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Subject: COVID Update

Good Evening Mayor and Council

I wanted to send you a quick update on our work in responding to the COVID pandemic.

City Operations

As we have discussed, our primary focus is to ensure that our services to the community can continue. We have been implementing our business continuity plans and have refined our essential services. We are working to ensure that adequate staff are allocated so that this work can continue in the event that employees are sick or in self-isolation. For now all services are operating. We have started a Redeployment Office to track redeployment opportunities necessary to keep our operations going, or to serve in new functions that are deemed necessary to address the pandemic.

City Staff

As I outlined in an earlier email, we are rolling-out our Workforce Adjustment Agreement. Staff across the organization have started to hear that they are being temporarily laid off. Obviously that's very difficult for everyone, but so far has been respectful and professionally handled. We have developed a decision tree for determining whether an employee works at home, at a worksite on essential services, or no longer has work. For those that don't have work, they can apply for redeployment opportunities.

Childcare

We have started an intake list for essential city workers in need of childcare. We are working with childcare providers and the province to get childcare opportunities allocated for city staff engaged in essential services. There remain barriers to overcome to get this fully up and running regarding liability, funding and childcare workers willingness to work.

Essential Services and Businesses

We have completed a list of services and businesses that we deem to be essential in the City. These include a variety of services from veterinarians, media, trades and non-profits that support vulnerable people. We have shared that list with the province, who we understand are also creating a list that they would use in the event of an order to close non-essential businesses.

Vulnerable People

Our work with VCH and BCH continues to progress very well. BCH has secured multiple hotels that will be used to house homeless or people in shelters that are COVID positive. We have two community centres that are ready to operate to support homeless or people in shelters that may have been exposed to COVID. That plan is now ready for deployment if cases emerge.

DTES

The conditions in the DTES continue to be a major concern for the City and VPD. Many of the critical services that people in the DTES rely on for hygiene, food, recreation and other supports are no longer available, so many more people are milling about in public. We have a severe lack of toilets and showers that we are working to address. We have secured a porta potty company that has agreed to provide the services in the DTES and will be delivering more toilets tonight and tomorrow. We are hearing that there is a lack of PPE for non-profit providers. We have been offering support with Atira, who are setting up a warehouse to provide PPE to organizations in the DTES. BCH with CoV support has brought in industrial cleaning companies to work on cleaning public and private SROs. We are hearing rumors that the border closure with the US is creating a shortfall in illicit drugs that many in the DTES rely on, so concerns are being raised about limit supplies. Overall, the general conditions in the DTES remain a major concern and focus for staff.

Economic Development and Recovery

Staff at the VEC have been working with my office to develop an a list of actions that we can undertake and that we can advocate to other levels of government to pursue. This work will continue in the days ahead.

I think that covers the big issues.

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.