



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: April 28, 2016  
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Meeting Date: May 18, 2016

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services  
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services  
SUBJECT: Expansion to 2016 Street Cleaning Grants

### ***RECOMMENDATION***

THAT Council approve an expansion to the 2016 Street Cleaning Grant Program totalling \$235,000 to the following recipients for programs that support improvements to street cleanliness, as detailed in the report, with funding from the 2016 Street Cleaning Operating Budget:

- Mission Possible Enterprises Society - MP Maintenance (\$110,000),
- Coast Mental Health Foundation - Employment Services Program (\$75,000),
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action (\$9,000),
- The Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program (\$6,000), and
- The Binner's Project (\$35,000).

### ***REPORT SUMMARY***

This report recommends an expansion to the 2016 Street Cleaning Grant Program including grants to five non-profit agencies totalling \$235,000 for supplementary street cleaning services and waste diversion initiatives. The provision of these grants:

- results in job support and life skills training opportunities for youth and adults with employment barriers;
- assists the recipients with leveraging additional funding;

- results in cleaner streets and lanes for communities where there is the greatest need;
- supports socially inclusive waste diversion initiatives; and
- results in partnerships with BIA's to support business area cleaning programs.

Council approved the first phase of 2016 grants on January 19, 2016 (RTS #11260) with the intention to report back with an expanded grant program, once that plan was further developed. Engineering staff have worked with Community Services Group, local non-profits, and Business Improvement Associations (BIA's) to develop the expanded program outlined in this report.

### ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

On January 19, 2016 Council approved Phase 1 of the 2016 Street Cleaning Grants to non-profit agencies totalling \$460,000 for supplementary cleaning of sidewalks, lanes and public spaces in Vancouver.

In July 2011, the Greenest City Action Plan passed and included a goal of supporting a green economy along with a target to double the number of green jobs over 2010 levels

In July 2014, the Healthy City Strategy passed and included a goal of Making Ends Meet along with a target to reduce poverty.

In March 2014, the Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan passed which identified the need to support opportunities for low barrier employment and other community economic development initiatives.

Approval of grants requires eight affirmative votes.

### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval of the expanded Street Cleaning Grant Program for 2016. This is a long-standing program with significant social and environmental benefits, complimenting efforts of the Greenest City Action Plan, Healthy City Strategy and related initiatives, including the DTES Local Area Plan. The recommendations outlined in this report will assist existing service providers with maintaining their programs, support new micro-cleaning in key areas of the City, including partnering with BIA's to expand into more of those areas, and support new waste diversion initiatives.

### ***REPORT***

#### ***Background/Context***

To supplement the City's street cleaning services, for the past 18 years Council has approved annual grants to non-profit agencies that have the capacity to provide micro-cleaning services. Micro-cleaning involves daily collection of litter on foot using brooms, shovels and wheeled garbage carts, and is work that is outside the scope of services provided by the City's forces. City micro-cleaning grants also complement other street cleaning services, such as programs coordinated by BIA's.

In November 2015 staff solicited proposals from local non-profit agencies currently involved in micro-cleaning type programs to gauge the level of interest and capacity for these organizations to expand the services offered. Submissions were reviewed and that information, together with input from BIA's and staff from Social Policy, assisted in the development of the expanded grant program outlined in this report.

## *Strategic Analysis*

### *Micro-cleaning Expansions*

In proposals received by the City, two existing grant recipients identified challenges with maintaining current service levels due to increased program costs incurred since their initial award (9 years ago). To support these organizations with maintaining financial health and allow for a small expansion of their micro-cleaning programs, staff recommend awards representing a 25% increase to 2016 funding levels, as follows:

- \$9,000 to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action (SYJA), and
- \$6,000 to The Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program (Kettle).

Mission Possible Enterprises Society - MP Maintenance (MP) is a social enterprise that helps individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty to achieve a renewed sense of dignity and purpose through meaningful work. MP has proven they have the capacity and capability to successfully provide micro-cleaning services, evidenced by a long list of satisfied customers including local BIA's, property management companies, and educational institutions to name a few. To allow the grant program to expand into another area of high demand, staff recommend an award of \$35,000 to MP to establish a new micro-cleaning service along Kingsway from Victoria to Broadway and continuing west along Broadway to Granville. As a value-add component of this award, MP is also proposing to engage with several faith-based organisations in the area to encourage increased participation in Keep Vancouver Spectacular's community clean-up program.

### *BIA Micro-Cleaning Pilot*

Vancouver's 22 BIA's directly support cleaner streets through a variety of programs, such as hiring private cleaners or organizing volunteer clean-ups, and have long shown an interest in accessing City grants to further supplement their programs. Existing micro-cleaning grants are focused in areas of high street cleaning demand and within walking distance to the grant recipients centre of operations; as a result micro-cleaning routes pass through only 6 of 22 BIA's in the City. As part of the grant proposal process, organizations were asked about their ability to work in areas throughout the City and two agencies, MP and Coast Mental Health Foundation - Employment Services Program (Coast), confirmed they have the capacity to do so.

Staff recommend undertaking a pilot program focused on supporting BIA cleaning efforts by providing them with access to City grant micro-cleaning services through an award of \$75,000 to MP and \$75,000 to Coast. The pilot will allow BIA's to 'book' MP or Coast services which, depending on each organization's capacity, include micro-cleaning, gum/graffiti removal, and/or pressure washing. Logistics for this new initiative will be refined over time by City

staff working directly with BIA's, MP and Coast and the findings will be used to assist in developing the 2017 Street Cleaning Grant Program. BIA's are supportive of the pilot and MP and Coast are eager to showcase their services across the City, recognizing the potential to leverage City funds to further expand their programs.

### *Binner's Project*

The Binner's Project is a group of binner's, aided by support staff, dedicated to improving their economic opportunities and reducing the stigma they face as informal recyclable collectors. Staff recommend an award of \$35,000 to the Binner's Project to support expansion and development of various street cleanliness and waste diversion initiatives involving the binning community, including testing refund programs (non-bottle such as coffee cups or cigarette butts) at City recycling drop-off events, waste sorting at special events, and facilitating refundables collection from residents and businesses.

Appendix A provides background information on each of the five organizations recommended for the grant awards outlined in this report.

### *Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)*

#### *Financial*

This report recommends an expansion to the 2016 Street Cleaning Grant Program with grants totalling \$235,000 consisting of \$110,000 to MP, \$75,000 to Coast, \$9,000 to SYJA, \$6,000 to Kettle, and \$35,000 to Binner's Project. The source of funding is the 2016 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.

In January, Council approved \$460,000 of grants and with the recommended \$235,000 expansion to the program, a total of \$695,000 of grants will be awarded in 2016.

#### *Human Resources/Labour Relations*

There are no personnel implications. The incremental services under the grant program supplement work performed by City crews and the micro-cleaning services funded through the program do not constitute work that has been historically performed by City staff.

### **CONCLUSION**

Street cleaning grants to the five non-profit agencies listed in this report will continue to benefit marginalized residents by providing job and life skills training and benefit the City by improving the cleanliness of the public realm and in developing new, socially inclusive, waste diversion initiatives. Staff will continue to work with non-profits to explore additional opportunities related to collection and/or recycling of street litter and abandoned items, and findings will assist in the development of the 2017 Street Cleaning Grant Program.

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## Background Information on Recommended Street Cleaning Grant Recipients:

### Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action (SYJA)

SYJA is a social enterprise committed to improving the lives of homeless or at risk youth, age 24 and under. They offer a range of services including prevention, counselling, pre-employment job training and employment opportunities. They take a unique approach with reaching out to youth, such as providing locker facilities and pet kennels in order to allow individuals to utilize their services.

Services provided by SYJA include temporary, casual or part-time employment to approximately 200 homeless or at risk youths per year on a work today, paid today basis. The program has proven to be successful in breaking down the barriers to employment and beginning the process of helping youth to acquire the confidence and skills they will need to become employable and bridge them back into the community. Long term success can be seen in staff members who were once themselves youths in the SYJA program and have now become SYJA peer counsellors.

SYJA has an established community enhancement program (micro-cleaning initiatives, needle sweeps, and graffiti removal) for its youth through partnerships with BIA's, Waste Management of Canada, and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA). With support from these organizations and businesses, they are able to receive matching funds which exceed the amount of funding provided by the City. The City's street cleaning grant allows SYJA to sustain their current program and extend it to more youth in need.

### The Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program

The Kettle Friendship Society is a Vancouver based organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with mental illness. The Kettle achieves this in a number of ways including provision of crisis support, advocacy, supported housing, employment and support services, a health clinic, drop-in lunch program, and recreational activities.

The Kettle runs numerous programs one of which is the SEED Employment Program. SEED (Skills, Esteem & Employment Development) assists individuals with chronic mental health issues to build the vocational skills, confidence and stamina necessary to make the transition from unemployment to satisfying work opportunities. SEED presently provides 35 various work opportunities to their clients with multiple barriers which include; landscapers, store clerks, kitchen prep workers and street cleaners to name a few. The SEED Program is a major partner with Common Thread Co-operative, and is responsible for the sewing training so participants can earn a wage producing various types of bags made from upcycled street banners.

The SEED Program is also part of a creative partnership with the Commercial Drive BIA. The SEED Clean Team has worked closely with the Commercial Drive BIA to conduct street cleaning services five days a week and has employed 78 people since 2003. The program gives participants an opportunity to learn new skills and to interact with the community while increasing their self-worth and benefiting the community. The City's grant allows The Kettle to sustain their current program and extend it to more people in need.

### Mission Possible

Mission Possible is a non-profit organization that transforms lives by helping those challenged by homelessness and poverty achieve a renewed sense of dignity and purpose through meaningful work. MP uses the motivation and desire for meaningful work as a catalyst for total life transformation. MP's 4 stage Employment Readiness Program assists those with employment barriers reach their full potential.

In 2007 Mission Possible began looking beyond simple provision of resources toward comprehensive community development strategies. With a new Executive Director, Brian Postlewait and a supportive board, work began in creating meaningful volunteer and dignifying economic opportunities for local community members. By 2015 Mission Possible has provided transitional employment opportunities to 100 local residents as well as ongoing volunteer opportunities to over 250 people. Over the past five years MP members have contributed over \$700,000 of volunteer value to the community and the collective wages of MP employees exceeds \$1 million.

The City grant will be used to support one of MP's most successful social enterprises, MP Maintenance, a full service property maintenance company that employs DTES residents. In 2011, MP Maintenance was named Best Emerging Social Enterprise in Canada, by Trico Foundation.

### Coast Mental Health Foundation - Employment Services Program (Coast)

Coast Mental Health is an accredited non-profit society that was created in 1972 in response to a growing need in the community for services to assist people recovering from a serious mental illness. Coast operates in the Lower Mainland and provides approximately 4000 people with supportive housing coupled with a drop in resource centre, a clubhouse, homeless outreach, clinical supports, leisure services, vocational skills training and employment programs.

Coast has operated employment services for people with a mental illness for 30 years with funding support from Government of B.C, Coastal Health and City of Vancouver. The employment program provides an opportunity for people with a mental illness, along a continuum of recovery, to build skills and self-esteem through pre-vocational skills training, transitional employment, basic education and placement in competitive employment. The Clubhouse operates Coast's Breaking Barriers Clean Team, a low barrier street cleaning service. Coast's employment service has long standing partnerships and service contracts with 14 Business Improvement Associations and the City of Vancouver to deliver micro-cleaning in the business districts of Vancouver and in the DTES.

The clean team employs 38 clients with a mental illness. Workers on the street cleaning crew have gained valuable essential skills for the work place, increased self-esteem and some have successfully transitioned to competitive employment. All of the micro-cleaners are residents of the area and take great pride in work they do by contributing to the beautification of their neighborhood. They are the eyes on the street for reporting refuse dumping in back alleys and vacant lots.

### The Binnners' Project

The Binnners' Project builds urban resilience, social inclusivity, and community connections for binnners, also known as informal waste-pickers, through community-driven initiatives. At its core, the Binnners' Project aims to foster face-to-face interactions between binnners, residents, and the community at large. Staff, students, volunteers, and binnners, all work closely on implementing pilot programs at the local level, while the overall mission of the project is to build a stronger social presence and voice for one of the most marginalized communities.

Started in 2014 by Ken Lyotier, a binner himself, who founded the binner-run bottle depot, United We Can, the Binnners' Project brings together binnners to achieve: 1) greater recognition of binnners' function in society; and, 2) new informal economic opportunities across the city. The Binnners' Project became a project on Tides Canada Initiatives' shared platform in the spring of 2015. Joining Tides Canada allows the Binnners' Project a base for future growth as well as high quality administrative support for governance, human resources, financial and grant management. Tides Canada is a registered Canadian charity dedicated to providing uncommon solutions for the common good by leading and supporting actions that foster a healthy environment and just Canadian society.

The past year has seen rapid growth for the Binnners' Project. Volunteers, media coverage, and binner engagement have taken off and the appetite for these programs has exceeded expectations, creating challenges with finding resources to respond to demand, and delivering results in a timely manner. The City grant will support the Binner's Project with implementing several pilot programs and initiatives aimed at developing increased economic inclusion for binnners and fostering their financial independence. All programs are developed by binnners, working together with staff, students and volunteers involved in the Binnners' Project.