

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)
To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 8/18/2022 4:53:56 PM
Subject: [Overdose crisis - property tax allocation](#)

Good afternoon Mayor and Council,

I understand that several members of Council have been contacted by media regarding the 0.5% increase to property taxes that was implemented by Council in 2016 to augment funding for the City's response to the overdose crisis. Global News also contacted our media line with questions on this same issue.

For your reference, I have copied below the information we provided to Global in response.

Best,
Paul

Rumina Daya – Global News – Opioid tax allocation

Could you please pull specific data for me pertaining to the 0.5% fentanyl tax which was approved by Vancouver city council in December 2016? Could you please advise how much has been collected from taxpayers? What was the money used for? Did the cash go into general revenue or is it specifically being spent on managing the fentanyl crisis?

The City introduced a 0.5 per cent property tax increase in December 2016 to enhance funding supports for the City's opioid crisis by \$3.5 million. Allocation of funds for 2017 and 2018 can be viewed here:

<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2018-11-15-opioid-tax-allocation.pdf>

The \$3.5 million in funding is built into the city's base budget. 2021 funds and current costs that continue to be funded in the 2022 budget are shown in the table below.

2019 Budget	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Overdose Response Initiative
2,430,000	2,430,000	2,430,000	2,430,000	Permanent funding for three-person medic unit in Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services and VPD Community Policing centres
370,000	470,000	470,000	470,000	Opioid crisis response
590,000	890,000	890,000	890,000	Incremental Micro Cleaning Grants in the Downtown Eastside
3,390,000	3,790,000	3,790,000	3,790,000	

Here is a breakdown of costs under the "opioid crisis response" category:

2019 Budget	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Breakdown of Opioid crisis response
\$310,000	\$310,000	\$310,000	\$310,000	City of Vancouver - Increased staffing in the DTES
\$60,000	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$160,000	VPD - operating maintenance drug containment facility (incremental increase of \$100K in 2020)
\$370,000	\$470,000	\$470,000	\$470,000	

The \$310,000 allocated to increase DTES staffing includes:

- Recruitment of a Planner and Planning Analyst to coordinate the City's response to drug policy, of which the opioid crisis is a key priority. These positions also work closely with Vancouver Coastal Health on opioid crisis response, and convene the Community Action Team (CAT) which comprises of approximately 25 organizations who are working on or are affected by the

crisis—including community members, health practitioners, Ambulance Services, VFRS and VPD. (Find out more about the work of the CAT in our [news release](#)).

- Outreach and engagement through community centre staff, peer support teams and other key City services engaged in the opioid crisis response.
- Support staff at Oppenheimer Park who prior to the closure of the encampment in summer 2020, worked in partnership with peers and community partners to provide overdose education and naloxone administration. Since the encampment closed, staff have continued outreach and engagement on the opioid crisis through programs and services based out of Carnegie Community Centre.

The City has a long-standing role in working with our health partners and people with lived experience to advocate for drug policy reform, harm reduction, recognizing mental health and substance use as a public health issue, not a criminal one, and promoting access to treatment and cultural approaches to healing. These costs can be difficult to fully measure because they are linked to mental health and other social issues.

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Snw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and salilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.