

April 2/20 CAO Remarks

Good Morning Mayor and Council.

I am happy to provide an update on COVID 19 to highlight how we are continuing to protect the health and safety of the public and staff in delivering City services.

Emergency Operations Centre

EOC is functioning at the highest level and all activities being triaged through these channels. We are in regular contact with daily updates from EMBC and HEMBC to inform our work and through the sharing of experiences and initiatives of other municipalities.

Staffing

We continue to reduce the risk to employees and the public by implementing operational changes and social distancing measures in alignment with direction from public health officials.

We have provided managers and supervisors with information and directives on social distancing and how to manage this with work practices.

City leadership continues to look for ways to support manager and supervisors who are fielding questions and concerns from the front lines on a daily basis. Departments are also continuing to collaborate with the Health and Safety team and the Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee, to assess and

identify any further measures we can put in place to keep staff safe at work.

The services we provide to our community remain important under the current challenging circumstances. Maintaining parks and opens spaces ensures that residents can safely enjoy the outdoors at a time when they may be feeling isolated. Ensuring that our streets are clean, that garbage is collected and that residents have clean water are services people can count on as they spend more time in their homes.

City as engine of our local economy

We recognize that operation of City fuels the engine of our local economy that we will be a contributor to recovery. To that end, our planning departments is working with community associations and developers to see how we can continue to accept application at a time when Land Use Committee meetings cannot be held. Staff will also be presenting Council with budget considerations for the 2020 budget given our new reality of COVID-19.

Caring for our vulnerable population

I want to express my thank and appreciation to staff in bylaw, fire, parks and public works as they collaborate with our service providers to care for our vulnerable populations.

While city staff are not health providers, staff are there working alongside our partners in providing services to those needing health care, housing and food.

Daily calls occur with service providers and health and housing partners to share information on various sites.

Topaz Park

This venue is being managed by the Coalition to End Homelessness and the Dandelion Society and they are establishing a management structure for the site. Hygiene, food, laundry and security services are being provided and staff recruitment is now underway. IH is starting in-reach services for general health assessments onsite and will be providing PPE for staff who provide direct care. IH are also providing mental health and substance use supports through daily nurse and peer/social worker visits.

RAP

BC Housing continues to advance plans for RAP supported by the action of the EOC while also looking to secure venues to further sheltering and housing.

900 Block of Pandora

Increased amount of tents but not increased individuals. Very concerned about impact of loss of washrooms. EOC is looking to find a solution and in the meantime, Our Place is allowing folks to use washrooms one at a time. Service providers are starting to engage with folks on the Block about benefits of changing sites once RAP is in place.

Communications

We continue to monitor morning Federal update and afternoon updates from the Provincial Health Officer for further guidance on potential changes to City Services.

We are also on calls almost daily with our counterparts in other local governments to share information and learn from the approaches others are taking.

Calls and outreach to our business community continues as we know that many are challenged to pay commercial rent when all sales have evaporated. The coming month will be especially challenging depending on whether there are increased self isolating measures. We continue to position the Business Hub as the repository of information related to Provincial and Federal services for workers and business owners.

We are also engaged with our tourism, hospitality and transportation partners to share information and determine actions that we can take to support each other through this period and to position for recovery.