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**Date:** 7/16/2018 4:17:08 PM  
**Subject:** Memo - Impacts and Costs of 2018 4/20 Cannabis Protests  
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Greetings Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Malcolm Bromley and myself regarding the Impacts and Costs of the 2018 4/20 Cannabis Protests. Feel free to contact either of us if you have any questions.

Best,  
Sadhu and Malcolm

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## MEMORANDUM

July 13, 2018

TO : Mayor, Council & Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Sadhu A. Johnston – City Manager, City of Vancouver  
Malcolm Bromley - General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation

SUBJECT : **Impacts and Costs of 2018 4/20 Cannabis Protests**

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The purpose of this memo is to provide Mayor and Council and Park Board Commissioners with an overview of the cannabis protest events that took place at Sunset Beach Park on April 20, 2018, including costs incurred for public safety operations.

### Overview

4/20 is the name adopted by cannabis-legalization protest events that occur annually around the world on April 20. In Vancouver, these events were traditionally held at the Vancouver Art Gallery commencing in 1995. Due to space constraints and associated public safety issues, as well as redevelopment of the Art Gallery north plaza, organizers relocated the primary event to Sunset Beach Park in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Similar to past years, the 2018 4/20 protest events were conducted without permits from either the City of Vancouver or the Vancouver Park Board. However, due to the size and impact of the protests, the City, Park Board, and Vancouver Police Department were compelled to undertake significant public safety planning and operations. In addition, in order to reduce impacts on neighboring residents and ensure a more orderly load-in with the objective of decreasing park damage, the Park Board allowed organizers to set up large equipment and infrastructure the day prior to the event (April 19).

On April 20, 2018, the VPD estimated that 40,000 people were present at Sunset Beach Park at the peak of the protest. Furthermore, it is estimated that there were approximately 482 vendor tents at the event.

The VPD had no major incidents at Sunset Beach but did make two arrests – one youth was arrested for assault and weapons charges and one man was arrested for breaching his release conditions.

Unlike recent years, there was no significant cannabis protest at the VAG in 2018. In early 2018, there was a significant presence of illegal cannabis vending on the south side of the Vancouver Art Gallery which was addressed through a progressive communication and enforcement campaign by City staff and VPD. On April 20, City and VPD resources also attended to the Vancouver Art Gallery to ensure the illegal vending did not return to this area. While some vendors did return, communication and enforcement efforts were successful in deterring vending at the VAG.

## Impacts

The following tables summarize the number of complaints received via 3-1-1, parking enforcement actions and medical responses at the two protest locations. Additional impacts of the events included diminished air quality, amplified noise/music, traffic disruption, public service disruption and restricted access to the seawall adjacent to Sunset Beach. The grass field at Sunset Beach Park also sustained damage and was closed for one month.

### Complaints to 311

Site	2017	2018
Sunset Beach Park	60	53
Vancouver Art Gallery	9	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>55</b>

Most complaints were related to:

- the lack of bylaw and law enforcement at the events;
- non-permitted events inappropriately characterized as protests;
- resident access in the impacted area;
- noise; and
- diminished air quality.

### Parking enforcement actions

Type of Parking Enforcement Action	2017	2018
Bylaw tickets issued	320	209
Vehicles towed	240	170
<b>Total</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>379</b>

Overall tickets were down almost 35%, and impounds down almost 32% over 2017 figures. Inclement weather, two less bike patrol Officers and heavy police enforcement are likely the causes of the decrease. Feedback from Parking Enforcement Officers was that it was a very busy event.

### Medical response

Type of Medical Response	2017	2018
Transport to St. Paul's Hospital	19	13
Treated by MedTech (the first aid provider contracted by the event organizers)	6	30
Subjects refused treatment	14	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>60</b>



## Costs

As is the case with other large, unpermitted protest events, the City, Park Board and VPD incurred significant operational costs to maintain public safety during these events. The costs associated with supporting the events are outlined in the table below.

Department	Sunset Beach Park Site		Vancouver Art Gallery Site		Total	
<b>Incremental Costs (e.g. materials, overtime, staff called-out for the event)</b>						
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
Parks and Recreation	\$34,630	\$37,554	\$0	\$0	\$34,630	\$37,554
Vancouver Fire and Rescue		\$18,023		\$0	\$11,760	\$18,023
Vancouver Police Department	\$127,245	\$139,699	\$43,425	\$44,968	\$170,670	\$184,667
Engineering (Streets & Traffic, Parking Enforcement and Sanitation)	\$5,760	\$11,285	\$21,189	\$17,205	\$25,949	\$28,490
Emergency Management	\$2,370	\$807	\$0	\$0	\$2,370	\$807
311						\$982
<b>Total incremental costs</b>					<b>\$245,379</b>	<b>\$ 270,523</b>
<b>Non-Incremental Costs (e.g. regular wages for staff redeployed from regular activities)</b>						
Non-Incremental Costs - Parks	\$32,126	\$27,316	\$0	\$0	\$32,126	\$ 27,316
Non-Incremental Costs - Eng	\$2,360	\$1,690	\$2,360	\$2,030	\$4720	\$ 3,720
<b>Total non-incremental costs</b>					<b>\$36,846</b>	<b>\$ 31,036</b>
<b>Total Costs (combined incremental and non-incremental costs)</b>					<b>\$282,225</b>	<b>\$ 301,559</b>

Consistent with correspondence that was provided to the organizers in advance of the event, the Park Board has invoiced the organizers for their share of event-related incremental and non-incremental expenses (including but not limited to the costs associated with restoring grass areas at Sunset Beach Park, park event fees, staffing expenses, sanitation costs, lost revenues, parking, etc.) in the amount of \$64,870.

The City of Vancouver has also invoiced the organizers for the staffing costs for VFRS, VPD, Engineering (Parking Enforcement, Street Operations, Sanitation, and Traffic Operations), Emergency Management, and 311, in the amount of \$170,796.

## Summary

While the City, Park Board and VPD have been successful in mitigating safety issues associated with the 4/20 protest events, the associated costs incurred by the City, Park Board, and VPD are significant as the scale of the event increases.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Regards,



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