



City of Richmond




Report to Committee

To: Finance Committee **Date:** February 5, 2021
From: Ivy Wong **File:**
 Acting Director, Finance
Re: **Extending Non-Acceptance of Cash Transactions at City Hall**

Staff Recommendation

That Council extends non-acceptance of cash transactions at City Hall until March 31, 2022

Ivy Wong
Acting Director, Finance
(604-276-4046)

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER  Acting GM, F&CS	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

At the Special General Purposes Committee meeting of March 23, 2020 and the Finance Committee meeting of September 8, 2020 Council supported the decision to not accept cash transactions at City Hall until March 31, 2021.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #5 Sound Financial Management:

Accountable, transparent, and responsible financial management that supports the needs of the community into the future.

Analysis

The initial decision to stop accepting cash at City Hall was to encourage social distancing by eliminating the only form of payment that requires physical presence. Most other payment methods (cheque, credit card, online banking) may be completed online through the City's or the financial institutions' websites or through the City's drop box. Non acceptance of cash minimizes physical presence at City Hall, encourages social distancing, and supports anti-money laundering initiatives.

In the 10 months since cash acceptance was curtailed, there have been relatively few customers adversely affected by Council's decision. In the initial 4 months, less than 10 customers expressed their displeasure while in the past 6 months, no customers expressed any objections and generally were understanding of the change.

Since the change, approximately 75% of all tax and utility payments are completed online (Attachment 1) or through financial institutions.

With the ongoing COVID situation and the recent discovery of new COVID variants, social distancing measures continue to be encouraged. With the rationales for not accepting cash at City Hall still in existence and customers' acceptance of online and cashless transactions strong, a further extension for non-acceptance of cash at City Hall is recommended.

Extending the non-acceptance of cash at City Hall until March 31, 2022 would allow time for the majority of residents to be vaccinated from COVID and for staff to determine the response to a cashless City Hall once the City is back to normal operations.

Financial Impact

None

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Conclusion

That Council extends non-acceptance of cash transactions at City Hall until March 31, 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Angela Zanardo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Angela Zanardo
Acting Revenue Manager
(604-276-4392)

AZ:az

Att. 1: Tax and Utility Payments Table

Tax and Utility Payments				
	City		Financial Institution	Total Online & Thru Financial Institutions
Month	% In Person or Mail-in	% Self Service Online Credit Card / eHOG	Online & Over the Counter Banking	
Mar 24-31	8.58%	10.84%	80.59%	91.42%
Apr-20	53.06%	18.33%	28.61%	46.94%
May-20	9.43%	41.83%	48.74%	90.57%
Jun-20	20.63%	29.10%	50.27%	79.37%
Jul-20	28.26%	15.78%	55.96%	71.74%
Aug-20	18.71%	14.29%	67.01%	81.29%
Sep-20	26.06%	13.60%	60.35%	73.94%
Oct-20	23.36%	11.05%	65.59%	76.64%
Nov-20	17.39%	9.45%	73.16%	82.61%
Dec-20	24.85%	16.08%	59.07%	75.15%
Jan-21	39.37%	39.81%	20.82%	60.63%