



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A22

Report Date: September 4, 2008
Contact: Cameron Gray
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: September 16, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Managing Director of Social Development
SUBJECT: Grant Request: Church and Affordable Housing Conference

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a grant of \$2,500, with funding to be provided from the Affordable Housing Fund, for the 2008 Church and Affordable Housing Conference that is being held in Vancouver on October 17 and 18, 2008.

This recommendation provides for a grant and requires eight affirmative votes of Council.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

Council policy is to provide grants to conferences where senior staff are involved in presenting or organizing the conference and the conference is relevant to City business.

In 1994, Council set a limit of \$5,000 for grants to conferences where funding for the conference is being provided from Contingency Reserve.

Grants require eight affirmative votes of Council.

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council approval of a \$2,500 grant for the 2008 Church and Affordable Housing Conference, which will be held in Vancouver on October 17 and 18, 2008.

BACKGROUND

The Church & Affordable Housing Conference was first held in Vancouver on October 14, 2006. This conference was organized by Shalom Seekers, an associate ministry of City in Focus. The conference was convened in recognition that the Christian community has expertise and resources to offer as part of partnerships to provide affordable housing and address homelessness. The conference attracted 250 attendees from 65 congregations and 18 denominations, greatly exceeding the expectations of the organizers.

Since the first conference, there has been significant action in the Christian community to address homelessness. Working groups have continued to meet to clarify the role the Christian community could play in addressing homelessness. City in Focus hosted Philip Mangano, Executive Director for the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, to further inform this process. The Christian community is now actively involved in the Vancouver Homeless Foundation and the Metro Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, and is exploring how its members can best contribute their financial and other resources.

2008 Church and Affordable Housing Conference

The second Church and Affordable Housing Conference will be held at Broadway Church on October 17th and 18th, 2008. The conference has been timed to coincide with Homeless Action Week in many BC communities as well as with the beginning of the peak giving season for many charities. Conference organizers expect 500-750 attendees including Church leaders, the business community, non-profits, government agencies and the media.

The two-day program includes keynote speakers, interactive workshops and networking opportunities. City staff in the Housing Centre have been invited to help organize the conference and will act as presenters at various events. This second conference is expected to expand and solidify the Christian community's contribution towards addressing homelessness. The Homeless Action Plan identifies the importance of engaging a diversity of community sectors in solutions to homelessness, and the Church and Affordable Housing conference is an important way to engage the Christian community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is recommended that the City provide a grant of \$2,500 for the 2008 Church and Affordable Housing Conference with the Affordable Housing Fund as the source of funding. This will match the provincial contribution by BC Housing. As a sponsor at this level, the City will receive recognition before, during and after the conference. The City will also receive complimentary tickets to the conference, tickets to the pre-conference networking dinner, and exhibit space. The conference will provide an excellent forum for the discussion of regional and local housing policies, and the role of the faith and philanthropic communities in addressing homelessness.

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