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Date: 11/26/2020 11:09:49 AM
Subject: Memo - Potential 2021 Investments in Street Cleaning
Attachments: Memo to Council - Potential 2021 Investments in Street Cleaning.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

The attached memo provides Council with an update on Street Cleanliness including additional actions taken to date in 2020, as well as potential ongoing and one-time investments in Street Cleaning programs that could be implemented to address challenges in maintaining public realm cleanliness through 2021.

The report outlines:

- 1) Background information
- 2) Review of key metrics to date
- 3) Summary of key issues impacting the street cleanliness
- 4) Potential additional actions for 2021 and the costs.

The potential new investments noted are not included in the 2021 base budget; however, \$675,000 for one-time street cleaning initiatives was included in the 2021 Budget Council report as a consideration. Details of the \$675,000 in one-time initiatives are included in the attached memo as well as options for ongoing street cleaning initiatives totalling up to \$1,550,000.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Patrice Impey at (604) 873-7610 or patrice.impey@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Sadhu

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Pronouns: he, him, his



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

MEMORANDUM

November 25, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy 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
Jon McDermott Branch Manager, Solid Waste Programs Services
Mike Zupan, Branch Manager, Sanitation Operations

FROM: Patrice Impey
General Manager, Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management

SUBJECT: Potential 2021 Investments in Street Cleaning

The purpose of this memo is to respond to requests to provide Council with a summary of actions taken to date in 2020, as well as potential ongoing and one-time investments in the City's Street Cleaning programs, to address challenges in maintaining public realm cleanliness through 2021. The report outlines background information, a review of the key metrics to date, a issues impacting the situation, and potential additional actions. The potential new investments noted are not included in the 2021 base budget; however, \$675,000 for one-time street cleaning initiatives was included in the 2021 Budget Council report as a consideration. Details of the \$675,000 in one-time initiatives are included in this memo as well as options for ongoing street cleaning initiatives totalling up to \$1,550,000.

Background

Over the past several years Vancouver has experienced a significant growth in transients, homelessness and encampments, along with the associated increases in litter, debris, abandoned materials, urine, feces and needles in the public realm. Service needs in some areas, including the Downtown Eastside (DTES), Granville Street, the downtown core, Chinatown, Gastown, Yaletown, East Hastings and Strathcona have increased drastically. Individual Councillors as well as Council as a whole, have been approached by residents, businesses, BIAs and community groups to increase the level of street cleaning services to address the increasing challenges.

Engineering resources allocated directly to maintaining street cleanliness, the majority provided

through Sanitation Services, are under more and more pressure to provide higher levels of services City wide, in particular around encampments and areas impacted by increased homelessness and transients. Since the beginning of the pandemic these resources have been reallocated, diverting them from areas of lower need to areas of higher need. Increased services being provided in the DTES, around Strathcona, and on Granville to address challenges in those areas draws more resources from a service that is already stretched thin. The impact of this is that in other areas, like Chinatown where demand is high, additional servicing is not possible or those areas may even witness reduced levels of service.

Street Cleaning Metrics

Metrics gathered for the last 3 years, illustrated in Table 1, show a steady increase in demand for servicing, as well as significant increases in the amount of material collected by Sanitation and under the Street Cleaning Grant Program. Despite lower demand via 311, the need for service increased drastically in the DTES and surrounding areas, where more people were on the street due to shelters/outreach and other services being closed. The level of effort required from Sanitation services, working jointly with the EOC to meet demand is much higher than would be illustrated through 311 calls.

As restrictions were loosened and more people were out on the street and in parks, there was an immediate increase in 311 service requests from the public, particularly in City parks, as well as extra service request from the EOC, from ACCS, BIAs and community groups.

Table 1 – Street Cleaning Metrics

Metric	2018	2019	2020 projected
All Street Cleaning calls	25,775	26,067	28,000
Abandoned calls	21,608	21,963	22,500
Litter/debris calls	2,266	2,737	2,740
Sidewalk littercan calls	1,716	1,175	750*
Feces calls	167	871	800*
Discarded needle calls	3,460	5,204	5,400
Abandoned items collected – Sanitation	130,867	164,216	197,650
Needles collected – Grant Program	72,608	116,771	75,000 (reduced service Mar-May)

*reflects 3 months COVID-19 of lockdowns and closures during March to May

Key Issues

The following outlines some of the main areas of concern.

Urine and feces - Over the past 3 years there have been increasing issues and subsequent complaints about urine and feces in the public realm, most notably in areas around encampments and in the downtown core. Although staff are working on longer term solutions to provide more washroom facilities, there is an immediate need to address this problem as there is currently no dedicated program to deal with this issue.

Litter and debris - Over the past 3 years as homelessness, transients and encampments have continued to grow, litter and debris have followed. The number of discarded needles continues to grow and COVID has significantly reduced the number of volunteer cleanups across the City and brought about a new PPE litter problem (masks, gloves, wipes). Higher capacity litter cans have been placed in many areas of the downtown. This has resulted in a significant reduction in overflowing calls, but more receptacles are needed to meet the demand.

Urban issues - Due to increased homelessness, transients and encampments City wide there is an increased response needed to collect abandoned waste & encampment cleanups both at large encampment sites and in locations which have migrated outside typical areas. Dedicated Urban issues crews are trained on how to appropriately and safely deal with these cleanups.

Potential Areas of Investment

Table 2 attached, provides a listing of potential investment in program enhancements to increase the levels of service in key areas of the City most affected. The table is sectioned into two categories, 1) issues that staff feel are ongoing challenges, and 2) issues that appear to have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and encampments and could be addressed with one-time funding in 2021. For each potential investment proposed, the areas of focus, a brief program description and the cost is provided. If all programs were approved the total investment for 2021 would be \$2.2M, of which \$1.6M would be related to ongoing demand and \$0.7M would be one-time related to COVID-19. The amounts represent the maximum additional investment that could be implemented in 2021; however, the investment could be scaled down to lower amount and would be focused on the highest priority areas.

Table 2 - List of investments

Issue	Areas	Comments	Program	Amount
Urine and Feces	DTES, DVBIA, Chinatown, Yaletown, Gastown, Hastings Crossing, Strathcona,	Over the past 3 years there have been increasing issues with Urine and Feces in the public realm due to increases in homelessness and transients.	Add daytime flushing in key laneways and alleys from March to October. The flushers can not be used in the winter due to potential for freezing and damage to equipment	\$125,000
Litter and Debris	DTES, DVBIA, Chinatown, Yaletown, Gastown, Hastings Crossing, Strathcona, Broadway, Parks in the area	Over the past 3 years as homelessness, transients and encampments have continued to grow litter and debris have followed.	Add a dedicated daytime cleanup crew (6 people) and sidewalk sweepers to provide regular cleaning of sidewalks.	\$600,000
Micro cleaning - Social Enterprises	DTES, DVBIA, Chinatown,	Additional cleaning support is needed to address increases in needles and litter on sidewalks.	Expand the social enterprise micro-cleaning - Grant Program	\$150,000
Litter and Debris	City wide	Due to increasing demand there is a need for additional litter cans throughout the City.	300 additional litter cans and crew to collect.	\$250,000
Litter and Debris	City Wide	Increase daytime sweeping in hotspots outside downtown core	Additional Sweeper Operator - Dayshift	\$125,000
Urban Issues	City wide	Due to increased homelessness, transients and encampments City wide there is an increased response needed to collect abandoned waste & encampment cleanups which have migrated outside typical areas	Additional 3 staff to support expanding services to challenging areas around the City.	\$300,000
Total ongoing				\$1,550,000

Issue	Areas	Comments	Program	Amount
Urban Issues	DTES, DVBIA, Strathcona	Increasing efforts needed to address encampments, transients, homelessness, street camping and vending	Supports additional 6 staff and equipment for 2nd round of daily cleaning on Hastings, increased abandoned waste & encampment cleanups around Strathcona and City wide	\$600,000
Litter and Debris	DTES, DVBIA, Chinatown, Yaletown, Gastown, Hastings Crossing, Strathcona, Broadway, Parks in the area	Over the past 3 years as homelessness, transients and encampments have continued to grow litter and debris have followed.	Add a dedicated daytime cleanup crew (6 people) and sidewalk sweepers to provide regular cleaning of sidewalks.	\$75,000
Total one-time				\$675,000

As alternatives to the plan set out in the above table, the investment amounts in the table above could be adjusted as follows:

- The litter and debris ongoing investment could be reduced by \$200,000 by reducing 2 FTE with a reduced focus on the DTES and Strathcona. The focus would be on DVBIA, Chinatown, Yaletown, and Gastown only.
- The increase in daytime sweeping in hotspots outside downtown core investment could be reduced by \$125,000 by not including this activity.
- The one-time investment in urban issues in DTES, DVBIA, and Strathcona could be reduced by \$200,000 by reducing 2 staff and focusing only on Hastings and Strathcona.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at patrice.impey@vancouver.ca / 604.873.7610.

Best Regards,



Patrice Impey

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