



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: April 16, 2007
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TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Report Back: Approval of 2007 Street Cleaning Grant

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a Street Cleaning Grant of \$60,000 to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action to supplement cleaning of sidewalks, lanes and public spaces by City forces, with previously approved funding from the 2007 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Engineering Services supports this recommendation.

COUNCIL POLICY

In June 2006, Council approved a new policy governing newspaper boxes on City street including a recommendation to increase the 2007 Engineering Operating Budget for street cleaning by \$186,100 to be offset with increased revenues from newspaper box fees.

In December 2006, Council approved the allocation of \$60,000 from the 2007 Street Cleaning Operating Budget for additional street cleaning initiatives to be provided by a social enterprise that supports job and life skills training opportunities for people with employment barriers.

Approval of grants requires eight affirmative votes.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for a grant of \$60,000 to Family Service of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action from the 2007 Street Cleaning Operating Budget to support job and life skills training opportunities for youth with employment barriers through supplemental street cleaning services.

BACKGROUND

The City's annual Street Cleaning Operating budget is approximately \$7.5 million (2007). This funds litter collection, mechanical sweeping and flushing of streets and lanes, removal of garbage from public litter cans, and the clean-up of abandoned solid waste materials dumped illegally on City right-of-way (streets and lanes).

For the past nine years the City has approved grants to Save Our Living Environment (SOLE) to supplement street cleaning services provided by the City. SOLE provides job training and employment to those with traditional barriers to employment through the grant by performing micro-cleaning of streets and lanes in the Downtown Eastside (DTES).

The value of the SOLE grant to the City and the community in terms of social and environmental benefits has proven to be significant. Following the example of the SOLE grant program, in December of 2006 Council approved the allocation of \$60,000 from the 2007 Street Cleaning Operating Budget for additional supplemental cleaning services from a social enterprise for 2007. Accordingly, the City Engineer recently sought and received grant applications from Vancouver social enterprises and staff are recommending award.

DISCUSSION

Five independent Vancouver based social enterprises were invited to apply for this grant. Those organizations were selected based on their experience with providing cleaning services, and their capacity to provide job training and employment to people with traditional barriers to employment.

Three organizations submitted grant applications, including:

- Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House - Youth Spot Services;
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action; and
- The Kettle Friendship Society.

Grant applications were reviewed independently by a team of staff from Engineering (Solid Waste Management, Sanitation Operations, and Streets Operations branches) and Social Planning. The evaluation considered completeness, accuracy and content of the application, with specific attention focusing on the scope of the proposed project and how it relates to the City's requirements. The applicant's stated ability to leverage matching funding, and their management capacity was also considered as part of the evaluation.

All of the applicants currently provide some degree of micro-cleaning services (litter collection on foot with the use of wheeled garbage containers, brooms and shovels in streets,

lanes, alcoves and entranceways) within specific neighbourhoods. However, applicants considered to have the greatest potential to leverage matching funds, and provide social capacity building and value to the City were ranked the highest.

Based on staff's evaluation, it is recommended that the City's previously approved grant funding for this supplemental street cleaning program be awarded to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action (SYJA).

SJYA is a social enterprise committed to homeless or at risk youth, age 24 and under, with barriers to traditional employment. They offer a range of services including prevention, counselling, pre-employment job training and employment opportunities. They take a unique approach in reaching out to youth by providing locker facilities and pet kennels in order to allow individuals to utilize their services, including casual, temporary, and part-time employment.

SYJA has an established community enhancement program (micro street cleaning initiatives, needle sweeps, and graffiti removal) for its youth through partnerships with Business Improvement Associations and Vancouver Coastal Health. They are being recommended for the 2007 Street Cleaning Grant over the other applicants because they have indicated they have the capacity to use the funding to:

- Increase job training and employment beyond their existing program;
- Clean areas outside of their typical area of work (they have access to a vehicle);
- Supplement services provided by City forces through approximately 4200 hours of micro-cleaning services; and
- Leverage matching funding from outside agencies.

The 2007 Street Cleaning Grant will allow SYJA to create more jobs for marginalized youth. Through this grant program, they will provide the following services:

- Collect litter in lanes around commercial waste containers and alcoves;
- Collect litter on sidewalks around lamp standards, traffic poles, trees, entranceways and litter cans;
- Collect leaves in the fall, around street drains;
- Power wash sidewalks and areas around commercial waste containers; and
- Retrieve syringes and other drug paraphernalia (including collection, recording and reporting to the Vancouver Coastal Health).

SYJA will primarily work within the downtown core, however, other commercial areas with high pedestrian traffic will be monitored by the City for supplemental cleaning. Weekly reports by SYJA to Sanitation Operations will help to determine the priority areas for micro street cleaning services and SYJA's work will be adjusted accordingly, as required.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report recommends a grant of \$60,000 to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action with previously approved funding from the 2007 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation in this report will result in improvements to the cleanliness of sidewalks, lanes and other spaces accessible to the public. Those improvements will enhance the safety, aesthetics and liveability of the City, benefiting both residents and visitors.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Micro-cleaning services provided by social enterprises such as Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action result in sustainable social benefits and employment to people with barriers. This in turn provides a sense of pride and self-esteem which better enables marginalized youth to seek, obtain and maintain employment.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications. The services that will be provided under this grant are outside of the range of services provided by the City.

CONCLUSION

A grant of \$60,000 to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action for supplemental street cleaning services will benefit marginalized youth by providing job and life skills training, and will benefit the City by improving the cleanliness of the public realm. This grant program is an excellent example of a sustainable solid waste management initiative since all three pillars of sustainability (environment, economic and social) will benefit from this program.

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