

# VANCOUVER FIRE RESCUE SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2026









## **Mission**

VFRS saves lives and builds safer communities.

## **Vision**

VFRS will be the international leader in fire, rescue, community risk reduction, and staff safety and wellness.



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECONCILIATION

The City of Vancouver and Vancouver Fire Rescue Services (VFRS) acknowledges that the land on which we live and work is the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7msesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał / Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We also acknowledge this place has been stewarded by them since time immemorial.

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services endeavours to honour their history, uphold their voice, and acknowledge the hurts and harms of the past. We believe our work together can contribute to the healing journey we all share. We recognize the importance in understanding the longstanding history that has brought us to reside on this land. We seek to understand our place within that history and are grateful for the opportunity to do so.

VFRS values the opportunity to learn, share and serve our community on these unceded lands. Our vision for reconciliation is to continue to engage and build strong relationships and collaborative partnerships with local First Nations and urban Indigenous peoples that builds on the work in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) strategy and Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.



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## MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



Since 1886, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services has protected the residents, visitors, and businesses of the City of Vancouver. We have a proud history of service to our city, connection to our communities and supporting each other. We have learned many lessons since we were founded, and now we are a department that has positioned itself as a leader in the Canadian and North American fire service (while always being honest about how we can be better).

Today, we are Canada's busiest fire department in terms of emergency calls per firefighter. The opioid crisis and other sociodemographic impacts, including severe housing and homelessness challenges, have led to significant risks for us to overcome. Our population is aging and diverse, and the west-end is the most densely populated neighborhood in North America.

Vancouver is one of the most beautiful places to live, VFRS is proud to serve this community, but it does not come without risks. The men and women of VFRS who serve this complex community must be highly trained and prepared to handle today's complex emergencies. Over the past decade, our city has seen radical changes and continual growth in the community served. VFRS strives to adapt to the changes required to protect this community and deal with the new and evolving risks. We partner and collaborate with partners to deal with the many challenging issues confronting our communities (e.g., epidemics, vulnerable communities, mental health, disasters, etc.).

As you review this plan, I hope you consider the critical role and risks our team plays in the success of our Fire Service and our commitment to public service and to continued improvement in the fire service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Fry'.

Karen Fry  
**Fire Chief**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vancouver Fire Rescue Services plays a critical role in protecting the community, the property, and the environment from the destructive effects of fires and other emergencies. VFRS provides effective response and ensures public safety by responding to public service calls, providing fire prevention and education, and promoting community preparedness.

To effectively carry out its mission, VFRS requires a well-trained and equipped workforce, adequate funding and resources, and strong partnerships with other emergency response agencies and community organizations. VFRS staff must possess the necessary skills and knowledge to respond quickly and safely to a variety of emergencies. In addition to responding to emergencies, the fire service is also responsible for conducting fire prevention and education programs. These programs aim to reduce the number of fires and the damage they cause by educating the public about fire safety and promoting the use of smoke alarms and other fire prevention measures.

The world worked its way through the COVID-19 Pandemic and VFRS pivoted its response to maintain safety for the citizens of Vancouver.

In alignment with Council priorities for 2023-2026, VFRS will focus on, but not limited to, the following;



Invest in preventing fires



Be prepared for large-scale emergencies



Do our part to ensure Vancouver residents are physically and mentally healthy



Work with the Province and other partners to address the mental health and addiction crisis



Advance the City of Vancouver United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Task Force recommended actions



Responsible financial management



A high-performing, engaged workforce



Continuous focus on improving efficiency, effectiveness, and customer service

This VFRS 2024-26 Strategic Plan outlines the priorities, key challenges, strategies, and tactics to guide VFRS toward becoming a recognized international leader of fire service. VFRS' main focus is the safety of its people and the community. This plan includes five (5) strategic priorities and twenty (20) associated objectives and 76 tangible and actionable deliverables that can be measured.

- 1. Deliver Exceptional Response**
- 2. Training for Professional Development and Organizational Succession**
- 3. Commitment to Continuous Improvement and Operational Excellence**
- 4. Promote a Safe and Healthy Workforce that also represents the Diverse Community Served**
- 5. Enhance Community Safety and Education**





## VFRS STATEMENTS

### Mission

VFRS saves lives and builds safer communities.

### Vision

VFRS will be the international leader in fire, rescue, community risk reduction, and staff safety and wellness.

### Values

**Teamwork** - WE display commitment and trust through collaborative communication and actions

**Courage** – WE have the conviction to defend our values and willingness to challenge the process

**Integrity** – WE demonstrate sound moral and ethical principles

**Respect** – WE encourage opinions and ideas of self and others

**Compassion** – WE demonstrate empathy for others, offer guidance and acknowledge strengths

**Leadership** – WE inspire and empower others to achieve the best results

**Excellence** – WE surpass expectations and set benchmarks to measurably be the best



## STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

VFRS faces both opportunities and risks in its efforts to protect public safety and respond efficiently and effectively to emergencies. Understanding these as strengths and challenges is essential for the effective management of the department and ensuring continued success and fulfilling our mission.

### STRENGTHS

#### **Safety Culture:**

A commitment to safety for both personnel and the community demonstrates a strong safety culture, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries.

#### **Quick Response Times:**

Efficient response times to emergency calls showcase the organization's capability to rapidly address incidents and provide assistance.

#### **Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion:**

Embracing diversity and fostering an inclusive environment can attract and retain a diverse workforce and strengthen community relations.



#### **Community Trust:**

A strong relationship with the community can be a major strength, as it facilitates cooperation, support, and effective communication during emergencies and public education efforts.

#### **Advancements in Technology:**

Advances and access to new equipment and technology can provide the fire service with tools to improve operational efficiency, enhance communication, and increase safety.

#### **Partnerships and Collaboration:**

Collaborating with other emergency response agencies, public safety partners, and community organizations helps identify and address potential risks, share resources, reduce costs, and more effectively serve the community.

#### **Proactive Community Fire Prevention:**

Focusing on a proactive approach to services helps reduce the number of emergencies and minimize their impact, promoting public safety and community resilience.

#### **Strong Leadership:**

Effective leadership within the fire service enhances decision-making, fosters a culture of collaboration, and promotes alignment with the organization's goals.

#### **Data Driven Decision Making:**

Utilization of data and analytics to inform decision-making enhances operational effectiveness and resource allocation.

#### **Open Minded and Supportive City Council:**

Aligning with the strategic priorities that benefit the City of Vancouver and prioritizing safety.



# CHALLENGES

## Increasing Demands:

The fire service faces increasing demands due to population growth, urbanization, and changes in the built environment. This can lead to more calls for service and a greater need for specialized skills and training. Call volume increases are leading to high levels of fatigue and burnout amongst firefighters while stretching department resources thin and increasing overtime costs.

## Opioid Epidemic:

British Columbia has been dealing with a public health emergency related to overdose deaths and Vancouver is the epicentre of this and recorded 26%<sup>1</sup> of BCs unregulated drug deaths. VFRS responds to an alarming number of overdose-related calls which not only affect the community but the ability to respond and the mental health of our responders.

## Changing Threats:

The nature of emergency response is constantly evolving, and the fire service must be prepared to respond to new and emerging threats. This includes climate change effects such as earthquakes, wildfires, and environmental impacts; as well as changing technologies (e.g. Lithium batteries, lockable lighters), new and increased regulations for training.

## Social Housing in High-Risk Communities:

The City continues to address the issue of those unhoused, including encampments through a variety of means, including providing temporary housing and support services, increasing affordable housing options, and enforcing laws against camping in public spaces. However, the problem remains ongoing and complex, with no easy solutions. Vancouver currently has 25% of the region's overall population but operates 75% of the region's shelter spaces and supportive housing units<sup>2</sup>.

## Budget Constraints:

One of the primary risks facing the fire service is limited funding and resources. Budget pressures affect the ability to maintain an adequate workforce, purchase equipment and supplies, and maintain facilities and infrastructure.

## Other Factors to Consider and Plan for:

- Aging infrastructure and fleet
- Limited capacity and restrictions at training facility
- Fire inspection program overload
- Support resources to align and scale with growth
- Improvement of policy delivery
- BCEHS/Paramedic support
- Compassion fatigue
- Mental health, resource

<sup>1</sup> SOURCE: BC CORONER'S SERVICE (DATA TO END OF AUGUST 2023)

<sup>2</sup> SOURCE: BC CORONER'S SERVICE (2023), METRO VANCOUVER (2023)

## RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed allocation of Growth Plan
- Defined and Implemented turnout time targets
- Hall #17 completed and in service – net-zero build
- Increased media coverage to educate community
- Canada's first electric fire fighting apparatus in service
- Expanded fire life safety training
- Completed 30yr station location plan
- Addressed issues and gaps in health care response delivery with partners (EMR)
- Improved resource allocation to align with risk
- Streamlined call evaluation and dispatch processes to ensure efficient emergency response resources
- Expanded community outreach programs (e.g. Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) education and training)
- Continue to develop the Public Information Officer (PIO) roles and public reach as well as the Combined Overdose Response Team (CORT) program
- Staff received Resilient Minds training to enhance mental health awareness
- Developed and initiated a risk-based inspection model
- Initiated health screening for staff focusing on risks associated with Cancer and Cardio
- Formed equity committees and working groups to advice leadership





## GAPS FROM LAST STRATEGIC PLAN

Identifying goals and initiatives in the previous strategic plan that may not have been fully achieved, addressing these as gaps with a corrective action, will aid in the success of the current plan. Some areas that have been identified as missed opportunities include:

### **Public Relations and Communications:**

Lack of reporting and transparent communication. Strategies were not sufficiently outlined nor were updates provided to staff for awareness and participation.

### **Resource Allocation:**

Decreasing community hazards while increasing resource availability.

### **Training Review:**

A fulsome analysis of the training program, delivery and division is required to correct the unproportioned ratio of training officers and support staff.

### **Environmental Concerns:**

Environmental impacts and initiatives related to climate change and sustainability were not given enough emphasis.

### **Emerging Technologies:**

New emerging technologies were not adequately incorporated. This may include advancements in firefighting equipment, communication tools, or data analytics.

### **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Reconciliation:**

Previous plan did not adequately address initiatives within the organization impacting community relations.

### **Collaborations and Partnerships:**

Opportunities with other agencies, organizations or neighbouring fire services could have been further explored and integrated.

### **Overtime Occurrences:**

Overtime was at an all-time high which not only affects budget but more importantly effects employee mental and physical abilities and possibly increase safety concerns.

### **Performance Metrics and Monitoring:**

VFRS needs to establish more clear key performance indicators for ongoing evaluation.

### **Employee Wellness:**

Increasing employee wellness, resources, such as counseling, and direct positive contact to effectually reduce the gradual employee absenteeism.

To address and mitigate these gaps going forward, VFRS commits to communicating new developments, hearing feedback, and reviewing lessons learned on a continual basis to ensure the success of this plan. VFRS plans to remain transparent, adaptable, and responsive to changing circumstances that occur while striving for continuous improvement



## RESPONSE

### DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL RESPONSE

Public safety is the main priority for Vancouver Fire Rescue Services; this includes saving lives, property and protecting the environment as effectively and efficiently as possible.

VFRS strives to provide emergency response and emergency planning services that are the best in the country and that make Vancouver safe and enjoyable. Our approach is a commitment to ensuring effective and operational safe resource levels to meet the demands of all incidents. By being highly adaptable, responsive, and continually evolving specialized plans, we are able to run dynamic resource plans while ensuring the continuity of service during major events, natural disasters, or escalating challenges.

Our comprehensive strategies for exceptional response extend beyond fire suppression, encompassing rescue operations, medical responses, and a holistic all-hazards approach to emergency management.



**A1 ~ Ensure Effective and Operationally Safe Resource Levels**

**A2 ~ Provide an All-Hazards Response and Emergency Management**

**A3 ~ Deliver Optimal Response Times as a World Class Destination City**

**A4 ~ Run Dynamic Resource Plans for Continuity of Service in Special and Major Events and Climate Emergencies**

2024

2025

2026



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND DELIVERABLES NO. 1 - DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL RESPONSE

### A.1 ~ Ensure Effective and Operationally Safe Resource Levels

- Review, adjust as required and implement a new efficient resource allocation plan
- Complete a city-wide risk assessment
- Align resources based on needs identified to improve response times
- Update dispatch algorithms to utilize emergency resources most efficiently
- Improve and build upon the alarm reduction program to increase fire apparatus availability
- Research alternative options to increase resource distribution availability during peak periods and time of day need

### A.2 ~ Provide an All-Hazards Response and Emergency Management (including but not limited to Suppression, Rescue and Medical Responses)

- Review and renew resource plan for special services including consideration of billing/cost recovery opportunities
- Explore opportunities for VFRS to contribute to non-emergency community healthcare
- Support specialized rescue teams with appropriate staffing, training, equipment, and grant administration
- Utilize National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards as a roadmap to guide operational efficiency and safety at technical rescue incidents

### A.3 ~ Deliver Optimal Response Times as a World Class Destination City

- Identify surges and fluctuations in demand for service and adjust service delivery as needed
- Formalize a committee responsible for regularly (three-year minimum) negotiating, revising, and updating automatic and mutual aid agreements

### A.4 ~ Run Dynamic Resource Plans for Continuity of Service in Special or Major Events and Climate Emergencies

- Leverage and improve strategic partnerships with both inter-city and external agencies
- Ensure robust planning in place for major events
- Ensure VFRS is prepared to support the City's public safety needs during the 2026 FIFA games
- Continue to coordinate with public safety agencies and law enforcement regarding preparation for localized emergencies (e.g., multi-casualty incidents, hazardous materials incidents)
- Enhance the Department Operations Center (DOC) incident management team training, staffing, and preparedness

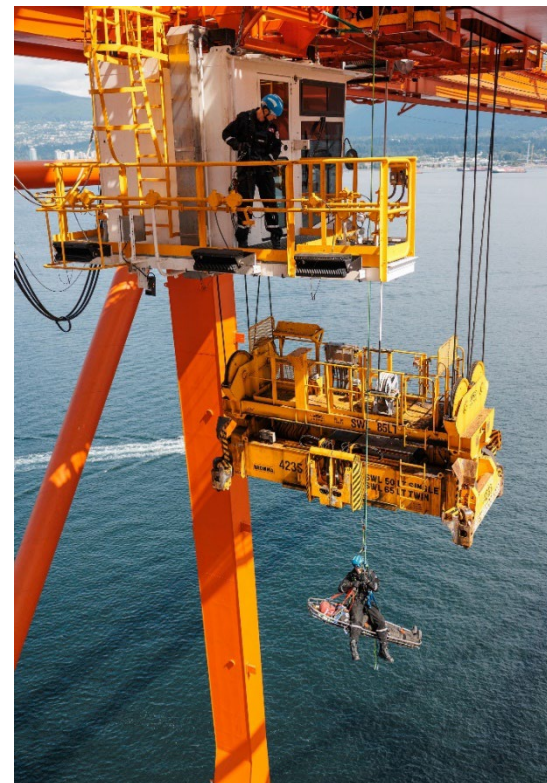
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### TRAINING

## TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESSION

VFRS' comprehensive training program enhances organizational effectiveness, operational efficiency, and overall community safety. VFRS aims to continually strengthen our emergency response capabilities through ongoing training, equipment modernization, and adopting cutting-edge technologies while ensuring that our firefighters are safely prepared to meet the challenges of our rapidly evolving city.

The training division holds a pivotal role that shapes the future of the fire service and of effective organizational succession. Cultivating a robust channel of skilled and competent firefighters, leaders, and emergency responders poised to assume critical roles within our organization is a leading objective of the division. VFRS plans to review and implement new and evolved training plans to enhance the skills and knowledge while empowering our personnel to uphold the highest standard of service delivery and fulfill the mission of protecting lives, property, and the environment.



**B1 ~ Create Pathways for Succession and Ongoing Professional Development**

**B2 ~ Deliver a Comprehensive and Concise Training Program**

**B3 ~ Measure and Evaluate Involvement and Effectiveness at All Levels**

2024

2025

2026

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND DELIVERABLES NO. 2 - TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESSION**

### **B1 ~ Create Pathways for Succession and Ongoing Professional Development**

- Foster ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance skills, leadership, and career growth to help create lifelong learners
- Focus on individualized career guidance, higher education access, and leadership coaching
- Facilitate further education through mentorship opportunities, certifications, and external opportunities

### **B2 ~ Deliver a Comprehensive and Concise Training Program**

- Review the current training delivery model and designate position-specific training officers
- Redevelop an effective and efficient training program that suits the needs of the City
- Implement a comprehensive training program aligned with the organizational review
- Review the in-service model and current training demands to create a program that is repeatable and capable of teaching complex topics in as simple a format as possible

### **B3 ~ Measure and Evaluate Involvement and Effectiveness at All Levels**

- Post-training assessments, practical evaluations, and feedback
- Review completion rates and ensure participation and engagement are at adequate and improving levels
- Review incident information for lessons learned and training refinement opportunities
- Increase engagement at all levels for development
- Develop specialized performance management processes to ensure improved performance





## EXCELLENCE

### COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

VFRS prioritizes public safety and recognizes that our responsibility to safeguard lives and property extends beyond emergency response, it encompasses proactive planning, resource management, and sustainable practices.

Embracing a culture of continuous improvement and operational excellence, we strive to identify and action opportunities for innovation and excellence in all aspects of our service. Financial management, strategic resource allocation as well as promoting sustainable practices are integrated into the planning processes to actively seek opportunities to uphold our core principles and remain resilient and responsive to the evolving needs of our community while fulfilling our mission.



**C1 ~ Evaluate and Support Operational Efficiency**

**C2 ~ Optimize Budget Utilization and Financial Accountability**

**C3 ~ Incorporate Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency Measures into Our Work**

2024

2025

2026

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND DELIVERABLES NO. 3 ~ COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

### **C.1 ~ Evaluate and Support Operational Efficiency**

- Utilize data and AI capabilities to support decisions while ensuring quality control over data inputs and practices
- Provide clear performance expectations through continual reinforcement of the Department's Vision, Mission, Core Values and Priorities
- Maintain an up-to-date and easily accessible departmental digital library
- Create and execute a communications strategy that keeps all partners updated and informed
- Prepare for CPSE accreditation
- Assist in improving speed and efficiency of the City's capital facilities and infrastructure delivery

### **C.2 ~ Optimize Budget Utilization and Financial Accountability**

- Prepare and collaborate in collective bargaining
- Establish workgroups and align with budgetary processes
- Explore opportunities for revenue generation

### **C.3 ~ Incorporate Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency Measures into Our Work**

- Support idle reduction practices and purchase resources in accordance with the City's mandate to reduce emissions
- Install EV charging infrastructure where relevant to operational requirements
- Increase purchasing of certified energy-efficient products
- Ensure all department members understand the importance of recycling (e.g. proper use of organic waste recycling bins)



## CULTURE & SAFETY

### PROMOTE A SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKFORCE THAT ALSO REPRESENTS THE DIVERSE COMMUNITY SERVED

Staff are the core of our service. The health and professional well-being of our workforce is critical to the success of our service. VFRS is committed to providing comprehensive support and training that not only prioritizes the health and safety of our staff but also ensures our organization reflects and serves the diverse needs of our community. VFRS intentionally targets initiatives and proactive measures that create an environment where staff feel safe, valued, supported, and empowered to thrive in the high standards and skills needed to successfully perform for the needs of the community.



Developing initiatives and a strong partnership with Local 18 is instrumental in increasing engagement, employee satisfaction and promoting equity. Our collaboration has proven to jointly identify key areas for improvement and target concerns where we can implement focused programs for professional development, wellness, and diversity training while creating a supportive and inclusive workforce.

**D1 ~ Promote Physical and Mental Well Being**

**D2 ~ Mitigate Cancer and Occupational Disease Risks**

**D3 ~ Ensure Equity**

**D4 ~ Develop an Inclusive Culture**

**D5 ~ Increase Engagement**

2024

2025

2026



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND DELIVERABLES NO. 4 ~ PROMOTE A SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKFORCE THAT ALSO REPRESENTS THE DIVERSE COMMUNITY

### D.1 ~ Promote Physical and Mental Well Being

- Implement psychometric evaluations for new hires that adhere to NFPA 1500 guidelines
- Establish more readily available access to outside resources, including mental health resources e.g. BC Fire Fighter Occupational Awareness, Training BOS Initiative, Coordinators of Wellness
- Enhance the capabilities of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team with additional resources e.g. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
- Explore psychological counselling paths for new staff
- Explore the opportunity to establish and train a standalone Peer Support Team

### D.2 ~ Mitigate Cancer and Occupational Disease Risks

- Be an international leader in Cancer prevention within the Fire Service and collaborate with other agencies to limit cancer carcinogen exposures, e.g. PFAS free Bunker Gear
- Continue to explore and expand on the scope of the current multi-year Presumptive Cancer Screening for all VFRS Employees
- Identify opportunities of meeting data standards and timelines to provide future directions for VFRS Safety related Programs, e.g. Report of Injury or Occupational Disease, Incident Investigation timelines, CISM meetings

- Launch formalized online large topic safety training, followed up with safety crew-talk, e.g. Mayday Procedures, Hydro Appliances, Fortis Gas emergency procedures
- Explore other education, resources, outside partnerships and tools to identify, reduce/mitigate Presumptive Occupational Injuries/Illnesses

### D.3 ~ Ensure Equity

- Promote culture and reconciliation actions
- Create more diverse outreach programs
- Incorporate and align with the City's UNDRIP strategy in all VFRS planning and deliverables

### D.4 ~ Develop an Inclusive Culture

- Find new ways to continue to recognize VFRS' history and show pride of working and serving this City
- Apply a safe, diverse, inclusive and engaged workplace using an equitable lens for decision making
- Implement new workplace respective policy

### D.5 ~ Increase Engagement

- Realize methods to get staff involved in all aspects of VFRS
- Increase engagement and development with the community
- Complete a full cycle process review of recruitment



## COMMUNITY

### ENHANCE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

VFRS' commitment to protecting lives and property begins with a foundation of community safety using fire prevention and public education tools to proactively identify, mitigate and eliminate potential fire hazards. Initiatives focused on addressing fire and life safety hazard concerns, supporting vulnerable communities, and promoting regulatory compliance aim to mitigate risk and ensure the safety and well-being of all residents. Through increased partner relations and engagement, we seek to empower the community to become proactive partners in fire prevention and safety. Together, we can work towards creating safer and more resilient communities.

By investing in fire prevention initiatives, including rigorous inspections, public education and awareness, and fostering a culture of vigilance and preparedness with the community, we can reduce the risk of fire related tragedies and ultimately save lives and protect property.



**E1 ~ Address Fire and Life Safety Hazard Concerns**

**E2 ~ Support Communities at Risk**

**E3 ~ Ensure Fire Safety Standards and Regulatory Compliance**

**E4 ~ Increase Partner Relations and Engagement**

**E5 ~ Promote a Safer Community Through Education**

2024

2025

2026

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND DELIVERABLES NO. 5 ~ ENHANCE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC EDUCATION**

### **E.1 ~ Address Fire and Life Safety Hazard Concerns**

- Continue Fire Life Safety support for Vancouver Residents and Visitors
- Collaborate with relative partners on identifying encampments and unhoused populations to reduce risks and track progress (e.g. GIS)
- Capture and review data regarding the vulnerable communities and fire risks

### **E.2 ~ Support Communities at Risk**

- Identify and address potential fire hazards and other safety concerns. Target specific at-risk communities and outreach to diverse communities
- Implement a corrective action program to address false alarms and explore the use of new technologies
- Manage vacant properties to mitigate fire risks

### **E.3 ~ Ensure Fire Safety Standards and Regulatory Compliance**

- Ensure compliance and "Enforce" BC Fire Code / CoV Building and Fire Bylaw through council approved changes (e.g. sprinkler isolation valves, alarm systems, vacant properties)
- Increase inspections and necessary enforcement of at-risk SRO buildings
- Assisting to streamline the review and approval process for development and occupancy permits

### **E.4 ~ Increase Partner Relations and Engagement**

- Continue to build relationships with housing stakeholders (e.g. BC Housing) and community partners to better share the responsibility of public safety
- Work with Inter-Governmental partners to create appropriate regulations to address emerging risks (e.g. lithium-ion batteries, lockable lighters)
- Continue working with the Province and other partners (e.g. VCH, ACCS) to address fire risks related to mental health and the Opioid crisis

### **E.5 ~ Promote a Safer Community Through Education**

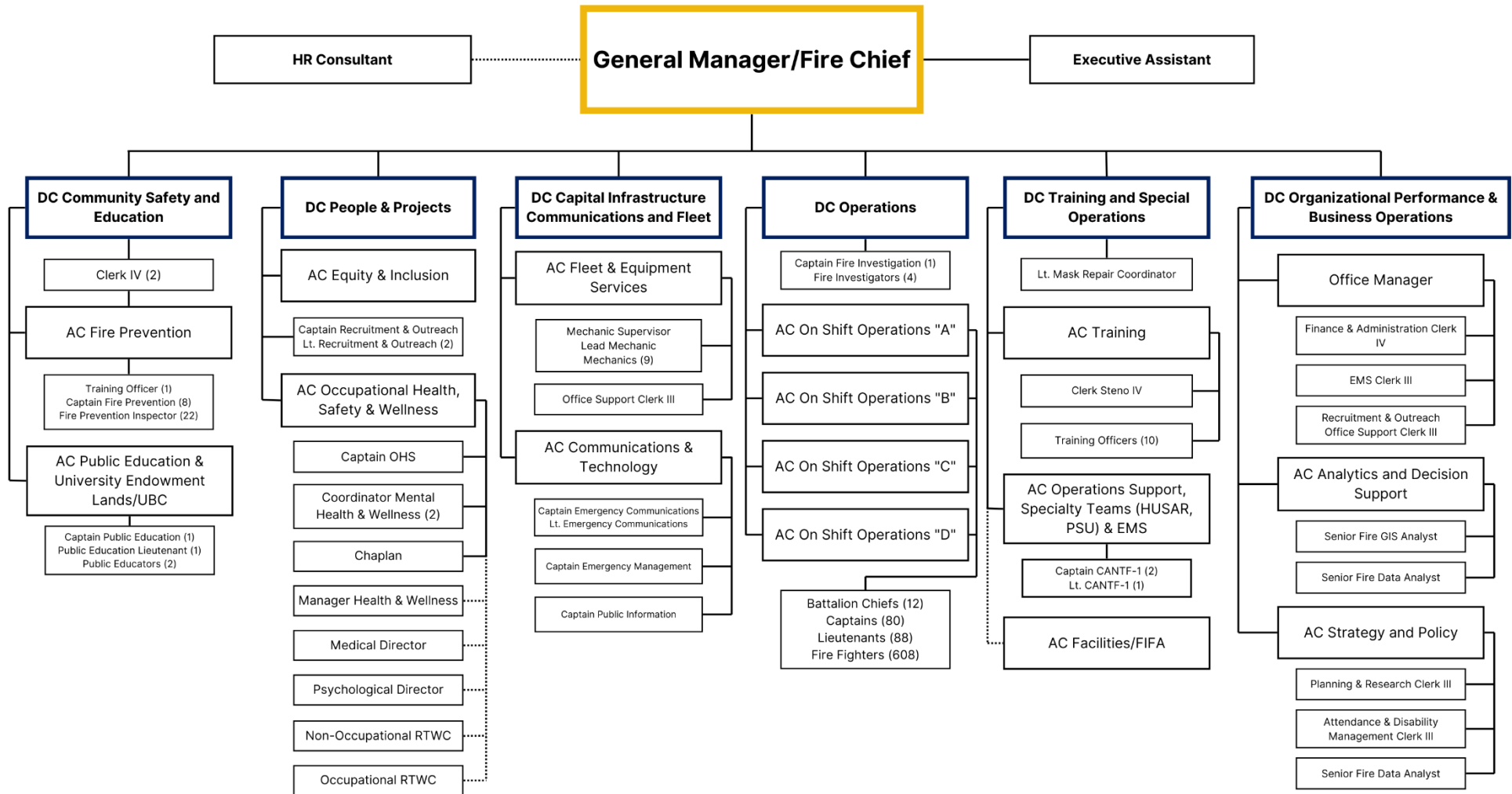
- Advance mitigations to prevent fires in encampments and single-resident occupancy units by delivering education programs for managers in the SROs
- Expand the scope of the train-the-trainer model, training residents on fire prevention to private and government supported SROs (e.g. SRO Collaborative, residents with disabilities)
- Implement the province' Fire Smart program to educate and prepare residents for urban interface fires



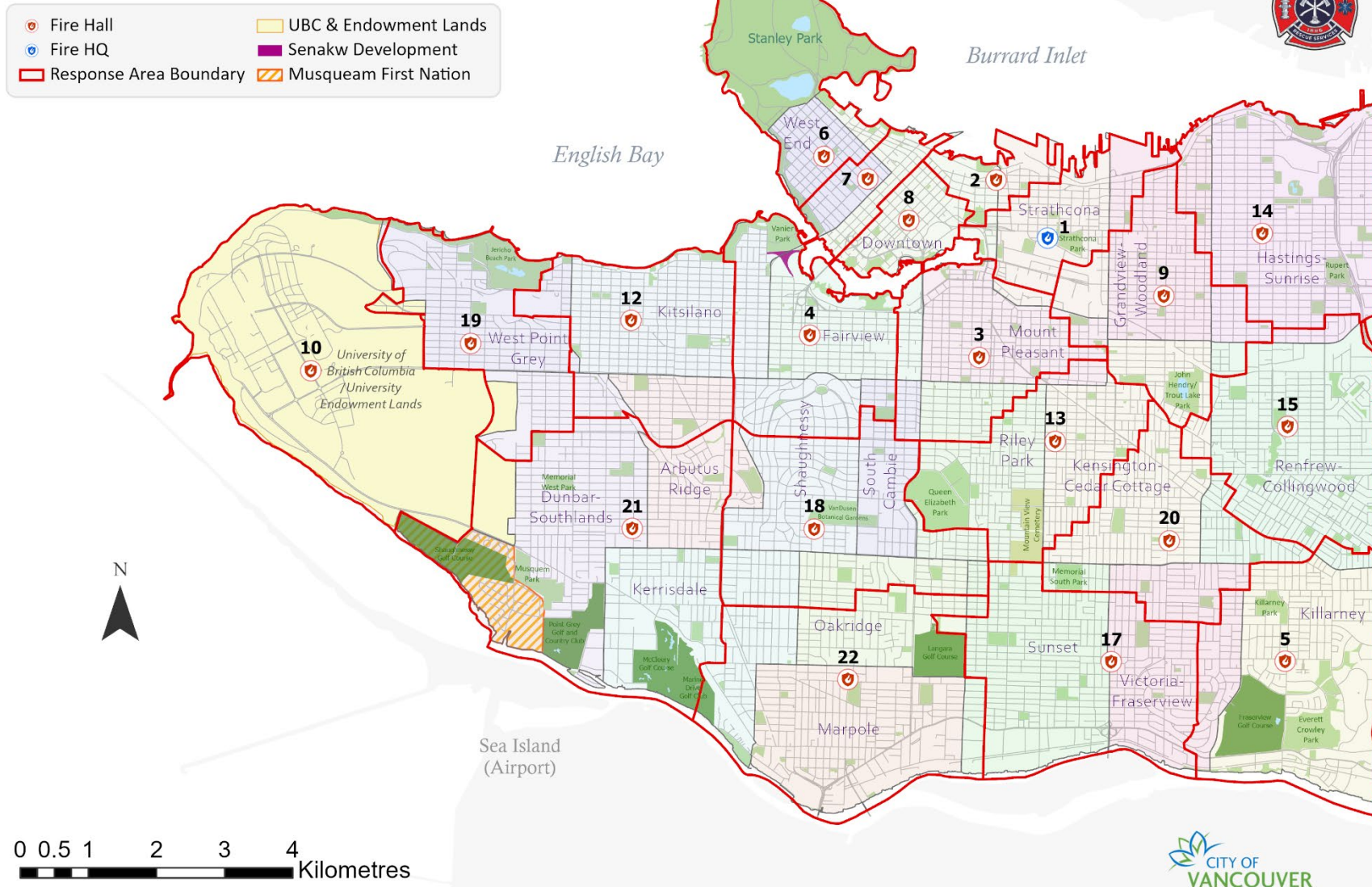
## APPENDIX A - VFRS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# Vancouver Fire Rescue Services



## APPENDIX B - VFRS RESPONSE AREAS MAP



VFRS provides service to Vancouver's 129 square kilometer footprint and a population of over 700,000 residents and approximately 1,000,000 people daily with its 20 strategically placed fire halls.

## APPENDIX C – OVERVIEW OF THE 2024-2026 VFRS STRATEGIC PLAN

PRIORITIES		OBJECTIVES	DELIVERABLES	DATES	ACCOUNTABLE BRANCH
<b>A RESPONSE</b>	<b>A.1</b>	<b>Ensure Effective and Operationally Safe Resource Levels</b>	Review, adjust as required and implement a new efficient resource allocation plan	Q2 2024	Ops/ Business
			Complete city-wide risk assessment	Q4 2024	Business
			Align resources based on needs identified to improve response times	Q4 2024	Ops
			Update dispatch algorithms to utilize emergency resources most efficiently	Q1 2025	Comms/ Ops
			Improve and build upon the alarm reduction program to increase fire apparatus availability	2026	Prevention
			Research alternative options to increase resource distribution availability during peak periods and time of day need	2026	Ops/ Business
	<b>A.2</b>	<b>Provide an All-Hazards Response and Emergency Management</b>	Review and renew resource plan for special services including consideration of billing/cost recovery opportunities	Q1 2026	Business
			Explore opportunities for VFRS to contribute to non-emergency community healthcare	Q3 2024	Spec. Ops
			Support specialized rescue teams with appropriate staffing, training, equipment, and grant administration	Q1 2024/ 25/26	Spec. Ops
			Utilize National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards as a roadmap to guide operational efficiency and safety at technical rescue incidents	Q1 2025	Special Ops/ Training
	<b>A.3</b>	<b>Deliver Optimal Response Times as a World Class Destination City</b>	Identify surges and fluctuations in demand for service and adjust service delivery as needed	Q2 2024	Ops/ Spec Ops/ Business
			Formalize a committee responsible for regularly (three-year minimum) negotiating, revising, and updating automatic and mutual aid agreements	Q2 2025	Fire Chief
	<b>A.4</b>	<b>Run Dynamic Resource Plans for Continuity of Service in Special and Major Events</b>	Leverage and improve strategic partnerships with both inter-city and external agencies	Q1 2025	Fire Chief/ Exec Board
			Ensure robust planning in place for planned major events	Q2 2024	Special Ops/ Prevention
			Ensure VFRS is prepared to support the City's public safety needs during the 2026 FIFA games	Q2 2026	Fire Chief/ Spec Ops



PRIORITIES		OBJECTIVES	DELIVERABLES	DATES	ACCOUNTABLE BRANCH
		<b>and Climate Emergencies</b>	Continue to coordinate with public safety agencies and law enforcement regarding preparation for localized emergencies (e.g., multi-casualty incidents, hazardous materials incidents)	Q4 24/25/26	Special Ops/ Ops
			Enhance the Department Operations Center (DOC) incident Management Team training, staffing, and preparedness	Q4 2024	Emerg Mngt Ops
<b>B TRAINING</b>	<b>B.1</b>	<b>Create Pathways for Succession and Ongoing Professional Development</b>	Foster ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance skills, leadership, and career growth to help create lifelong learners	Q4 2024	Fire Chief/ Executive
			Focus on individualized career guidance, higher education access, and leadership coaching	Q1 2025	Training
			Facilitate further education through mentorship opportunities, certifications, and external opportunities	Q4 2025	Training
	<b>B.2</b>	<b>Deliver a Comprehensive and Concise Training Program</b>	Review the current training delivery model and designate position-specific training officers	Q3 2024	Training
			Redevelop an effective and efficient training program that suits the needs of the City	Q4 2025	Training
			Implement a comprehensive training program aligned with the organizational review to meet the needs and risks of the City	Q1 2026	Training
			Review the in-service model and current training demands to create a program that is repeatable and capable of teaching complex topics in as simple a format as possible	Q2 2025	Training/ Ops
	<b>B.3</b>	<b>Measure and Evaluate Involvement and Effectiveness at All Levels</b>	Post-training assessments, practical evaluations, and feedback	Q1 2025	Training
			Review completion rates and ensure participation and engagement are at adequate and improving levels	Q1 2025	Training
			Review incident information for lessons learned and training refinement opportunities	Q4 2024	Ops/ Training
			Increase engagement at all levels for development	Q4 2024	Training
			Develop specialized performance management processes to ensure improved performance	Q3 2024	Training
<b>C EXCELLENCE</b>	<b>C.1</b>	<b>Evaluate and Support Operational Efficiency</b>	Utilize data and AI capabilities to support decisions while ensuring quality control over data inputs and practices	24/25/26	Business
			Provide clear performance expectations through continual reinforcement of the Department's Vision, Mission, Core Values and Priorities	24/25/26	Fire Chief / Business

PRIORITIES		OBJECTIVES	DELIVERABLES	DATES	ACCOUNTABLE BRANCH
C EXCELLENCE			Maintain an up-to-date and easily accessible departmental digital library	Q4 2024	Comms
			Create and execute a communications strategy that keeps all partners updated and informed	Q4 2024	Fire Chief
			Prepare for CPSE Accreditation	Q3 2026	Business
			Assist in improving speed and efficiency of the City's capital facilities and infrastructure delivery	Q4 2024	Fire Chief
	C.2	<b>Optimize Budget Utilization and Financial Accountability</b>	Prepare and collaborate in collective bargaining	Q3 2024	Fire Chief
			Establish workgroups and align with budgetary processes	Q4 2024	Business
			Explore opportunities for revenue generation	Q2 2025	Business
	C.3	<b>Incorporate Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency Measures into Our Work</b>	Support idle reduction practices and purchase resources in accordance with the City's mandate to reduce emissions	Ongoing	Fleet
			Install EV charging infrastructure where relevant to operational requirements	2026	Fleet
			Increase purchasing of certified energy-efficient products	Ongoing	Business
			Ensure all department members understand the importance of recycling	Q3 2024	Executive
D CULTURE & SAFETY	D.1	<b>Promote Physical and Mental Well Being</b>	Implement psychometric evaluations for new hires that adhere to NFPA 1500 guidelines	Q3 2024	OHS
			Establish more readily available access to outside resources, including mental health resources e.g. BC Fire Fighter Occupational Awareness, Training BOS Initiative, Coordinators of Wellness	Q3 2024	People
			Enhance the capabilities of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team with additional resources e.g. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)	Q1 2025	OHS
			Explore psychological counselling paths for new staff	Q1 2025	OHS
			Explore the opportunity to establish and train a standalone Peer Support Team	Q2 2025	OHS

PRIORITIES		OBJECTIVES	DELIVERABLES	DATES	ACCOUNTABLE BRANCH
D CULTURE & SAFETY	D.2	Mitigate Cancer and Occupational Disease Risks	Be an international leader in Cancer prevention within the Fire Service and collaborate with other agencies to limit cancer carcinogen exposures, e.g. PFAS free Bunker Gear	Q2 2024	OHS
			Continue to explore and expand on the scope of the current multi-year Presumptive Cancer Screening for all VFRS Employees	Q1 2024, 2025, 2026	OHS
			Identify opportunities of meeting data standards and timelines to provide future directions for VFRS Safety related Programs, e.g. Report of Injury or Occupational Disease, Incident Investigation timelines, CISM meetings	Q3 2024	OHS
			Launch formalized online large topic safety training, followed up with safety crew-talk, e.g. Mayday Procedures, Hydro Appliances, Fortis Gas emergency procedures	Q1 2026	OHS
			Explore other education, resources, outside partnerships and tools to identify, reduce or mitigate Presumptive Occupational Injuries/Illnesses	Q1 2024, 2025, 2026	OHS
	D.3	Ensure Equity	Promote culture and reconciliation actions	Ongoing	People
			Create more diverse outreach programs	Ongoing	People
			Incorporate and align with the City's UNDRIP strategy in all VFRS planning and deliverables	Ongoing	People
	D.4	Develop an Inclusive Culture	Find new ways to continue to recognize VFRS' history and show pride of working and serving this City	Q4 2024	People
			Apply a safe, diverse, inclusive, and engaged workplace using an equitable lens for decision making	Q3 2024	People
			Implement new workplace respective policy	Q3 2024	People / Training
	D.5	Increase Engagement	Realize methods to get staff involved in all aspects of VFRS	Ongoing	Fire Chief
			Increase engagement and development with the community	Ongoing	People
			Complete a full cycle process review of recruitment	Q2 2024	People
	E.1		Continue Fire Life Safety support for Vancouver Residents and visitors	Ongoing	Prevention



PRIORITIES		OBJECTIVES	DELIVERABLES	DATES	ACCOUNTABLE BRANCH
E COMMUNITY		<b>Address Fire and Life Safety Hazard Concerns</b>	Collaborate with relative partners on identifying encampments and unhoused populations to reduce risks and track progress	Q4 2024	Prevention
			Capture and review data regarding the vulnerable communities and fire risks.	Q2 2024	Prevention
	E.2	<b>Support Communities at Risk</b>	Identify and address potential fire hazards and other safety concerns. Target specific at-risk communities and outreach to diverse communities	Ongoing	Prevention
			Implement a corrective action program to address false alarms and explore the use of new technologies	Ongoing	Prevention
			Manage vacant properties to mitigate fire risks	Q2 2024	Prevention
	E.3	<b>Ensure Fire Safety Standards and Regulatory Compliance</b>	Ensure compliance and "Enforce" BC Fire Code / CoV Building and Fire Bylaw through council approved changes (e.g. sprinkler isolation valves, lockable lighters, vacant properties)	Q4 2024	Prevention
			Increase inspections and necessary enforcement of at-risk SRO buildings	Q2 2024	Prevention
			Assist in streamlining the review and approval process for development and occupancy permits	Ongoing	Prevention
	E.4	<b>Increase Partner Relations and Engagement</b>	Continue to build relationships with housing stakeholders (e.g. BC housing) and community partners to better share the responsibility of public safety	Ongoing	Fire Chief/ Prevention
			Work with Government partners (e.g. OFC) to create appropriate regulations to address emerging risks (e.g. lithium-ion batteries, lockable lighters)	Ongoing	Fire Chief/ Prevention
			Continue working with the Province and other partners to address fire risks related to mental health and the Opioid crisis	Ongoing	Fire Chief/ Prevention
	E.5	<b>Promote a Safer Community Through Education</b>	Advance mitigations to prevent fires in encampments and single-resident occupancy units by delivering education programs for managers in the SROs	Ongoing	Prevention
			Expand the scope of the train-the-trainer model, training residents on fire prevention to SROs (e.g. SRO Collaborative, residents with disabilities)	2024/ 2025	Prevention
			Implement the Province's Fire Smart program to educate and prepare residents for urban interface fires	Q2 2024	Prevention





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VFRS Website: [Vancouver Fire Rescue Services | City of Vancouver](#)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VancouverFireRescueServices>  
X (Twitter): <https://twitter.com/VanFireRescue> (@VanFireRescue)  
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/VanFireRescue/> (@VanFireRescue)  
Local 18 X (Twitter): <https://twitter.com/IAFF18>  
Charities X (Twitter): <https://twitter.com/VanFireCharity>





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For More Information:

Visit: [vancouver.ca](http://vancouver.ca)

Phone: 3-1-1

Outside Vancouver: 604-873-7000

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