



CITY OF VANCOUVER

A14

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: September 2, 2008
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Meeting Date: September 16, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Managing Director of Social Development in consultation with the General Manager of Business Planning and Services and the Director of Real Estate Services

SUBJECT: Rent Subsidy Grant for 685 East Broadway
Pacific Community Resource Society - Broadway Youth Resource Centre

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a rent subsidy grant estimated at \$4,552 per month up to a total of \$109,250 to Pacific Community Resources Society to cover the rent incurred for use of the City-owned property at 685 East Broadway on a month-to-month basis for 24 months or until the premises are redeveloped, whichever shall first occur. The source of funding to be the 2008 Contingency Reserve.

Occupancy and use of the premises at 685 East Broadway is subject to Pacific Community Resource Society:

- 1) obtaining all applicable permits
- 2) signing of the standard commercial month-to-month rental agreement with the City

Approval of a rent subsidy grant requires eight affirmative votes.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services and General Manager of Business Planning and Services recommend approval of the foregoing recommendation.

COUNCIL POLICY

The City charges market rental value for its properties. Groups may request a rent subsidy grant from Council. Council has a policy of considering rent subsidy grants to groups that

qualify for a Community Services Grant and that rent City-owned property held in the Property Endowment Fund. Approval of a rent subsidy grant requires eight affirmative votes. If approved, Council policy has been to provide any additional funding from the Contingency Reserve.

PURPOSE

This report recommends that Council approve the recommended rent subsidy grant to Pacific Community Resources Society.

BACKGROUND

The City has co-chaired the Vancouver Youth Funders Committee since its inception in 2005. This intergovernmental committee initiated the youth "hub" model of integrated service provision and has been working to fully implement this model at four Vancouver sites. The City has played an active role in supporting the hubs primarily through the purchase of land/buildings to house the hubs as well as some operational funding through Community Services Grants for specific programs targeting vulnerable and high risk youth. A report will be coming forward to Council in early 2009 with further details on the hubs.

Broadway Youth Resource Centre, operated by Pacific Community Resources Society is one of these designated youth services hubs, funded primarily by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. The Centre currently rents two City-owned Commercial Retail Units (7,000 square feet of floor space) at 691 East Broadway. Broadway Youth Resource Centre's current lease for these units is based on market rent. Two other youth services hubs, the Downtown Youth Centre and the Urban Native Youth Association also occupy City-owned buildings at 1134 Burrard and 1630-1670 East Hastings Street respectively.

In March 2007, Council approved the purchase of 675-691 East Broadway and 2411 Fraser Street (RTS 6519 In Camera report) with the intent to incorporate the Broadway Youth Resource Centre into a future social housing development, which will include housing for youth receiving services. This site is one of the 12 social housing sites being developed by the City in partnership with BC Housing.

DISCUSSION

The Broadway Youth Resource Centre recently expanded its services to include 4.5 new housing workers for youth, for whom workspace is required. The Centre also requires additional storage facilities for start-up housing kits for youth and teen parents.

Given that the adjacent City-owned premises at 685 East Broadway (2375 square feet of retail space) is currently vacant and will be demolished within the next 18 to 24 months for the new social housing redevelopment, Pacific Community Resources Society has requested that the Broadway Youth Resource Centre be able to use the space for no rent. This would provide the Centre with the needed space for its expanded operations, within its existing budget, until the entire site is redeveloped.

If the rent subsidy grant is approved by Council, the Pacific Community Resources Society would enter a Standard Commercial Month-to-Month Rental Agreement with the City for the Centre's use of the premises at 685 East Broadway. There would be no commitment by the City to continue the rent subsidy grant as part of tenancy in the new redeveloped site.

685 East Broadway is currently zoned C-2C, Commercial with outright uses such as grocery store, retail store, and barber shop. Conditional approved uses include cultural and recreational, institutional, office, and other retail and service uses. Pacific Community Resources Society will be responsible at their expense for obtaining all the required permits for their use and occupancy, before occupation of the premises will be permitted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The rent subsidy grant to Pacific Community Resources Society is valued at \$4,552 per month up to a total of \$109,250 for 24 months or until the premises are redeveloped, whichever shall first occur, in order to cover the rent expenses for use of the City-owned premises at 685 East Broadway. Pacific Community Resources Society will assume responsibility for all permit fees and all operating costs including, insurance, repairs, maintenance and utilities for the premises, in accordance with the standard terms and conditions within the Month-to-Month Rental Agreement.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A rent subsidy grant would allow the Broadway Youth Resource Centre to occupy the City-owned premises at 685 East Broadway and provide the Centre with the additional space needed to administer its youth housing program until the site is redeveloped. Youth experience a number of unique barriers to accessing safe and affordable housing, which adult-oriented housing services do not address. The approach taken by the Broadway Youth Resource Centre is demonstrating some promising outcomes in housing vulnerable youth and preventing long term homelessness.

CONCLUSION

The Managing Director of Social Development, in consultation with the General Manager of Business Planning and Services, the Director of Real Estate Services and the Director of Legal Services, recommends that Council approve the recommended rent subsidy grant.

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