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**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE  
COMMISSION

**DATE:** 2019 SEPTEMBER 10

**FROM:** DEPUTY CITY CLERK

**FILE:** 61000-01

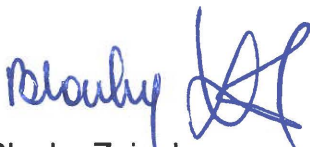
**SUBJECT: PETITION REQUESTING CHANGES AT CAPITOL HILL RESERVOIR  
PARK**  
(ITEM NO. 7(5), MANAGER'S REPORTS, COUNCIL 2019 SEPTEMBER  
09)

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Burnaby City Council, at the Open Council meeting held on 2019 September 09, received the above noted report and adopted the following recommendations contained therein:

1. THAT Council approve the installation of signs promoting quiet times within the Capitol Hill Reservoir Park and along the 200 block Hythe Street North as outlined in this report.
2. THAT Council support the installation of a Neighbourhood Library Box within Capitol Hill Reservoir Park as outlined in this report.
3. THAT a copy of this report be provided to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for information.
4. THAT a copy of this report be provided to all petitioning residents for information.

As per recommendation #3, a copy of the report is attached.



Blanka Zeinabova  
Deputy City Clerk

## COUNCIL REPORT

**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2019 September 03

**FROM:** DIRECTOR ENGINEERING **FILE:** 61100-01

DIRECTOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND  
CULTURAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT: PETITION REQUESTING CHANGES AT CAPITOL HILL RESERVOIR  
PARK**

**PURPOSE:** To respond to requests and concerns from residents near Capitol Hill  
Reservoir Park.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** Council approve the installation of signs promoting quiet times within the Capitol Hill Reservoir Park and along the 200 block Hythe Street North as outlined in this report.
2. **THAT** Council support the installation of a Neighbourhood Library Box within Capitol Hill Reservoir Park as outlined in this report.
3. **THAT** a copy of this report be provided to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for information.
4. **THAT** a copy of this report be provided to all petitioning residents for information.

**REPORT****INTRODUCTION**

On 2019 August 15, a petition was received from Ms. Renu Goodenough requesting:

1. The removal of concrete barriers along Hythe Avenue North adjacent to Capitol Hill Reservoir Park (Hythe Park) because they are often used as benches and attract excessive amounts of people to stay for extended periods of time. Of particular concern were people partying and making excessive noise after hours.

To: City Manager  
From: Director Engineering  
Director Public Safety and Community Services  
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services  
Re: PETITION REQUESTING CHANGES AT  
CAPITOL HILL RESERVOIR PARK  
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2. Permission to allow residents to install their own street signs and sandwich board signs to deter speeding along Hythe Avenue North because of the ineffectiveness of the existing speed limit sign and the extreme hazard for many children playing in front of the park.
3. Permission to allow residents to install a neighbourhood library within Capitol Hill Reservoir Park to increase positive use of the park and promote community engagement.

The petition cites concerns about illegal and unsafe activities at Capitol Hill Reservoir Park (and fronting street and boulevard) including drug and alcohol abuse, disrespectful, obnoxious and loud behavior, littering, fighting, and erratic driving. It also mentions numerous calls to the RCMP related to break-ins, vandalism, and car thefts. The petition was referred to staff for a report back to Council.

## **POLICY SECTION**

The concerns raised in the petition relate to Burnaby's Corporate Strategic Plan, in particular the following goals and sub-goals of the Plan.

### **Goal**

- A Safe Community
  - Crime prevention and reduction –  
Ensure citizens and businesses feel safe in our community
  - Emergency services –  
Provide responsive emergency services
  - Transportation Safety –  
Make City streets, pathways, trails and sidewalks safer
- A Connected Community
  - Social connection –  
Enhance social connections throughout Burnaby
- An Inclusive Community
  - Create a sense of community –  
Provide opportunities that encourage and welcome all community members and create a sense of belonging

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Director Public Safety and Community Services  
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## **BACKGROUND**

Capitol Hill Reservoir Park is a small 0.69 acre neighbourhood park located at 229 Hythe Avenue N (Figure 1). Despite its size, its popularity has been increasing because of the westerly views it offers towards Vancouver and during sunsets. One website ranks the park as one of the top 12 parks to visit in the City.

A review of RCMP files in the last 14 months from the neighbourhood surrounding Capitol Hill Reservoir Park indicated that 9 reports were made. Most of the reports related to City bylaws such as parking and very few were associated with the park directly. In the area surrounding the park, there have been no reports of erratic driving, alcohol or drug abuse, break ins, vandalism, or car thefts in the last 14 months. In general, there does not appear to be very many recent calls for RCMP services from the area, and no known illegal or unsafe activities related to Capitol Hill Reservoir Park.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Removal of Concrete Barriers**

The concrete barriers along the west side of Hythe Avenue N directly adjacent to Capitol Hill Reservoir Park were installed in 2007. The barriers narrow the roadway from 8.5 m to 7.0 m which reinforces the No Stopping regulations on the west side of the road, helps to reduce the speed of traffic along this 30 km/h park zone, and provides a physical barrier from vehicles along the road. Replacement of this barrier with pylons would eliminate informal public seating opportunities, but its effectiveness in reducing the number of people visiting the park and for longer duration after hours is questionable, especially when weather conditions are favourable. This is because visitors can continue to sit along the roadway curb and boulevard, within the park lawn area, or in one of three benches available.

The removal of the concrete barriers would have a negative impact on safety because it currently provides a physical barrier between vehicles and park users, and prevents young children from straying into the roadway. The concrete barriers are particularly useful when there are many people visiting the area to enjoy the view. The use of pylons would not provide the same level of protection. In addition, pylons would increase maintenance costs due to vandalism, damage from vehicles, or during snow plowing operations. The pylons can create a false sense of security and some may find them less aesthetically pleasing. Therefore the removal of the existing concrete barriers is not recommended.

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To address nighttime noise concerns, it is recommended that City post signs to educate and request cooperation from evening visitors, such as "Quiet Residential Zone 10pm to 7am". This does not address concerns about other potential undesirable activities nor the popularity of the park, but it may encourage reduction of the nuisance.

### **Installation of Signs by Residents**

The request to allow residents to install their own signs on City property to slow down vehicles is not recommended. Signs regulating the operation of vehicles on City streets must be installed by the City and in accordance with national standards to ensure uniformity, consistency and enforceability. Other irregular signs installed could create sign clutter, create confusion, distract from existing regulatory signs, and increase City liabilities. Earlier this year, an additional "No Exit" sign for northbound traffic along Hythe Avenue at Cambridge was installed to ensure drivers were aware of the dead end street in response to concerns from a resident. A review of existing speed limit signs found them to be visible.

Concerns about traffic speeds along Hythe Avenue were investigated. Traffic speeds were monitored in the last few days in August and over the long weekend. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed and average speed was found to be 40 km/h and 30 km/h, respectively. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed represents the speed that 85% of all vehicles would travel below. These speeds are considered reasonable. Similar results were found in 2016 in response to speeding concerns at that time. Also, two-way traffic volumes along Hythe Avenue north of Cambridge were found to be about 350 vehicles per day which is much lower than a typical residential street. This is as expected because Hythe Avenue North is a dead end street at the north end.

Although speeding was not found to be a significant problem, abutting residents have the opportunity to install speed humps along their block through the Local Area Service Program. This program would require the majority of abutting residents to support and contribute to the installation of the speed humps through a petition process. There are current discussions about the City funding the installation of speed humps on streets adjacent to parks, and if approved, Hythe Street North next to Capitol Hill Reservoir Park may be a future candidate.

It should be noted that the boulevard area fronting Capitol Hill Reservoir Park is not conducive to active sports play because of the very steep grades (50%) within the park. Also, the existence of the concrete barriers, as mentioned previously, provides a strong measure of physical safety. Therefore there does not appear to be any extreme hazard related to children playing next to the street or from excessive traffic speeds.

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## Installation of a Neighbourhood Library Box within Capitol Hill Reservoir Park

Neighbourhood library boxes for book sharing purposes have previously been installed within two Parks. One was installed in Capitol Hill Reservoir Park on a trial basis over 15 years ago. The box was provided by a resident and staff installed it at a suitable location that did not impact park operations. It was installed on the condition that it would be removed should it become unsightly or damaged. Unfortunately, the box at Capitol Hill Reservoir Park had to be removed about two years ago due to vandalism and rot. Based on past experience, staff do not have any objections to the installation of a new library box should a suitable one be provided and maintained by a resident, including the provision of books as necessary.

## CONCLUSION

A petition from residents surrounding Capitol Hill Reservoir Park was received due to concerns about a number of disruptive activities, particularly later in the evening. A number of changes were requested, but the removal of existing concrete barriers and installation of resident-made signs along the street were not supported for safety reasons. To address noise issues in the evening, the installation of "Quiet Residential Zone" signs is recommended. The request for a neighbourhood library book box is supported to replace the one that had existed in the park previously.

  
for Leon. A. Gous, P. Eng., MBA  
DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

  
Dave Critchley  
DIRECTOR PUBLIC SAFETY &  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

  
Dave Ellenwood  
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

DL/ac

Attachment

Copied to: Director Corporate Services  
RCMP – OIC Burnaby Detachment Chief Supt. Deanne Burleigh  
Chief Librarian



**Figure 1 - Capitol Hill Reservoir Park**

August 30, 2019

1:1,546

