



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: November 14, 2007  
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Meeting Date: December 11, 2007

TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets

FROM: General Manager, Community Services

SUBJECT: Carnegie Centre - Cashier Positions and Outreach Program

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive this report for INFORMATION and defer the following Recommendations to the 2008 Interim Operating Budget:

- A. That Council approve the establishment of three Regular Part Time Cashier positions (2.3 FTE) and Auxiliary hours (.17 FTE) at the Carnegie Centre, commencing May 1, 2008, subject to review and classification by the General Manager of Human Resources, at an estimated annual cost of \$109,300 (pro-rated for 2008 - \$73,230). Approval and funding to be deferred to the 2008 Interim Operating Budget.
- B. That Council approve the extension of the Carnegie Centre Outreach Program for three years to December 2010 at an estimated annual cost of \$277,600 in 2008, \$285,300 in 2009 and \$294,500 in 2010 (includes wage settlement and inflation). Approval and funding to be deferred to the 2008 Interim Operating Budget. AND FURTHER THAT the Carnegie Centre be instructed to report back in 2010.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The General Manager recommends approval of A and B above.

## COUNCIL POLICY

City Council must approve all changes in permanent staffing levels.

City Council must approve all significant changes in service levels and programmes.

## PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

This report outlines two Carnegie Community Centre funding requests for referral to the 2008 interim operating budget:

- permanent cashier positions in the Carnegie Food Services Program (2.3 FTEs) at an estimated annual cost of \$109,000 to replace the current practice of using volunteers. This would enable the Centre to meet existing city standards for this business practice and improve accountability for City resources; and
- a three-year extension of the Carnegie Outreach Program at an estimated annual cost of \$277,600 to continue addressing housing, support and referral of homeless DTES street-entrenched individuals to support existing and pending further initiatives to reduce homelessness.

## BACKGROUND

The Carnegie Centre is a city-owned and operated facility with an annual membership of over 4000. The Centre provides food services, socio-cultural-recreational programs including programs at Oppenheimer Park, a range of volunteer opportunities, and the Outreach Program. It also houses a Seniors Centre and Library Branch. It serves as a community centre for the people of the DTES.

## DISCUSSION

### A. THE CARNEGIE CENTRE FOOD SERVICES PROGRAM

The Carnegie Centre Food Services Program serves nutritious, delicious, low cost food to an average of 500 low income patrons per day 365 days per year. Kitchen staffing costs are included in the operational budget supported by the City of Vancouver; kitchen revenue is used to cover the cost of food, necessary food service items and basic maintenance/repairs. While the Centre has endeavoured to maintain costs, it may be necessary in the next year to raise the cost of some food items in the cafeteria to meet rising expenditures. To assist the City in supporting the Centre, the Carnegie Community Centre Association has contributed towards the purchase of major kitchen appliances, including a steam and convection oven, as well as various pieces of smaller equipment.

The Centre delivers an extensive Volunteer Program that provides patrons with productive opportunities for skill development. The majority of volunteers are living in poverty and many are also struggling with addictions or mental health issues. All volunteers' contributions are rewarded with food tickets. A total of 130,000 volunteer hours were contributed to the Centre in 2006. Approximately 22,300 volunteer hours assisted kitchen operations with 4,250 of these hours scheduled for cashier duties.

The cafeteria is open from 9:00 am until 8:00 pm daily. Food is served cafeteria style and there is usually a queue waiting to buy food at the start of each meal time. The cashier's main duty is to provide service at the till, but they also stock and supervise meal service with the assistance of another volunteer. The concession remains open to serve sandwiches, soup, salads, etc., in-between meals. Currently, when neither a volunteer cashier nor server show up for their shifts, the concession is closed, or is opened only briefly by kitchen staff, which negatively impacts food preparation and sales. Having a paid cashier would ensure the concession is not closed. Kitchen staff are not able to supervise at the concession except during the thrice daily cash-outs.

The concession cashier and food servicing position has historically been a volunteer position. This is no longer a viable option for several reasons:

1. **Risk Management:** Volunteers currently manage cash intake of approximately \$1000 per day plus volunteer food tickets. Although volunteers are trained to do this, staff can only offer limited supervisory support and with various volunteers operating a complex cash register there can be inaccuracies, imbalances and sometimes losses.
2. **Volume and Demand:** The demand for food in the neighbourhood has expanded enormously as the cost of living has outstripped the level of income for most residents. The kitchen takes in \$1000 per day (menu items range from \$0.40 to \$3.00). This high volume makes the position very challenging and requires technical and professional skill sets.
3. **Dependability of Volunteers:** Although volunteers are scheduled, there is a high rate of absenteeism. If a volunteer is absent, kitchen staff must either close the concession or re-assign paid staff to the cashier job from their regular food preparation or kitchen administrative functions. The impact is that the cook may not be able to produce the food necessary to serve the next meals or snacks, which also results in a loss of revenue for the kitchen.
4. **Food Security:** The Carnegie Kitchen plays an important role in the food security of the DTES. Pensioners, those with mental health issues, and other at risk patrons who live without cooking facilities in their rooms are very dependant on these meals. This is consistent with the goals of the CoV Food Security Policy.

## **B. THE CARNEGIE OUTREACH PROGRAM**

The program addresses problems in the areas of homelessness, low threshold employment and safety and health related issues for those living on the street. The Carnegie Outreach Program provides services to the poorest and most marginalized of Vancouver's citizens, most of whom are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol, and many who are mentally ill or dually diagnosed. This program supports City initiatives including the Homeless Action Plan and other Housing Centre programs, The Four Pillars Drug Strategy, and the Civil City Initiative.

Carnegie Outreach is a street level outreach program which was initiated as part of a program of strategic actions to address issues with the illegal drug trade at Main and Hastings. In November 2001, Council approved two-year funding in the amount of \$335,845 annually as part of the City's "Four Pillars Strategy" for addressing addictions. The program was engaged in building relationships with patrons through programming and other activities offering

information and referrals, direct assistance to addicts, and encouraging more responsible behaviours thereby lessening the violence and disorder of the drug market as it then existed. This initiative also improved access to the Centre. In 2005, Council approved three-year funding of \$300,000 per year with instruction to look for funding partners. In 2006, a partnership with BC Housing created an opportunity to reduce City funding to \$270,000.

The Carnegie Outreach Program provides services in the following three ways:

### **Reduces Homelessness**

In partnership with the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance (MEIA), BC Housing and the City's Housing Centre, Carnegie Outreach staff has been able to find housing for some of the most vulnerable and long-term homeless in the city, typically in SRO accommodation. This partnership, the Homeless Action Project, partially funded through BC Housing, is a program to fast-track homeless citizens onto welfare and into housing, usually within one to three days.

*Outcomes:* In the period from November, 2005 through to June 2007, the Carnegie Outreach Team housed 321 homeless persons - some 16 individuals per month. From July to December 2006, the team housed 95 individuals - of these 88% remain housed at the end of this sample period.

Success is dependent on the extensive relationship built up with the street entrenched population which gives staff first hand knowledge of who, among the street population, are homeless and most in need of support. The trust they garner in the community, because of their accessibility and the services they offer, creates a situation wherein they can approach those who are sleeping outside in the early hours of the morning and assist them throughout the process of getting on welfare and finding a place to live. Follow up is available on an as-needed basis.

Carnegie, the City's Housing Centre, BC Housing and MEIA received the Premier's Award in the spring of 2007 for their work in piloting this project, which has since been expanded to include three other partner organizations. This program meets outreach service needs addressed in the Homeless Action Plan and assists people in accessing the Lower Mainland Cold/ Wet Weather Strategy shelters.

### **Builds Employment Skills and Opportunities**

The Outreach Peer Program provides opportunities for those who live on the street to engage in low threshold training, life skills education and employment, and to assist in program delivery. Individuals who are street involved, but known to be seeking a change in their lives are hired as Peer Workers and receive a stipend as part of a progression in finding alternatives to their present lifestyle.

With the support of Carnegie Outreach staff, Peer Workers provide leadership in offering programs at a number of host agency partners such as the Downtown Community Health Clinic, WISH, the Health Contact Centre, Lookout Emergency Aid, Living Room Mental Health Drop-in, and the Portland Hotel Society. Organizing and taking part in special events offers further peer/helper opportunities, and closer

working ties to other service agencies where referral and advocacy can be enhanced for the outreach client base.

Carnegie Outreach supports the Peer Worker through referrals for services and mentoring. Peers are also assisted with their long terms goals, which have included returning to school, reuniting with family, and work. In each of these categories, there have been successful peer/helpers. (See Appendix A for a spreadsheet of services offered to Peers.)

*Outcomes: In 2006,*

*32 peers worked approximately 800 shifts*

*6 moved on to more regular forms of employment*

*4 reunited with family outside of the area*

One of the great successes of this component was the 2004 Historic Markers project (funded by Western Economic Diversification) which involved some 200 street people in a program of literacy, life skills and health care while they were employed in the construction of 31 mosaic historic markers, installed in the sidewalks of the DTES. This demonstration program laid the groundwork for Creating Employment through the Arts (CETA), an independent workers cooperative. CETA continues to provide low threshold opportunities for those living on the street to be employed in art projects such as mural work or mosaics.

### **Provides Safety and Assistance**

The Outreach Program provides a measure of safety and assistance to the street population by conducting regular patrols of streets and alleys, connecting with the street population where they live, referring and accompanying people to shelters, medical services, treatment and detox. Outreach workers provide programming with other agencies and services and encourage the utilization of resources such as the Life Skills Centre, Insite, Lookout Shelter, the Living Room, WISH, and DAMS by those least likely to access them.

This component of the program builds community trust and the resulting relationships create access for the provision of the housing and low threshold employment components of the program.

The Outreach Program is able to assist with most challenges presented by a client in the areas of housing, employment, addiction or connection to social services. The program is designed to address the issues of the street population on a person by person basis.

There are other agencies conducting outreach; however, their focus is either on a specific demographic or they support programs offered by their parent organization, and their definition of outreach may not necessarily include work on the streets. Notably, the Carnegie Program is a comprehensive program open to any homeless person; is focussed on housing the homeless; and connects with and refers individuals to a broad range of services which may include the specific services of other agencies and their outreach initiatives.

A copy of the survey of existing outreach services which operate in Vancouver is on file with the City Clerk.

A three year extension is requested at this time. BC Housing has recently announced an expansion of their outreach program funding to other communities, as well as new housing opportunities for Vancouver. In anticipation of a reduction in homelessness, three years funding is requested and the Carnegie Centre will report back to Council at that time.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

**Cashier Positions, Food Services Program** -This request is for new Regular Part Time positions (2.3FTE) and auxiliary hours (0.17FTE) to be funded on an ongoing basis, commencing May 1, 2008, at a cost of \$109,300 per annum (2007 rates). This practice is consistent with other City facilities handling cash (e.g. The Gathering Place and Evelyne Saller Centre).

**Outreach Program** - The total funding request is for \$277,600 for 2008, \$285,300 for 2009 and \$294,500 for 2010 which includes increases due to new collective bargaining wage settlements and inflation.

\$60,000 from the BC Housing funding (of \$90,000) has been used to enhance the "Housing the Homeless Program" as part of Carnegie's participation in the Homeless Project. The remainder of BC Housing fund is used to provide an off-set of \$30,000 in the City's budget for Carnegie Outreach. By assisting with housing, employment and health solutions for the street population, the program makes a credible contribution to the reduction of health and social service and policing costs.

Gross cost of the Carnegie Outreach Program	\$367,600
<u>Funding contribution from BC Housing</u>	<u>\$(90,000)</u>
Net cost to the City	\$277,600

## PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

**Cashier Positions** - 3 Regular Part Time (RPT) positions (2.3 FTE) and auxiliary hours (.17 FTE) are requested.

**Outreach Program** - Staff will continue at current levels.

## CONCLUSION

The Carnegie Centre provides a continuum of services that enable the DTES population to address their basic needs, increase their individual skill levels and build the capacity of their community.

This Food Services cashier request is to better manage the risk associated with cash handling. By introducing paid staff positions which are responsible for handling cash, the following benefits are anticipated:

- consistency with established risk management and business practices - Carnegie is the only Centre that uses volunteers to handle cash
- improved accountability, reliability and standards of customer service

- improved volunteer management through procedures that protect volunteers, staff and patrons

As the City grapples with the housing crisis it will be important to have front line contact with those most in need. Outreach workers employed by the City of Vancouver will be able to provide first hand knowledge of conditions and input into solutions for the street population. As future supportive housing is built in the city, the Outreach Program is positioned to be instrumental in connecting the most marginalized and homeless individuals with the appropriate housing and service programs.

Carnegie Outreach Peer Project 2006												
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Peer	Date	Active	Area	Staff	Contract	Contract Item 1	STATUS	Contract Item 2	STATUS	Contract Item 3	STATUS	End Outcome
Female 1	Jun-05	X	Support	Bob	X	MEIA	DB2	Housing	Vivian	Medical	Pregnancy Issues	Continuing
Female 2	Dec-05		Support	Bob	X	MEIA	DB2	Housing	Princess	Medical	Pregnancy/HepC/HIV	Not appropriate at this time
Female 3	Feb-06	X	Program	Judy	X	Project	Stanley Gardening	Employment	PIVOT	MEIA	Employment support	Employment / Continuing
Female 4	Apr-06		Program	Judy	X	Project	Project Display Completed					Found it too stressful
Female 5	Dec-06	X	Program	Sarah								Continuing
Female 6	Feb-06		Program	Sarah								Relocated to Alberta
Female 7	Nov-06	X	Program	Sarah								Continuing
Female 8	Nov-06	X	Program	Sarah								Continuing
Male 1	Mar-06	X	Program	Peggy	X	Housing	DERA Tenacy	Addiction		Housing	Colonial	Continuing
Female 9	Jun-04	X	Program	Kimi	X	Addiction	DETOX	Medical	Dr Peter	Housing	Bridge Short Term	Continuing
Female 10	Nov-06	X	Program	Kimi								Continuing
Female 11	Jan-06		Program	Kimi	X	Employment	Honoraria					Employed elsewhere
Female 12	Feb-06	X	Program	Judy	X	Employment						Continuing
Female 13	Feb-06	X	Program	Sarah								Continuing
Female 14	Feb-06	X	Program	Kimi		Employment						Continuing
		X	Outreach	Dixie	X							
Female 15	Jun-06	X	Program	Sarah		Employment						Continuing
		X	Outreach	Dixie	X							
Male 2	Nov-05		Outreach	Bob	X	Housing	American Hotel	Counselling	DCHC	Employment	COV	Employed elsewhere
Male 3	Jun-05	X	Outreach	Sikee	X	Employment	Lifeskills	Employment	Roofing	Employment		Wants to continue
Male 4	Aug-05		Outreach	June	X	Work Training	Tradeworks	Employment	Honoraria			Employed elsewhere
Female 16	Jan-05		Outreach	Jim	X	MEIA	Reg Asst.	Treatment	Maple Ridge	Housing	X	Unknown
Female 17	May-05		Outreach	Bernadette	X	Addiction	DETOX	MEIA		Housing	Treatment	Treatment, then out of touch
Male 5	Jun-04		Outreach	Jim	X	ID / MEIA	Complete	Training		Employment		Employed elsewhere
Female 18	Nov-05		Outreach	Judy	X	Probation Officer	Amended Order	Housing		Repatriation	Nothern BC	Returned Home
Male 6	May-06	X	Outreach	Bob	X	MEIA	DB2	Education	VCC / Counselling	Employment	Treatment House	Seeking Work
Male 7	Jul-06		Outreach	Bob		Employment	Volunteering at Carnegie					Prefers volunteering
Female 19	Jan-06		Outreach	Sarah	X	Medical	Pregnancy Issues	Education	VSB	Employment	Went home	Returned Home
			Project	Ali								
Male 8	Dec-06		Project	Bob	X	Art Workshop	Completed					Unknown
Male 9	Apr-06		Project	Bob	X	SCUC Workshop	Completed			Employment	Completed	Employed elsewhere
Male 10	Apr-06		Project	Bob	X	Peer Training	Completed	SCUC Workshop	Completed	Housing	Completed	Seeking Work
<b>Chart Key</b>							<b>Work Areas</b>					
Column	1	Peer name (Deleted)					Project	A peer working in a project is with us for a short period of time to complete a certain project.				
	2	Date the peer started					Programming	A program peer, works during the operation of the recreation program at partner agencies				
	3	Are they still active with the program? X means yes.						Program peers usually operate without a contract. When they graduate into a larger role				
	4	Which area they work in						a contract is created.				
	5	Who is their staff mentor					Outreach	An outreach peer is contracted to perform general street and alley outreach duties at				
	6	Has the peer agreed to a peer/mentor contract? (Some peers graduate into contract status over time)					Support	least once per week, working closely with a mentor, and working to complete their contract. Outreach Support peers are not at a point to be able to assist with regular Outreach duties.				
	7	Peer / Mentor Contract Item to be worked on										
	8	Status of Peer / Mentor Contract Item 1					<b>Peer Contracts</b>					
	9	Peer / Mentor Contract Item 2					A peer/mentor contract is an agreement between the staff mentor and the peer to					
	10	Status of Peer / Mentor Contract Item 2					work towards identified goals in the peers life. The outreach team brings resources					
	11	Peer / Mentor Contract Item 3					to bear on these issues. The goals may change over time as the peer's life becomes					
	12	Status of Peer / Mentor Contract Item 3					more stable. Program peers usually operate without a contract. When they graduate					
	13	Overall status with Project					into a larger role, a contract is created. The low threshold for program peers to join					
						the project is an entry point for low functioning peers.						
						<b>Duration:</b>						
						A peer contract usually is one year in duration for an Outreach Peer. These peers						
						work the most, and are usually the closest to moving their contract items forward.						



