



# The Crises Response Pilot Project



## Q4 2024 Project Update

Council Workshop  
November 18, 2024

# Presentation Overview

- Crises Response Team – Jackie Teed
- Policy and Advocacy Team – John Stark
- Operations Support Team – Lisa Leblanc
- Conclusion – Lisa Spitale

# Crises Response Team Updates and Highlights

- **Team Purpose:** non-clinical outreach in the field directly assisting those with living experience of the three crises in connecting to provincial and community-based support services (e.g. housing/shelter, health care), as well as other basic daily needs.
- This team champions the needs of Indigenous people with living experience, and works to identify how the City could provide a culturally-appropriate and trauma-informed response.
- First four months of its operation (May 2024): outreach staff had **184 interactions** and made **590 referrals**.

# Crises Response Team Updates and Highlights

- Current outreach team's work includes coordinating multiple referrals to various faith-based, non-profit, and provincial organizations and teams providing a range of services and supports, as well as case management where appropriate.
- Outreach staff are specially qualified and trained; they engage with unhoused residents outside of an enforcement context, and in a manner that prioritizes the individual's needs.
- Outreach staff also work to build relationships with faith-based, not-for-profit, and provincial organizations and teams providing support to those with living experiences of these crises.



# Policy and Advocacy Team Update

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- **Team Purpose:** focuses on longer-term and sustainable strategies to address the three crises, including permanent supportive housing; and ensures facilities, services and supports are equitably distributed throughout the city and not focused on any one neighbourhood. It also works to ensure that facilities, services and supports are purpose-designed and self-contained, and that measures are in place to minimize externalities.
- This team collaborates with senior government for the required funding, resources and services, and communicates with and engages the community, including related to advocacy.
- This team also fosters strategic partnerships, and has developed staff liaisons to work closely with resident, business, faith-based, non-profit, and provincial interests.

# Engagement with Senior Government and External Bodies Update

- Staff have conducted a information and engagement events with internal and external bodies, including the senior levels of government.
- Purpose: raise awareness, build relations, facilitate collaboration and garner support for the Pilot Project.

Fraser Health Mental Health and Substance Use Leadership Team (Sept. 2023)

Medical Health Officer (Sept. 2023)

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions staff (Sept. 2023)

Assertive Community Treatment Team (Nov. 2023)

Economic Development Advisory Committee (Nov. 2023)

Fraser Health Vulnerable Populations and Toxic Drug Response Team (Nov. 2023)

RCH Medical Directors and Emergency Department Managers (Nov. 2023)

Fraser Northwest Division of Family Practice (Dec. 2023)

Joint Meeting: Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ministry of Housing (Jan. 2024)

New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society Board (Feb. 2024)

Fraser Health Authority Overdose Outreach Team (Mar. 2024)

Downtown Residents' Association (Apr. 2024)

New Westminster Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association (Apr. 2024)

Residents' Association Forum (Apr. 2024)

Housing Leadership Planning Group: BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority and Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (Apr. 2024)

BC Housing and the Ministry of Housing at UBCM (Sept. 2024)

Downtown New Westminster Business Improvement Association Board (Sept. 2024)

Metro Vancouver TAC Social Issues Sub-Committee (Sept. 2024)

New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society Board (Oct. 2024)

# Advocacy and Collaboration Update

- Staff are working with senior levels of government on a number of advocacy and collaboration actions:
  - permanent 24/7 shelter
  - supportive housing units
  - a health and connect resource centre
  - an overdose inhalation site
  - senior government funding for the pilot project
- Regular assessment and refinement of work: done through working groups, evaluation by a post-secondary institution to evaluate the project.
- Utilizing a fulsome communications plan to ensure the various audiences are informed and can be engaged in the process.
  - Examples: social media campaigns, flyers, updating the project's webpage as needed





# Operations Support Team Update

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- **Team Purpose:** this team responds to issues related to emergency, life safety, fire prevention, cleanliness, compliance with bylaws, and also assesses staff needs related to safety and training.
- **Daily cleaning:** proactive street cleaning every morning, plus contracted services to address special waste
- **Implementation of a sanitation trailer:** completed over the summer
  - Operated by Purpose Society
  - In July 2024, the sanitation trailer recorded 1,544 visits; in August 1,745 visits; 1,307 visits in September.

# Operations Support Team Update

- Staff and a specialist contractor continue to conduct proactive daily cleaning and respond to complaints as they arise.
- Incidents of human waste reported by the contractor have **declined by 35% during the period March through June, relative to the same period last year.**
- City-wide public washroom strategy, and signage improvements, **in progress.**
- **Staff training has been initiated** - Resilient Minds (Building Psychological Strength), Violence Prevention and De-escalation of Crisis, and Homelessness 101