



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee

Date: November 2, 2021

From: Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief

File: 99-Fire Rescue/2021-
Vol 01

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

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Richmond Fire-Rescue Monthly Activity Report – October 2021”, dated November 2, 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

Staff participated in the multi agency Vancouver Airport Table Top Exercise. Staff participated as exercise players and observers for a simulated a plane crash and explosion on the airport runway. The objective of the Table Top Exercise was to practice multi-agency decision-making, collaboration and communication, orientation and exposure to Vancouver Airport communications processes around a crash event. The event also provided an examination of the steps involved in ensuring site safety for RFR Emergency Response Crews, and provided the logistical support for investigative activities from the transfer of site command to aircraft recovery.

Staff organized and facilitated the Great BC Shake-Out event, which was held on October 21, 2021 at 10:21 am. During this event, staff tested the Emergency Notification System (ENS), which reached all subscribers; and provided for increased subscriptions. As part of the Great BC Shake-Out, staff opened the Department Operations Center (DOC) and implemented a Multi-Agency Emergency Response exercise, which included other key City departments, the Richmond RCMP Detachment, Vancouver Airport Authority and E-Comm 9-1-1. Learnings from this exercise included: preferred and best appropriate communications methods for both internal and external service partners, the capacities of business units post-disaster, and pending communications improvements on the E-Comm wide area radio system.

Staff participated in a three day Individual/Group Crisis Intervention Workshop outlining how to assess and assist individuals suffering psychological crisis. Outcomes of this workshop will enhance staff's ability to include this critical component into emergency planning.

During October, and as the City transitions into colder weather, there have been a number of Extreme Weather Reports including river level increases and extreme wind. Emergency Programs staff collaborated with Corporate Communications & Marketing and Public Works Operations in communicating potential weather impacts and response capacities.

Training and Public Education

During October 2021, Fire Training staff continued to facilitate the training for the 29 new firefighter recruits. Other training activities included Leadership training for future Officers and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus awareness training.

During October 2021, public education events included Fire Prevention Week public education and promotion by attending the Country Farms Pumpkin Patch event. Fire staff continue 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 October 2021, there were a total of 845 incidents, representing a 31 per cent increase in incidences from October 2020 (Attachment 1).

Richmond Fire-Rescue is experiencing increases in medical responses due to changes in the Provincial Health Orders and Medical Health Officer's direction. The increase in October 2021 is a result of the gradual return to normal levels of service of medical event types and responses to medical calls for hot weather responses. 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 30 minutes, which was the same as recorded in 2020. Time on scene can vary due to the nature and severity of each incident.

	Totals (2021)	Percentage Change from October 2020	Number Change from October 2020 to 2021	5 Year Average for October
Alarm Active No Fire	166	+13	+19	147
Explosion	0	-	-	0
Fire	33	-27	-12	33
Haz-Mat	5	-69	-11	10
Medical	383	+40	+110	357
MVI	91	+63	+35	93
Public Hazard	7	-	-	13
Public Service	101	+71	+42	71
Response Cancelled/Unfounded	54	+35	+14	70
Specialized Transport	4	-	+4	4
Tech Rescue	1	-	+1	0
Totals	845	+31	+202	797

In October 2021, there were 33 reportable fires to the Office of the Fire Commissioner, representing a 27 per cent decrease from October 2020. The average figure for fires reported in October over the last five years is 33.

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 October 2021 are estimated at \$135,000. This total includes \$85,000 for building/asset loss and \$50,000 for content loss. The total building/asset and content value at risk was estimated to be \$11,147,400 and the total value preserved from damage was \$11,012,400. These numbers translate to 99 per cent of value protected (Table 2); this is higher than the 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	3	67,600	10,000	-	-	57,600
Multi family	5	2,373,000	50,000	60,000	50,000	2,333,000
Commercial/Industrial	2	8,616,800	-	-	-	8,616,800
Outdoor	15	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicle/Vessel	7	30,000	25,000	-	-	5,000
Totals*	32	11,087,400	85,000	60,000	50,000	11,012,400

* 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 October 2021 incidents:

- October 12, 2021 - Medical incident on River Road.** Multiple RFR crews responded to two persons trapped under large sheets of glass. Upon arrival, the crew's initial observations were that both patients were observed to be deceased. Shortly afterwards BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) arrived on scene and confirmed this. All members of the crew assisted removing the glass off the two patient utilizing airbags. The bodies were removed and covered. WorkSafe BC and RCMP Special Crimes attended the scene. Due to the nature of the incident, staff were provided with Critical Incident Stress defusing as indicated in RFR's standard operating guidelines. There were no physical injuries sustained by any RFR personnel or other agencies on scene.
- October 12, 2021 – Residential fire on No. 4 Road.** RFR crews responded to a fire in a bedroom. The fire was extinguished limiting extension to the room of origin. The fire was minor in nature but had created a lot of smoke in the structure. RFR crews cleared the smoke from the home using a Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV) fan and performed air monitoring before turning the home back over to the occupants. BCEHS was requested to attend to provide the resident with medical assistance. The occupant declined transport in favour of making their own way to the hospital. There were no other injuries reported to residents or RFR personnel. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.

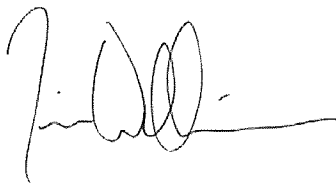
- **October 22, 2021 – Commercial fire on No. 3 Road.** RFR crews responded to reports of a cardboard compactor on fire. On arrival and investigation, RFR crews found what appeared to be a homeless person inside the compactor, smoking and using a lighter to be able to see, which created the small fire. Once crews gained access to the compactor, the person left the scene. Crews extinguished the fire using water and foam and assisted with garbage removal from the compactor. A PPV fan was set up to provide ventilation to the adjacent property. Once extinguished the garbage was put back into the compactor and turned it on. The site Operations Manager was contacted to have the bin collected. A Fire Investigator attended the scene.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

During October 2021, Richmond Fire-Rescue crews continued to experience increases to incident volumes that are a return to volumes experienced in years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. RFR staff remain ready to react and adapt to the ever changing pandemic situation.



Tim Wilkinson
Fire Chief
(604-303-2701)

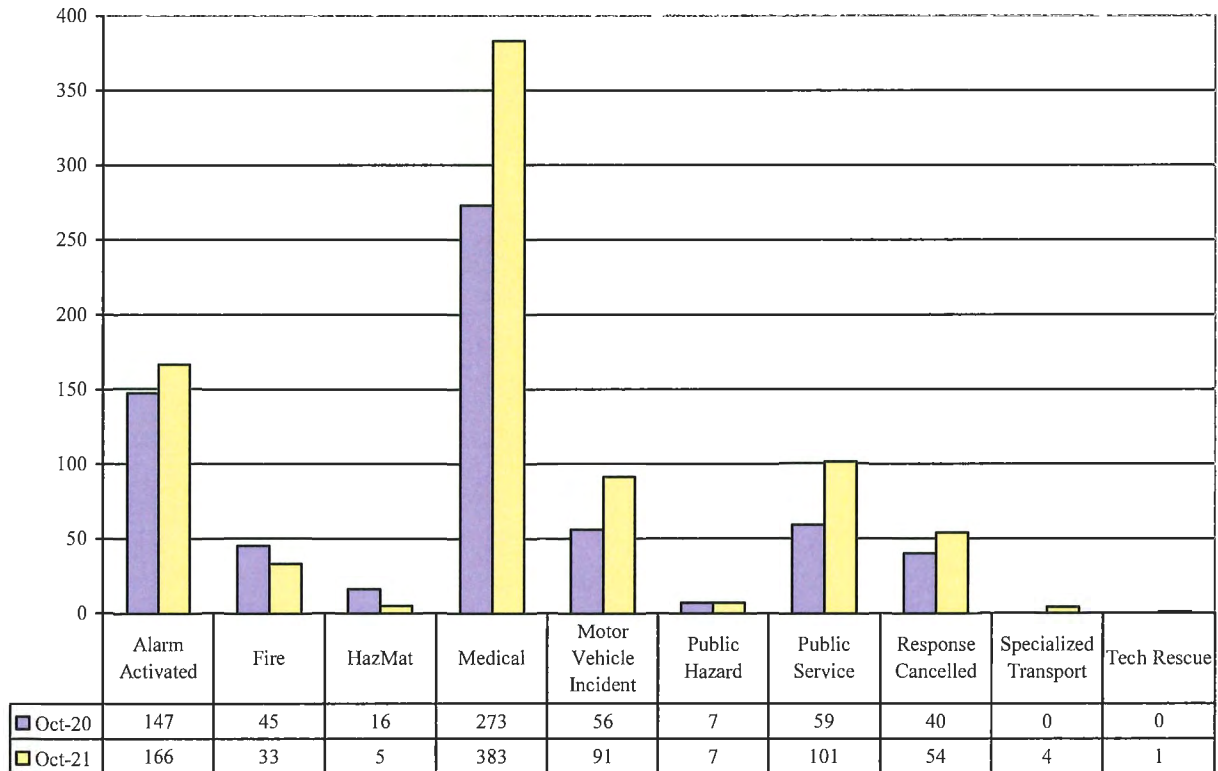
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Att. 1: Suppression Activity, including location of October's Fire, Medical and MVIs

Incident Volumes

The following chart provides a month to month comparison regarding incidents occurring in October 2021 and 2020. In October 2021, there were a total of 845 incidents, compared to 643 in October 2020. This represents an increase of 31 per cent.

Table 3: October 2020 & October 2021 Incident Volumes



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 45 per cent of the total emergency responses for RFR during the month of October 2021. A detailed breakdown of the medical incidents for October 2020 and 2021 is set out in the following table by sub-type. There were a total of 383 medical incidents in October 2021 compared to 273 in October 2020, an increase of 40 per cent. RFR continue 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: October 2020 & October 2021 Medical Calls by Type

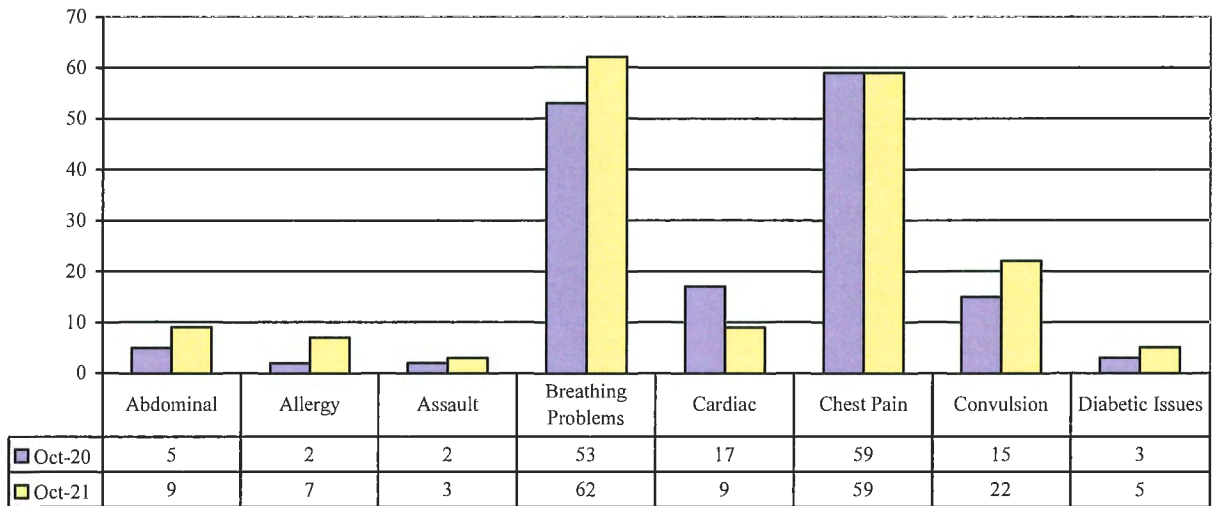
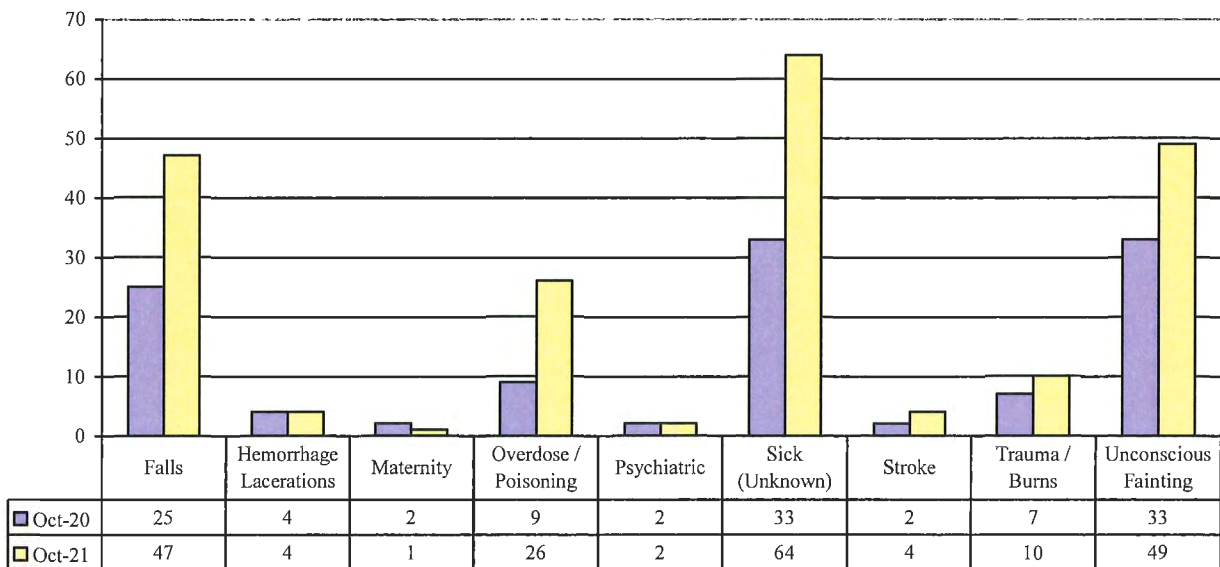


Table 4b: October 2020 & October 2021 Medical Calls by Type



Fire Investigations

The fire investigation statistics for October 2021 are listed below:

Table 5: Total Fire Investigation Statistics – October 2021			
	Suspicious	Accidental	Undetermined
Residential - Single-family	-	2	1
Residential - Multi-family	-	5	-
Commercial/Industrial	1	1	-
Outdoor	1	13	1
Vehicle	1	6	1
Totals	3	27	2

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 – October 2021	
	Details
Natural Gas / Propane Leaks (small)	3
Unclassified	2
Totals	5

Figure 1: Location of reportable fires attended in October 2021 (total 33)

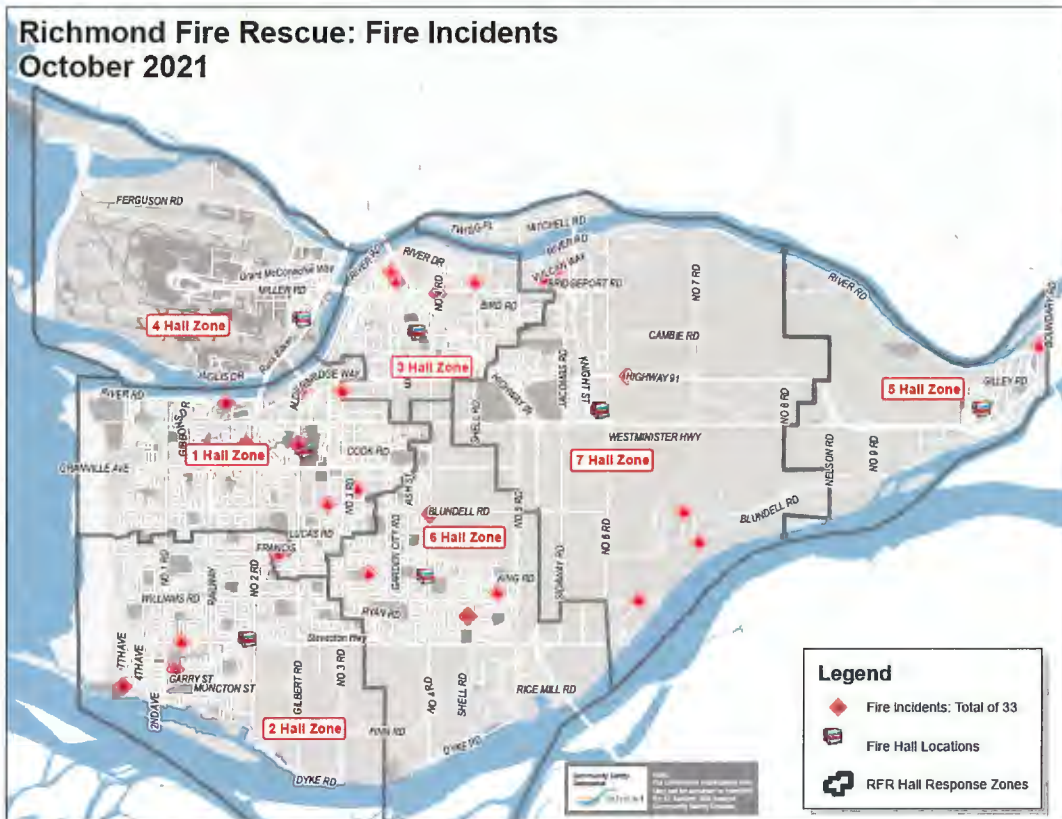


Figure 2: Location of medical incidents in October 2021 (total 383)

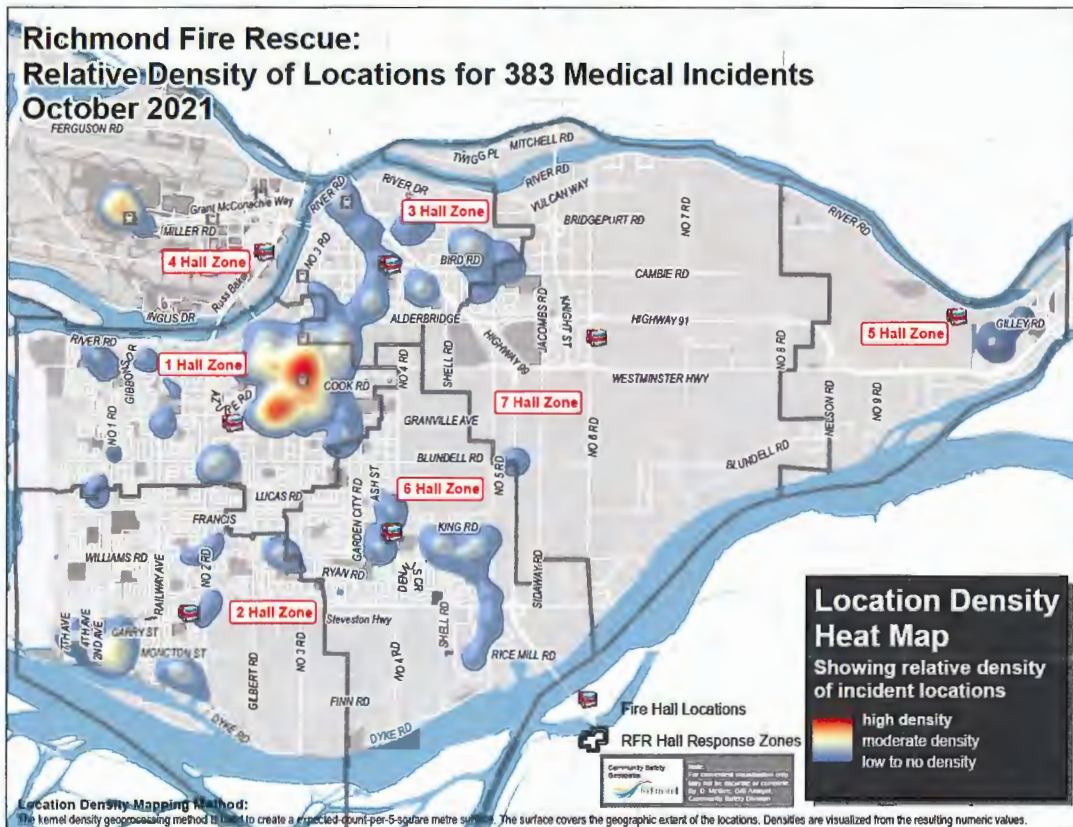
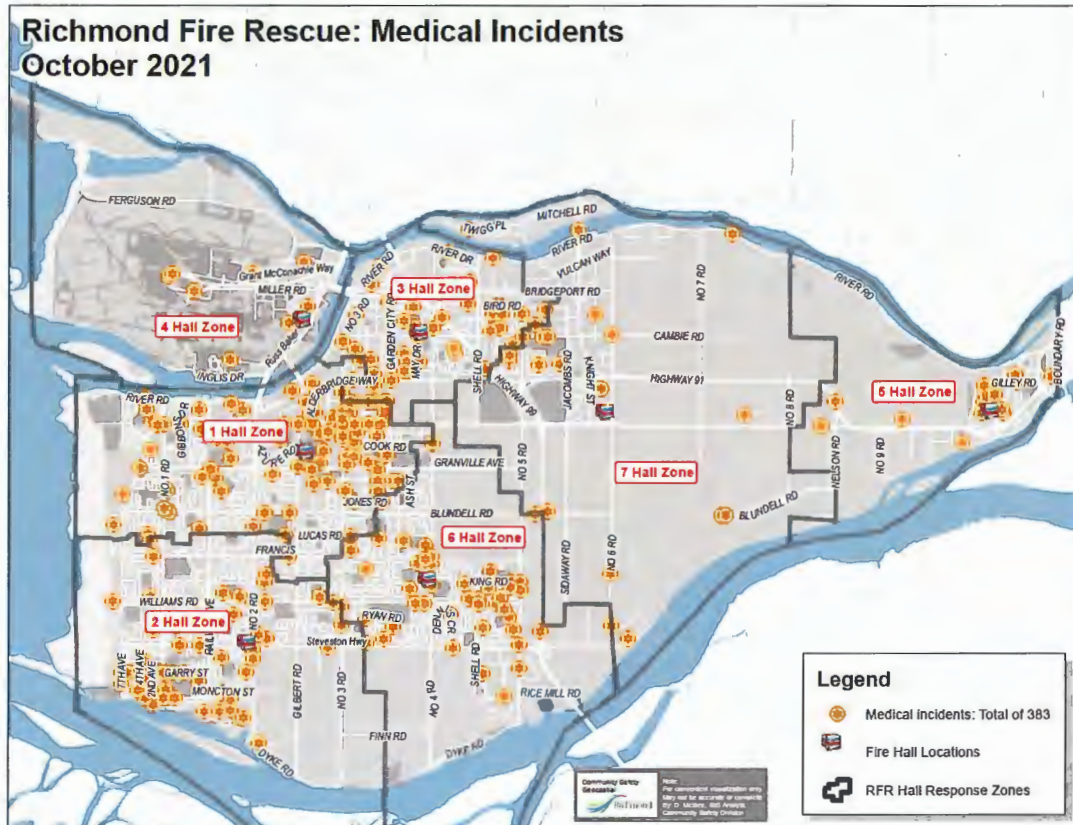


Figure 3: Location of MVI Incidents in October 2021 (total 91)

