



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: January 16, 2009  
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VanRIMS No.: 13-6200-30  
Meeting Date: February 3, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services  
SUBJECT: 2009 Street Cleaning Grants

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

- A. THAT Council approve a grant of \$115,000 to 'Save Our Living Environment' for supplementary cleaning of sidewalks, lanes and public spaces in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, with funding of \$75,000 from the Capital Financing Fund (Solid Waste Capital Reserve) and \$40,000 from the 2009 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.
- B. THAT Council approve a grant of \$35,000 to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action for supplementary cleaning of sidewalks, lanes and public spaces in downtown Vancouver, with funding from the 2009 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.
- C. THAT Council approve a grant of \$25,000 to The Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program for supplementary cleaning of sidewalks, lanes and public spaces in Vancouver's Commercial Drive area, with funding from the 2009 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.

#### ***GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval.

### ***COUNCIL POLICY***

On April 23, 2002 Council adopted a definition of Sustainability as a basis for City actions and operations. Among other things, that definition described sustainability as being achieved through community participation.

On May 24, 2005 Council adopted a definition of Social Sustainability. That definition described human capacity as the attributes and resources individuals can contribute to their own well-being and to the well-being of the community as a whole.

In each of the past 10 years, Council has approved annual grants to non-profit social enterprise organizations for micro-cleaning of streets and lanes in areas of the City where there is the greatest need for this type of work. Funding for these grants has been provided from the Capital Financing Fund (Solid Waste Capital Reserve) and Engineering's Operating Budget.

Approval of grants requires eight affirmative votes.

### ***PURPOSE***

This report recommends grants to three social enterprise organizations totalling \$175,000 for supplementary street cleaning services in 2009. The provision of these services results in job support and life skills training opportunities for youth and adults with employment barriers, assists the recipients with leveraging additional funding, and results in cleaner streets and lanes for communities where there is the greatest need.

### ***BACKGROUND***

The City's annual Street Cleaning budget is approximately \$8 million. This operating budget funds 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 streets and lanes. About 75 percent of this budget (\$6 million) is allocated to services that respond to irresponsible behaviour from the public, including the clean up of garbage littered on roads and materials abandoned in laneways. The remaining budget is spent on emptying and cleaning public litter containers, and removing leaves from roads in the autumn.

Areas of Vancouver where there is high pedestrian activity or where poor social conditions are prevalent demand a higher level of street cleaning resources compared to other areas of the City. To supplement City services, for the past ten years Council has approved annual grants to social enterprise organizations that have the capacity to provide micro-cleaning services. Micro-cleaning involves daily collection of litter, on foot using brooms, shovels and wheeled garbage carts; work that is outside the scope of City services. In addition to achieving cleaner streets, these grants support employment and life skills training for local community residents, and assist social enterprise organizations with leveraging other funding resulting in expansions of their programs.

Micro-cleaning services funded by City grants also complement other street cleaning initiatives, such as programs coordinated by Business Improvement Associations (BIA's) and the Downtown Community Courts, and that which is provided through the City/Provincial *Great Beginnings* initiative. Due to the variety of street cleaning initiatives, staff work with our grant recipients throughout the year to ensure cleaning resources are allocated appropriately.

Since 1999 Council has approved annual grants to Save our Living Environment (SOLE) for a very successful program involving micro-cleaning of streets and lanes in the Downtown Eastside (DTES). For 2007 and 2008 grants were also provided to Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action (SYJA) for micro-cleaning in the downtown peninsula. Grants in 2008 to SOLE and SYJA were for \$115,000 and \$75,000, respectively.

The success and value of street cleaning grants to the community, in terms of social, environmental and economic benefits continues to be significant. The programs which the grant monies support promote community pride, result in cleaner public spaces, provide employment and foster increased self-esteem amongst their participants.

Grant funding provided by the City for 2008 resulted in the following measures of success:

- Approximately 215 City blocks were cleaned;
- Over 13,000 work hours were provided to about 200 people with barriers to traditional employment allowing them to achieve valuable job training skills and employment opportunities;
- Over 10,000 bags of litter were collected from space accessible by the public; and,
- The grant recipients were able to leverage additional funding from other organizations such as BIA's, Vancouver Coastal Health, special event organizers and other levels of government.

### *DISCUSSION*

For 2009 staff recommend a \$115,000 grant to SOLE (the same funding level as in 2008). This will allow SOLE to continue providing street cleaning services in the DTES, an area of the City where street cleaning demand is significant. Over the past 10 years SOLE has consistently demonstrated they have the necessary resources and capabilities to provide a high standard of workmanship and good value to the City with respect to cleaning in DTES streets and lanes.

Staff also recommend that grants be provided to SYJA and The Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program (The Kettle) in the amounts of \$35,000 and \$25,000, respectively. This recommendation is based on staff's assessment of:

- areas outside the DTES where street cleaning supply and demand gaps may exist,
- the additional level of service those areas would benefit from, and
- social enterprise organizations which have the necessary experience and capacity to provide street cleaning services outside of the DTES.

Staff compiled this information in October 2008 largely based on a survey of non-profit organizations Vancouver BIAs utilize for street cleaning. The survey assisted staff with identifying five organizations which were subsequently invited to submit proposals for City funded micro-cleaning work. Proposals were received from Mission Possible, SYJA and The Kettle.

Proposals were reviewed independently by staff from Engineering Services and Social Planning. The evaluation considered completeness, scope and experience. Specific attention was placed on how the proposed work relates to the City's needs, and resulting benefits to the community. Proposals demonstrating well established cleaning programs considered to have the greatest potential to leverage matching funds, build social capacity and provide value to the City were ranked the highest. Proposals provided by SYJA and The Kettle were considered superior.

SYJA has demonstrated their abilities and have committed to use City funding to leverage additional funds. SYJA will primarily work within the downtown peninsula; however, other areas will be monitored by the City for supplemental cleaning and SYJA will adjust their work areas accordingly.

The Kettle is being recommended for a grant because they have indicated they have the capacity to use the funding to:

- Increase job training and employment beyond their existing program;
- Expand their cleaning area and service levels in the Commercial Drive area;
- Supplement services provided by City forces through approximately 1040 hours of micro-cleaning services; and
- Leverage matching funding from outside agencies.

The grant will allow The Kettle to add two more people to its SEED Clean Team, resulting in an expansion outside of their current area extending west on Broadway to Clark Drive and north to meet with an area currently cleaned by Hastings-Sunrise BIA funded micro-cleaners.

Quarterly summary reports by SOLE, SYJA and The Kettle will be submitted to and monitored by Engineering Services staff and will include the number of hours worked, people employed, blocks cleaned and the amount of litter collected. These reports will assist staff with measuring the success of the programs and determining priority areas for micro-cleaning services so that work can be adjusted accordingly, as required. Grant funding will be distributed quarterly following the submission of summary reports.

Appendix A provides background information on each of the three organizations recommended for grant funding for 2009.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

This report recommends a total street cleaning grant in 2009 of \$175,000 consisting of \$115,000 to SOLE, \$35,000 to SYJA and \$25,000 to The Kettle. The source of funding includes \$75,000 from the Capital Financing Fund (Solid Waste Capital Reserve) and \$100,000 from the 2009 Street Cleaning Operating Budget.

### ***PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS***

There are no personnel implications.

### ***ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS***

The recommendations 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 residents, businesses and visitors.

### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Micro-cleaning services provided by social enterprises organizations improve the appearance and safety of City streets, while providing 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 and adults to seek, obtain and maintain employment.

By contributing to the existing programs run by these organizations recommended in this report, the City is helping marginalized individuals to become more self reliant and in turn further the goal of ending homelessness in Vancouver.

### *CONCLUSION*

Street cleaning grants to Save Our Living Environment, Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action and Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program for supplemental street cleaning services will continue to benefit marginalized residents by providing job and life skills training. They will also continue to benefit the City by improving the cleanliness of the public realm. As well as encompassing the Council adopted definitions of Sustainability and Social Sustainability, this grant program is an excellent example of a sustainable solid waste management initiative since all three pillars of sustainability (environment, economic and social) are addressed.

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## Background Information on Recommended Grant Recipients

### Save Our Living Environment (SOLE)

SOLE is a non-profit urban environmental group active in the DTES. The Society sponsors several projects at 39 East Hastings Street, including the United We Can Bottle Depot. A primary objective of the Society is to create self-sustaining enterprises that focus on caring for the urban environment, while also creating income and job training for people of the inner city. The program employs residents from the local community with barriers to traditional employment, giving them valuable job-training, enhanced self-esteem and improved life skills.

SOLE has utilized City grant funding over the past 10 years to provide job training and employment to individuals by performing micro-cleaning of streets and lanes in the DTES. This funding has also allowed SOLE to leverage additional funding through Business Improvement Associations (BIA's), other levels of government, and through special events within the DTES.

SOLE has approximately 50 stable employees with a range of assorted barriers that clean lanes and sidewalks. As a result of this opportunity, some of the SOLE staff no longer require income assistance. SOLE's total pool of active work participants is sustained at 100 people, many of whom participate in the lane cleaning program. During the past year SOLE's cleaning activities have increased in frequency and area as a result of the Provincially funded Great Beginnings initiative administered by the City. Great Beginnings funding combined with City grant money is funding social enterprise micro-cleaning covering approximately 65 blocks and several parks in the DTES and surrounding areas.

### Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Street Youth Job Action (SYJA)

SYJA is a social enterprise committed to improving the lives of homeless or at risk youth, age 24 and under. They offer a range of services including prevention, counselling, pre-employment job training and employment opportunities. They take a unique approach with reaching out to youth, such as providing locker facilities and pet kennels in order to allow individuals to utilize their services.

Services provided by SYJA include temporary, casual or part-time employment to approximately 280 homeless or at risk youths on a work today, paid today basis. The program has proven to be successful in breaking down the barriers to employment and beginning the process of helping youth to acquire the confidence and skills they will need to become employable and bridge them back into the community. Long term success can be seen in staff members who were once themselves youths in the SYJA program and have now become SYJA peer counsellors.

SYJA has an established community enhancement program (micro-cleaning initiatives, needle sweeps, and graffiti removal) for its youth through partnerships with BIA's, the Vancouver Port Authority, Canadian Pacific Railway, Waste Management of Canada, and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH). With support from these organizations and businesses, they are able to receive matching funds which exceed the amount of funding provided by the City.

For 2007 the City provided SYJA with a \$60,000 grant based on the submission and evaluation of grant applications received from various Vancouver social enterprises. Accordingly, the grant enabled SYJA to provide approximately seven months of street cleaning services

primarily in the downtown peninsula. In November 2007, Council awarded a \$75,000 grant to SYJA allowing the street cleaning program to run for the entire 12 months in 2008.

The 2008 grant allowed SYJA to provide 4000 hours of life skills and job training, and employment opportunities to about 150 youth through their street enhancement program. As a result, some of these youth have and will be able to find long term employment and housing. The program also resulted in approximately 2500 bags of litter being cleaned up from over 150 blocks of streets and sidewalks in the downtown peninsula. The City's street cleaning grant allows SYJA to sustain their current program and extend it to more youth in need.

#### **The Kettle Friendship Society - SEED Employment Program**

The Kettle Friendship Society is a Vancouver based organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with mental illness. The Kettle achieves this in a number of ways including provision of crisis support, advocacy, supported housing, employment and support services, a health clinic, drop-in lunch program, and recreational activities.

The Kettle runs numerous programs one of which is the SEED Employment Program. SEED (Skills, Esteem & Employment Development) assists individuals with chronic mental health issues to build the vocational skills, confidence and stamina necessary to make the transition from unemployment to satisfying work opportunities. SEED presently provides 35 various work opportunities to their clients with multiple barriers which include; landscapers, store clerks, hair stylists, kitchen prep workers and street cleaners to name a few.

The SEED Program is also part of a creative partnership with the Commercial Drive BIA. The SEED Clean Team has worked closely with the Commercial Drive BIA to conduct street cleaning services five days a week and has employed 37 people since 2003. The program gives participants an opportunity to learn new skills and to interact with the community while increasing their self-worth and benefiting the community. The service area is Commercial Drive from Adanac to 13th Ave. as well as two blocks on Broadway (beside the Skytrain station). In 2008, the SEED Clean Team received external funding from the Commercial Drive BIA and from a Vancity Community grant.