



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Community Safety Committee

**Date:** August 16, 2021

**From:** Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief

**File:** 99-Fire Rescue/2021-  
Vol 01

**Re:** Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – July 2021

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – July 2021”, dated August 16, 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 July 2021 are as follows:

- City staff continue to collaborate on the Heat Emergency Planning and Response and Emergency Cooling Centres project so that Richmond residents are provided respite during the summer 2021 heatwave and poor air quality advisories.
- Staff continue to work with the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) on their new National Inclusive Resilience Project. CRC and staff reached out to specific Richmond groups with a phone screen beginning late July.
- Staff continue to support the Regional Wildfire Operations by identifying local capacity to support evacuee's arriving in Richmond. In July, EP Emergency Support Services (ESS) Coordinators began a regular rotation to support the Provincial Emergency Operation Centre (PREOC). Every Thursday staff rotate to provide support to the Lytton evacuees. It is expected this will continue throughout August.
- RFR and EP staff have conducted an in-house tabletop exercise. Practicing an evacuation and evacuee management plan in order to be able to manage a wildfire event and evacuee support, should it occur in the City or impact our neighbouring municipalities. EP staff will continue to conduct in-house table top exercises until the end of the year after which, the City's ESS and evacuation plans will be updated.
- Staff continue to support YVR's Emergency Programs staff in preparation for the YVR 2021 regulatory exercise, taking place in October 2021.

#### Vaccinations

During July, staff continue to attend appointments for their immunizations.

#### Training and Public Education

Fire Training staff facilitated multiple training activities during July 2021 including: High-rise, Confined Space, Pool Officer Exams, Hook Lift, Water Rescue training.

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

### Recruitment

During July 2021, interviews were ongoing for a number of important positions within Fire-Rescue and Emergency Programs.

### 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 July 2021, there were a total of 822 incidents, representing a 95 per cent increase in incidences from July 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 July 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 56 minutes, which was higher than the 31 minutes recorded in 2020. Time on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

<b>Table 1: Total Incidents - July 2021</b>				
	<b>Totals (2021)</b>	<b>Percentage Change from July 2020</b>	<b>Number Change from July 2020</b>	<b>5 Year Average for July</b>
Alarm Active No Fire	108	-14	-17	133
Explosion	1	-	+1	-
Fire	66	+27	+14	74
Haz-Mat	7	+250	+5	9
Medical	365	+362	+286	310
MVI	82	+71	+34	79
Public Hazard	15	+36	+4	13
Public Service	105	+33	+26	77
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	70	+180	+45	84
Specialized Transport	3	-	+3	3
Tech Rescue	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>+95</b>	<b>+401</b>	<b>781</b>

In July 2021, there were 66 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 27 per cent increase from July 2020. The average figure for fires reported in July over the last five years is 74. The increase of cancelled/unfounded calls in July is a result of no incident found at location and smoke, steam or dust being mistaken for fire.

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 July 2021 are estimated at \$1,029,730. This total includes \$506,500 for building/asset loss and \$522,230 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$106,547,000 and the total value preserved from damage was \$105,517,270. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 2); this is higher than the value observed in 2020.

<b>Table 2: Fire Incidents By Type and Loss Estimates - July 2021</b>						
<b>Incident Type Breakdown</b>	<b>Incident Volume</b>	<b>Estimated Building/Asset Value (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Building/Asset Loss (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Content Value (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Content Loss (\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Total Value Preserved (\$)</b>
Residential: Single family	2	1,117,000	250,000	42,500	2,100	907,400
Multi family	5	651,700	-	13,000	30	664,670
Commercial/Industrial	5	103,004,200	65,000	1,510,000	520,000	103,929,200
Outdoor	51	1,500	500	100	100	1,000
Vehicle/Vessel	3	207,000	192,000	-	-	15,000
<b>Totals*</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>104,981,400</b>	<b>507,500</b>	<b>1,565,600</b>	<b>522,230</b>	<b>105,517,270</b>

\* 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

During July the Province of BC Wild Fire Service requested a fire engine with a crew to be deployed to assist with the wild firefighting efforts in Lytton, BC. RFR deployed a team who were assigned by BC Forestry to a river rafting facility where they successfully extinguished numerous spot fires. The crews were then assigned multiple other suppression duties. No injuries were reported for any of the deployed staff.

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

- **July 8, 2021 – Wildland fire on Westminster Highway.** Multiple crews responded to a bog fire at the parkland area. Arriving crews located the fire, approximately 200 feet down the railroad track and 200 feet into the bog area. Crews gained access and successfully extinguished the fire. Crews set up a sprinkler system to continue to soak the area and remained on site for to facilitate this. CN rail was notified and the railroad was shut down for a time. BC Emergency Health Services staff and the RCMP attended the scene. A RFR Fire Investigation attended to scene to collect information to assist in the cause and origin investigation. There are no injuries to RFR personnel.
- **July 12, 2021 – Residential fire on No. 4 Road.** Arriving RFR crews encountered a full enflamed room on the top floor of a house with no occupants reported inside. Crews attacked and extinguished the fire and checked for any extension hot spots. No other structures were damaged due to the fast attack and hard firefighting efforts of the first crews. On scene RCMP blocked surrounding north and south bound roads. There were no injuries to staff or civilians. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.

- **July 19, 2021 – Commercial fire on No. 3 Road.** Multiple RFR crews were dispatched for reports of flames and smoke showing at a commercial property. On arrival, the fire was hard to find due to its location at the back of the building and at the top of the structure. Crews performed a rapid attack and confined the fire, while gaining access to the inside of the building. Once access was gained, an internal attack commenced and hotspots in the building and on the roof were checked. Once the fire was extinguished, ventilation was provided from both ends of the building. A Fire Investigator, BC Emergency Health Services and the RCMP attended the scene. There were no injuries reported.
- **July 26, 2021 – Commercial fire on Mitchell Road.** Multiple RFR personnel were dispatched to the scene of a fire in a hopper at a commercial property. Arriving crews were deployed to extinguish the fire from the top end of the hopper. Crews were successful in extinguishing the fire and proceeded to check for hot spots. There were no injuries reported. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.

### **Financial Impact**

None.

### **Conclusion**

During July 2021, Richmond Fire-Rescue crews continued to experience impacts on all incident volumes. RFR staff remain ready to react and adapt to the ever changing pandemic situation.



Tim Wilkinson  
Fire Chief  
(604-303-2701)

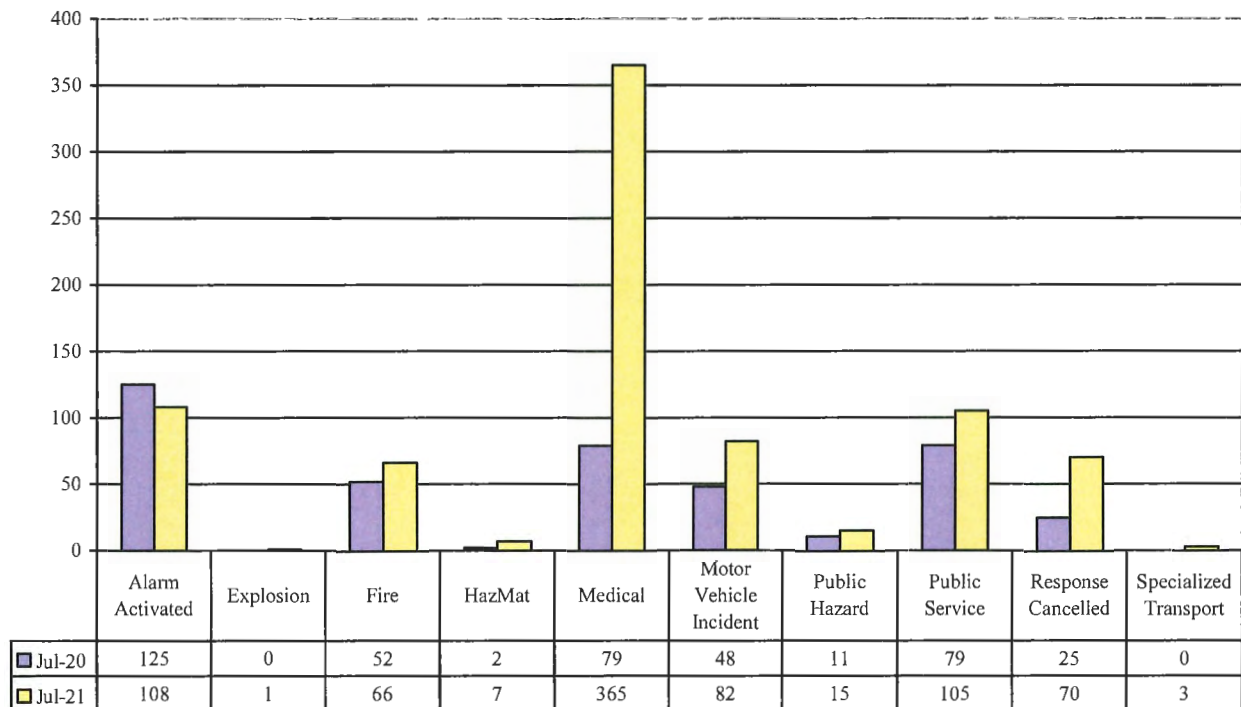
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Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of July's Fire, Medical and MVIs

## Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in July 2021 and 2020. In July 2021, there were a total of 822 incidents, compared to 421 in July 2020. This represents an increase of 95 per cent.

Table 3: July 2020 & July 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 44 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of July 2021. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for July 2020 and 2021 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 365 medical incidents in July 2021 compared to 52 in July 2020, an increase of 362 per cent. RFR are continuing to see incident numbers returning to normal levels due to gradual changes in the Provincial Medical Health Officer orders in response to the pandemic.

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

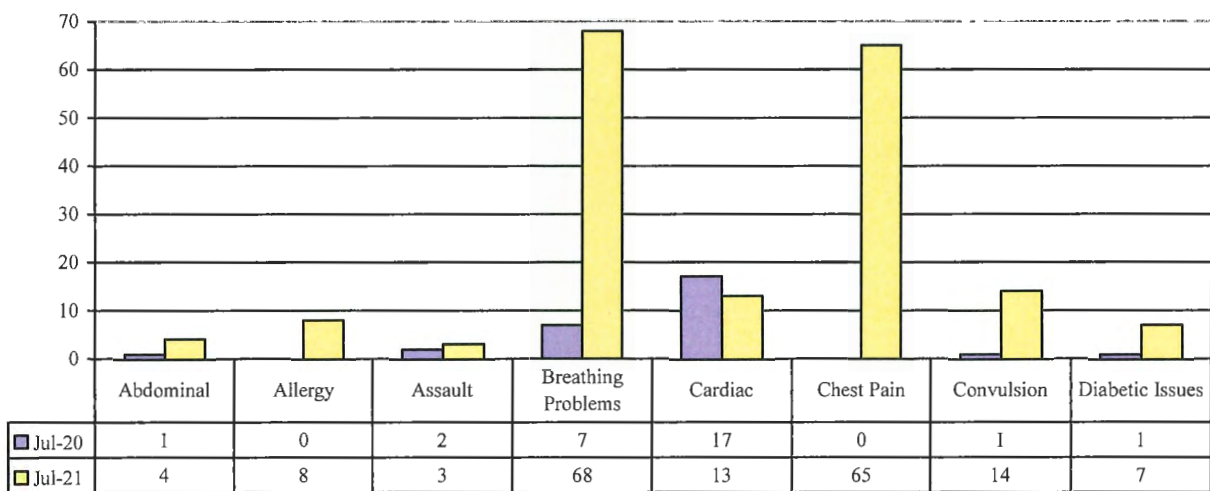
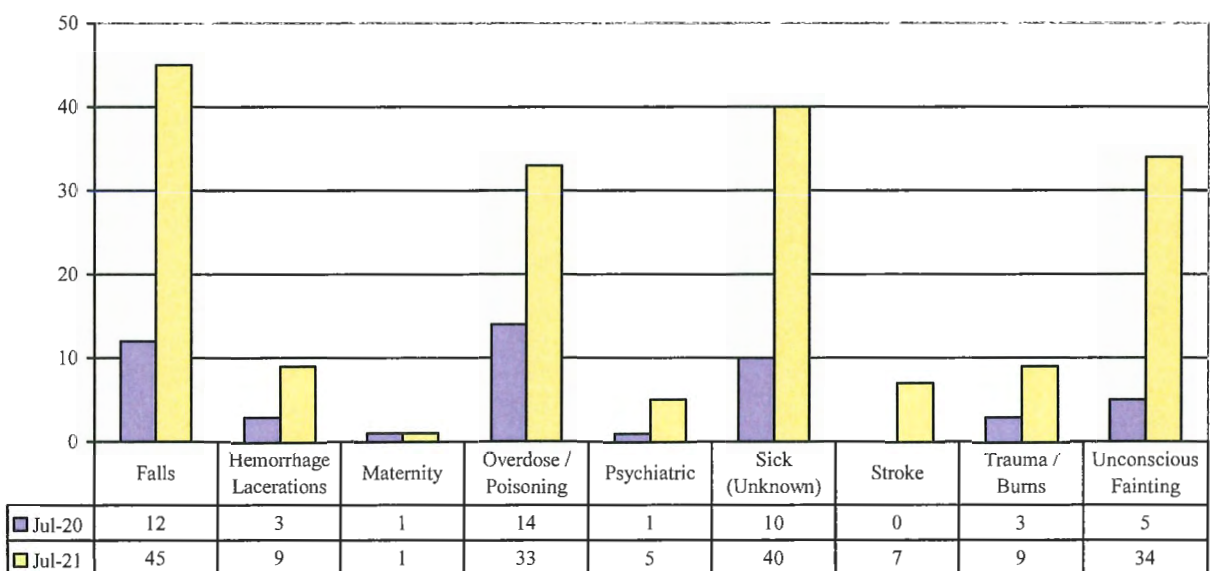


Table 4b: July 2020 & July 2021 Medical Calls by Type



## Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for July 2021 are listed below:

<b>Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – July 2021</b>			
	<b>Suspicious</b>	<b>Accidental</b>	<b>Undetermined</b>
Residential - Single-family	-	1	1
Residential - Multi-family	-	5	-
Commercial/Industrial	1	2	2
Outdoor	2	38	11
Vehicle	-	3	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>14</b>

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

<b>Table 6: Hazardous Materials Incidents By Type – July 2021</b>	
	<b>Details</b>
Flammable / Combustible Liquids	1
Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small)	3
Corrosive	1
Unclassified	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7</b>

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in July 2021 (total 66)

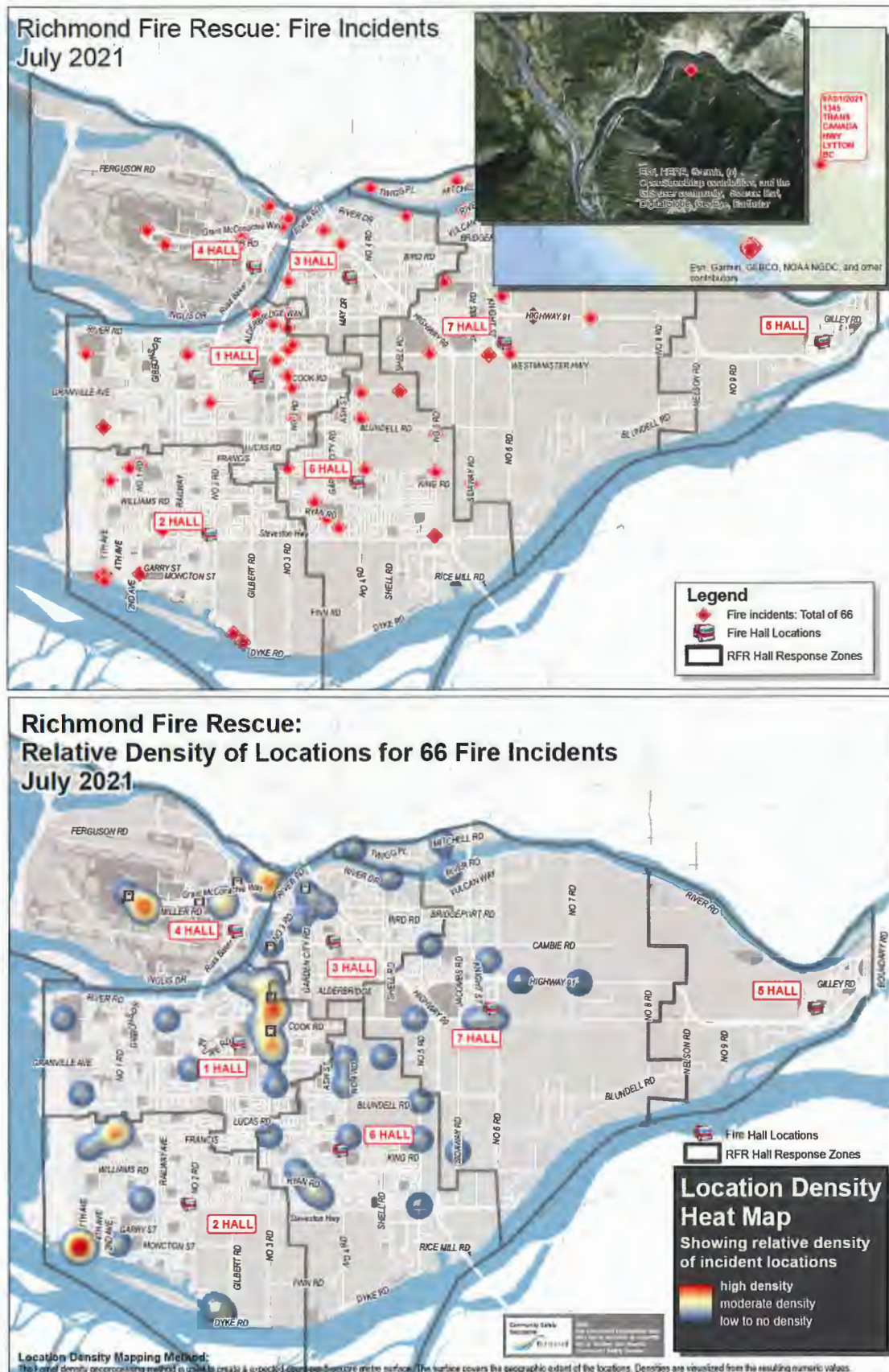


Figure 2: Location of medical Incidents in July 2021 (total 365)

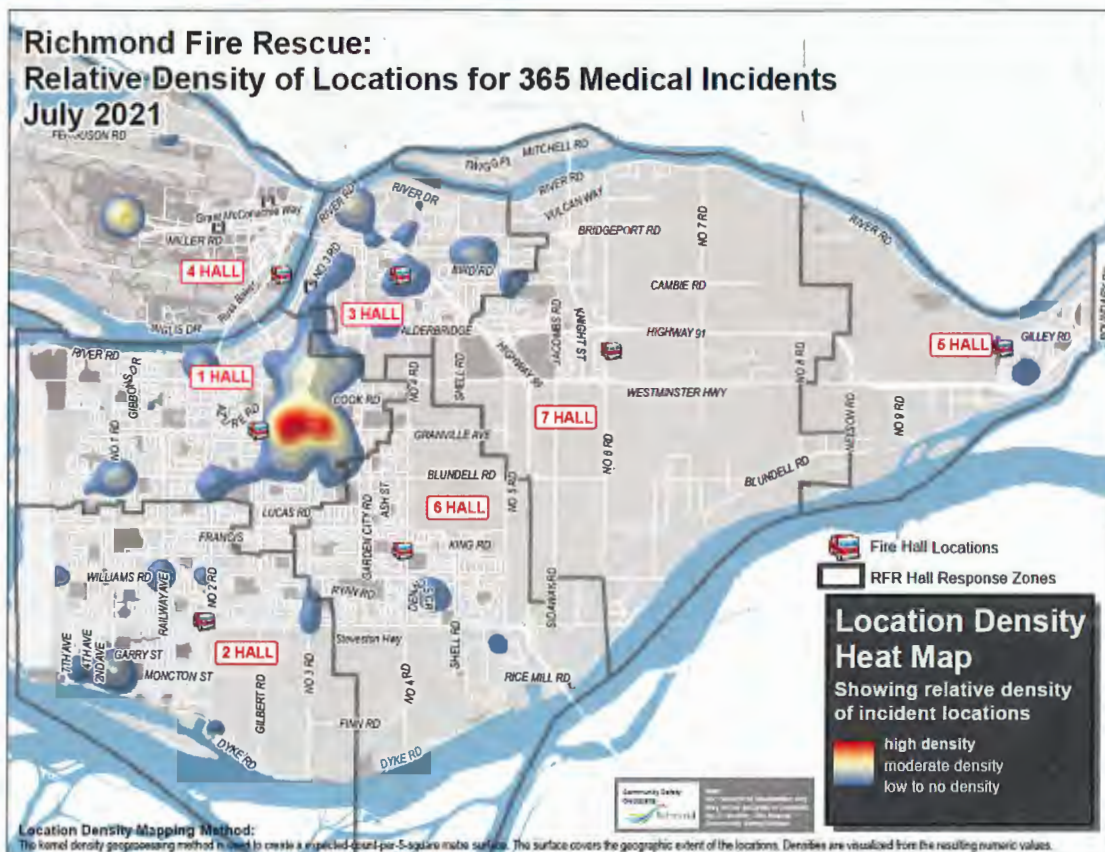
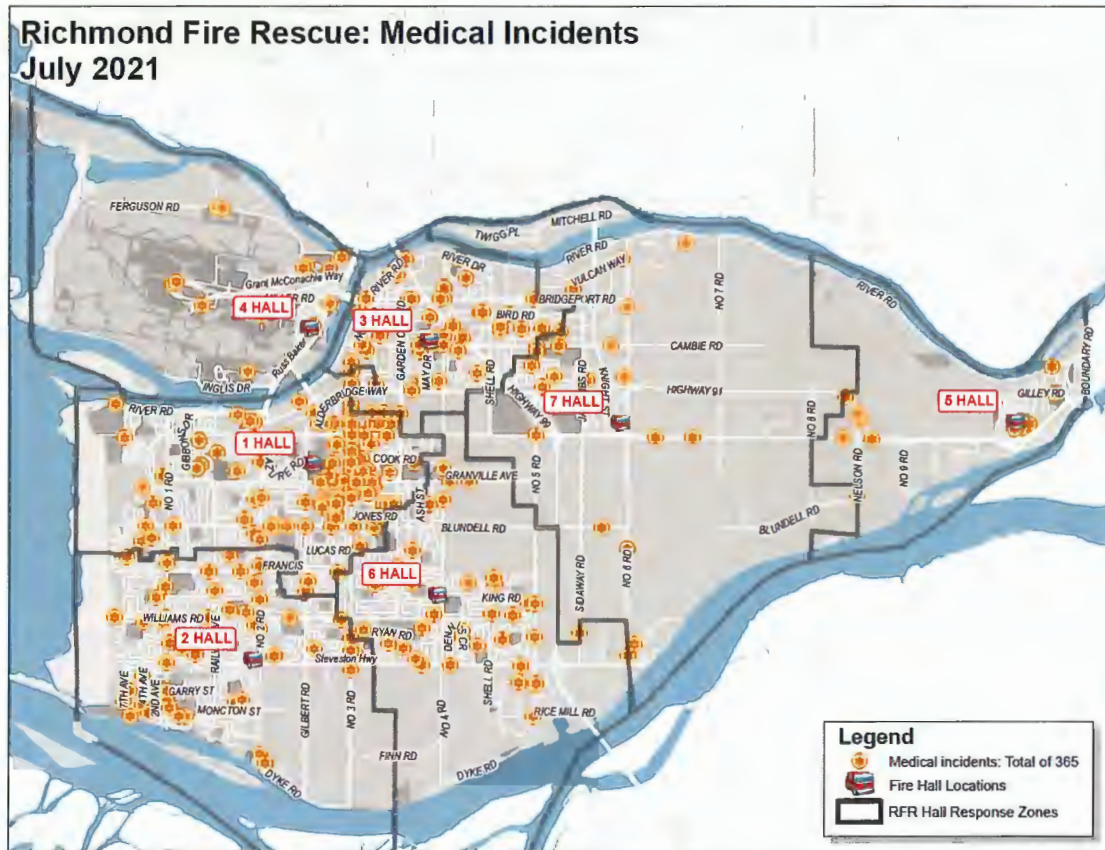


Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in July 2021 (total 82)

