



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee

Date: March 9, 2021

From: Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief

File: 99-Fire Rescue/2021-
Vol 01

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

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – February 2021”, dated March 9, 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

Training and Public Education

The education and development of firefighters in the Province of British Columbia is regulated through the Office of the Fire Commissioner. The Office of the Fire Commissioner has created minimum training standards which are found within the "Structure Firefighters Competency and Training Playbook" or "Playbook". Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) implemented a new program in February 2019 where all firefighters will review, practice and demonstrate the skills identified within the Playbook. Firefighters are continuing within their Playbook training.

Fire Training staff facilitated multiple training activities during February 2021 including; probationary recruit 12 month practical and theory exams, fire blanket suppression system, the Road to Mental Health Readiness (R2MR) Instructors Workshops, Frontline Leadership and Playbook drills.

During February 2021, public education events remained on hold. Fire staff continued to create and post educational videos on the RFR Facebook and website pages, along with preparation for the next round of recruitment.

Recruitment

In February there were approximately 500 applications for the next round of firefighter recruitment. This year's recruitment has been streamlined to improve the process, while adhering to COVID-19 health guidelines. These improvements also include the introduction of a more efficient resume format and the use of online testing resources.

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 incidences in a manner where loss of life, reduction of property damage and protection of the environment is mitigated. In February 2021 there were a total of 577 incidents, representing a 16 per cent decrease in incidences from February 2020 (Attachment 1).

The average time on scene for RFR crews was 29 minutes, which was the same in 2020. Time on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

	Totals	Percentage Change (February 2020)	Number Change (February 2021)
Alarm Active No Fire	113	-7%	-8
Explosion	0	-	0
Fire	26	+44%	+8
Haz-Mat	15	+50%	+5
Medical	239	-28%	-95
MVI	48	-39%	-31
Public Hazard	6	-14%	-1
Public Service	81	+9%	+7
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	46	+12%	+5
Specialized Transport	2	+100%	+1
Tech Rescue	1	-	+1
Totals	577	-16%	-108

In February 2021 there were 26 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 44 per cent increase from February 2020. The average figure for fires reported in February over the last five years is 21.

Richmond Fire-Rescue continues to experience decreases in medical responses due to the changes of the Provincial Health Orders and Medical Health Officer's direction. RFR continues to monitor all activities to identify and create programs to respond to emerging trends.

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 February 2021 are estimated at \$54,700. This total includes \$1,500 for building/asset loss and \$53,200 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$16,906,200 and the total value preserved from damage was \$16,851,500. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 2); this is greater than the 97 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	6	3,301,000	-	165,000	50,500	3,415,500
Multi family	1	12,336,000	-	500	500	12,336,000
Commercial/Industrial	1	600,000	-	500,000	-	1,100,000
Outdoor	17	-	-	2,200	2,200	-
Vehicle/Vessel	1	1,500	1,500	-	-	-
Totals*	26	16,238,500	1,500	667,700	53,200	16,851,500

* 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 February 2021 incidents:

- **February 5 – Motor Home fire on River Road.** On arrival crews found a motor home fully involved with fire and was unable to be salvaged. There were no injuries to civilians or RFR personnel. After RFR crews left the scene, the owner of the motor home arrived and identified themselves to the onsite Investigator. The owner was using the motor home as their permanent residence. The RFR Fire Investigator triggered the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) support process and the motor home owner was provided accommodation for 72 hours while they worked through their insurance process. Richmond RCMP and an RFR Fire Investigator attended the scene to determine the cause and origin of the fire.
- **February 17 – Structure fire on No. 2 Road.** RFR Crews arrived on scene to a structure fire involving a split-level residence. On arrival, the fire had involved the back patio of the residence extending into the attic space. Crews worked to extinguish the fire along with any hot spots. Three tenants had self-evacuated upon arrival and, although not injured, required emergency services through the CRC. RFR successfully rescued four cats from the residence. There are no reported injuries to RFR staff. A Fire Investigator attended to determine cause and origin of the fire. One media request from the Richmond News was addressed by staff.
- **February 21 – Dumpster fire on Great Canadian Way.** On arrival RFR crews found a dumpster with burning material up against a commercial building. Crews quickly extinguished the fire and checked for any extension to the nearby building. There were no occupants present. The business owner was contacted by RCMP and arrived on scene shortly after. RFR crews were able to winch the dumpster out of the covered area to ensure that there was no spread of fire in the outbuilding. Two Richmond units remain on scene to ensure the overhaul was complete. A Fire Investigator attended to determine the cause and origin of the fire. There are no reported injuries.
- **February 23 – Structure fire on Thormanby Crescent.** On arrival RFR crews found a large newer home with heavy smoke and fire on the exterior. Crews quickly extinguished the fire and prevented extension into the soffit and attic space. The fire had broken a window and strong winds had driven significant smoke and some fire into the interior. Interior crews dealt with any hot spot concerns and a primary search confirmed there were no occupants present. A Fire Investigator attended the scene. There were no injuries to report. The owner arrived later on scene and the home was unable to be re-occupied at that time.

Financial Impact

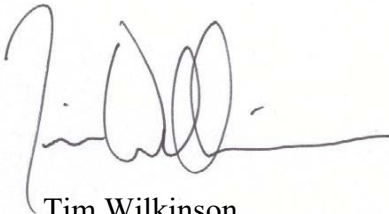
None.

Conclusion

During February 2021, Richmond Fire-Rescue crews continue to experience impacts on all incident volumes. For medical incidents, this is due to the decreases in medical responses emanating from the temporary changes by order of the Provincial Medical Health Officer in response to the pandemic.

The impacts of the pandemic, on incident volumes, has resulted in RFR Management pivoting staff to learning, development and preparedness activities. Richmond Fire-Rescue 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Wilkinson', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief
(604-303-2701)

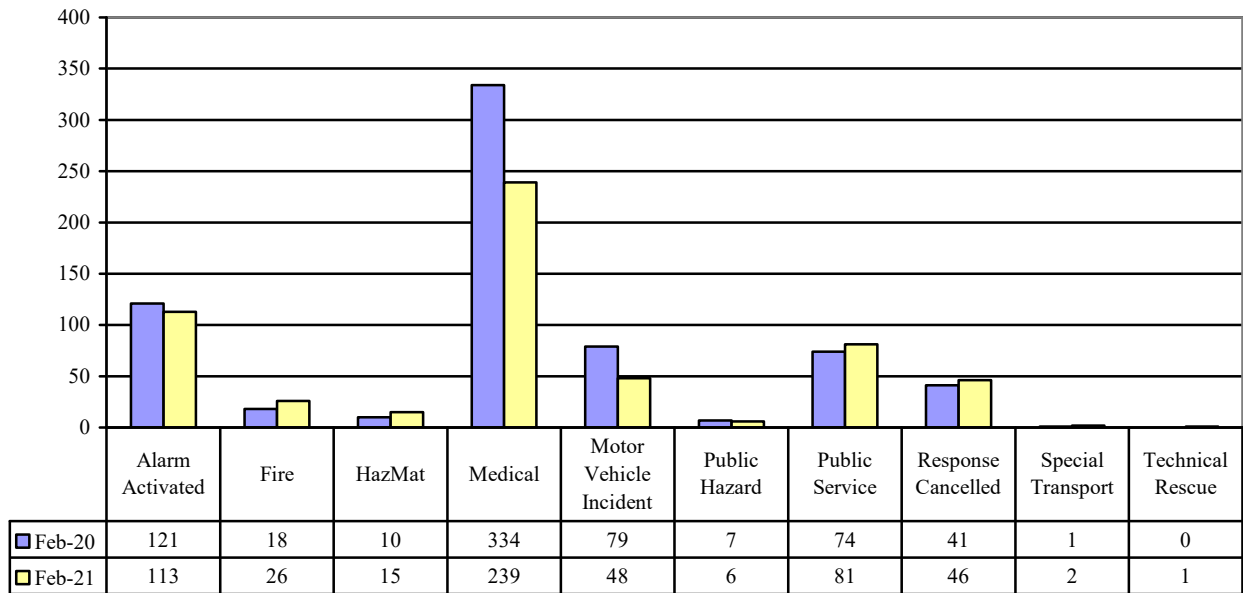
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Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of February's Fire, Medical and MVIs

Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in February 2021 and 2020. In February 2021, there were a total of 577 incidents, compared to 685 in February 2020. This represents a decrease of 16 per cent.

Table 3: February 2020 & February 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 41 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of February 2021. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for February 2020 and 2021 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 239 medical incidents in February 2021 compared to 334 in February 2020, a decrease of 28 per cent.

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

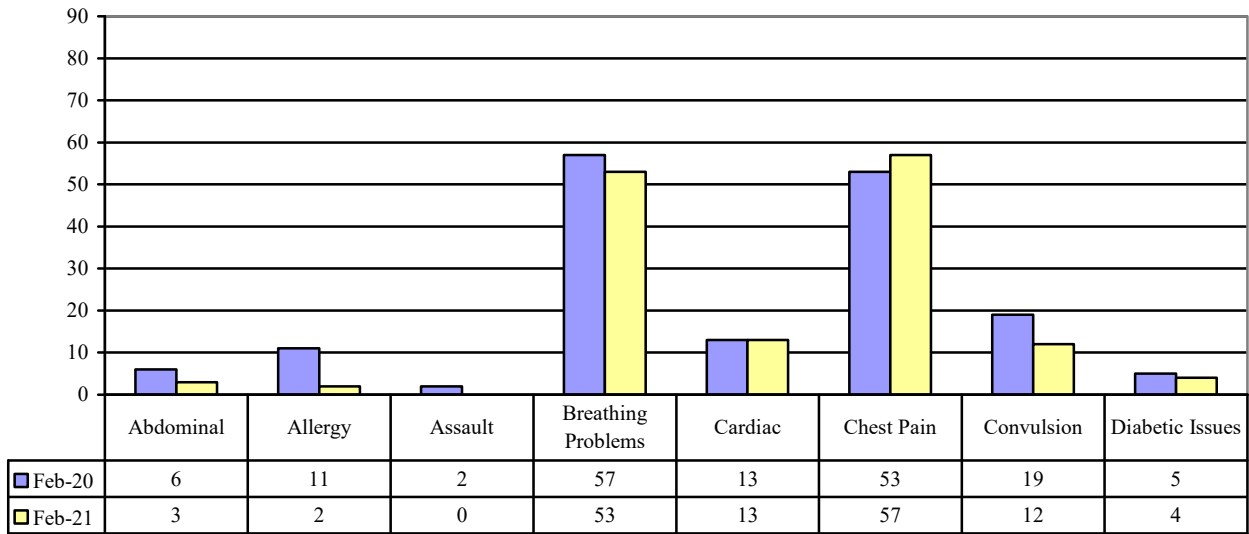
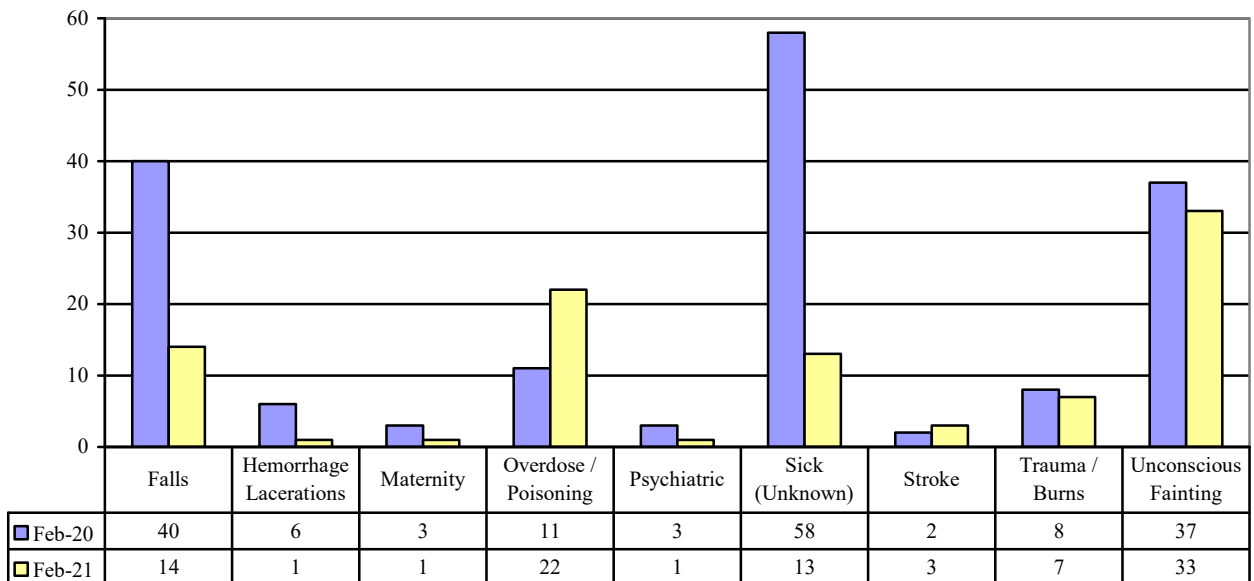


Table 4b: February 2020 & February 2021 Medical Calls by Type



Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for February 2021 are listed below:

Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – February 2021			
	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined
Residential - Single-family	-	6	-
Residential - Multi-family	-	1	-
Commercial/Industrial	-	-	1
Outdoor	-	13	4
Vehicle	-	1	-
Totals	-	21	5

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 – February 2021	
	Details
Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small)	6
Unclassified	3
Vapour Leak	2
Flammable / Combustible Liquids	4
Totals	15

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in February 2021 (total 26)

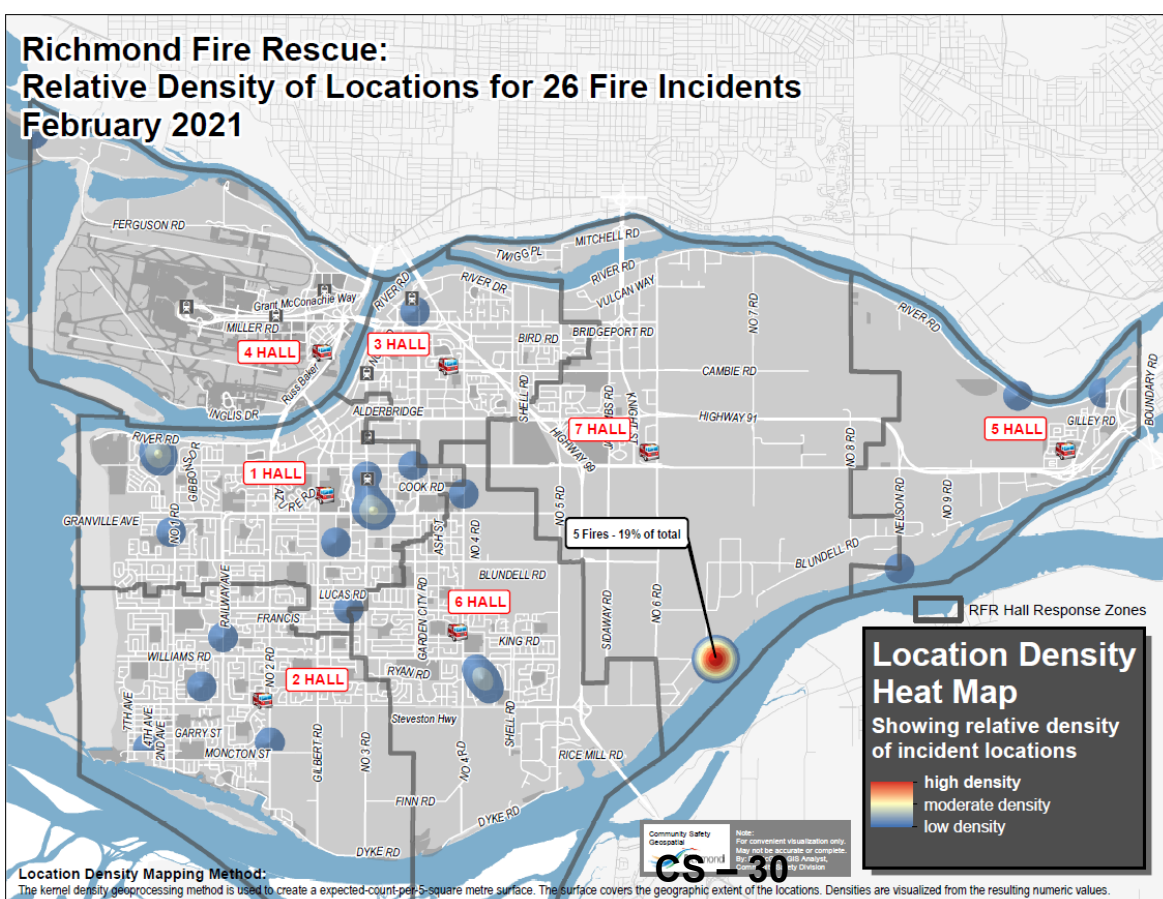
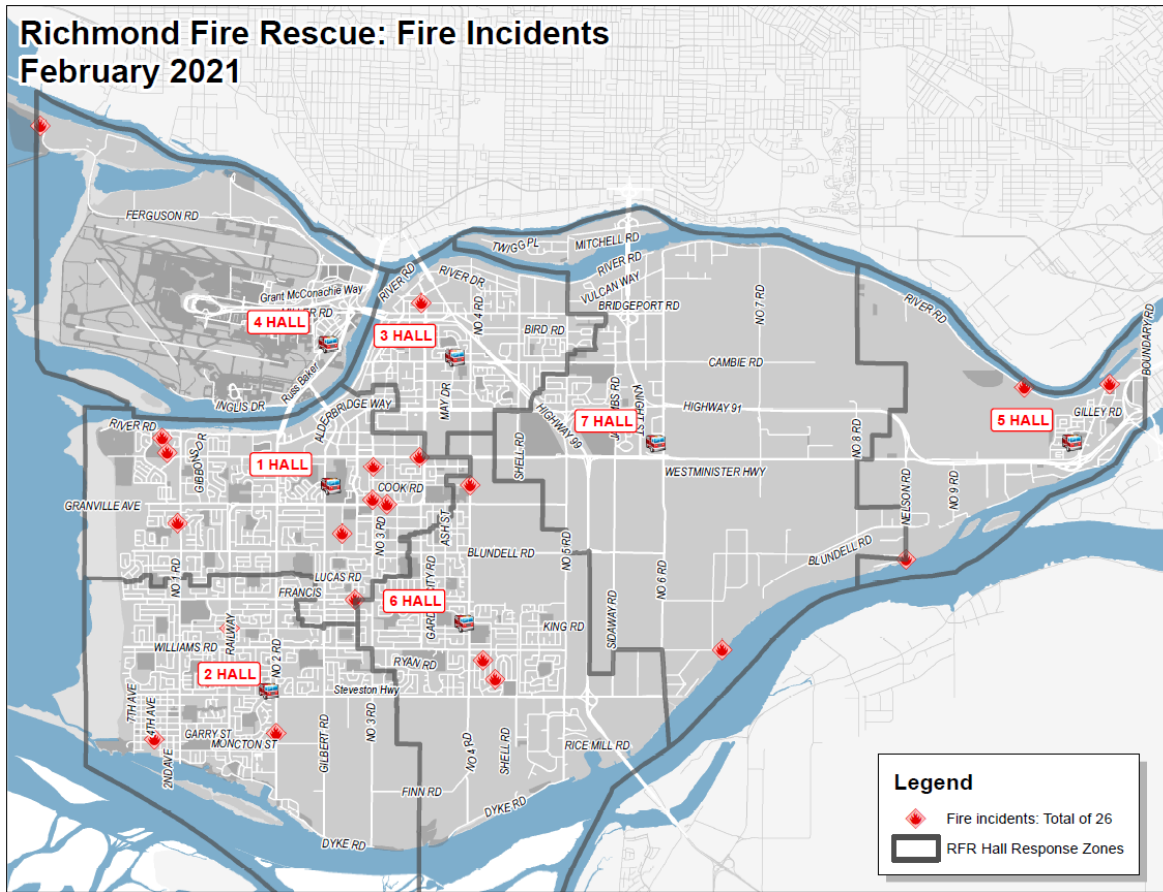


Figure 2: Location of medical Incidents in February 2021 (total 239)

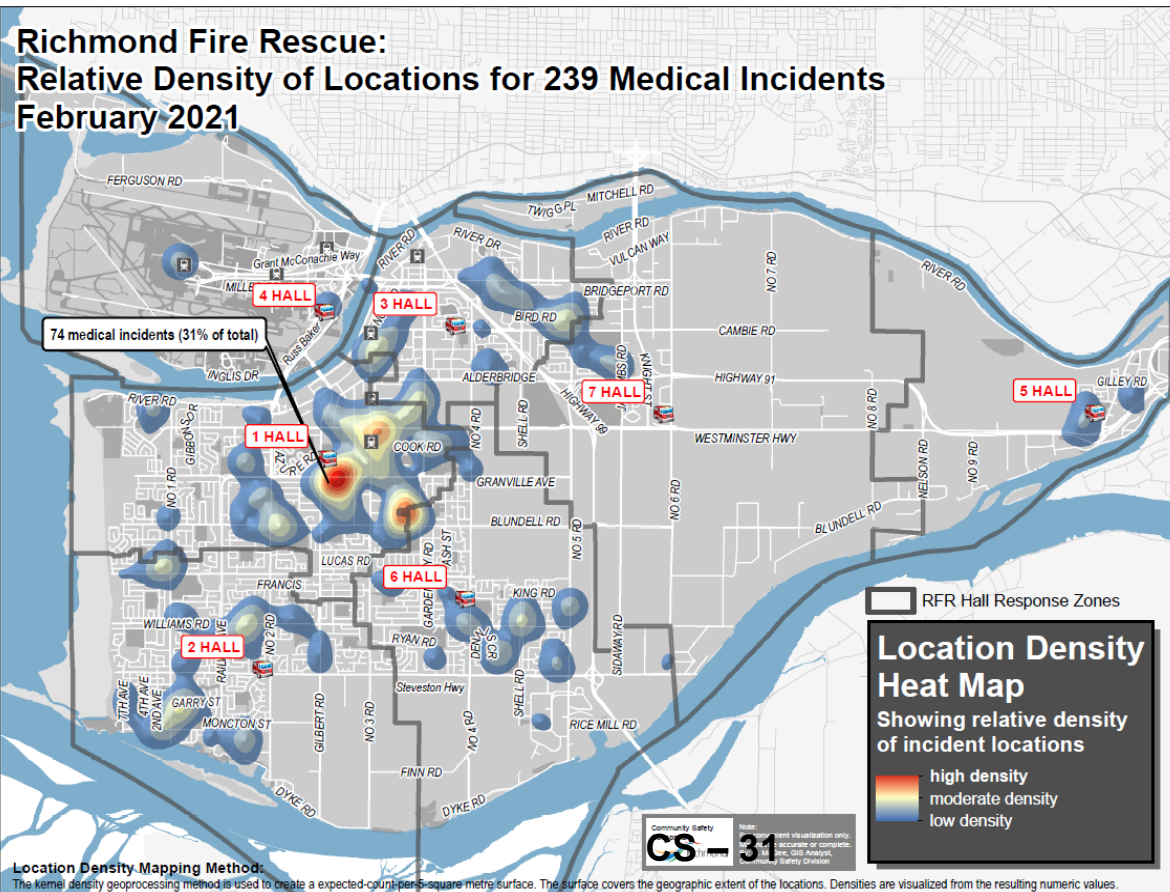
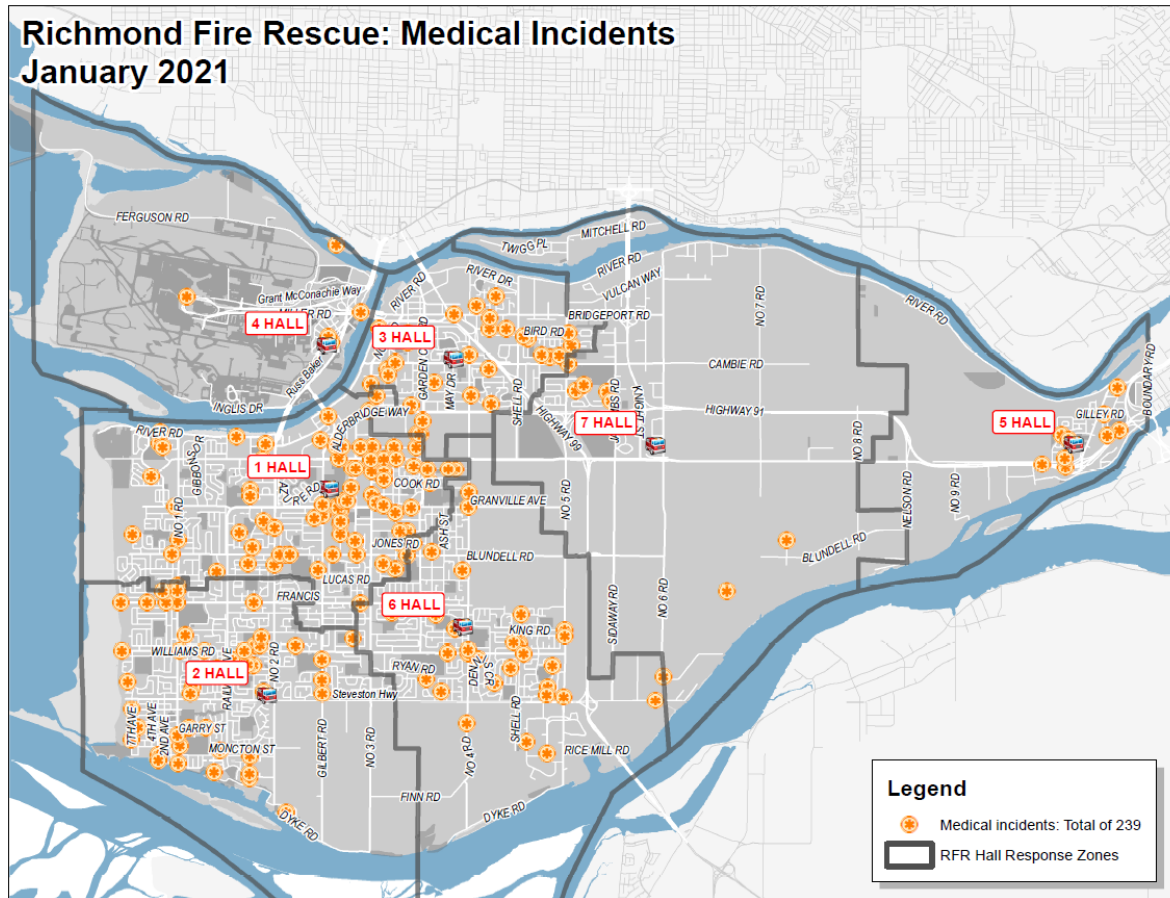


Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in February 2021 (total 48)

