits on the types and sizes of tools and equipment that may be used and limits on the duration and frequency of their use.
 - 36.2. Limits on the types and scale of production methods and limits on their duration and frequency.
 - 36.3. Structural alterations to prevent or minimize the transfer of noise, odors, dust, glare or other potential nuisances to nearby properties.
 - 36.4. Limits on the hours of operation of the Home-based Artist Studio and the number of customers who may visit the Home-based Artist Studio at any one time.
 - 36.5. Restrictions on the types and quantities of materials that may be stored on the premises and requirements for storing materials.
 - 36.6. Limits on the size of production space.
 - 36.7. Limits on the amount of space used to sell products produced in the Home-based Artist Studio.
- 37. A temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio may authorize the outdoor display of a single sculpture or artisan craft with a maximum volume of 1 cubic meter and a maximum height of 1.5 meters, during the period of time specified in the permit.
- 38. It is a condition of all temporary use permits for Home-based Artist Studios that the premises are open for customer visits only between 8am and 8pm.
- 39. Notwithstanding Section 38, a temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio may authorize customer visits between the hours of 8pm and midnight to accommodate special events, exhibitions, or similar activities for up to 12 evenings per year, as specified in the permit.
- 40. It is a condition of all temporary use permits for Home-based Artist Studios that motor vehicles of residents and employees of a Home-based Artist Studio must be parked on the lot on which the Home-based Artist Studio is located and not on the abutting street.
- 41. It is a condition of all temporary use permits for Home-based Artist Studios that not more than one person who does not normally occupy the dwelling unit in which it is located may be employed in the Home-based Artist Studio.
- 42. It is a condition of all temporary use permits for Home-based Artist Studios that no more than five customers may attend a studio at any one time to receive arts or crafts instruction.
- 43. Any product sold from a Home-based Artist Studio must be produced on the premises where the Home-based Artist Studio is located.

44. A temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio may include a condition that the owner demolish or remove a sign or other structure associated with the temporary use, or restore land described in the permit to a condition specified in the permit, within a specified period of time prior to the expiry of the permit.

Health and safety

45. The General Manager must refuse to issue or renew a temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio if the premises do not substantially comply with RMOW bylaws or applicable health and safety regulations and for that purpose may require inspections, at the applicant's cost, by the RMOW Building or Fire Department.

Eligible works

46. In determining whether to issue or renew a temporary use permit for a Home-based Artist Studio, the General Manager may consider the recommendations of an advisory committee convened to advise the General Manager on the artistic or aesthetic merit of objects that are proposed to be produced in the Home-based Artist Studio, and the General Manager may refuse to issue or renew a permit in the case of objects having insufficient merit.
47. For the purposes of the preceding section, the Council establishes an advisory committee consisting of the following:
- 47.1. One member of Council to be appointed by Council resolution;
 - 47.2. One person appointed by the Whistler Arts Council; and
 - 47.3. One person appointed by the Whistler Chamber of Commerce.
 - 47.4. One person appointed by Tourism Whistler.
 - 47.5. One staff person from the RMOW Resort Experience Division, appointed by the General Manager of Resort Experience.
48. In making its recommendations the advisory committee must consider only whether objects proposed to be produced or being produced in a Home-based Artist Studio are artfully or skilfully made or crafted, whether they are original or unique or have original or unique aspects, and whether they express or exhibit qualities or incorporate materials that are particularly related to the cultural, historical, social or environmental character of the Resort Municipality or its surroundings.
49. The General Manager may prescribe procedures for the advisory committee, including procedures by which applicants for temporary use permits may familiarize members of the committee with the work they propose to produce in a Home-based Artist Studio. The advisory committee shall not hold public hearings or undertake any other form of public consultation, but shall provide its own recommendations to the General Manager as it sees fit.
50. Members of an advisory committee shall not be entitled to remuneration in respect of the performance of their duties as members of the advisory committee.

Given first and second readings this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Pursuant to Section 890 of the *Local Government Act*, a Public Hearing was held this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Given third reading this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Approved by the Minister of Transportation this _____ day of _____, 2015.
Adopted by the Council this ____ day of _____ 2015.

Nancy Wilhelm-Morden,
Mayor

Shannon Story,
Corporate Officer

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this is a true
copy of Zoning Amendment Bylaw
(Temporary Use Permits) No. 2096,
2015.

**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER
LAND USE PROCEDURES AMENDMENT BYLAW (Temporary Use Permits) NO.
2097, 2015**

A BYLAW TO LAND USE PROCEDURES AND FEES BYLAW NO. 2019, 2012

WHEREAS a local government that has adopted an official community plan bylaw or a zoning bylaw must, by bylaw, define procedures under which an owner of land may apply for an amendment to the plan or bylaw or for the issue of a permit under this Part;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, in open meeting assembled, **ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as "Land Use Procedures Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use Permits) No. 2097, 2015".
2. Land Use Procedures And Fees Bylaw No. 2019, 2012 is amended as follows:
 - a. By adding, in the first sentence of subsection a under section 10, the words "or a temporary use permit" after "development variance permit".
 - b. By deleting, under section 10, subsections b, c, d and e.
 - c. By adding, under section 10, to subsection f, between "s. 892(7)" and "of", the words "and s.921(4)".
 - d. By adding to the beginning of section 11 "Except for an application for a temporary use permit,".
 - e. By adding as subsection j, under section 19, "issue or renew temporary use permits".
 - f. By adding to the first line of section 28 between the words "of" and (925(2.1)" the words "s. 921(12) and".
 - g. By adding as subsection d. under section 28 "In the case of a temporary use permit, an amount of security that will forfeit to the Resort Municipality if the permit holder fails, prior to the expiry of the permit, to demolish or remove a sign or other structure related to the temporary use or to restore land to the condition specified in the permit."
 - h. By adding as section 28 "Notwithstanding 19(j) The General Manager may refer a temporary use permit application to Council for consideration of issuance." And by renumbering subsequent sections accordingly
 - i. By deleting from Schedule A, under the heading "APPLICATION FEES" from item 6 the word "(not delegated)".

- j. By deleting from Schedule A, under the heading "APPLICATION FEES" from item 7 the word "delegated" and replacing with "renewal".
- k. By adding to the beginning of the paragraph at the bottom of Schedule A, before the words "In addition to the above noted..." the words "Except for an application for a temporary use permit,".

Given first and second readings this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Pursuant to Section 890 of the *Local Government Act*, a Public Hearing was held this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Given third reading this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Approved by the Minister of Transportation this _____ day of _____, 2015.
Adopted by the Council this ____ day of _____ 2015.

Nancy Wilhelm-Morden,
Mayor

Shannon Story,
Corporate Officer

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this is a
true copy of Land Use Procedures
Amendment Bylaw (Temporary Use
Permits) No. 2097, 2015.

**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER
SIGN BYLAW AMENDMENT BYLAW (Home-Based Artist Studios) NO.
2098, 2015**

A BYLAW TO AMEND SIGN BYLAW NO. 558, 1987

WHEREAS Council has enacted a bylaw under Section 908 of the *Local Government Act* and Section 8(4) of the *Community Charter*, to regulate and impose requirements relating to the number, size, type, form, appearance and location of signs, and wishes to amend the bylaw;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipal Council of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, in open meeting assembled, **ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as "Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw (Home-based Artist Studios) No. 2098, 2015".
2. Sign Bylaw No. 558, 1987 is amended as follows:

by adding under Section 2 Definitions

“Home-based Artist Studio: means a Home-based Artist Studio as defined under Zoning and Parking Bylaw 303 for which a valid temporary use permit has been issued.”

by adding under section 6.2

“6.2.2 In addition to a fascia sign permitted under section 6.3.2, one permanent freestanding sign with a maximum area, including all supporting structures and surrounding framework, of 2m² and a maximum height of 2.4 metres is permitted on the premises of a Home-based Artist Studio.”

, and

by adding the following after section 6.11:

6.12 Sandwich Board Signs

6.12.1 On the premises of a Home-based Artist Studio, one sandwich board sign with a maximum height of 1.2m, and a maximum area of 1.0m² for each side of the sign, is permitted.

, and

By adding the following after section 10.2.4

“10.2.5 for permit to erect a sandwich board sign for a Home-based Artist Studio \$30”

,and by renumbering subsequent sections accordingly.

Given first and second readings this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Given third reading this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Adopted by the Council this ____ day of _____ 2015.

Nancy Wilhelm-Morden,

Mayor

Shannon Story,

Corporate Officer

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this is a true
copy of Sign Bylaw Amendment Bylaw
(Home-Based Artist Studios) No. 2098
BLANK, 2015.

**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY RENTAL CHARGES AMENDMENT BYLAW
NO. 2107, 2015**

**A BYLAW TO AMEND PARKS & RECREATION
FEES & CHARGES REGULATION BYLAW NO. 1807, 2007**

WHEREAS the Council of the Resort Municipality of Whistler owns and operates the Meadow Park Sports Centre

AND WHEREAS Council may, by bylaw pursuant to Section 194 of the *Community Charter*, may charge fees for admission to and use of the municipal property;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, in open meeting assembled, ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. This Bylaw may be cited as "Parks and Recreation Facility Rental Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2107, 2015".
2. Parks & Recreation Fees & Charges Regulation Bylaw No. 1807, 2007 is amended by:
 - (a) Replacing Appendix 3; Schedule 1; Admission Rates – Meadow Park Sports Centre 2013 - 2014 with Meadow Park Sports Centre Admission and Pass Rates 2016 and 2017 and Meadow Park Sports Centre Admission and Pass Rates 2018 and 2019 hereby attached to this Bylaw.

GIVEN FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD READING this __ day of _____, ____.

ADOPTED by the Council this __ day of _____, ____.

Nancy Wilhelm-Morden
Mayor

Shannon Story
Corporate Office

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this is a true copy
of "Parks and Recreation Facility Rental
Charges Amendment Bylaw No. 2107,
2015".

Shannon Story
Corporate Officer

MEADOW PARK SPORTS CENTRE ADMISSION AND PASS RATES 2016 AND 2017

Classification	ADMIT 1		PLAYTIME CARDS			ACTIVE MEMBER PASSES			
	Drop In	All Day	10 Time	20 Time	30 Time	Monthly	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
Adult/Senior	\$8.50	\$12.75	\$72.25	\$127.50	\$170.00	\$76.50	\$187.00	\$318.75	\$535.50
Youth	\$5.00	\$7.50	\$42.50	\$75.00	\$100.00	\$45.00	\$110.00	\$187.50	\$315.00
Child	\$4.25	\$6.50	\$36.13	\$63.75	\$85.00	\$38.25	\$93.50	\$159.38	\$267.75
Family	\$17.00	\$25.50	\$144.50	\$255.00	\$340.00	\$153.00	\$374.00	\$637.50	\$1,071.00
Squash	\$11.00		\$93.50	\$165.00	\$220.00	\$96.25	\$242.00	\$418.00	\$715.00
Youth Squash	\$6.75		\$57.38	\$101.25	\$135.00	\$59.06	\$148.50	\$256.50	\$438.75
Drop In Hockey	\$11.00		\$93.50						
Youth (16-18 yrs) Drop In Hockey	\$6.75		\$57.38						
Early Bird/Late Owl - Adult	\$6.50		\$55.25			\$58.50	\$143.00		
Early Bird/Late Owl - Youth	\$3.75		\$31.88			\$33.75	\$82.50		
Early Bird/Late Owl - Child	\$3.25		\$27.63						
Early Bird/Late Owl - Family	\$12.75		\$108.38						
Midweek/Midday - Adult	\$6.50		\$55.25			\$58.50	\$143.00		
Midweek/Midday - Youth	\$3.75		\$31.88			\$33.75	\$82.50		
Midweek/Midday - Child	\$3.25		\$27.63			\$29.25	\$71.50		
Midweek/Midday - Family	\$12.75		\$108.38			\$114.75	\$280.50		
Open Sport Adult	\$8.50		\$72.25						
Open Sport Youth (16-18 yrs)	\$5.00		\$42.50						
Tokens-All Ages/Family	\$0.50								
Spirit Pass								\$299.00	\$499.00
Combination Discounts				5%	5%		5%	10%	10%

MEADOW PARK SPORTS CENTRE ADMISSION AND PASS RATES 2018 AND 2019

Classification	ADMIT 1		PLAYTIME CARDS			ACTIVE MEMBER PASSES			
	Drop In	All Day	10 Time	20 Time	30 Time	Monthly	3 Month	6 Month	Annual
Adult/Senior	\$8.75	\$13.13	\$74.38	\$131.25	\$175.00	\$78.75	\$192.50	\$328.13	\$551.25
Youth	\$5.25	\$7.88	\$44.63	\$78.75	\$105.00	\$47.25	\$115.50	\$196.88	\$330.75
Child	\$4.50	\$6.50	\$38.25	\$67.50	\$90.00	\$40.50	\$99.00	\$168.75	\$283.50
Family	\$17.50	\$26.25	\$148.75	\$262.50	\$350.00	\$157.50	\$385.00	\$656.25	\$1,102.50
Squash	\$11.50		\$97.75	\$172.50	\$230.00	\$100.63	\$253.00	\$437.00	\$747.50
Youth Squash	\$7.00		\$59.50	\$105.00	\$140.00	\$61.25	\$154.00	\$266.00	\$455.00
Drop In Hockey	\$11.50		\$97.75						
Youth (16-18 yrs) Drop In Hockey	\$7.00		\$59.50						
Early Bird/Late Owl - Adult	\$6.50		\$55.25			\$58.50	\$143.00		
Early Bird/Late Owl - Youth	\$4.00		\$34.00			\$36.00	\$88.00		
Early Bird/Late Owl - Child	\$3.25		\$27.63						
Early Bird/Late Owl - Family	\$13.25		\$112.63						
Midweek/Midday - Adult	\$6.50		\$55.25			\$58.50	\$143.00		
Midweek/Midday - Youth	\$4.00		\$34.00			\$36.00	\$88.00		
Midweek/Midday**** - Child	\$3.25		\$27.63			\$29.25	\$71.50		
Midweek/Midday - Family	\$13.25		\$112.63			\$119.25	\$291.50		
Open Sport Adult	\$8.75		\$74.38						
Open Sport Youth (16-18 yrs)	\$5.25		\$44.63						
Tokens-All Ages/Family	\$0.50								
Spirit Pass								\$309.00	\$519.00
Combination Discounts				5%	5%		5%	10%	10%

From: Pedaw [mailto:pedaw@familyservices.bc.ca]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2015 9:36 PM
To: Mayor's Office
Subject: Updated Proclamation Request

Dear Mayor & Council:

I'm writing on behalf of the BC Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) campaign for your assistance to see if it is possible for Whistler to proclaim Eating Disorder Awareness Week (EDAW) and the Annual Launch of the BC Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) campaign. I have put the details of the proclamation at the bottom of this message.

Best,

Kimberly

Kimberly Strain
PEDAW Committee

203 - 1111 Lonsdale Avenue
North Vancouver, BC V7M 2H4
PHONE: 604-988-5281
Email: pedaw@familyservices.bc.ca

Eating Disorder Awareness Week (EDAW) and Annual Launch of the BC Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) Campaign

February 1-7, 2016

Proclamation:

WHEREAS Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate among all psychiatric illnesses and can develop in anyone, regardless of age, ethno-racial background, socioeconomic status, gender or ability.

WHEREAS Stigma, secrecy and stereotypes still surround eating disorders, causing many people who are suffering to refrain from seeking help.

WHEREAS Open supportive dialogue can help break the shame and silence that affect nearly 1 million Canadians living with diagnosable eating disorders and the millions of others who are struggling with food and weight preoccupation.

WHEREAS EDAW seeks to raise awareness of eating disorders, shed light on dangerous and pervasive myths, and promote prevention. It is also a time of year for Canadians to learn about available resources and appropriate services for themselves and/or loved ones.

WHEREAS The National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC) is Canada's only national organization dedicated to helping those with eating disorder, food and weight preoccupation and related issues. NEDIC provides information, education, resources and referrals to individuals with eating disorders, their families, friends and health care professionals.

WHEREAS The Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness (PEDAW) campaign is a BC Province wide effort to raise awareness around prevention and early intervention of eating disorders as well as media literacy, resiliency, building healthy body image and self-esteem.

WHEREAS PEDAW is led by Jessie's Legacy Eating Disorders Prevention Program at Family Services of the North Shore in collaboration with Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre, Looking Glass Foundation, St. Paul's Specialized Adult Eating Disorder Program, BC Children's Hospital Eating Disorders Program, Healthy Minds, Healthy Campuses and Project True.

WHEREAS PEDAW is launched annually in February with activities and events taking place throughout the year; visit www.jessieslegacy.com or contact pedaw@familyservices.bc.ca.

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PROVINCIAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS (PEDAW) CAMPAIGN:

Love Our Bodies, Love Ourselves!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/loveourbodiesloveourselves

Twitter: [@loveourbodies](https://twitter.com/loveourbodies)

Blog: loveourbodiesloveourselves.blogspot.ca

Website: www.jessieslegacy.com

Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/loveourbodies

From: Cathy Peters [<mailto:ca.peters@telus.net>]

Sent: Sunday, November 01, 2015 7:30 AM

To: Mayor's Office

Subject: Email #6; Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in BC

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

The United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol has established the most widely accepted international definition of human trafficking and a **4 pillar approach** to combat human trafficking. (Their link: <http://www.unodc.org/undoc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html>)

The 4-P's are:

1. **Prevention** of human trafficking
2. **Protection** of victims
3. **Prosecution** of offenders
4. **Partnerships** with others

We would encourage your Council to evaluate specifically what you are doing in each of these areas.

Prevention involves raising awareness; which is what we are trying to do throughout BC with our information emails. Reaching out to the schools in your communities will be a key. Our youth are very vulnerable. **We believe education is our greatest weapon.**

Protection of victims and **Prosecution** of offenders is the intent of Bill C-36 (a form of the Nordic Model of Law) "The Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act". We believe police forces and judges need to be mandated to enforce this Federal Law. Until they do, trafficking will continue unabated in BC, because Human Trafficking is very lucrative and traffickers will have no incentive to curb their activities and criminality.

Partnerships are crucial to stopping Human Trafficking. We are grateful for the passing of the Resolution B53 (and B80) at the recent UBCM Convention, but would now encourage cities and municipalities **to implement** these Resolutions, and to **prepare a Resolution for the National FCM.**

The 2 reports with complete and specific Action Plans (referred to in the UBCM Resolution B53) are below:

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/octip/docs/action-plan.pdf>

<http://canadianwomen.org/sites/canadianwomen.org/files/NO%20MORE.%20Task%20Force%20Report.pdf>

Also, in your individual Government Associations around the Province of BC, we encourage you, as Councils to put together a delegation to speak to the issue of Human Trafficking at your Annual Conventions. Share your stories, your issues, your solutions. **Collaboration is key.**

OCTIP (Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons) in Vancouver is an excellent resource, as is the BC/Yukon RCMP Coordinator for Human Trafficking, Jassy Bindra (jassy.bindra@rcmp-grc.gc.ca). Both will put on presentations and workshops.

Please watch an exited prostitution survivor speak; Trish Baptie for NGO "Exploited Voices Now Educating" at her SFU TED talk:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzC7BU6m7gg>

An excellent resource for men is from Dr. Jackson Katz in the USA. Please watch his timely TED talk on "Men, Violence and Silence":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTvSfeCRxe8>

And lastly, I (Cathy) presented to the Nanaimo City Council last Monday evening.

Here is the link, FYI.

<http://www.nanaimo.ca/meetings/VideoPlayer/Index/COW151026V?time=190139>

We hope to hear from you.

We do not want to be complicit, complacent or silent.

We are asking for your help.

Most sincerely, Cathy and Allan Peters

#302-150 W. 15th St., North Vancouver, BC V7M 0C4

1
Mayor & Council
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler B.C.
Von 1B4
Nov. 4-2015
9179 Emerald Dr.
Whistler B.C.
Von 1B9

Dear Mayor & Council

About a week and a half ago
I was standing at the bus
stop on Hwy 99 near the
Alpine Meadows stop light
waiting for the bus.

In my pocket I had about
7 dollars in change and \$125⁰⁰
in my wallet. I had just
finished breakfast at the Alpine
Cafe, it was about 9:30.



2

As I glanced down the highway there was a string of traffic and in that traffic was an RCMP Pick up truck and a neighbour a few vehicles back. The neighbour ~~flashed~~ flashed his lights and I ~~he~~ waved back.

At that very instant the RCMP TRUCK dropped out of the traffic lit up his lights and stepped on the gas and raced towards me. Thinking that he was

responding to a crime in progress I moved well off to the side.

He stopped suddenly in front of me and ran out of his truck towards me very aggressively. I stepped back and he said "What are you doing".

Waiting for the bus I replied and showed him my change and pointed to the stop sign.

"What are you here for and where do you live" he yelled.

I am going home I replied
I live in Emerald Estates
where I have lived for
35 years I replied.

"Do you have any ID"
he yelled - "or a driver's
license"

"For what" I asked "what
have I done" I asked

"How many Warrants do you
have out?" he asked

"None" I replied

"Give me your" license
he yelled.

I told him that I had an

interim license because mine had expired and the plastic one had not come in the mail yet.

"I hope you tied your B.C. med card into your license he yelled"

"That's optional" I said. He took my license but never told me what I had done wrong.

He returned with my license and gave it back to me.

"I guess I am clean and free to go then" I said.

6

"Too clean" he said

"I want to see dirt"

He then said he thought I was locked and loaded and got in his truck & drove away.

I phoned Staff Sgt. Steve Le Clair and left a complaint and saw him a couple of days later at Nestels on his day off.

He informed me that the officer thought I was hitch hiking.

I told Staff Surg Le Clair

that his tactics were rather aggressive and out of line and intimidating.

Steve replied saying "We do not train our staff to be sinking violets or guys like me would walk all over them".

At that I dropped the conversation.

Three days later I went to the Alpine Cafe for lunch & outside at the picnic table were 8 high school kids smoking pot on their lunch break.

Our streets and highways are littered with beer cans - I picked up 30 the other day coming back from getting my mail.

Every day I see dozens of people talking on their cell phone while driving and I take my life in my hands when I walk through a controlled cross walk in this town. You can get hard drugs any time in the village after dark I am told. Do you get the picture.

9.

I plan on filing an RCMP Complaints Commission report about this incident

I am ~~not~~ well aware of what really goes on in this town and I am not the person that some people in high places portray me to be.

I suggest that the RCMP focus on the real bad guys and leave us tax paying transit riders alone.

604-932-4477 Mike Soggett

From: Carol Coffey <ccoffey@whistlerfoundation.com>
Sent: November 11, 2015 9:30 PM
To: Nancy Wilhelm-Morden
Subject: Giving Tuesday

Hi Nancy,

I wanted to follow up in regards to Giving Tuesday.

Robin Douglas passed along to your our letter regarding a Mayoral Proclamation for Giving Tuesday. I'm attaching the letter as well as sample proclamation wording.

We now have 19 partners signed on to the Sea to Sky Gives movement for Giving Tuesday:

<http://givingtuesday.ca/partners/seatoskygives#.VkQfr14Vd84>

Mayor Patricia Heintzman has signed a proclamation declaring December 1st as Giving Tuesday in the District of Squamish.

We hope Whistler council will consider doing the same at the next meeting.

Thank you for considering this matter,

Kind Regards,
Carol

Carol Coffey
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Community Foundation of Whistler

ccoffey@whistlerfoundation.com
www.whistlerfoundation.com
cell 604.898.1191

Sea to Sky Gives- working together to spread the Giving Tuesday message and inspire giving back to the community





GivingTuesday Proclamation

WHEREAS, GivingTuesday was established as a national day of giving on December 1, 2015; and

WHEREAS, GivingTuesday is a celebration of philanthropy and volunteerism where people give whatever they are able to give; and

WHEREAS, GivingTuesday is a day where citizens work together to share commitments, rally for favorite causes, build a stronger community, and think about other people; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper on GivingTuesday and on every day to recognize the tremendous impact of philanthropy, volunteerism, and community service in the Resort Municipality of Whistler; and

WHEREAS, GivingTuesday is an opportunity to encourage citizens to serve others throughout this holiday season and throughout the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Nancy Wilhelm-Morden, Mayor of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, do hereby proclaim December 1, 2015 as GivingTuesday in the Resort Municipality of Whistler, and encourage all citizens to join together to give back to the community in any way that is personally meaningful.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the Resort Municipality of Whistler, British Columbia, to be affixed to this proclamation.

Nancy Wilhelm-Morden
Mayor
Resort Municipality of Whistler

