



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee

Date: June 10, 2021

From: Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief

File: 99-Fire Rescue/2021-
Vol 01

Re: Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – May 2021

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – May 2021”, dated June 10, 2021, from the Fire Chief, be received for information.

Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief
(604-303-2701)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO	

Staff Report

Origin

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #1 A Safe and Resilient City:

Enhance and protect the safety and well-being of Richmond.

Analysis

Emergency Programs

Notable items from Emergency Programs (EP) for May 2021 are as follows:

- On May 13, EP staff launched the City's new Emergency Notification System (ENS), called Richmond BC Alert. Staff continue to promote and market the new emergency notification system to all internal and external customers via the intranet, City website, Facebook and Richmond News advertisements. Promotion of the system will continue throughout 2021. Staff are also supporting residents throughout the subscription process on MyRichmond, including those who do not have access to a computer. Since the launch, and over a two week period in May, new subscriptions totals included 2,344 for Emergency Notification and 1,174 for Crime Prevention Newsletter. It is expected that these numbers will continue to increase with the ongoing promotional plan.
- Staff continue to provide ongoing support and administration of the City's Emergency Operations Centre in response to the Provincial State of Emergency.
- Staff continue to work with the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) on their new, National Inclusive Resilience Project. Staff are coordinating with other City business units in preparation for working with the CRC on this important project. Richmond is one of only five municipalities in Canada working with the Red Cross on this project.
- During May, through the use of remote and virtual presentations, the Richmond Resilient Communities Workshop for senior's initiative was held. Launched by Community Services and aimed at sustaining engagement with seniors, the event featured various phone-in programs to support seniors and to provide an opportunity for learning and engagement. The workshop promoted collaboration with corporate and community partners, who are critical in building resilience in our community.
- In May, EP staff completed the administration of a Union of BC Municipalities Provincial grant. The grant will provide equipment to support mobile and remote Emergency Support Services (ESS) to members of the community when they need assistance. The financial support was made available to Local Governments through the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund program. The assets obtained with this funding will help build the resilience of our community and provide ESS assistance and support during these challenging times.

Vaccinations

During May, staff continue to book appointments for their immunizations.

Training and Public Education

Fire Training staff facilitated multiple training activities during May 2021 including: Fire Service Instructor 1 and Emergency Scene Management.

During May 2021, public education events remained on hold. Fire staff continued to create and post educational videos on the RFR Facebook and website pages.

Emergency Response

Richmond Fire-Rescue staff continue to support incidences emanating from Health Orders issued by the Province to combat the COVID-19 pandemic as well as provide regular services to the community.

Richmond Fire-Rescue's goal is to respond to incidents in a manner where loss of life, reduction of property damage and protection of the environment is mitigated. In May 2021, there were a total of 711 incidents, representing a 147 per cent increase in incidences from May 2020 (Attachment 1).

Richmond Fire-Rescue is experiencing increases in medical responses due to the changes of the Provincial Health Orders and Medical Health Officer's direction. The increase in May 2021 is a result of the gradual return to normal levels of service of medical event types. RFR continues to monitor all activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.

The average time on scene for RFR crews was 33 minutes, which was less than the 36 minutes recorded in 2020. Time on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

Table 1: Total Incidents - May 2021			
	Totals (2021)	Percentage Change (from May 2020)	Number Change (from May 2020)
Alarm Active No Fire	104	-4	-4
Explosion	0	-	-1
Fire	51	+42	+15
Haz-Mat	1	-67	-2
Medical	346	+889	+311
MVI	75	+88	+35
Public Hazard	9	+29	+2
Public Service	72	+95	+35
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	52	+148	+31
Specialized Transport	1	-	+1
Tech Rescue	0	-	-
Totals	711	+147	+423

In May 2021, there were 51 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 42 per cent increase from May 2020. The average figure for fires reported in May over the last five years is 44.

Richmond Fire-Rescue's emergency fire response goal is to contain the fire to the room of origin. The room of origin standard is especially important in terms of fire loss, which increases significantly once the fire leaves the room of origin.

Fire damage and property losses during May 2021 are estimated at \$128,600. This total includes \$127,600 for building/asset loss and \$95,400 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$353,376,510 and the total value preserved from damage was \$353,028,210. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 2); this is greater than the 82 per cent protected value observed in 2020.

Incident Type Breakdown	Incident Volume	Estimated Building/Asset Value (\$)	Estimated Building/Asset Loss (\$)	Estimated Content Value (\$)	Estimated Content Loss (\$)	Estimated Total Value Preserved (\$)
Residential: Single family	4	125,010,000	127,600	85,000	1,000	124,943,000
Multi family	4	1,612,700	1,612,700	2,000	200	1,609,500
Commercial/Industrial	4	225,918,000	500	460,000	1,000	226,376,500
Outdoor	34	-	-	3,000	3,000	-
Vehicle/Vessel	5	195,610	96,400	90,200	90,200	99,210
Totals*	51	352,736,310	127,600	640,200	95,400	353,028,210

* The dollar losses shown in this table are preliminary estimates. They are derived from RFR's record management system and are subject to change due to delays in reporting and confirmation of actual losses from private insurance agencies (as available).

Significant Events

Fire crews minimized harm and limited fires to the place of origin in these notable May 2021 incidents:

- May 1, 2021 – Motor vehicle incident on Knight Street.** Multiple crews responded to a vehicle fire involving a flipped 45 foot reefer truck northbound on Knight Street. The majority of the external fire was quickly extinguished, however, insulation on the inside of the container had ignited. To reach the internal fire, as the truck was resting on its side blocking door access, RFR crews cut part of the roof off to extinguish the fire. There were no reports of injuries to the public or RFR staff. RCMP attended the scene and assisted with traffic management.
- May 9, 2021 – Shooting incident at Vancouver Airport.** RFR crews were held on standby to assist with an RCMP event at Vancouver Airport. Once the RCMP secured the scene, RFR and BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) crews were advised to move in. RFR assisted with scene management and did not make contact with the deceased victim. All traffic routes in and out of Richmond were temporarily closed during this event. There were no other injuries reported to the public or RFR personnel.

- **May 10, 2021 – Large hedge fire at Chatsworth Road.** RFR crews responded to flames reaching approximately 25 feet from a large tree hedge along a walkway. The fire affected most the south side of the hedge. Crews used water and Cold Fire to quickly extinguish the fire. The flames had severed a nearby power line supplying power to a nearby residence. BC Hydro were requested to attend. A Thermal Imaging Camera was used to detect any fire extension and no significant issues were found. The fire occurred on a public path and the City Works Yard were requested to also attend. RCMP attended due to the suspicious nature of the fire.
- **May 11, 2021 – Bush fire on Cook Road.** RFR crews arrived on scene to find a bush fire with flames roughly 8 feet high impacting a tree on the south west corner of the intersection. Behind the bush was an unoccupied parked car directly behind the fire. Crews used both 81 gallons of water and six gallons of Cold Fire to extinguish the fire. RCMP attend due to the suspicious nature of the fire and in case there was any heat damage to the unoccupied vehicle. RFR crews cleared the scene upon extinguishment and returned to quarters. There were no injuries reported.
- **May 24, 2021 – Residential fire on Westminster Highway.** RFR crews attended a small fire in the lobby of a hotel. The fire was contained to the water cooler in the lobby. Crews extinguished the fire quickly, preventing any extension. Crews proceeded to ventilate the lobby and one of the stairwells of smoke. Occupants of the hotel, who had previously been evacuated, were able to return to their units once the air quality was restored to normal. A fire investigator attended the scene and there were no injuries reported.

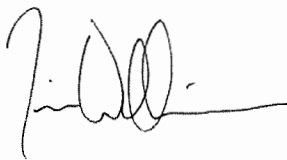
Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

During May 2021, Richmond Fire-Rescue crews continued to experience impacts on all incident volumes. RFR are continuing to see incident numbers slowly returning to normal levels due to gradual changes in the Provincial Medical Health Officer orders in response to the pandemic. RFR staff remain ready to react and adapt to the ever changing pandemic situation.

Richmond Fire-Rescue has not experienced any negative impacts to emergency response and continues to monitor activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.



Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief
(604-303-2701)

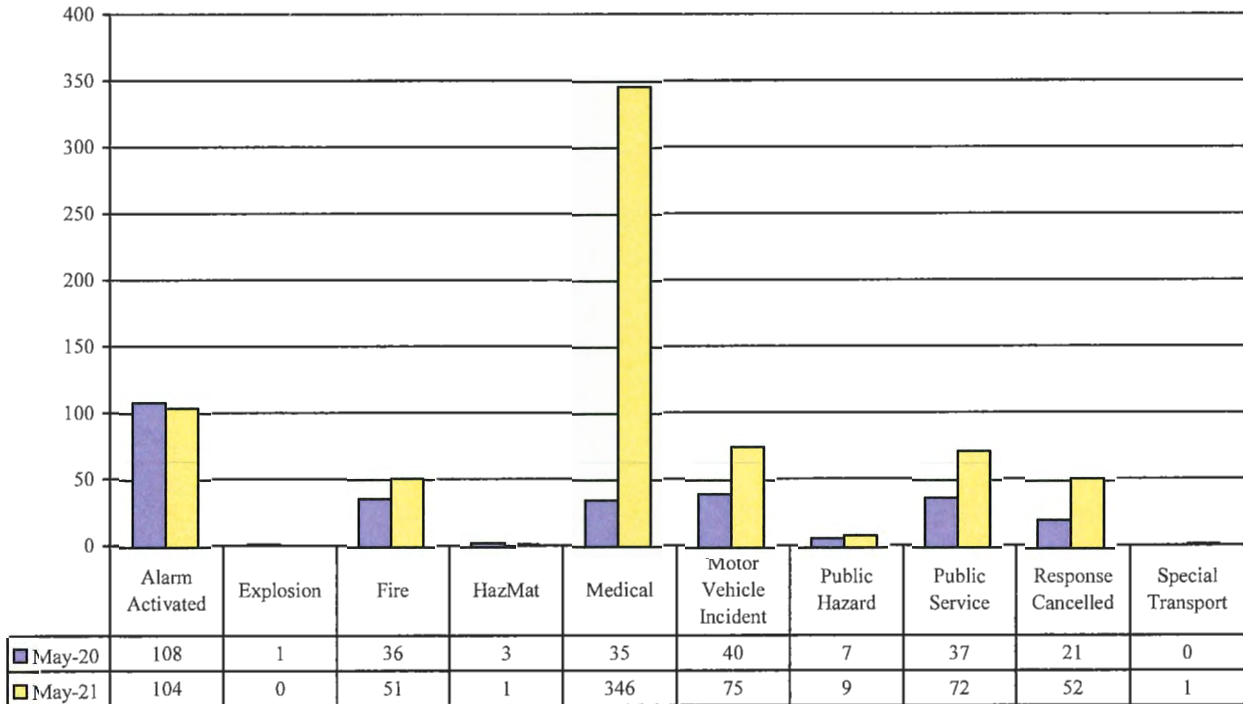
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Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of May's Fire, Medical and MVIs

Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in May 2021 and 2020. In May 2021, there were a total of 711 incidents, compared to 288 in May 2020. This represents an increase of 147 per cent.

Table 3: May 2020 & May 2021



Incident Type Legend:
HazMat: includes fuel or vapour; spills, leaks, or containment
Medical includes: cardiac arrest, emergency response, home or industrial accidents
Public Hazard includes: aircraft emergency, bomb removal standby, object removal, or power lines down
Public Service includes: assisting public, ambulance or police, locked in/out, special events, trapped in elevator, water removal

First Responder Totals

Medical first responder incidents comprised 49 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of May 2021. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for May 2020 and 2021 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 346 medical incidents in May 2021 compared to 35 in May 2020, an increase of 889 per cent.

Table 4a: May 2020 & May 2021 Medical Calls by Type

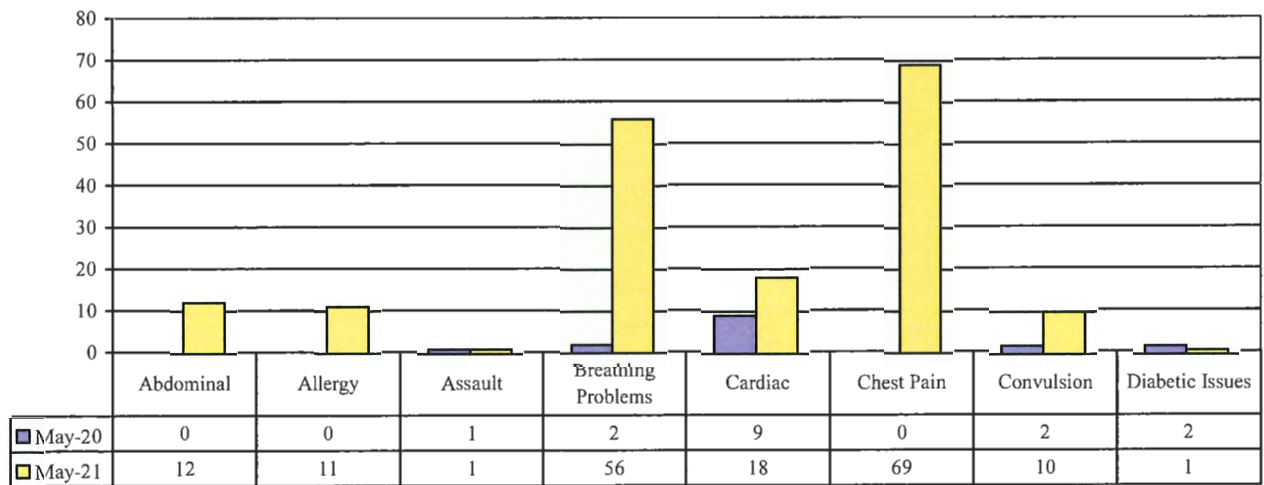
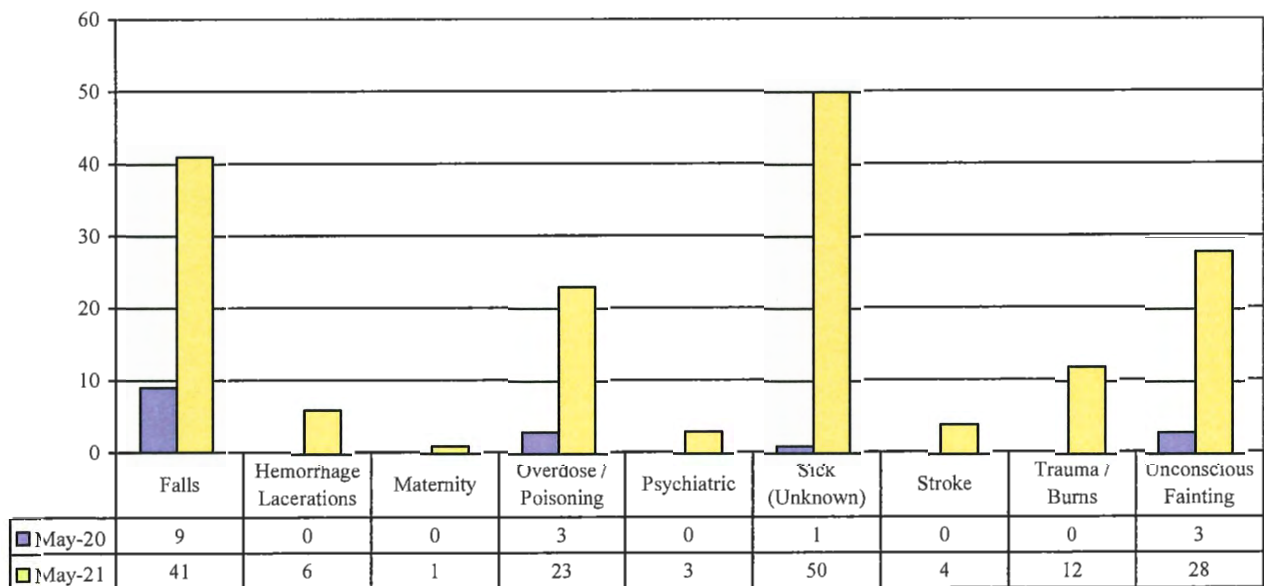


Table 4b: May 2020 & May 2021 Medical Calls by Type



Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for May 2021 are listed below:

Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – May 2021			
	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined
Residential - Single-family	-	3	1
Residential - Multi-family	1	3	0
Commercial/Industrial	1	2	1
Outdoor	6	20	8
Vehicle	2	1	2
Totals	10	29	12

Richmond Fire-Rescue investigators report all suspicious fires to the RCMP, while working alongside RCMP staff to address potential risks to the community.

Hazardous Materials

Table 6: Hazardous Materials Incidents By Type – May 2021	
	Details
Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small)	1
Totals	1

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in May 2021 (total 51)

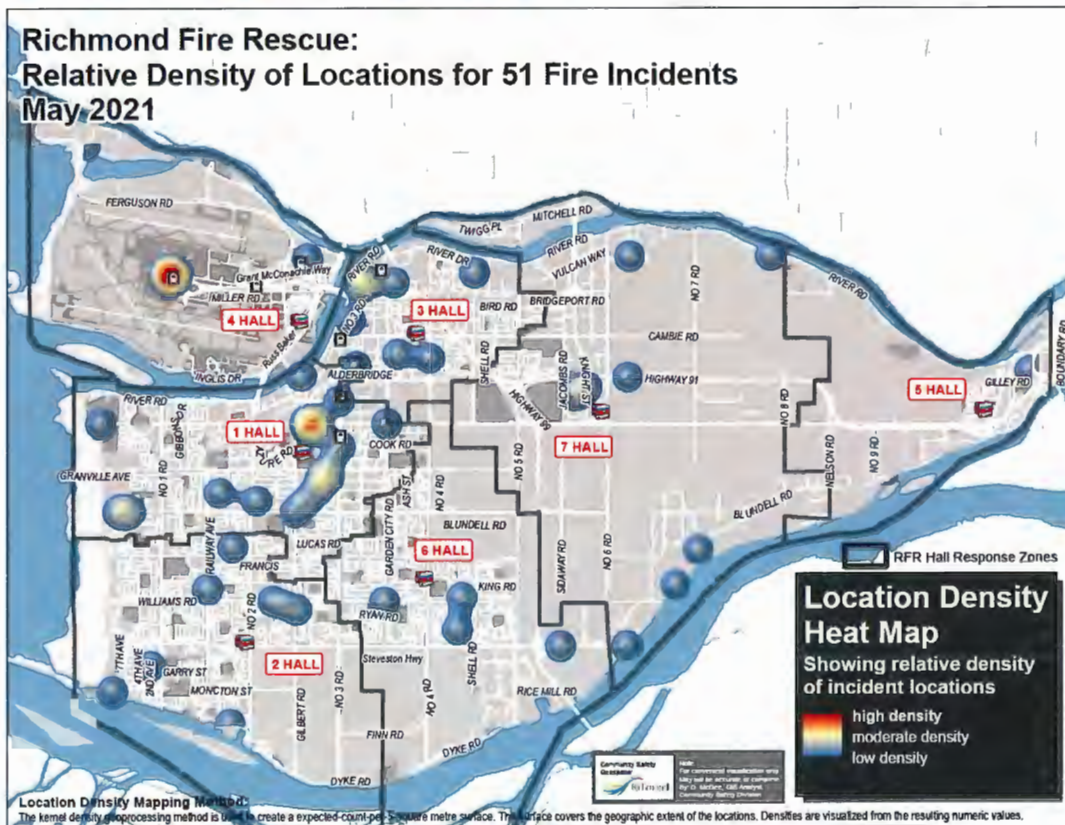
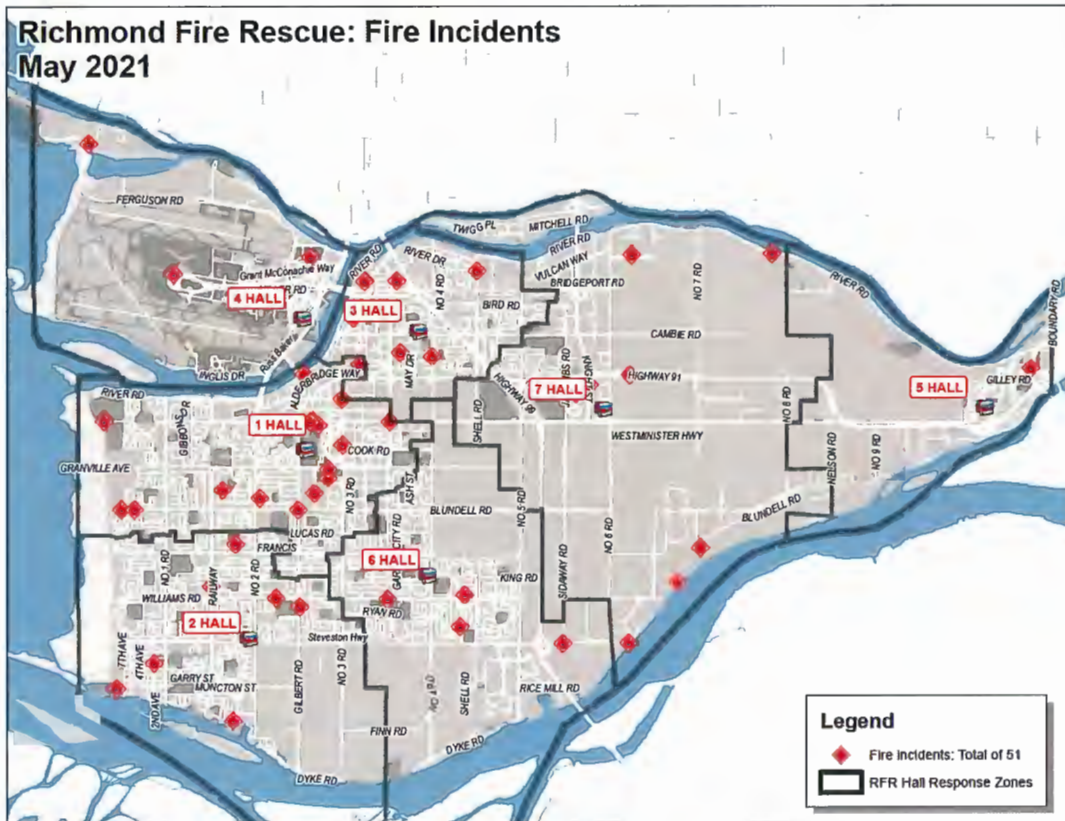


Figure 2: Location of medical incidents in May 2021 (total 346)

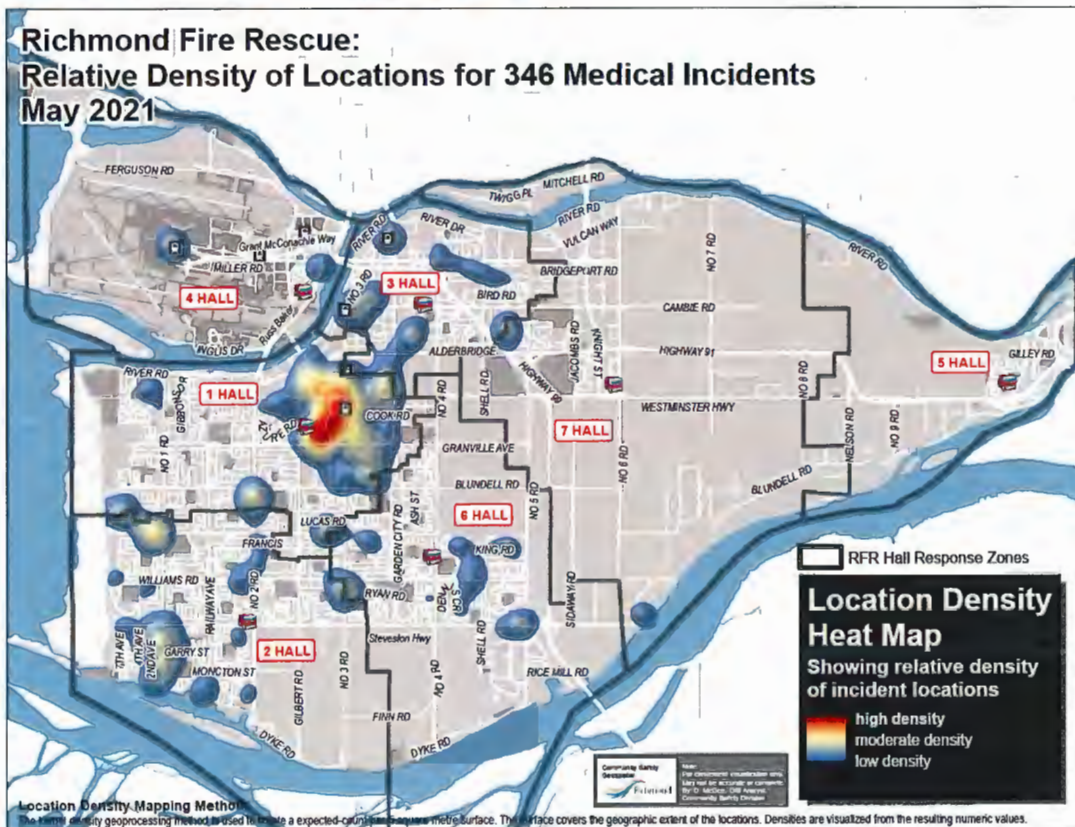
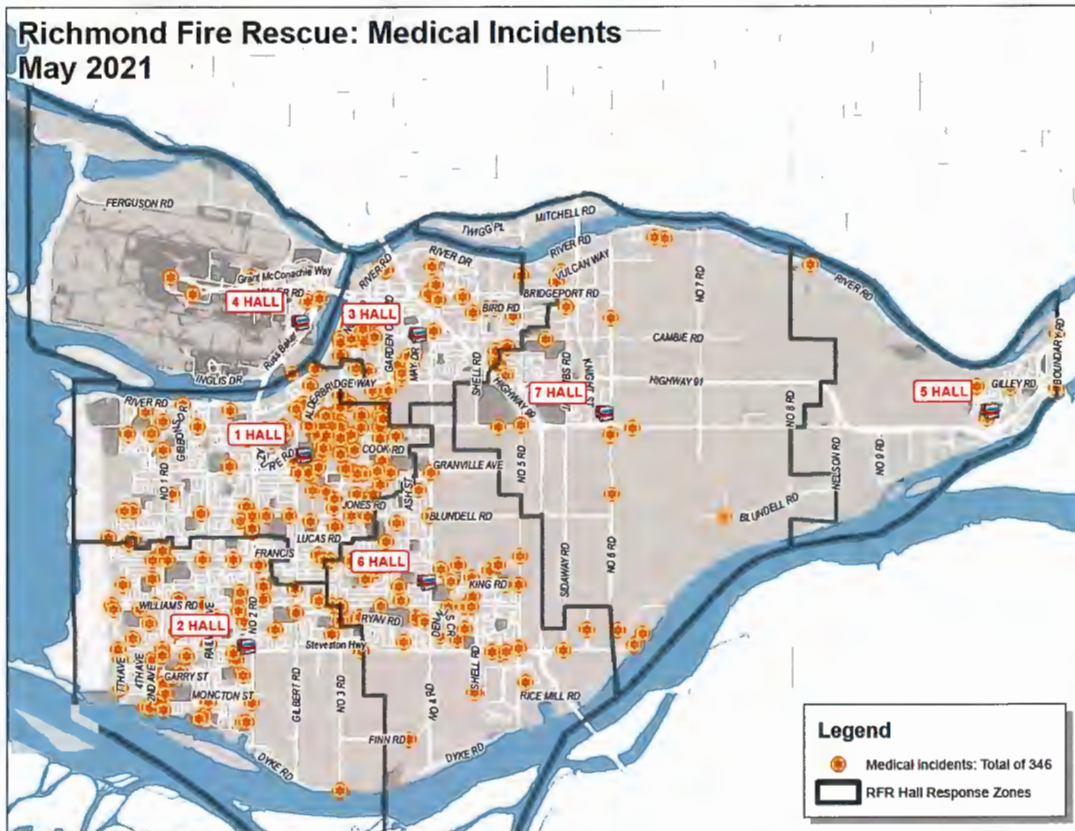


Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in May 2021 (total 75)

