From: "Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 6/8/2026 2:38:22 PM
Subject: Memo: Overview of public-facing extreme heat plans for summer 2026
Attachments: CMO - VEMA - Memo (Council) - Extreme Heat Plans - Summer 2026 (2026-06-08).pdf

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Dear Mayor and Council,

The attached memo provides Mayor and Council with the early June annual update on the City's extreme heat plans for the upcoming summer. This memo also includes responses to the recently passed Council resolution Proactively Protecting Residents from Dangerous Heat (RTS 18672; May 6, 2026). Key information in the memo outlines:

- Coordinated citywide response: Vancouver maintains a long-standing, multi-agency extreme heat plan led by VEMA with annual seasonal coordination.
- Heat alert system: A new 3-tier provincial heat alert system (Yellow/Orange/Red) is now in effect.
- Cooling access: 39 civic cooling centres, new partner sites, transportation pilot, and supports for vulnerable residents and renters.
- Outdoor cooling measures: Access to shaded spaces, misting stations, drinking water access, and outreach to at-risk individuals outdoors.
- Strong communications and partnerships: Multilingual public messaging and collaboration with health agencies and community networks to reach vulnerable groups.
- Long-term resilience focus: Advances in tree canopy, shade planning, cleaner air spaces, and advocacy for expanded Provincial funding support.

Extreme heat is complex and requires collaboration and coordination across multiple levels of government, across agencies, and with community organizations. Staff have worked diligently to respond to lessons learned, feedback from robust engagement with seniors, people with disabilities, and subject-matter experts. The City continues to foster strong relationships with partners to improve extreme heat plans, services, and cooling infrastructure, as well as seek ways we can mitigate urban heat through the built and natural environment.

If Council has any questions, please feel free to email me at Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca and staff will work to provide a response through the appropriate channel.

Thank you,

Sandra

Sandra Singh | Deputy City Manager

City of Vancouver

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges the unceded homelands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) and səl̓ilwətaʔɬ / sel̓íl̓witulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

CITY OF VANCOUVER

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
Deputy City Manager

MEMORANDUM

June 8, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: City Leadership Team
Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Jason Twa, City Clerk
Mellisa Morphy, Acting Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Overview of public-facing extreme heat plans for summer 2026

RTS #: 18672

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide Mayor and Council with the early June annual update on the City's extreme heat plans for the upcoming summer. This memo also includes responses to the recently passed Council resolution *Proactively Protecting Residents from Dangerous Heat* (RTS 18672; May 6, 2026; Appendix C).

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Extreme heat is complex and requires collaboration and coordination across multiple levels of government, agencies, and with media and community-based organizations.

City Role and Approach

The City of Vancouver has had an extreme heat plan (Extreme Heat Initial Response Guide [IRG]) in place for 15 years. This plan is coordinated by the Vancouver Emergency Management Agency (VEMA) with contributions and actions by several departments through identified departmental response leads.

Each spring, VEMA convenes a Seasonal Readiness Coordination Call with public partners like Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), as well as representatives from all departments with operational roles in the Extreme Heat IRG. This session allows staff to hear about the anticipated forecast for the season and health impacts. Staff share information about departmental heat initiatives to ensure effective coordination throughout the summer.

DISCUSSION

2026 Heat Readiness and Response

Environment and Climate Change Canada's latest global mean temperature forecast indicates that 2026 will likely be among the hottest years on record.

The 2026 spring Seasonal Readiness Coordination Call took place on May 4. This section provides an overview of the components of the heat readiness and response work for 2026, including:

1. Coordination approach for heat warnings
2. Access to indoor cooling
3. Access to outdoor cooling and hydration
4. Communications and public messaging
5. Strategic Partnerships
6. Wildfire smoke and Poor Air Quality
7. Cost Recovery
8. Tree canopy modelling update
9. City-wide shade infrastructure analysis

1. Coordination approach for heat warnings

ECCC is responsible for issuing warnings for heat with input from the provincial Health Effects of Anomalous Temperatures (BC HEAT) committee. In 2026, the BC HEAT committee (led by the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Ministry of Health) updated and released the BC Heat Alert Response System (BC HARS) to incorporate the new colour-coded weather alerts on May 29. Under this change, the previous two-tiered system (Heat Warning and Extreme Heat Emergency) has been replaced with a three-tiered system (Yellow, Orange, and Red Warnings). The three levels of heat warnings are outlined below. The 2026 BC HARS includes additional detail which staff will incorporate into extreme heat response plans as needed going forwards.

Appendix A includes a description of the City's tiered approach to the new three-level system.

2. Access to indoor Cooling

As per advice from Vancouver Coastal Health, spending time in cool spaces is one of the primary measures to prevent heat-related illness. Access to indoor cooling is available at:

- **Civic Cooling Centres:** Vancouver has designated 39 civic facilities (community centres and libraries) as cooling centres (See Appendix B, Table 1 for full list of locations). During heat warnings, the City pushes public messaging about these spaces to encourage people to spend time in a cool space. Cooling centres at community centres extend their hours and allow pets when activated during orange and red warnings. Additionally, the Evelyne Saller Centre will activate as an overnight shelter space with cooling during orange and red heat warnings. Cooling centre locations and hours are kept up-to-date on the City's *Where to keep cool in Vancouver* map, accessible from: www.vancouver.ca/hotweather
- **Partner and Community Cooling Spaces:** In addition to civic cooling centres, staff are exploring partnership opportunities to include non-civic facilities as formal cooling centres. For 2026, a community partner cooling centre is available at the Chinatown Plaza mall and the Christ Church Cathedral. Engagement with Neighbourhood Houses, Indigenous service

agencies, cultural organizations, faith-based groups and seniors centres has demonstrated that many already provide informal cooling spaces to their users during heat events.

- **Taxi Service Pilot:** Staff are piloting a new program this summer to provide taxi services to and from designated cooling centres in collaboration with community-based organizations. Taxi services are a cost-recoverable expense for local governments through the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR).
- **Supporting Residents of Non-Market Housing:** The City provides support to residents of City-owned and -operated Non-Market Housing by adding mechanical cooling in shared spaces, distributing information, and conducting checks on residents during heat warnings.
- **Supporting Private SROs:** The City connects with privately-owned Single Room Occupancy (SRO) operators and the SRO-Collaborative (SRO-C) to provide heat safety information, encourage operators to check on heat-vulnerable residents and utilize community peer services as available. Between 2022 and 2025, the SRO-C received operational grants from the City to develop heat plans and protocols. In April, Vancouver City Council approved a $500,000 grant for the SRO Collaborative (SRO-C) to retrofit six private SRO buildings with cooling (warming in winter) rooms in 2026-2029. These rooms, featuring heat pumps, aim to protect vulnerable residents during extreme weather.
- **Personal preparedness:** The City provides information on how residents can prepare and stay safe in the summer heat on www.vancouver.ca/hotweather. Here, residents can find translated information on how to develop their own heat plan and instructions on how to build their own cool kit with personal household items.
- **Supporting Renters:** On June 3 Council approved a report responding to a Nov 2025 motion directing staff to explore regulatory options that prevent landlords from banning or limiting the use of portable cooling devices where a residential unit does not have air conditioning. Recommendations in this report **reduce** a significant barrier to at-home indoor cooling for tenants.

3. Access to outdoor cooling and hydration

Staying cool while outdoors is critical to avoiding heat related illness. Access to cooler spaces outdoors and places to access water are available through the City at:

- **Shaded Spaces:** Residents who are outside can seek shade in parks, beaches, and other spaces under trees. Staff are working with select partners with parklets to explore how they can provide respite for communities during extreme heat response by, for example, putting up canopy tents and umbrellas in their parklets or providing access to water and health information. Staff continue to explore potential outdoor cooling options and new locations may come on-line in 2026 or in future years.
- **Water Features in Parks:** Water-based cooling is available at 15 spray parks (open May to September). The locations of these water features are available at: www.vancouver.ca/hotweather Due to Metro Vancouver Stage 3 water restrictions, Vancouver Park Board is prohibited from operating wading pools and decorative water features. A select number of misting stations will be deployed at key wading pools to provide cooling during these restrictions. Staff will update the City's cooling infrastructure maps and public messaging accordingly.
- **Misting Stations, Fountains, and Handwashing Stations:** The City and Vancouver Park Board have deployed over 35 misting stations in 2026, to be in place from May to September. Most misters are placed in parks and areas of greater need. The City also has an extensive network of over 200 permanent drinking fountains with temporary stations deployed temporarily during the summer, in addition to handwashing stations that offer

both hygiene and drinking functions. The locations of misting stations, fountains and handwashing stations are included in the map at: www.vancouver.ca/hotweather

- **Bottled Water Distribution:** Bottled water is provided to ACCS Community Centres, Ray-Cam, Park Rangers, Carnegie Outreach and Urban Issues Team to distribute to patrons without refillable water bottles who need support with hydration.
- **Checking on people in outdoor public spaces:** While the majority of deaths from the June 2021 heat dome occurred inside, people in outdoor spaces are also at risk of heat-related illness and death. Park Rangers, outreach workers, and first responders check on people exhibiting signs of heat-related illness and direct them to cooling centres, water, and other support.

4. Communications and Public messaging

The City takes a proactive and multi-channel approach, aligned with partners, to increase awareness of extreme heat, health impacts, preparedness, and response plans, and to communicate key information in 12 languages before and during heat events.

- **Media relations**
  - A pre-season information bulletin is issued in the first week of June.
  - Staff have identified spokespersons within VEMA, ENG, SUS, ACCS and Park Board to speak on City's work to prepare for the season.
  - A follow-up information bulletin is prepared to highlight cooling centre and safety information when Environment Canada issues a heat warning.
    - To extend the reach to ethnocultural media, a brief synopsis in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Tagalog, Punjabi and Vietnamese will be added to this information bulletin.

- **Social media**
  - General heat safety tips will be pushed to the public on City's social media channels.
  - Staff have prepared the following messages when the outdoor temperature reaches a certain threshold:
    - 24-27 C – Highlight the need to have a plan to get cool, learn about wellness checks, and ways to stay informed
    - 27-29 C – Monitor indoor temperatures, beat the heat tips, check on others
    - 29 C and above – Monitor indoor temperatures, go to a cool space, activated cooling centres, checking on people can be life-saving

- **Vancouver.ca**
  - Updated maps and printable materials on vancouver.ca/hotweather, and vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke
  - To align with the City's Language Access Policy, posters, printable maps and social media graphics are translated into 11 languages and have been uploaded to Vancouver.ca/heat-translations

Council can support this work by amplifying City's social media posts on your personal channels especially during a heat event, reposting the City's translated resources and cooling centre maps in multiple languages and engaging with local neighbourhood groups and community-serving organizations to highlight the availability of supports.

For key resources including printable maps, translated material: Stay safe in the summer heat translated resources | City of Vancouver

For more hazard and risk information about extreme heat and wildfire smoke visit the Hazard & Risk Explorer on www.vancouver.ca/hazards

5. Strategic Partnerships

Mitigating the effects of, preparing for and responding to extreme heat events is complex and requires an all-of-society approach. The City works to expand and strengthen relationships with other levels of government, industry, and community-based organizations in relation to extreme heat and air quality emergencies. This work includes:

- **Government, Academic Partnerships, and Network Partnerships:** The City has close working relationships with Vancouver Coastal Health, BC Housing, Emergency Management and Climate Readiness BC, University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, C40 Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance, and the Resilient Cities Network, and many others.
- **Resilient Neighbourhoods Program and Amplifier Network:** During emergencies, people go to the places they know and trust to meet their needs. Through the Resilient Neighbourhoods Program and building on the Resilient Vancouver Strategy, the City partners with community-based organizations to plan and deliver extreme heat supports. Since 2022, the City has provided small annual operational grants to 14 core partners within the Resilient Neighbourhoods Program. These grants allow our partners to provide extreme heat supports to their communities. A list of partners and grant amounts can be found in Appendix B, Table 3. In addition, staff have connections with 60 organizations through the Resilience Amplifier Network. This network shares extreme heat information to communities not following formal City communication channels. Each spring, staff host seasonal readiness calls with these partners to share the City's plans, receive feedback, learn about partners' plans, and identify gaps. Since 2022, partners have supported vulnerable residents by conducting wellness checks, hosted multilingual heat workshops, distributed cool kits, and hosted DIY air cleaner workshops.

6. Wildfire smoke and poor air quality

While wildfire smoke and poor air quality are not the focus of this memo, this is also the season for smoky skies and these events often occur alongside extreme heat. Below is a brief, high-level overview of some of the ways Vancouver is addressing wildfire smoke in conjunction with extreme heat.

- **Cleaner Air Spaces:** The City has 14 cleaner air spaces at community centres and libraries with high-performance air filtration systems to improve indoor air quality (see Appendix B, Table 2 for a full list of locations). Cleaner air spaces are available throughout the year during regular operating hours, and additional rooms are added when an air quality advisory is issued. Visit www.vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke for a map of these locations.
- **DIY Air Cleaners:** The City developed the DIY air cleaner initiative in conjunction with researchers from Simon Fraser University (SFU BREATHE) and BC Lung Foundation in 2023 to improve access to cleaner indoor air for seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income families. Through this initiative, the City offers translated DIY air cleaner instructions in the 12 most-used languages in Vancouver through www.vancouver.ca/wildfiresmoke, enabling people to build air cleaners at home.

7. Cost recovery

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) BC reimburses local authorities for eligible incremental costs in response to declared heat warnings. Costs can be recovered for public messaging, incremental costs of activating cooling centres, and costs for transportation vulnerable residents to and from cooling centres. See provincial cost-recovery policy for details. Costs for preparedness work, such as response planning, procurement of supplies in advance, or compiling Cool Kits in advance are not currently eligible.

As per the Council resolution, staff will continue to advocate to the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness to request program changes to support municipalities to fund compiling and proactive distribution of cool kits and DIY air quality filters in advance of the summer heat and wildfire seasons. Staff will send a letter to the Ministry noting the Council direction by end of June.

8. Tree canopy modelling update

Tree planting continues being prioritized in low-canopy areas of the city to reduce heat-related impacts. Recent collaboration between Urban Forestry and Engineering is advancing increased stump removal from tree-pits allowing for expedited replacement tree planting in urbanized settings. Urban Forestry continues to advance the cross-departmental canopy modelling initiative which is approximately 50% complete and anticipated to be finalized in late 2026. The outcome will support targeted tree planting investments that optimize canopy expansion on sites best-suited to provide the greatest public benefit.

9.City-wide shade infrastructure analysis

Through the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, work is planned to advance current understanding of city-wide shade and connectivity, with a focus on neighbourhoods with highest exposure to extreme heat. This cross-departmental project will begin in late 2026 with an audit of existing natural and built shading and cooling infrastructure. This work will help identify priority neighbourhoods, opportunities and partnerships to advance public realm shade and cooling investment.

FINAL REMARKS

Extreme heat is complex and requires collaboration and coordination across multiple levels of government, across agencies, and with community organizations. Staff have worked diligently to respond to lessons learned from previous years, feedback from robust engagement with seniors, people with disabilities, and subject-matter experts. The City continues to foster strong relationships with partners to improve extreme heat plans, services, and cooling infrastructure, as well as seek ways we can mitigate urban heat through the built and natural environment.

If Council has any questions, please feel free to email me at Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca and staff will work to provide a response through the appropriate channel.



Sandra Singh
Deputy City Manager

APPENDIX A
Heat Warning: COV Operational Actions Tier (Summer 2026)

Warning Type	Description and Expected Frequency	City Actions
Yellow Warning: Heat Yellow warnings indicate hazardous weather which may cause damage, disruption, or health impacts. Impacts are expected to be moderate, localized and/or short-term. Yellow alerts are the most common.	**Unusually high** daytime and overnight temperatures for **2+ days** (daytime high of 29°-31°C and nighttime lows of 14°-15°C) Expected frequency: 3 per summer *Note: for the first heat of the summer, a yellow warning may be issued based on daytime highs alone, regardless of whether the nighttime lows are reached.*	During a Yellow Warning, the City will: - Send out an advisory email to all departments - Send out an advisory email to all community partners - VEMA Duty Officer to monitor forecasts and correspond directly with response leads - Escalate public messaging, including the use of paid promotions - Note: based on public health advice the City will treat the first yellow warning as a significant event – initiating activities associated with an orange warning.
Orange Warning: Heat Orange Warnings indicate severe weather which is likely to cause significant damage, disruption, or health impacts. Impacts are expected to be major, widespread and/or may last a few days. Orange alerts are uncommon.	**Very high** daytime and overnight temperatures for **3+ days** (**exceeding** temperature ranges for Yellow Warning) Expected frequency: 1 per summer	During an Orange Warning, the City will conduct all Yellow activities, plus: - Host a coordination call for response leads (e.g. City department leads) - Host a coordination call for community partners - Increase access to drinking water, spray parks, and misting stations - Promote shelter from heat through activation of cooling centres, including extension of hours where possible - Monitor outdoor spaces for people suffering heat-related illness - Monitor City Non-Market Housing - Monitor Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels - Coordinate with Community Partners - Increase public messaging and initiate paid promotions
Red Warning: Heat Red warnings indicate very dangerous and possibly life-threatening weather which will cause extreme damage and disruption. Impacts are expected to be extensive, widespread, and prolonged. Red alerts are rare.	Orange warning conditions with a pattern of **substantive day-over-day temperatures increases** for **3+ days** Expected frequency: 1 per decade	During a Red Warning, the City will conduct all Orange activities, plus: - Activate the EOC - Establish daily coordination calls with community partners - Increase access to drinking water, spray parks, and misting stations, including deployment of heavy misters - Promote shelter from heat through activation of cooling centres, including extension of hours where possible - Monitor outdoor spaces for people suffering heat-related illness - Monitor SROs & City Non-Market Housing - Increase public messaging and initiate paid promotions

APPENDIX B

Table 1: Civic Cooling Centres Locations – 2026

VPB and ACCS Community Centres

1. Carnegie Community Centre
2. Champlain Heights Community Centre
3. Coal Harbour Community Centre
4. Evelyne Saller Centre
5. Gathering Place
6. Hastings Community Centre
7. Hillcrest Community Centre
8. Kensington Community Centre
9. Kerrisdale Community Centre
10. Killarney Community Centre
11. Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre
12. Mount Pleasant Community Centre
13. RayCam Cooperative
14. Renfrew Park Community Centre
15. Roundhouse Community Centre
16. Sunset Community Centre
17. Thunderbird Community Centre
18. Trout Lake Community Centre
19. West End Community Centre

Libraries

1. Britannia Library
2. Carnegie Library
3. Central Library
4. Champlain Library
5. Collingwood Library
6. Dunbar Library
7. Firehall Library
8. Fraserview Library
9. Hastings Library
10. Joe Fortes Library
11. Kensington Library
12. Kitsilano Library
13. Marpole Library
14. Mount Pleasant Library
15. nə́c̓aʔmat ct Strathcona Library
16. Oakridge Library
17. Renfrew Library
18. South Hill Library
19. Terry Salman (Hillcrest) Library
20. West Point Grey Library

Note: Locations are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated on vancouver.ca and via other channels.

Table 2: Cleaner Air Spaces Locations – 2026

VPB and ACCS Community Centres

1. Carnegie Community Centre
2. Creekside Community Centre
3. Evelyne Saller Centre
4. Gathering Place
5. Hillcrest Community Centre
6. Mount Pleasant Community Centre
7. West End Community Centre

Libraries

1. Britannia Library
2. Central Library
3. Joe Fortes Library
4. Kerrisdale Library
5. Mount Pleasant Library
6. Renfrew Library
7. Terry Salman (Hillcrest) Library

Table 3: Extreme Heat Resilience Grants Recipients

1. Aboriginal Friendship Centre ($15,000)
2. Britannia Community Services Centre ($10,000)
3. Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
4. Collingwood Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
5. Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
6. Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
7. Gordon Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
8. Kitsilano Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
9. Kiwassa Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
10. Little Mountain Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
11. Marpole Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
12. Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
13. South Vancouver Neighbourhood House ($10,000)
14. Technology for Living ($15,000)

Appendix C

Resolution (RTS 18672): Proactively Protecting Residents from Dangerous Heat

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

A. THAT Council acknowledge the City's extensive measures to protect residents from extreme and dangerous heat levels and affirm Council's commitment to delivering extended access to cooling centres, spaces, and related infrastructure throughout the summer months, acknowledging the life-threatening impact of prolonged heat exposure on the City's residents, and

FURTHER THAT staff be directed to implement a vigorous and urgent public\information campaign around the City's extreme heat measure in anticipation of the coming heat of summer.

B. THAT staff provide a memo to Council outlining the City's extensive and reasonable measures to protect residents from extreme and dangerous heat levels within the context of the City's jurisdiction and resources, including information regarding (but not limited to):

1. the City's robust network of community centres and public library branches that are open throughout the summer that provide access to indoor space.

2. the City's established extreme heat response activation guidelines, which are aligned with Provincial guidelines, and activated by the City in collaboration with a focussed number of external partners who provide effective cooling spaces during declared extreme heat events.

3. incremental costs for activating cooling centres during declared extreme heat events which are recoverable from the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness.

4. Park Board's tree modeling work currently underway that will assess gaps in tree canopy and inform tree planting priorities, as well as scheduled work by PDS sustainability staff related to analysis of cooling dead zones scheduled to begin at the end of 2026 and be completed by December 2027.

5. strategic partnerships and other strategic relationships with organizations such as the Food Bank that enhance the City's preparedness for extreme heat events.

C. THAT Council direct staff to contact the Province to discuss the need to enable emergency funding for municipalities to proactively pre-distribute cool kits and AQ kits for vulnerable residents through the provincially funded ESS program.