

NO: R080

COUNCIL DATE: April 25, 2022

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **April 21, 2022**

FROM: **City Manager**

FILE: **7130-16**

SUBJECT: **COVID-19: Emergency Operations Centre Update**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that Council receive this report for information.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a status update of the various actions taken in response to COVID-19 since the last Corporate Report, which was provided to Council at the April 11, 2022, Regular Council Public Hearing meeting (a copy of Corporate Report No. R064; 2022 is attached as Appendix "I").

## BACKGROUND

The City's Emergency Operations Centre ("EOC") is the command and communications hub for any large emergency or disaster including the current global COVID-19 pandemic. The EOC was activated by the City on February 17, 2020, prior to the World Health Organization ("WHO") declaring a global pandemic.

Since the last report, there has been minimal change to the COVID-19 situation. With most public health restrictions rescinded in British Columbia, the City has resumed operations near pre-COVID levels and the EOC has now been deactivated. EOC updates to Council regarding COVID-19 will resume if the EOC is reactivated, or if health restrictions are re-imposed.

## DISCUSSION

The EOC has clear responsibilities outlined and actions underway to respond to the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the EOC has been instrumental in leading the City's COVID-19 response, the relaxation of public health orders and restrictions has allowed the City to deactivate the EOC and resume a level 1 response activation within the Surrey Emergency Program. A level 1 activation reflects an event that requires situation monitoring only and minimal need for site support activities. The following sections provide an update of the current COVID-19 situation in Surrey.

## **Current State of COVID-19**

COVID-19 continues to have a global impact with over 505 million cases worldwide as of April 19, 2022. The Omicron wave, which had led to significant case counts in North America, has subsided and now most of the case growth is concentrated in Europe and East Asia. In response to lowering case counts, jurisdictions in North America, including Canada, have removed many COVID-19 restrictions that have been in place for nearly two years.

British Columbia added an additional 1,770 cases from April 3-6, 2022 (the last date of reporting by the Province) for a total of 359,002 cases. This represents an increase of 67 cases from the preceding week. The BC Centres for Disease Control (“BCCDC”) has indicated that case numbers are no longer an effective measure for COVID-19 transmissibility and announced on April 15, 2022, that reporting of daily case totals will be suspended indefinitely. A summary of COVID-19 cases within the Metro Vancouver region is included in Appendix “II”.

## **Recent Updates to BC Public Health Orders**

British Columbia’s Provincial Health Officer ended the majority of public health orders on April 8, 2022 including BC Vaccination card requirements and Workplace Safety Orders.

The BC Public Health Officer has indicated that unless there is a significant change to the COVID-19 situation, most remaining public health orders will be removed and hopes to manage the pandemic like seasonal influenza.

The City continues to use its Restart Plan to determine when each of the City’s other functional business areas are able to adjust their level of service and resume some form of operation. These decisions are based on the premise that all of the following four criteria are met:

1. Ability to comply with new PHOs;
2. Reasonable public demand for services;
3. Financial viability; and
4. Public and employee safety measures are in place.

The following sections provide an update on the status of the EOC’s COVID-19 response to changes with the latest PHOs and the City’s Restart Plan.

## **Current Staffing Levels and Return to Office Plan**

Since the start of the pandemic, there has been 906 cases amongst staff, with a drastic decline in reported cases in recent weeks. The RTO plan and safe work protocols in place have been effective to date in minimizing COVID-19 transmission between staff as most cases that staff have contracted occurred outside of the workplace. Despite the number of cases amongst staff, the City’s level of service has not been negatively impacted.

In response to the recent changes to the PHOs, effective March 14, 2022, staffing levels were increased to 100% and all in-person meetings and training sessions have returned to 100% room capacity.

As of April 8, 2022, proof of vaccination is not required to enter any City facility and greeters are no longer required at facility entrances for this purpose. Furthermore, the City's Rapid Testing Program has been suspended for staff (excluding those who work in RCMP Support Services) and those participating in the program are no longer required to submit a valid negative rapid test prior to their shift.

### **Surrey Fire Services and Surrey RCMP Response**

The Surrey Fire Services ("SFS") and RCMP have generally responded to more calls than pre-pandemic levels, including in the previous month. Since the beginning of January 2022, Surrey Fire Service workload trends continue to be 28% higher in-service demand compared to 2021 year-to-date ("YTD") (see Appendix "III").

Surrey RCMP calls for service in 2022 YTD has exceeded pre-pandemic levels; however, Surrey RCMP has responded to 248 fewer calls compared to 2021 (see Appendix "IV").

### **COVID-19 Compliance and Enforcement Team**

On March 26, 2020, the Surrey RCMP and the City of Surrey Bylaw Services Division established a joint COVID-19 Compliance & Enforcement Team ("CCET") to conduct proactive checks and educate local residents and businesses on their personal obligations related to PHOs.

With the easing of PHOs, and given the sustained high-level of compliance amongst businesses, CCET has moved towards a response-base model for complaints.

### **Surrey Libraries**

All 10 Surrey Libraries are open at full-service hours with daily checkouts at 75.5% of pre-pandemic levels and daily visits at 49.7% of pre-pandemic levels. In addition, in-person programming restarted with the easing of provincial health restrictions effective February 17, 2022, and public meeting room rentals are now available at select branches. Libraries are also continuing to be used by the community for information and recreational needs, computer access, and study spaces. As daily checkouts and daily visits have not returned to pre-pandemic levels, the City will continue to be monitor these levels closely over the coming months.

### **Parks, Recreation & Culture Facilities**

The City initiated a phased reopening of Parks, Recreation & Culture facilities across the City starting in May of 2020. Currently all parks, recreation and culture facilities have reopened except for the South Surrey Indoor Pool. City of Surrey facilities, like many across the province, have struggled with lifeguard and support staff shortages that have impacted pool openings, swim lesson offerings and hours of operation. The demand for recreational services is higher than operational staffing capacity can meet. Parks, Recreation & Culture and Human Resources staff continue to focus on recruiting, hiring, and training of new staff to increase the staffing capacities to meet these demands for service. The City will continue to monitor the capacity levels and expand operations as soon as there is a greater staff capacity.

## Support for Priority Populations

In April of 2020, the EOC partnered with BC Housing and the Fraser Health Authority to open the former North Surrey Recreation Centre (“NSRC”) as an Emergency Response Centre (“ERC”) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among people experiencing housing instability during the pandemic. The ERC operated at or near capacity since opening. With the lifting of public health restrictions and new supportive housing and shelter projects opening in Surrey, BC Housing staff have begun to transition guests out of the ERC and into alternate housing options as they become available. It is anticipated that all the ERC guests will have moved to more permanent accommodation by the summer.

To reduce the number of people in some existing BC Housing funded shelters in Surrey, BC Housing moved people from shelters to individual motel rooms at the Linda Vista Motel at 6498 King George Boulevard and the Canadian Inn at 6528 King George Boulevard. BC Housing will continue to lease these rooms over the coming months.

## Supporting and Informing Residents

The City continues to provide updates regarding COVID-19 through a variety of mediums specifically the [www.surrey.ca/COVID-19 website](http://www.surrey.ca/COVID-19 website). This has been a valued source of information for residents and businesses with approximately 319,917 pageviews as of April 20, 2022, with 351 pageviews occurring over the last week.

Additionally, the City’s social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram continue to be a valued source of information for residents and businesses. Over the past week, the City has used these platforms as part of a renewed effort to encourage residents to follow current regulations and restrictions. Through these platforms, the City reached approximately 123,023 users over the last week.

## COVID-19 Financial Recoveries

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the City has requested \$2,569,835 and has been approved \$1,203,090 in funding from Emergency Response from Emergency Management BC (“EMBC”) in recoveries and the Federal Government in grants. Funds from EMBC are reimbursed on an expense authorization basis with some recoveries based on utilization of PPE for COVID-19 response. The following chart provides a summary of the amounts requested and approved to date:

COVID-19 Emergency Response			
Entity	Recovery Program/Purpose	Recovery Amount Requested	Recovery Amount Approved
Emergency Management BC (EMBC)	COVID-19 Pandemic	\$553,034	\$322,087
Federal Government (Reaching Home)	Reaching Home COVID-19 Canada's Homelessness Strategy	\$2,016,801	\$881,003
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$2,569,835</b>	<b>\$1,203,090</b>

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The City of Surrey Emergency Program, the EOC, and the level of service provisions support the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0. This work relates to Sustainability Charter 2.0 themes of Public Safety, specifically, the following Desired Outcome ("DO"):

- Emergency Preparedness and Prevention DO6: Surrey has proactive and coordinated emergency prevention measures in place and can effectively deal with emergencies that arise.

## **CONCLUSION**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly improved in recent weeks with most Public Health Order restrictions being lifted. As a result, the EOC will continue adjusting its COVID-19 response according to the latest PHOs and the City's Restart Plan.

Vincent Lalonde, ICD.D., P.Eng.  
City Manager

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Appendix "I" – Corporate Report R064; 2022 – COVID-19: Emergency Operations Centre Update  
Appendix "II" – New Cases Per Week in the Local Health Authorities  
Appendix "III" – Surrey Fire Service – Incident Responses  
Appendix "IV" – Surrey RCMP – Calls for Service



## CORPORATE REPORT

NO: R064

COUNCIL DATE: April 11, 2022

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**REGULAR COUNCIL**

TO: Mayor &amp; Council

DATE: April 7, 2022

FROM: City Manager

FILE: 7130-16

SUBJECT: COVID-19: Emergency Operations Centre Update

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The City Manager recommends that Council receive this report for information.

**INTENT**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a status update of the various actions taken in response to COVID-19 since the last Corporate Report, which was provided to Council at the March 28, 2022, Regular Council Public Hearing meeting (a copy of Corporate Report No. R062; 2022 is attached as Appendix "I").

**BACKGROUND**

The City's Emergency Operations Centre ("EOC") is the command and communications hub for any large emergency or disaster including the current global COVID-19 pandemic. The EOC was activated by the City on February 17, 2020, prior to the World Health Organization ("WHO") declaring a global pandemic. Since the last report, the COVID-19 situation has improved in BC resulting in most BC Public Health Order restrictions including vaccine passport requirements being removed effective April 8, 2022. As a result, the EOC has undertaken the following actions:

- Ended the enforcement of vaccine passport entrance requirements at all recreation facilities;
- Suspended the City's Employee, Volunteer and Contractor COVID-19 Vaccination Policy and Rapid Testing Program; and
- Continued social media efforts to remind residents and businesses of the need to adhere to public health measures and good practices, to advise residents of vaccine eligibility and opportunities, and to advise of facility and service updates enacted as part of Step 3 of the Surrey Restart Plan.

## DISCUSSION

The EOC has clear responsibilities outlined and actions underway to respond to the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, the EOC continues to plan, assess, and respond to new developments domestically and abroad.

### Current State of COVID-19

COVID-19 continues to have a global impact with over 494 million cases worldwide as of April 6, 2022. The Omicron wave, which had led to significant case counts in North America, has subsided and now most of the case growth is concentrated in Europe and East Asia. In response to lowering case counts, jurisdictions in North America, including Canada, have removed many COVID-19 restrictions that have been in place for nearly two years.

British Columbia added an additional 1,514 cases from March 20-26, 2022 (the last date of reporting by the Province) for a total of 354,135 cases. This represents a decrease of over 250 cases from the preceding week. The BC Centres for Disease Control (“BCCDC”) has indicated that case numbers are no longer an effective measure for COVID-19 transmissibility and will no longer be updating these figures in the near future. A summary of COVID-19 cases within the Metro Vancouver region is included in Appendix “II”.

### Recent Updates to BC Public Health Orders

British Columbia’s Provincial Health Officer announced on March 11, 2022, the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in response to declining case counts across the province. These changes include:

- Face coverings will be optional for people in all indoor public and workplace settings;
- Removal of capacity limits on personal and organized indoor gatherings;
- Removal of capacity limits for events, nightclubs, bars, and restaurants;
- Resumption of indoor and outdoor fitness aquatics, and rinks;
- Resumption of adult sports tournaments; and
- Return to work for remote office workers with COVID-19 safety protocols.

On April 8, 2022, the following changes were also made to the public health order:

- BC Vaccination Card proof of vaccination to access non-essential events, services, and businesses will no longer be required;
- The requirement for students residing in residence to be fully vaccinated has been repealed; and
- All Workplace Safety Orders will be lifted.

The BC Public Health Officer has indicated that unless there is a significant change to the COVID-19 situation, most remaining public health orders will be removed and hopes to manage the pandemic like seasonal influenza.

In response to the current COVID-19 situation and the most recent PHO updates, the City is using its Restart Plan to determine when each of the City's other functional business areas are able to adjust their level of service and resume some form of operation. These decisions are based on the premise that all of the following four criteria are met:

1. Ability to comply with new PHOs;
2. Reasonable public demand for services;
3. Financial viability; and
4. Public and employee safety measures are in place.

The following sections provide an update on the status of the EOC's COVID-19 response to changes with the latest PHOs and the City's Restart Plan.

### **Current Staffing Levels and Return to Office Plan**

Since November 29, 2021, there has been 891 cases amongst staff, with a drastic decline in reported cases in recent weeks. The RTO plan and safe work protocols in place have been effective to date in minimizing COVID-19 transmission between staff as most cases that staff have contracted occurred outside of the workplace. Despite the number of cases amongst staff, the City's level of service has not been negatively impacted.

In response to the recent changes to the PHOs, effective March 14, 2022, staffing levels were increased to 100% and all in-person meetings and training sessions have returned to 100% room capacity.

As of April 8, 2022, proof of vaccination is not required to enter any City facility and greeters are no longer required at facility entrances for this purpose. Furthermore, the City's Rapid Testing Program has been suspended for staff (excluding those who work in RCMP Support Services) and those participating in the program are no longer required to submit a valid negative rapid test prior to their shift.

### **Surrey Fire Services and Surrey RCMP Response**

The Surrey Fire Services ("SFS") and RCMP have generally responded to more calls than pre-pandemic levels, including in the previous month. Since the beginning of January 2022, Surrey Fire Service workload trends continue to be 34% higher in-service demand compared to 2021 year-to-date ("YTD") (see Appendix "III").

Surrey RCMP calls for service in 2022 YTD has exceeded pre-pandemic levels; however, Surrey RCMP has responded to 248 fewer calls compared to 2021 (see Appendix "IV").



## **COVID-19 Compliance and Enforcement Team**

On March 26, 2020, the Surrey RCMP and the City of Surrey Bylaw Services Division established a joint COVID-19 Compliance & Enforcement Team (“CCET”) to conduct proactive checks and educate local residents and businesses on their personal obligations related to PHOs.

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## **Surrey Libraries**

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## **Parks, Recreation & Culture Facilities**

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## **Support for Priority Populations**

The EOC has worked with BC Housing and the Fraser Health Authority to open one arena at North Surrey Recreation Centre (“NSRC”) as an Emergency Response Centre (“ERC”) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among people experiencing housing instability during the pandemic. The arena has operated at or near capacity since opening.

To reduce the number of people in some existing BC Housing funded shelters in Surrey, BC Housing has moved people from shelters to individual motel rooms at the Linda Vista Motel at 6498 King George Boulevard and the Canadian Inn at 6528 King George Boulevard.

It is expected that as the risk for COVID-19 subsides, BC Housing will seek to relocate those sheltered at the Linda Vista Motel and the Canadian Inn to available housing where possible, or back to an existing shelter as capacity in these facilities increase back to pre-pandemic occupancy rates. In addition, staff are continuing to work with BC Housing and the Province to identify alternate housing options for the guests at the NSRC ERC.

## Supporting and Informing Residents

The City continues to provide updates regarding COVID-19 through a variety of mediums specifically the [www.surrey.ca/COVID-19 website](http://www.surrey.ca/COVID-19). This has been a valued source of information for residents and businesses with approximately 318,897 pageviews as of April 7, 2022, with 358 pageviews occurring over the last week.

Additionally, the City's social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram continue to be a valued source of information for residents and businesses. Over the past week, the City has used these platforms as part of a renewed effort to encourage residents to follow current regulations and restrictions. Through these platforms, the City reached approximately 106,010 users over the last week.

## COVID-19 Financial Recoveries

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the City has requested \$2,569,835 and has been approved \$1,203,090 in funding from Emergency Response from Emergency Management BC ("EMBC") in recoveries and the Federal Government in grants. Funds from EMBC are reimbursed on an expense authorization basis with some recoveries based on utilization of PPE for COVID-19 response. The following chart provides a summary of the amounts requested and approved to date:

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Federal Government (Luma Native BC Housing Society)	Reaching Home COVID-19 Canada's Homelessness Strategy	\$2,016,801	\$881,003
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$2,569,835</b>	<b>\$1,203,090</b>

## SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

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## CONCLUSION

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly improved in recent weeks with most Public Health Order restrictions being lifted. As a result, the EOC will continue adjusting its COVID-19 response according to the latest PHOs and the City's Restart Plan.



Vincent Lalonde, ICD.D., P.Eng.  
City Manager

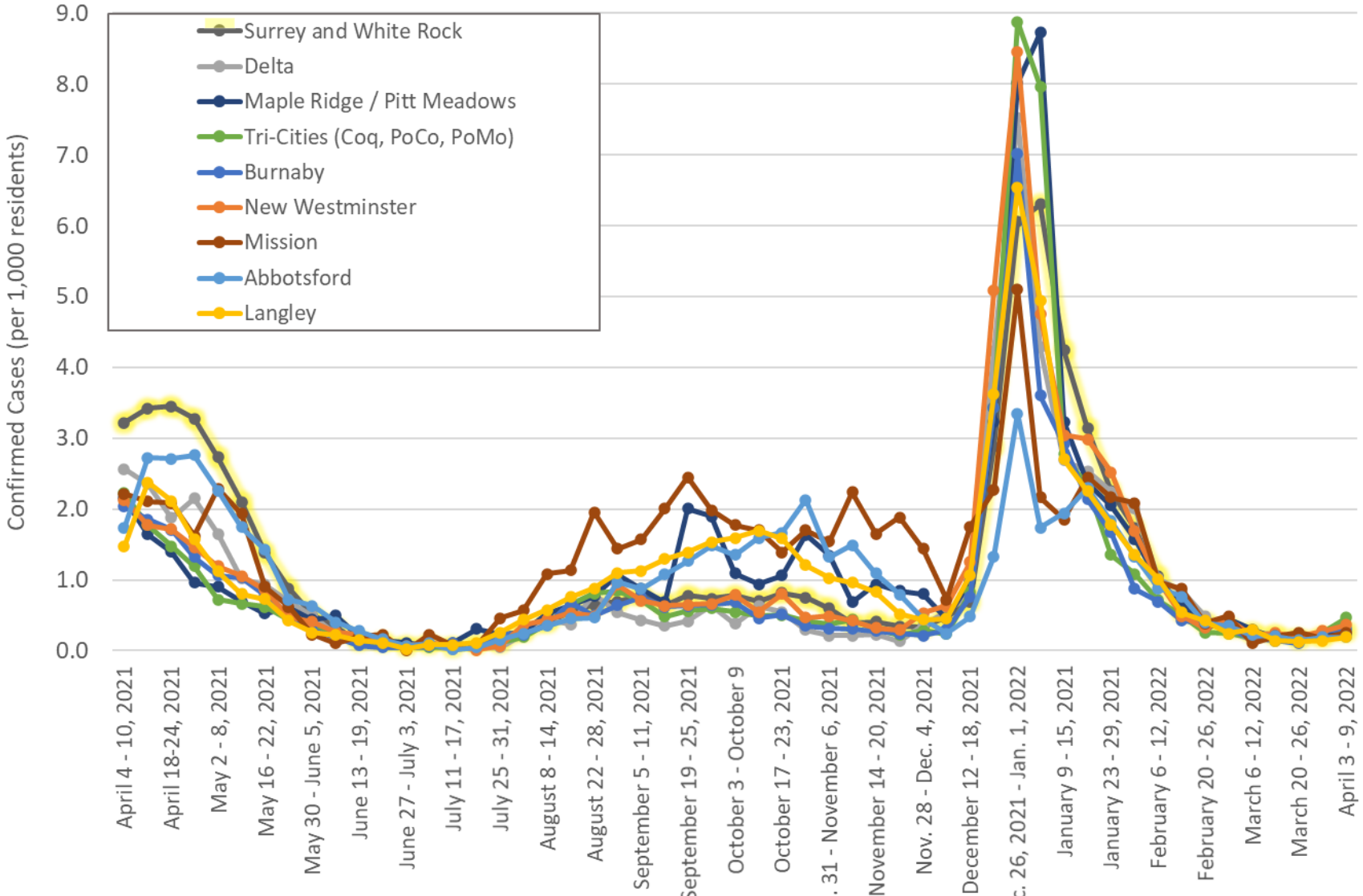
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*\* Appendices available upon request*

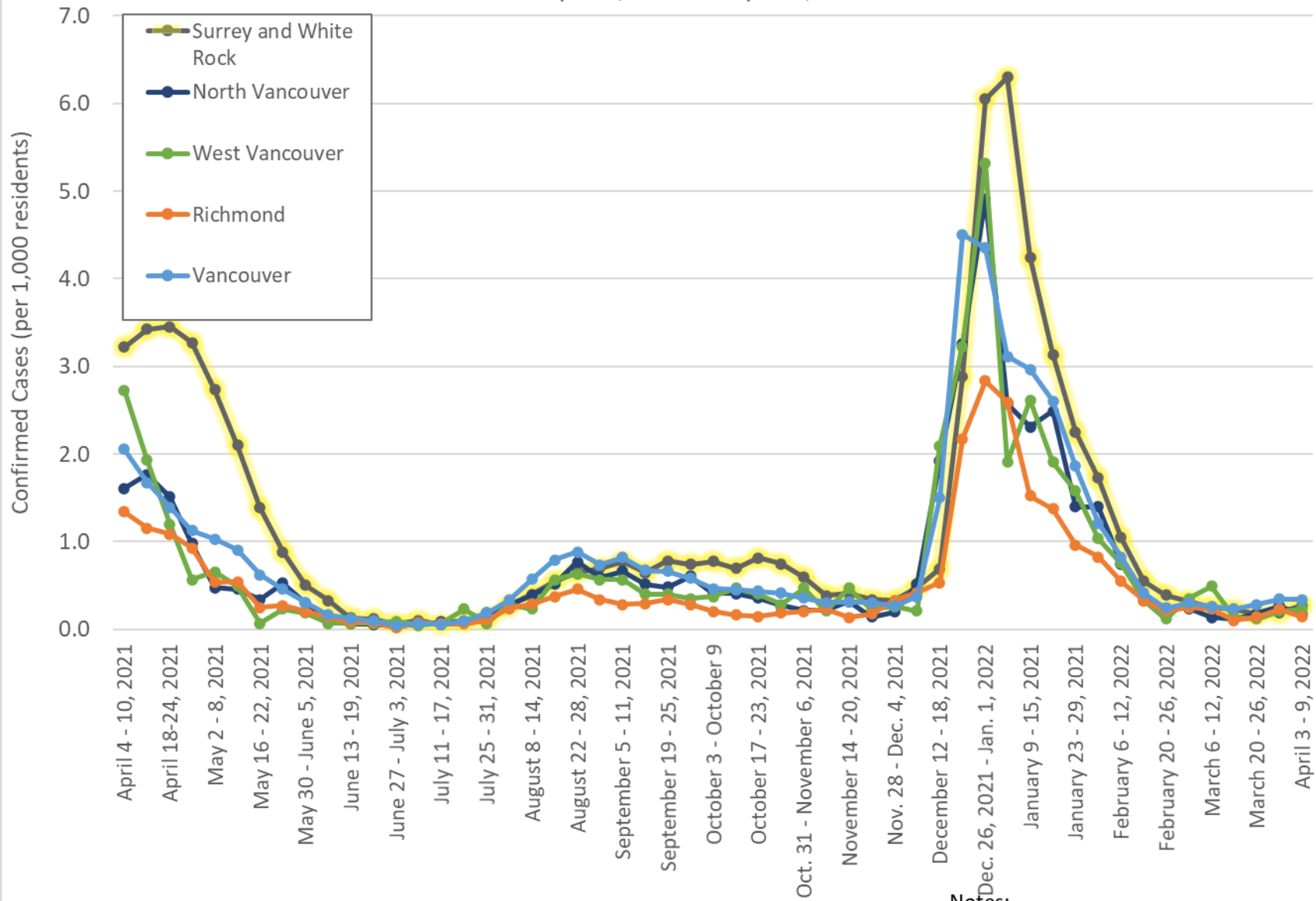
New Cases per Week per Capita in Communities in the Fraser Health Authority  
April 4, 2021 to April 9, 2022



Notes:

- Based on 2016 census population.

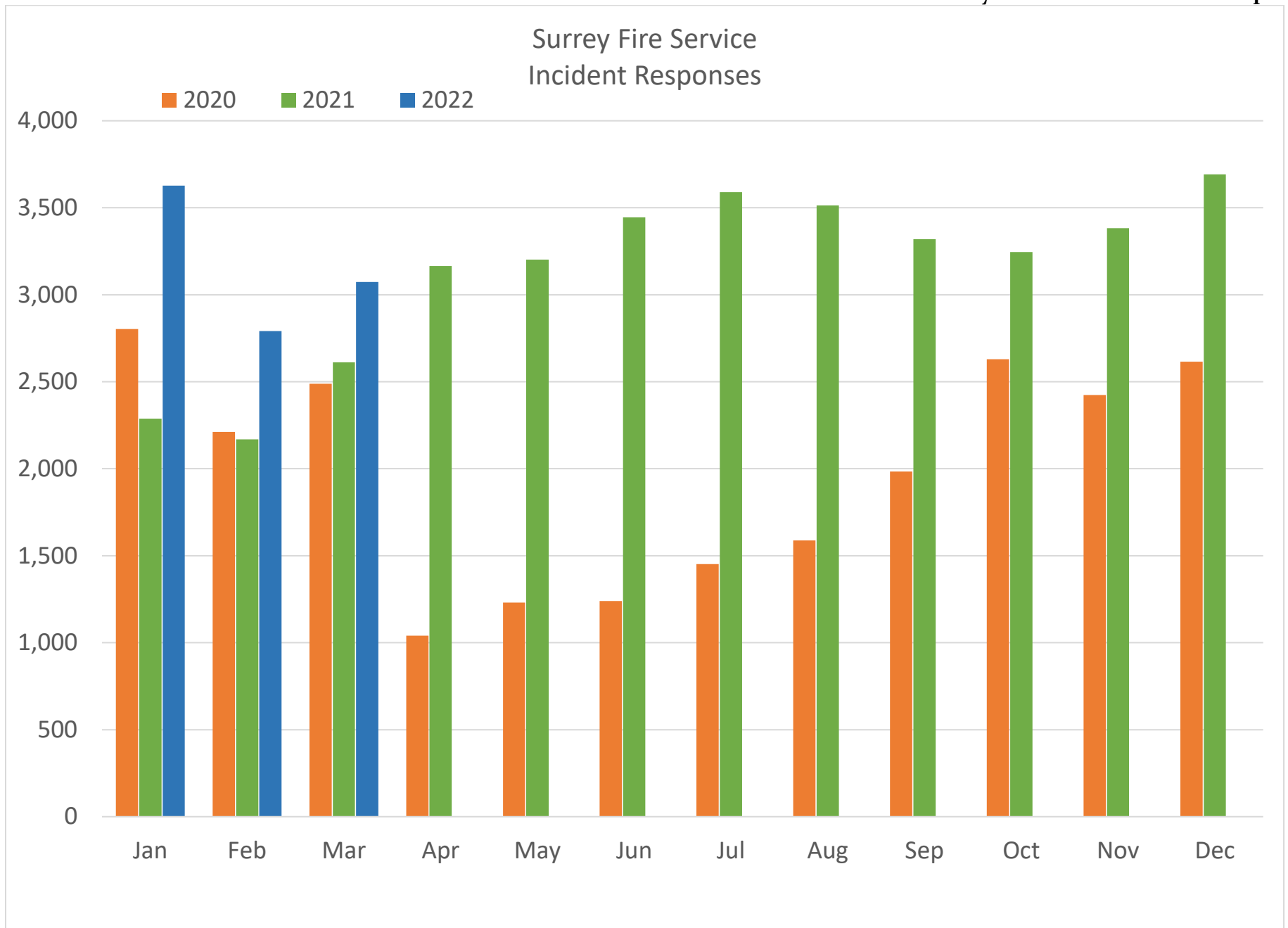
### New Cases per Week per Capita in Communities in Vancouver Coastal Health April 4, 2021 to April 9, 2022



Notes:

- Based on 2016 census population.

Appendix "III"  
Surrey Fire Service – Incident Responses



### Surrey RCMP Calls for Service

