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To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"
Date: 3/13/2020 7:07:12 PM
Subject: COVID-19 update: March 13, 7:00pm

Good evening Mayor and Council,

I am writing to provide an update on the progress of the outbreak and our response over the past 24 hours.

Public health

In her media conference this afternoon, Dr. Henry confirmed that an additional 11 cases of COVID-19 have been identified in the last 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 64. 2 of those cases are currently in hospital and 6 have recovered. 39 of the 64 cases have been identified in the VCH region, which includes Vancouver, Richmond, the North Shore, Sea to Sky and Sunshine Coast. All 11 of the new cases were identified within the Vancouver Coastal region.

For 9 of the 11 new cases, public health has identified the source of transmission. 2 remain under investigation. 4 of the new cases are associated with transmission in health care facilities.

Dr. Henry also confirmed that she will be issuing a statutory order formalizing the directive announced yesterday regarding cancellation of gatherings of more than 250 people. That order will enable some event organizers to access insurance coverage for business losses.

Minister Dix indicated that further details will be released over the weekend regarding expansion of the provincial COVID-19 testing network. Our staff have been in contact with health officials to support those efforts, as required.

Event & program impacts

City, Parks and VPL staff are reviewing all events and programs in the context of public health directives on mass gatherings and social distancing. Large events (250+ attendees) will be cancelled or postponed; the list of impacted events is posted on vancouver.ca and will be updated on an ongoing basis. Parks has also taken immediate steps to limit capacity in pools and closing saunas and steam rooms.

Staff are also reviewing smaller events and programs to assess exposure risks and mitigation opportunities. The EOC has developed a risk assessment tool to guide those decisions based on criteria published by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

We will continue to update our external communications to reflect any further operational changes and service curtailments, as may be warranted.

Support to vulnerable residents

We have been successful in securing commitment from BCH and VCH to participate in a task force focused on the particular requirements for support to vulnerable residents in the DTES and other neighbourhoods. That task force will be convening at the EOC tomorrow to continue operational planning, with support from our EOC team. Sadhu is also in contact with senior provincial officials on this issue and has reinforced the need for attention on the part of the province.

Support to staff who are ill or in isolation

In consultation with other Metro municipalities, we have established a framework to address compensation issues for employees who are required to self-isolate or who may become ill and do not have access to regular sick leave benefits. That framework has been shared with union representatives and communicated to all staff this afternoon.

Communications

We are dedicating significant effort to our internal and external communications regarding the pandemic. We have established a regular daily cadence of posts and will continue to brief the media as circumstances warrant. We will also work to ensure Council is apprised of those external messages and opportunities to amplify.

The EOC will remain operational over the weekend. Thus far, our staff have done an tremendous job ramping up our capacity to manage the pandemic response and in adjusting to the highly dynamic nature of this emergency.

We will continue to provide you with a daily update on this situation. If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please let me know.

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.