



WHISTLER

REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: October 20, 2020
FROM: Corporate and Community Services
SUBJECT: COUNCIL POLICY B-18: FACE MASK USE WITHIN MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

REPORT: 20-107
FILE: 0340-00

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the *Council Policy B-18: Face Mask Use within Municipal Facilities*;

That Council direct staff to update relevant RMOW COVID-19 safety procedures and plans to reflect this requirement; and further

That Council direct staff to develop a communication and signage strategy to support the new requirement in advance of the proposed effective date of October 26, 2020.

REFERENCES

Appendix "A" – *Council Policy B-18: Face Mask Use within Municipal Facilities*

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to obtain Council endorsement of the proposed Face Mask Use within Municipal Facilities.

DISCUSSION

Background

The Province of British Columbia is currently in Phase 3 of BC's COVID-19 Restart Plan. The BC Restart Plan takes a phased approach to reopening. This allows sectors and activities within the phases to open when the evidence and data tells us the time is right, and as protocols and guidance are in place for them to do so safely. The Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) is committed to protecting the health and safety of its residents, visitors and staff.

Whistler is also in the process of rolling out a new sticker program to recognize Whistler businesses that have worked hard to put in place visible measures such as posting their Safety Plan and maximum occupancy, placing Plexiglas barriers between staff and customers, clearly marking out physical distancing on their premises and in outdoor lineups, encouraging mask-wearing and having their staff model physical distancing and mask-wearing.

The RMOW began a limited re-opening to the public in the upstairs customer service area at municipal hall on Monday, June 1, 2020 with physical distancing measures in place. The RMOW has implemented a number of safety measures throughout the resort, including signage, hand sanitation

stations, divided pedestrian walkways along the Village Stroll, and encouraging the wearing of masks whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.

As the RMOW continues to re-open facilities, staff have embraced an adaptive, measured approach to building a safely plan, in close alignment with the recommendations of the Provincial Health Office. Building a culture of mask-wearing will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Over the past month, the provincial government has strengthened and in some cases, reinstated measures to limit the further spread of the virus. There is a continued need to remain vigilant in our actions and our practices across our community and our organization.

Practices in other Jurisdictions

Many communities (especially in Ontario, Quebec and Alberta) are adopting policies and bylaws to require the use of face masks to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. A scan of Lower Mainland municipalities suggests that a number of other BC municipalities have, or are, considering the development of a mask requirement for visitors to municipal facilities:

- Delta has recently announced the requirement for mandatory facemasks to be worn by anyone entering, exiting or moving around City of Delta facilities; and
- Richmond city councillors unanimously supported a motion Monday, October 5 that will make it mandatory for face masks to be worn in all city buildings — which also include libraries, museums, pools, police facilities, arts facilities and the Richmond Olympic Oval.

In addition, BC Transit, in alignment with TransLink and other transportation agencies, have already proceeded with mandatory use of face coverings on buses in BC Transit communities across the Province as of August 24.

Current Practice

Current municipal practice is that all RMOW employees working indoors in close mutual proximity - within 2m of one another - without the protection of physical barriers are instructed to don and wear a non-medical mask for the duration of the task. However, visitors to municipal facilities are not required to wear masks to access municipal services or programs.

Visitors arriving in Whistler are being reminded that COVID-19 is not on vacation, even if they are. The RMOW and Tourism Whistler are encouraging everyone who chooses to spend time in Whistler be vigilant in following measures that help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Many businesses in the Whistler are also currently opting to require their patrons to wear masks as part of their comprehensive COVID-19 safety plans.

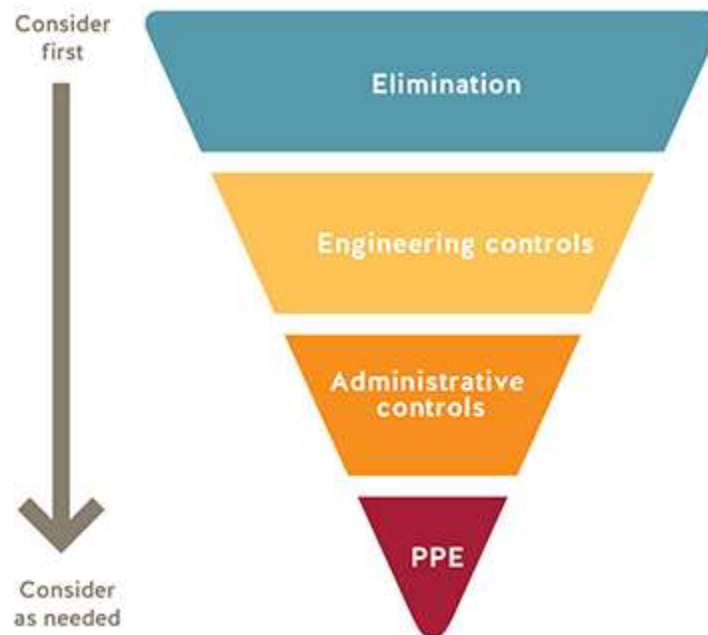
Expert Opinion

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) states that masks can help protect those around an individual by acting as a barrier to the spread of droplets from a person's nose and mouth. Studies suggest that not all persons with COVID-19 display symptoms, or may only experience mild symptoms. In these cases, it is possible for an asymptomatic individual to spread the virus inadvertently to others.

As municipal facilities continue to reopen to staff and members of the public, the risk controls implemented in the RMOW Exposure Control Plan, RMOW Safe Work Procedures and Guidelines and COVID Safety Plan are being continually re-evaluated to reflect the current pandemic situation. These risk controls include the use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) which includes the use of face masks where physical distancing is not possible to supplement other source control measures already in place. It is important to note that the use of PPE is not intended to replace other site control

measures including physical distancing, engineering controls, hand washing, covering one's cough or sneeze, not touching one's eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands, self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms and remaining at home when one is sick.

These measures are currently being implemented in the municipal re-start plan for all facilities. This approach was adapted from the WorkSafeBC COVID-19 Safety Plan and used as a guiding principle for reducing the risk of transmitting COVID-19. This approach is described in the diagram below:



- **First level protection (elimination):** Limit the number of people in your workplace where possible by implementing work-from-home arrangements, establishing occupancy limits, rescheduling work tasks, or other means. Rearrange work spaces to ensure that workers are at least 2 m (6 ft) from co-workers, customers, and members of the public.
- **Second level protection (engineering controls):** If you can't always maintain physical distancing, install barriers such as Plexiglas to separate people.
- **Third level protection (administrative controls):** Establish rules and guidelines, such as cleaning protocols, instructing workers to not share tools, or implementing one-way doors or walkways.
- **Fourth level protection (PPE):** If the first three levels of protection aren't enough to control the risk, consider the use of masks. Ensure masks are selected and cared for appropriately and that workers are using masks correctly.

The Chief Public Health Officer of Canada is advising that these basic strategies should continue to be the focus of Canadians in order to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

The World Health Organization (WHO) advises decision makers to use a risk based approach to when considering or encouraging the use of face masks. The purpose of required mask use should be well communicated, which in the case of Council Policy B-18, is to prevent the infected wearer from transmitting the virus to others (source control).

The WHO also states select advantages to the use of face masks by healthy individuals. According to the WHO, mask wearing can reduce the potential risk from infected persons before they develop symptoms and further reminds people to be compliant with other measures.

Policy Highlights

As outlined in the attached Council Policy B-18, the required use of face masks will apply to all persons entering and or occupying an indoor facility operated by the RMOW. This requirement would include all staff, contractors and members of the public subject to the identified exceptions. Masks will be made available to ensure access is not denied to those who are unprepared.

Persons entering or remaining without a mask or face covering will be given a verbal reminder of the Policy's masking requirement. However, there are a number of exemptions included within the Policy, including children under two, and those with medical conditions who cannot safely wear a mask or face covering, among others. More detail is provided in the attached Council Policy document.

If supported by Council, it is intended that this Policy would come into effect for Monday, October 26, 2020. Signage will be developed and installed in step with this target effective date.

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendations in this Report are provided in the context of the provincial state of emergency and public health emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council Policy B-18: Face Mask Use within Municipal Facilities is consistent with the 2019-2022 Corporate Goals, in particular: "Corporate policies and operations ensure continuous excellence in infrastructure, facility and program management."

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

There are no direct costs to implement this Policy beyond the design, production and installation of associated signage. All signage costs can be accommodated within existing 2020 amended operating budgets.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The RMOW Communications Team has initiated a campaign with Resort Partners TW, Whistler Blackcomb, Whistler Chamber and the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre to promote the use of face masks in establishments where physical distancing is not possible. The public will be encouraged to submit a photo donning a face mask to show support for wearing masks to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The proposed Policy is consistent with these public campaigns to encourage mask use in Whistler Village and throughout the broader community.

SUMMARY

The Face Mask Use within Municipal Facilities Council Policy will supplement control measures already put into place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission as RMOW facilities continue to open to staff and members of the public. Health authorities such as the World Health Organization and B.C. Centre for Disease Control continue to support these measures. As such, this Report serves to seek Council's endorsement to direct staff to implement the Face Mask Use within Municipal Facilities.

Respectfully submitted,

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for
Ted Battiston
GENERAL MANAGER OF CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES