

CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



Report Date: March 8, 2006
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Meeting Date: March 23, 2006

TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets

FROM: Director of Social Planning

SUBJECT: Funding for Feasibility Study: Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Minority Equality (*The Centre* - LGTB Community Centre)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive for INFORMATION this report requesting \$35,000 to PFAME (Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Minority Equality) to complete a Feasibility Study for a LGTB (Lesbian/Gay/Transgender/Bisexual) Community Centre as outlined in the Administrative Report dated March 8, 2006, entitled "Funding for Feasibility Study: Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Minority Equality (*The Centre* - LGTB Community Centre) and subject to Terms of Reference as outlined in Appendix A; approval and funding of this request to be deferred to the 2006 Interim Operating Budget.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services Group submits this report for Council's consideration as part of the 2006 Operating Budget.

COUNCIL POLICY

On March 17, 2005, Council approved a motion to increase Contingency Reserve by \$400,000 for the purpose of providing funding to several proposed projects, including "...a Feasibility Study of a Community Centre for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTB) community". The motion requires that "reports need to be submitted for Council's approval prior to release of these funds."

SUMMARY

This report outlines a request from the Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Minority Equality, which operates as *The Centre*, for funding to undertake a feasibility study for a new LGTB Community Centre in Vancouver. The study would be conducted in two phases, to be completed by end of March, 2007, and subject to the terms of reference as outlined in APPENDIX A of this report.

PURPOSE

This report outlines the components of a two-part feasibility study for *The Centre*, which will confirm the vision for a proposed new LGTB Community Centre and analyse components and required next steps to develop such a centre. Staff propose a grant of \$35,000 to undertake this work.

BACKGROUND

The original Gay and Lesbian Centre (GLC) of Vancouver was opened in 1977. In 1984, it was registered as a charitable organization under the name of Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Minority Equality (PFAME) and in 1996, changed its name to *The Centre*, a Community Centre Serving and Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Transgendered, Bisexual People and Their Allies, or, in short, *The Centre*.

The Centre is currently operating out of two service sites: 1170 Bute Street and 1033 Davie Street, with a combined space of about 5,000 square feet. In 2005, the annual operating budget of the Society was slightly over \$ 700,000.

The Centre's programs and services have grown rapidly over the past decade. Currently, it receives funding support from all three levels of government, including a civic grant of \$20,812 for core operation and a civic grant of \$28,764 for youth services in 2005. Current services range from front-line referral and information, support for youth and seniors, one-on-one counselling, a resource library, to victim assistance services and community workshops for service and community groups.

The Centre has been exploring options for a larger space which would better meet the growing needs of the LGTB community. It has explored redevelopment proposals in the past several years, the most recent being in the form of a submission which was short-listed in last year's VanCity \$1 million capital award program.

In recent years, the LGTB community has gained more access to community resources and facilities, including the new Dr. Peter Centre. However, *The Centre*, as the hub and gathering place for LGTB community, is housed in the second floor of an older rental building which has no wheelchair access. It does not have sufficient or adequate space to conduct larger community meetings, workshops and other activities. As a result of lack of space, more and more programs are provided off-site which creates staffing and co-ordination challenges. The facility also provides poor working environment for both staff and the public.

The Centre has done preliminary work on developing a vision for a new LGTB Community Centre that would maintain core services and include new components related to the arts and culture, recreation and sports, business development opportunities and resources for population-specific groups. It has also identified groups with a potential interest in co-location of services, including the Gay and Lesbian Business Association, the Davie Village Business Improvement Association, the Vancouver Pride Society, Out on Screen, Lesbian and Gay Immigration Task Force, Rainbow Refugee Committee, the Bute Street Clinic, and Aids Vancouver.

The Centre has approached the City for financial support to further consult with the community and to confirm the viability of implementing this vision.

DISCUSSION

After meetings with *The Centre*, the following work is proposed (for details, see APPENDIX A):

A two-phase project will be undertaken by *The Centre*, to be completed between September 2006 and March of 2007, which will assist *The Centre* to:

- a) Consult with diverse constituencies in the LGTB community to:
 - o clarify the vision of a new LGTB Community Centre;
 - o seek input on population-specific needs;
 - o seek input on the benefits, opportunities and challenges involved in developing a new centre;
 - o seek community input in developing location criteria.
- b) Based on community input, identify a maximum of three models or options for a new LGTB Community Centre; including factors such as facility size, scope of services and programs; co-location and partnership potentials; and population-specific concerns.
- c) For each model or option, analyse key issues pertaining to:
 - o capital cost requirements;
 - o operational cost requirements;
 - o key funding partners: community, government, and non-government;
 - o current and required organizational capacity to undertake project.
- d) Make recommendations for next steps

Project Steering Group:

A Project Steering Group (PSG) will be established to help guide and support the study process. The PSG will be appointed by *The Centre's* Board of Directors and will report to the Board on a regular basis directly and through the Executive Director of *The Centre*. It will oversee the entire process of the study, and will assist in the hiring of project consultant(s).

Project Timeline and Reports:

The proposed timeline for this project is July 2006 - March, 2007. The project will be conducted in two phases: the initial phase will be from July to December, 2006, with an interim report to be submitted to Social Planning on or before January 5, 2007. The second

phase will be from January to March 2007, with a final report to be completed by the end of March, 2007.

Project Deliverables:

Phase One deliverables include: background documentation; summary of focus groups' discussions; location criteria; development of up to three models or options for a new LGTB Centre. An interim report will be completed no later than January 5, 2007.

Phase Two deliverables include: research and analysis on key issues pertaining to each "model" or "option" areas; summary of feedback from key stakeholders/supporters; and proposals on organizational and fundraising capacity-building. A final report will be completed by end of March, 2007.

The Centre's Board of Directors has endorsed the Terms of Reference for the Feasibility Study.

Costs and Condition for Payment:

The Centre has consulted with a number of potential consultants about costs of undertaking the above work. The overall cost of the project is estimated to be \$45,000. The Centre's Board of Directors has approved an amount of \$10,000 towards the total cost of the Study. It is recommended that Council approve the remaining balance of \$35,000 for the Feasibility Study, with payments to be dispersed in two instalments: \$15,000 for Phase One work upon Council's approval of this report; and \$20,000 for Phase Two work, CONDITIONAL on receipt of an interim report on Phase One to the satisfaction of the Director of Social Planning, no later than January 5, 2007.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Total cost for the feasibility study has been determined to be \$45,000. The Centre has approved an amount of \$10,000 towards the total cost of the Study. PFAME is requesting the City to fund the remaining balance of \$35,000 for the study. Approval and funding of this request to be deferred to the 2006 Interim Operating Budget.

CONCLUSION

The Centre has been a major resource centre for the LGTB community in Vancouver for many years. Although programs and services have grown significantly over the years, the facility is not wheelchair accessible and has insufficient and inadequate space to serve the diverse needs of the community. *The Centre* is proposing to undertake a feasibility study which will include consultation with key constituencies and stakeholders to confirm the need for new space and the financial and operational viability of the project. The results of the Study will assist *The Centre* in determining next steps for their capital project.

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Terms of Reference

Assessment of Feasibility of a LGTB Cultural Community Centre in Vancouver

Purpose: To undertake a Feasibility Study which will enable *The Centre* to :

- a) Consult with diverse constituencies in the LGTB community to:
 - o clarify the vision of new LGTB Cultural Community Centre;
 - o seek input on population-specific needs;
 - o seek input on the benefits, opportunities and challenges involved in developing a new centre;
 - o seek community input in developing location criteria.
- b) Based on community input, identify a maximum of three models or options for a new LGTB Cultural Community Centre, including factors such as facility size, scope of services and programs; co-location and partnership potentials; and population-specific concerns.
- c) For each model or option, analyse key issues pertaining to:
 - o capital cost requirements;
 - o operational cost requirements;
 - o key funding partners: community, government, and non-government;
 - o current and required organizational capacity to undertake project.
- d) Make recommendations for next steps

Project Steering Group:

A Project Steering Group (PSG) will be established to help guide and support the study process. The PSG will be appointed by *The Centre's* Board of Directors and will report to the Board on a regular basis directly and through the Executive Director of *The Centre*. It will oversee the entire process of the study, and will assist in the hiring of project consultant(s).

Project Timeline and Reports:

The proposed timeline for the project is July 2006 - March 2007. The project will be conducted in two phases: the initial phase will be from July to December, 2006, with an interim report to be submitted to Social Planning on or before January 5, 2007. The second phase will be from January to March, 2007, with a final report to be completed and submitted to Social Planning by March 30, 2007.

Phase One: Affirming Vision for a new LGTB Facility

Goal: To affirm the vision and support for a new LGTB Cultural Community Centre through consultation with diverse constituencies of the LGTB communities and allies. This is a community-based process which will lay the foundation in creating awareness for and galvanizing support towards creating a new LGTB Community Centre. Based on community feedback, up to three different models or options can be further considered in Phase Two.

Process and methodology: The Project Consultant, with advice from the Project Steering Group, will organize and conduct a series of focus group meetings (10-12). Prior to focus group discussions, the Project Consultant will compile background information including: *The Centre's* previous facility proposals and documentation from other cities' LGTB Centres related to facility development processes. The consultant will also invite agencies which have undertaken major facility developments to meet with the Project Steering Group to share their perspectives and learning (e.g. local neighbourhood houses, Nikkei Place, Coal Harbour Arts Complex). A summary of all these materials and information can be presented at focus groups to stimulate discussions and ideas.

Focus Groups:

The Project Steering Group will assist in identifying individuals and groups to participate in focus group discussions. Participants will reflect the diversity of LGTB community sectors, including:

- Businesses
- Sports and Recreation
- Arts, Culture and Media
- Health and Social Service organizations
- Advocacy and Social Justice
- Religious/Spiritual organizations

Recognizing the diverse populations within the LGTB communities, some focus group meetings will be dedicated to exploring the unique identities and needs of specific population groups including:

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Transgender
- Bisexual
- LGBT Youth
- Aging and older LGTB people
- LGTB people of colour
- LGTB people with disabilities
- Allies

Some Focus Group Discussion Items:

- Clarify vision of a new LGTB Centre;
- Identify benefits, opportunities and challenges in developing a new LGTB Centre;
- Current and future roles of a new centre for LGTB and wider communities
- Population specific needs and resources in a multi-use facility;
- Identify/confirm community's and stakeholders' support for the project;

Developing "Models" or "Options"

Based on focus groups' feedback, and working in consultation with Project Steering Group, the consultant may identify a maximum of three possible models or options for developing a new LGTB Centre. The models or options will consider factors such as: facility size, scope of services and programs, co-location potentials, and population-specific concerns. Phase Two will further analyse the viability of each model or option based on capital fundraising, operational and organizational capacity.

Phase One Deliverable: Interim Report

An Interim report will be due by January 5, 2007, and to be submitted to the satisfaction of the Director of Social Planning. It will include: background documentation; summary of focus groups' discussions; location criteria; the development of up to three models or options for a new LGTB Centre.

Phase Two: Key Issues and Future Directions

Goal: Building on the interim report and possible models or options for developing a new LGTB centre, Phase Two will further analyse key issues and identify next steps.

Process and methodology

Conduct research and analysis on key issues for each of the model or option. Key issues may include capital fundraising, operational and organizational capacity. The process may include further consultations with key stakeholders, partners, community leaders, and three levels of government to ascertain degree of support. Recommendations may include proposals for increasing organizational and fundraising capacity.

Key Issue Areas:

- 1. Capital Costs Requirement**
 - What kind of capital costs will be needed to implement the different "models" or "options" in building a new LGTB centre?
 - What are the sources of funds? How to secure them?
 - Identify potential co-location partners and their contributions
 - Identify potential donor support
- 2. Operational Cost Requirement**
 - What are program priorities for a new facility?
 - What are funding sources for new programs?
 - Is funding long-term and sustainable?
- 3. Identify key partners, including governments, and their support for project**
 - Who are key project supporters? Government? Community? Non-governmental?
 - What kind of commitment can be solicited?
 - What kind of timeframe is needed in acquiring funds and support?
- 4. Current and projected organizational capacity to undertake the project**
 - Analysis of current board, staff, volunteer and membership structures and capacity to undertake project - strengths, weaknesses, key elements required
 - Who are internal and external champions?
 - Proposals for increasing organizational and fundraising capacity

Phase Two Deliverable: Final Report

A final report will be due on or before March 30, 2007, to be submitted to the Director of Social Planning. It will include: research and analysis on key issues as pertaining to each "model" or "option" areas, summary of feedback from key stakeholders/supporters, and proposals on organizational and fundraising capacity-building.