

2021 July 5

To: Mayor Nenshi and Members of Council

From: Kay Choi, A/Director, Calgary Community Standards
Melanie Hulsker, A/Director, Calgary Neighbourhoods

**Re: Administrative Inquiry
Lessons Learned from Supporting Safe Consumption Site**

This memo responds to the 2021 June 01 Administrative Inquiry submitted by Councillor Chu and Councillor Farkas which included the following question:

Can Administration provide an update on lessons learned from their experience supporting the community with coordinated actions and activities in response to the operations of the supervised consumption services at the Sheldon Chumir Health Centre?

The Government of Alberta recently announced the Sheldon Chumir Health Centre's supervised consumption services will be closed and replaced with two new locations as part of a broader plan to overhaul existing harm-reduction services across the province. Better community outcomes can be achieved for the new, yet-to-be announced locations by understanding lessons learned and employing appropriate actions. The Administrative Inquiry identified the opportunity for The City to be proactive in considering lessons learned to support both the residents and businesses in the areas of the new sites.

Actions Taken

Administration supported communities near the Sheldon Chumir Health Centre's supervised consumption services through:

- Coordinated enforcement and outreach services – To ensure continuity of uniformed presence, City enforcement agencies and private security guards coordinated shifts by using data mapping that supported a proactive response. Uniformed presence was complemented by outreach teams that connected individuals with required services and programs.
- Participation in liaison committee – The supervised consumption services site community liaison committee brought together Administration, partners, and community members to provide opportunities for engagement and problem solving.
- Supporting enhanced perceptions of safety – Community-driven programming encouraged activities at Central Memorial Park. The City also worked with social service organizations to report and respond to needle debris and altered the surrounding space to better control access and improve lighting.

Lessons Learned

From our experience, we have learned the following:

- Ensure community engagement – The service provider should provide a forum to involve the surrounding community, supervised consumption service clients and other identified stakeholders in information sharing, communicating concerns, and identifying potential solutions.
- Advocate to the Province – Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) measures reduce social disorder and criminal activity. The Government of Alberta should strongly consider applying CPTED principles at the new locations.
- Coordinate response – Involve the surrounding community, service provider, supervised consumption services' clients, uniformed and social services in developing a comprehensive strategy to enhance safety around the supervised consumption sites, prior to the sites opening.
- Activate surrounding areas – Organize neighbourhood programming and activities to enhance perceptions of safety and discourage crime and social disorder.

Administration will continue to monitor announcements made by the Government of Alberta on the location of the future supervised consumption services sites. Once the sites are known, there will be a better understanding of the community impact and the relevance of the identified lessons learned. Resources may be required – from various stakeholders, depending on the actions taken – to implement the above lessons learned.

Understanding lessons learned and employing appropriate actions as the new locations are established can support better community outcomes.

If there are any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact Kay Choi, A/Director, Calgary Community Standards, or Melanie Hulsker, A/Director, Calgary Neighbourhoods.