

# Transportation Planning

VCH established a 2010 Transportation Task Group to co-ordinate transportation planning with local authorities throughout the region.

The Task Group worked with planners from VANOC and with municipal transportation planners to minimize the impact of proposed traffic restrictions on the ability of VCH staff to get to work and to deliver services in the community. The Task Group also sought ways to minimize VCH's impact on traffic volumes during the Games by encouraging the use of transportation alternative to single-occupancy vehicle trips, such as car pooling, use of public transit and, where possible, telecommuting.

The Task Group had no Games-time logistical responsibility but worked with management and staff throughout the region to put in place strategies to mitigate the impact of traffic restrictions on VCH's ability to deliver services.

VANOC released the first phase of the integrated transportation plan for the 2010 Games on March 11, 2009. The second phase of the plan, which included dates for the imposition of traffic restrictions, was released on October 14, 2009.

# Transportation Planning

## Impact Assessment

The Task Group completed an impact assessment of proposed traffic restrictions on the ability of VCH to deliver services throughout the region. Staff at Vancouver Coastal Health and Providence Health Care reviewed the road restrictions that were to be in place for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

VCH's Transportation Task Group met with the Olympic and Paralympic Transportation Team in May, 2009 and invited participation from VCH Supply Chain, BISS and the Canadian Blood Service. The VCH/PHC Task Group then met with program managers throughout the region to assess the impacts on the delivery of health services, of the road restrictions, and to elicit input into the design of the response to those impacts. It was felt that the most significant impacts on health service delivery would be in the downtown core and the downtown east side of Vancouver (DTES).

VCH and PHC then developed a series of strategies to address the effects of road restrictions.

### Services in Downtown Vancouver

Services were delivered through Community Health Centres. Some services, such as community nursing, palliative care, immunization clinics and new baby visits, were delivered by VCH staff for whom a car was a work requirement. There was often equipment involved in the delivery of these services to patients in their own homes.

Support services, such as homemaking, were delivered by staff of contracted agencies. A car was not generally required to deliver such services.

It was expected that staff who required a car to do their work would find parking very difficult in the downtown core, the downtown eastside and the northwest quadrant of the West End. Olympic lanes and road closures limited access to VCH sites.

Staff safety was always an important consideration in the delivery of services in the community, especially in the winter when number of daylight hours is shorter.

There was concern that, with the presence of Olympic Lanes on Hastings Street, traffic would diffuse onto Powell Street, presenting additional hazards for clients who use VCH's primary care facility at the Downtown Community Health Centre, especially those affected with addiction and mental health issues.

# Transportation Planning

## Impact Assessment

### St. Paul's Hospital

St. Paul's Hospital, the designated spectator hospital, fronts on to Burrard Street, which had Olympic lanes in both directions. This eliminated an important parking and patient drop-off area at the front of the hospital.

Patients attending the hospital for outpatient services, such as renal dialysis or other life-saving treatment, often arrive by car and require an escort into the hospital. It was identified that a temporary, short-term parking space or "patient drop-off zone" was needed.

### Oxygen Deliveries in the Community

Oxygen equipment was delivered to patients in their homes by contracted suppliers. For patients already enrolled on the caseload, increasing deliveries before Games-time was considered so as to reduce the number of deliveries during the Games.

Setting up oxygen equipment for a patient newly discharged from hospital or newly admitted to the caseload from the community required some time and the location could not be predicted much in advance. There may have been a few occasions when such vehicles had to park in areas designated as "no parking," in order to set up the necessary equipment and ensure that it was functioning.

Some deliveries may have taken vehicles transporting oxygen (regulated by the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations) in the vicinity of secured venues. Contractors were willing to provide the OPTT and, if necessary, the ISU, with a listing of such vehicles, so as to avoid any delay in service delivery, caused by security considerations.

VCH advised oxygen suppliers to be in touch directly with the City of Vancouver to make their case for exemption from parking restrictions and to apply to Transport Canada for an exemption certificate to allow them to make deliveries within the restricted downtown area between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight.

### Transportation of Dangerous Goods

A restricted zone for the transportation of dangerous goods was imposed in the downtown core of Vancouver and along the Sea-to-Sky corridor. This affected oxygen deliveries in the community and to VCH/PHC hospitals and the movement of medical isotopes between facilities. Carriers were obliged to apply to Transport Canada for exemption certificates to allow them to continue to operate within the zones between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight. Oxygen deliveries to St. Paul's Hospital were scheduled to take place between midnight and 6:00 a.m. for the period when the restrictions remained in place.

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## Inter-hospital Shuttle Service

The Cambie Corridor Consortium (CCC) operates inter-hospital shuttle services. The shuttle service carries passenger on three routes and also provides courier services (at no charge) between stops.

As part of planning for the 2010 Winter Games, the Transportation Task Group sought ways to raise the ridership on the inter-hospital shuttle service to take advantage of the availability of passenger space as an alternative to, and to minimize the number of, car trips by staff among VCH/PHC facilities.

# Transportation Planning

## Support from the City of Vancouver

In planning for service delivery during the Games, VCH identified a number of areas where support from the City of Vancouver was critical to VCH being able to operate, especially in the downtown core.

### Resident Only Parking

In the Hillcrest and Hastings Park areas of the city, resident-only parking restrictions were put in place to discourage spectator parking during events. VCH alerted the city to the necessity of staff and support services to have access to home care patients living in these areas. VCH identified the staff who would visit on a regular basis and supplied the city with a list of names and licence plate numbers. The city issued a two-hour parking permit to each plate number so that service providers could visit their clients without fear of being ticketed or towed. The permits were in place for both Olympic and Paralympic Games in the Hillcrest area.

### Commercial Lane Passes

In order to accommodate the needs of service providers for parking in the downtown core, the city provided a number of lane passes that permitted staff to park in commercial lanes during home visits. Each vehicle displayed a dash card that identified them as VCH vehicles.

### Off-Street Parking

The City arranged for VCH to be able to rent stalls in EasyPark lots for the duration of the Olympic Games. These short-term rentals enabled staff to park their cars off-street. Dash cards identified the vehicles as belonging to VCH staff and specific stalls were allocated to VCH staff parking.

### Loading Zone - St. Paul's Hospital

To compensate for the loss of street parking to the "Olympic Lane" on Burrard Street, the city established a loading zone on Thurlow Street for patient drop-off. A thirty-minute limit was in place, enabling patients to be dropped off and escorted into the hospital.

### Community Oxygen Deliveries

Community oxygen suppliers provided VCH and the City of Vancouver with photographs of their vehicles and a list of licence plate numbers so that parking enforcement staff would be able to identify the vehicles, if when providing services, they were in danger of contravening parking regulations.

# Transportation Planning

## Lessons Learned

### What Worked Well

Establishing a 2010 Transportation Task Group to co-ordinate transportation planning with local authorities throughout the region worked extremely well and served to greatly diminish the angst felt by many staff as the Olympics approached.

The Task Group worked closely with planners from VANOC and with municipal transportation planners to minimize the impact of proposed traffic restrictions on the ability of VCH staff to get to work and to deliver services in the community.

The Task Group also sought ways to minimize VCH's impact on traffic volumes during the Games by encouraging the use of transportation alternative to single-occupancy vehicle trips, such as car pooling, use of public transit and, telecommuting.

Communicating early and often with staff regarding transportation issues was important.