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Date: 11/4/2020 12:38:04 PM
Subject: Memo: COVID19 – Update on Emergency Operations Centre Activation
Attachments: Memo_Update on Emergency Centre Operations Activation_Nov 3 2020.pdf

Greetings Mayor and Council,

The attached memo provides Council with an update on the activation of the City's emergency response infrastructure in support of our COVID19 pandemic response.

The EOC remains active to maintain situational awareness, liaise with and support health authorities, and coordinate response activities across the organization, particularly those initiatives focused on supporting populations disproportionately impacted. It is expected to remain activated for the foreseeable future.

Please let me know if you require any additional information.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

November 3, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Daniel Stevens, Director of Emergency Management

FROM: Paul Mochrie
Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: COVID19 – Update on Emergency Operations Centre Activation

This memo is intended to provide Council with an update on the activation of the City's emergency response infrastructure in support of our COVID19 pandemic response. The pandemic continues to present significant operational challenges for the organization, particularly given increased demands for service, adaptations required to protect staff and public safety and the complexity inherent in the restoration of services that were closed during the first wave of the pandemic. The Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) serves a central role in management of the City's response to this crisis.

Background

The City of Vancouver initially activated its Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 9, 2020, and it has remained active since. Led by the Vancouver Emergency Management Agency (VEMA), the EOC serves as a mechanism to monitor the evolving situation and coordinate City efforts to address the impacts of the pandemic, support the safe delivery of the City's services and assist health authorities and other partners.

The EOC quickly ramped up to a level three (full activation) and operated at that level for the first wave of the pandemic, including up to 150 staff operating within its framework at the peak. On July 6^h, the EOC activation was scaled back to level one (monitoring and coordination

functions) to reflect the transition of many operational responsibilities to other departments. Throughout the summer, the EOC continued to provide coordination support to department operations monitored the pandemic situation and coordinated with health authorities and other partners involved with COVID-19 response.

On September 30th, in response to increasing COVID transmission within the community, the EOC activation was escalated to provide additional capacity for coordination and support to departments and local health authorities, and in anticipation of the need supports to people experiencing homelessness or who are precariously housed over the winter months.

We expect that the EOC will remain activated for the foreseeable future. An overview of the current response initiatives coordinated by the EOC is provided below.

Current EOC Response Initiatives

1. Situational Awareness

As a core function, the EOC is responsible for monitoring the COVID19 emergency, direction from public health authorities and senior governments and the associated implications for City departments and the community, including food security risks, impacts for vulnerable populations and capacity constraints for non-profit agencies.

As a support to City operations, the EOC monitors and provides regular reporting on financial impacts and cost recovery from senior governments, critical supply inventories, enforcement activities and COVID exposures in City facilities.

2. Hygiene and water access

Early on in the pandemic, many services supporting our most vulnerable residents in the downtown eastside and downtown south closed or limited capacity. These service disruptions impacted access to basic hygiene services including washrooms, handwashing, and access to water. In response, the City deployed temporary hygiene infrastructure to address these needs.

Washroom Trailers

The EOC continues to support the operations of three washroom trailers located at and supported by partner organizations. The washrooms are monitored by peers during operating hours and provide the opportunity to connect patrons with additional support services. The washroom trailers are located at:

Location	Partner
334 Alexander Street, Vancouver	WISH Drop In Centre Society
62 E. Hastings St., Vancouver	Overdose Prevention Society
998 E 19th Ave, Vancouver	RainCity Housing and Support Society and Church of the Nazarene

The trailer at 998 E 19th Ave (Kingsway) is unique in that it operates overnight due to the primary population it supports (sex workers in the Kingsway area). This poses additional operational challenges for the Kingsway location, particularly over the winter months. ACCS is working with RainCity Housing and the John Howard Society to explore transitioning hygiene access from an outdoor trailer to an indoor bricks-and-mortar location nearby.

Expanded Washroom Access

In response to direction from Council, the EOC is assessing options to increase washroom access in the West End and Downtown South. Options being explored include deploying peer-supported washroom trailers (similar to the three existing trailers) as well as extending hours at existing facilities.

Handwashing Stations and Portable Water Fountains

The City deployed portable handwashing stations and water fountains (some connected to misters to mitigate the impacts of heat during the summer) during the summer. This temporary water and handwashing infrastructure is being removed as it is not winterized and subject to damage from freezing temperatures. Throughout the past few months, many City and not-for-profit services have re-started operations, thereby increasing brick-and-mortar access to handwashing and water. The EOC is currently assessing the gap that will be left after the temporary infrastructure has been decommissioned and is assessing options to supplement temporary access to water and handwashing over the winter.

3. Support to Health Authorities

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) have both requested support in accessing City space to meet needs for an expanded influenza immunization campaign, COVID-19 testing, and temporary clinical support facilities (i.e. Emergency Response Centres), and addressing a significant backlog in school-aged immunizations. As the pandemic progresses and needs evolve, we expect to receive additional requests from the health sector.

In conjunction with Park Board, ACCS, REFM and VPL, the EOC coordinates the City's response to such requests. This role includes assessing City-owned spaces that may meet the health authorities' operational needs, exploring third-party options on behalf of the health authorities, and connecting the health authorities to external organizations with suitable facilities (e.g. cultural centres).

4. Space Allocation

The City continues to respond to a range of demands for reallocation of public space to assist businesses, non-profits, health agencies and residents in coping with the impacts of the pandemic. The EOC is coordinating a multi-pronged initiative to address these demands through existing processes and to explore new solutions for issues that cannot be accommodated through those channels.

Temporary Outdoor Events

The Film and Special Event Office (FASE) is actively working to adapt existing policy and supporting business processes to support space requests for temporary outdoor events, such as pop-up immunization clinics.

Winterization of Outdoor Spaces

Since the first wave of COVID response, Street Activities has installed approximately 10 social service parklets to support respite, physical distancing and service provision, primarily in the DTES and Downtown South neighbourhoods. Street Activities (ENG) is working with partner organizations and internal COV departments to implement winterization solutions that consider safety, traffic management, snow and wind loading, snow and leaf clearance and drainage.

The EOC is also coordinating efforts to identify and evaluate options for the provision of additional weather-protected spaces accessible to the public (e.g. underneath bridges).

Additional Space Demands

The City has received a number of requests for assistance with space requirements that, due to unique impacts or complexities, cannot be met through existing parklet, special event or patio permit programs. The Downtown Eastside Women's Centre request to expand services to road right-of-way is an example of such a request. The EOC is coordinating an inter-departmental working group to evaluate and respond to these requests, considering factors such as social vulnerability, functional needs, indoor space availability (public and private), cost and risk.

5. Food and Cleaning Support for residents of Single Room Occupancy (SROs)

City staff have been working with VCH and BC Housing to provide for targeted delivery of food and cleaning services to residents of private SROs and the City's non-market housing operations. This support was initiated during the first wave and has been adjusted for during the second wave.

Food programs

- a) Direct Meal Provision in Congregate Settings – In order to support effective self-isolation and outbreak management, VCH is coordinating the targeted provision of food (and enhanced cleaning services) to residents in public and private SROs, as part of their case management process. Funding for food and cleaning is provided by BC Housing to the end of 2020.
- b) Community Mobilized Food Programs in SROs – The City is working on a proposed strategy to leverage community groups (specifically SRO Collaborative) to support a meal delivery program in private SROs that is linked to cultural, harm reduction and peer empowerment programming. The priority for this stream is to support Indigenous Elders and seniors, Chinese-dialect-speaking seniors who are linguistically isolated, and tenants with mobility constraints or underlying health conditions. Funding for this stream is actively being sought through BC Housing.
- c) Non-Market Housing Food Program – some tenants in City non-marking housing buildings are being provided prepared/frozen meals via Langara Golf. This program is also being funded by BC Housing until December 31, 2020.

Cleaning Kits

In late August, the EOC procured 1,000 cleaning kits to support SRO residents in reducing the risk of COVID transmission where cases are identified in a particular building. Cleaning kits include hand soap, nitrile gloves, surgical face masks, hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes, along with an instruction guide (in English, Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese) and VCH Cleaning Guideline.

Since October 2, 144 cleaning kits have been directly deployed to private SROs and COVID19 testing clinics on VCH's direction. The VCH testing clinic also distributes kits, on an as-need basis, to individuals without a fixed address or who are staying in shelters. The EOC is currently working with the ATIRA Supplies Hub to seek external funding and donations to continue the program once the initial stock of kits is depleted.

6. Food Security

Since April, ACCS has been updating and distributing a [Free and Low Cost Food Services map](#) to the public and to community agencies. Since June, the map has been translated from English to Traditional Chinese, Tagalog, Punjabi, and Vietnamese languages. Francophone Affairs BC (FABC) has also partnered with the City to support distribution of a French translation of this resource. ACCS will continue working with the City's GIS team, Civic Engagement and Communications staff and FABC to support ongoing updates, translation and distribution of the interactive and static map.

7. Donations Management

During the first wave of the pandemic, the City worked with ATIRA to establish and support a supplies hub to manage third party donations of critical supplies and to distribute these critical supplies to not-for-profit organizations providing essential services in the downtown eastside and downtown core. While the volume of offers to the City has decreased, the EOC continue to direct donations to the ATIRA Supply Hub. ATIRA is also leveraging its own networks to meet the current demand. The EOC maintains liaison with the ATIRA hub and is monitoring the capacity of the hub to fulfill supply needs.

If you require any additional information regarding the EOC or the work being coordinated through the EOC, please do not hesitate to contact me.



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