



## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 18, 2013  
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Meeting Date: July 10, 2013

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services  
FROM: General Manager of Community Services  
SUBJECT: 2013 Homelessness Action Week (HAW) Grants

### *RECOMMENDATION \**

- A. THAT Council champion Vancouver's 2013 Homeless Action Week by supporting neighbourhood-based responses to homelessness.
- B. THAT Council approve an allocation of \$35,000 in grants as outlined in Appendix A to create awareness and engage citizens on awareness and solutions to homelessness through a variety of events during Homelessness Action Week on October 13 to 19, 2013 and throughout the year; source of funds to be the Community Services Group Operating Budget 2013 - Street Homeless Budget.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to report back October 8, 2013 to proclaim HAW 2013 and to showcase actions and events being planned.

### *REPORT SUMMARY \**

The 2013 Homelessness Action Week (HAW) is the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Metro Vancouver campaign aimed at raising awareness and building local capacity for solutions to homelessness. This report recommends that the City support 18 community organizations to host events primarily during HAW, but also throughout the year to promote HAW and connections with their local homeless populations. The \$35,000 in grants will come from the Community Services Operating Budget - Street Homeless.

### *COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS \**

On July 28, 2011, Council endorsed the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 which includes three strategic directions:

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing;
2. Encourage a housing mix across all neighbourhoods that enhances quality of life; and,
3. Provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability.

The 3-Year Action Plan 2012-2014 identifies priority actions to achieve some of the Strategy's goals. The priority actions that relate to this grant request are to

demonstrate leadership to support partners to enhance housing stability and improve the health, safety, food security and social supports for the homeless and those at risk.

Council approved the *Homeless Action Plan* in 2005 which identifies three priorities to address homelessness: improved access to income, more supportive housing and expanded mental health and addiction services. The City has been involved in reducing homelessness through a variety of measures including community grants, the development of supportive and social housing, relocation services for those who are homeless and partnerships to support people maintaining their housing.

The Vancouver Charter requires a resolution passed by eight affirmative votes from Council for the approval of grants.

#### ***CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS \****

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

#### ***REPORT***

##### ***Background/Context \****

The 8<sup>th</sup> annual regional Homelessness Action Week will take place October 13<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Coordinated through the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat (MVHS), this regional and local campaign provides a unique opportunity to engage the citizens, the media, the private and non-profit sector on the causes and solutions to ending homelessness. The City has played an integral role in initiating and supporting HAW since its inception and has strived to generate more events, interest and activities with each passing year.

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for a variety of community and grassroots initiatives that will support positive and engaging events taking place in Vancouver's 2013 HAW (October 13 - 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013). The City has recognized the importance of supporting community involvement and partnership activity through the provision of small grants since 2009:

- In 2009, the City provided \$9,300 to four community groups (RTS 08283).
- In 2010, the City provided \$10,500 to five community groups (RTS 08788).
- In 2011, the City provided \$25,000 in grants to nine community groups (RTS 09325).
- In 2012, the City provided \$30,000 in grants to eleven community groups (RTS 9581).

These funds have contributed to uniting Vancouverites in a common goal to raise awareness and create solutions to the issues of homelessness in Vancouver. Interest in HAW has grown significantly - we received over \$70,000 in grant application requests from 25 non-profit societies.

To meet this demand, staff are recommending \$35,000 in grants to ignite even more community passion to solve homelessness, and to reach out further than in previous years and engage an even greater number of participants and communities.

Staff have also begun planning for a number of other events and activities and will report back October 8, 2013 to provide Council an opportunity to proclaim HAW and to provide more detailed information on these events. A key aim of this year's HAW is to use it as a platform for year-round efforts to increase awareness and actions to address homelessness.

### *Strategic Analysis \**

#### **2013 HAW Theme - Building on What Works**

HAW 2013 builds on the success of partnerships between the City, the Province and other private and not-for-profit partners to reduce homelessness through a diversity of responses. Some of the key drivers for success are highlighted below.

**Partnerships** - Success would not be possible without partnerships with the Provincial government and the many dedicated community groups, non-profit agencies we work with, including Streethome, Vancouver Coastal Health and others. Through the strength of our partnerships, there are real improvements in the lives of homeless citizens demonstrated through a stabilization in the number of homeless individuals living on streets and in shelters.

**Low-barrier Shelters** -Over the last 10 years significant strides have been made to decrease street homelessness through partnerships which have created low-barrier shelters such as the HEAT Shelter Program which began in the winter of 2008/2009. HEAT and Winter Response shelters have played a critical role in moving people inside. Low-barrier shelters are important because they allow people with multiple barriers to access safe and secure housing with their pets and belongings without a maximum length of stay. They provide healthy food along with supported health care and social services. An increase in low-barrier shelter beds targeted to neighbourhoods where there were significant street homeless populations resulted in a number of street homeless moving into shelters and onto permanent housing. In addition, BC Housing's shift in shelter policy to provide 24/7 access, increased staffing, 3 meals per day, mental health and primary health care assessments/services and supports, and allowing people to stay until housing became available has had a significant impact.

**New Supportive Housing** - Thirteen of the City's Supportive Housing sites are scheduled for completion by the end of 2014 for a total of almost 1,500 units. The supportive housing sites will continue to have a significant impact on achieving our goal of ending street homelessness since our policy now requires that our non-profit partners tenant the units with individuals experiencing street homelessness (50%), sheltered homelessness (30%) with the remaining tenants being relocated from SROs (20%).

**Health and the Lived Environment** - As more supportive housing is completed, it is important to feature, as well as reflect upon what works and what has been achieved. Access to secure housing, healthy food, support networks, community, nature and the arts create opportunities for improved health outcomes for both the individual and the community. The Healthy City Strategy being developed by the City plays an integral role in supporting and engaging individuals who are homeless as well as successfully housed. Some HAW events will engage housing providers to showcase their programs and their

successes in supporting homeless individuals and will feature some of the supportive housing outcomes during HAW.

**Expanding our Reach** - More and more neighbourhoods across the city and region are becoming involved in efforts aimed at ending homelessness. Homelessness creates unimaginable human suffering for the individual and negatively impacts our communities. Individuals struggling with homelessness live in every part of our city and, as demonstrated by the breadth of HAW grants recommended in this report, neighbourhood responses to this issue are having marked impacts.

**Increased Housing Options and Best Practices Research** - At Home/Chez Soi is a research demonstration project investigating mental health and homelessness in five Canadian cities including Vancouver. The project will provide evidence about what services and systems could best help people who are living with a mental illness and are homeless. The project has housed 300 people who were homeless or at-risk of homelessness with severe and persistent mental illness and the findings of the research project will demonstrate the positive impact housing and supports can have on an individual.

**Renovating Single Room Occupancy Hotels** - The Provincial purchase of 23 SROs provided over 1400 units of supported and social housing. Thirteen SROs will be improved through renovations as a result of the Federal P3 initiative. Work is underway with completion scheduled for 2015.

**Targeted Outreach Programs** - The Provincial Homeless Intervention Program (HIP) targets housing and wrap-around services to the chronically homeless which has had a significant impact on providing individuals with the support they need to access services and move inside.

## 2013 HAW Grants

The goals for Vancouver's 2013 HAW Grants include:

1. Creating innovative solutions to local homelessness and supporting new approaches and opportunities to prevent or eliminate homelessness.
2. Building the capacity of neighbourhoods to raise awareness and respond to issues of homelessness.
3. Building healthy, safe and inclusive communities in neighbourhoods across the City.
4. Supporting existing and creating new partnerships and leveraging opportunities to address homelessness and affordable housing needs.

These four goals are aligned with the priority actions of *Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 Strategic Direction 3: Provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability*. The priority actions speak to research and innovation, improvements in health and safety, and partnering opportunities for prevention and elimination of homelessness. Community groups are important partners in helping to achieving these desired outcomes. The provision of HAW grants enables the City to develop new relationships with non-profit community groups and nurture existing ones.

To this end, there was a formal call for proposals to host events or projects in and around the week of HAW 2013, which support the spirit of HAW. This year the total available funds are \$35,000 from which a group may receive a maximum of \$3,000. This is the largest amount of funds allocated to HAW grants since the City began allocating HAW grants in 2009. Grant applications were available online. Non-profit community groups were invited to make an application that supported the four 2013 HAW grant goals listed above.

Social Development received and reviewed a total of 25 grant applications. Of the 25 applications, this report recommends approval of 18 grants. Grant applications were reviewed and assessed on the following criteria:

- Projects had to be designed to directly benefit people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness within local neighbourhoods.
- Organizations had to:
  - be a registered non-profit society based in Vancouver
  - have a proven track record for delivering projects, services and/or hosting events
  - demonstrate a strong level of partnership with a range of key local stakeholders
- Priority was given to projects that leveraged funding from other sources.

Applicants that had received HAW grants in the past were eligible to apply but each organization was only eligible to receive one grant in 2013 because of the significant demand on funding. Projects being recommended for funding provide unique opportunities for capacity and skills development, awareness raising and direct access to resources and services for the homeless and those at risk.

The table in Appendix A summarizes the applications received and the recommended level of support for each.

Interest was strong and while all applications met some of the eligibility criteria, those being recommended in this report more strongly supported the goals and criteria set out in the proposal call. Staff will work with the unsuccessful applicants to build capacity for next year.

### **Sneak Peak at City Events Being Planned**

Community involvement, public engagement and unique and inspiring events have grown with each successive HAW. Staff are in the early planning stages of a number of exciting and inspirational events for this year.

Personal stories of overcoming mental health and addiction and/or struggles with homelessness humanize this very tragic issue and several of the grants being recommended in this report support giving voice to homeless individuals through dialogue and panel discussions, video and the visual arts.

### **Arts Events**

The City is partnering with Vancouver Community College (VCC) at their downtown campus to host a week-long art event around the theme, the "arts as a catalyst for change". Creative engagement and dialogue around ideas from "root cause to the meaning of home" is expected to engage a broad audience, giving

vision and voice to our homeless citizens, and creating a greater understanding of the issues in the broader community.

Supportive housing tenants, as well as those currently homeless or at risk of homelessness will showcase their work in their own voice, alongside professional artists during a week-long exhibition and sale. This will be an opportunity for supportive housing tenants and providers to partner and showcase the work they are doing on all fronts and at one venue, supporting the benefits of art as a means of self-expression, health and fulfillment.

A panel discussion with art therapists and professionals working in the area of health and livability will engage in dialogue on "How does art benefit in the healing process?"

As more supportive housing buildings come on stream, it is important to backcast and highlight our successes. Creating awareness, through the arts about the beneficial impact of housing on the health and wellbeing of homeless individuals, while engaging a broad citizenry is an expected outcome of the HAW art event.

### **Connect Event**

The VCC has also agreed to partner with the City to host the Vancouver Homeless Connect Event at the downtown campus. This event provides homeless and those at risk of homelessness with direct services such as haircuts, foot care, food, health and dental services, access to income assistance and BC Housing staff, etc. The event itself and these partnerships - without which the event would not be possible - are well established. Last year the event attracted approximately 350 homeless individuals and connected them to over 50 organizations. Given the central location and building on VCC's "Christmas in July" event where they provide meals to over 2,000 participants, attendance at this October's Connect event is anticipated to be very strong.

### **Film Screening and Panel Discussion on Homelessness**

Partnering with Reel Causes, a BC registered non-profit society that organizes monthly film screenings with net proceeds going to a local charity or cause, the City is hosting an evening film screening and panel discussion on homelessness at the Djavad Mowafaghian World Art Centre, Goldcorp Centre for the Arts, SFU Downtown. The panel will consist of experts in the field of homelessness, including those with lived experience on the streets.

There are a number of other events and activities in the early planning stages. Staff will report back on these and other events and activities on October 8, 2013. This meeting will also provide Council an opportunity to proclaim HAW 2013.

### ***Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)***

#### ***Financial \****

This report recommends Council approve \$35,000 in grants to 18 non-profit organizations, with the Community Services Group Operating Budget 2013 - Street Homeless Budget as the source of funds.

### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Homelessness is devastating not only to the individual but also to our communities. It involves severe human suffering and represents a waste of individual potential. It also poses significant costs to our health and social services and criminal justice system. Targeting our limited resources for more proactive social objectives would positively impact the quality of life of all Vancouver citizens.

The newly adopted Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 identifies the need to lead and support our partners and leverage other partnering opportunities. HAW 2013 is a positive platform to connect with new partners and support partners to create new solutions to homelessness at a community level. HAW spans not only the City of Vancouver but the region and promotes healthy and inclusive neighbourhoods by engaging all residents to raise awareness about homelessness issues amongst those in their community. This report highlights ways in which the City can support its community organizations and neighbourhoods to get involved in implementing solutions to homelessness across Vancouver.

### ***COMMUNICATIONS PLAN***

Staff are working with Corporate Communications to draft a comprehensive Communications Plan for HAW 2013 to support the regional communications strategy. An activities and events calendar will be created and posted on [www.stophomelessness.ca](http://www.stophomelessness.ca) as well as the City's website.

### ***CONCLUSION \****

This report seeks Council approval of \$35,000 in grants to support a variety of grassroots initiatives to support positive and engaging events taking place in Vancouver's 2013 HAW (October 13-19, 2013).

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2013 Vancouver's Homelessness Action Week Grant Applicants					
Event	Agency	Date of Event	2013 Request	2013 Recommendation	2012 Grant
1. <b>Beauty Nights:</b> fund the cost of a foot care specialist during HAW week. Provide health and beauty services including haircuts and manicures to DTES women residents while connecting them to mental health, addiction, housing and other valuable services.	Beauty Night Society	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$400	-
2. <b>Dialogue to Reduce Homelessness:</b> A panel discussion on the root cause & potential solutions to reduce homelessness. The experts will be people with lived experience of homelessness as well as an SFU researcher involved with At Home Chez Soir. The event will be highly publicized City-wide by the agency and will take place at the Coast Pacific Housing Building, a supportive housing site located at 337 West Pender Street. 100 individuals are expected to attend.	Coast Mental Health Foundation	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$2,500	-
3. <b>From Connection to Action:</b> An Open House, including community networking and public education tours which is anticipated to engage more than 350 local & city wide citizens. Local DTES Ambassadors will lead the tours. An evening coffee house, a music jam and local video clips and interactive activities will take place.	First United Church Community Ministry Society	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$2,800	-
4. <b>Building Bridges:</b> Provide at least 10 presentations and brochures to Francophone and French immersion schools with facts & info about the realities of homelessness in Vancouver and challenges the homeless face. Invite children and youth to help prepare, serve and share a meal for La Boussole homeless clients.	La Boussole	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$1,430	\$3,000
5. <b>A Day in the Life of</b>	Lookout		\$3,000	\$2,700	-



<p><b>Homeless Individuals:</b> Providing technical training in photography, putting cameras in the hands of individuals from the street through the continuum to those who live in supported housing in order to construct a visual history of homelessness through visual storytelling. Rent a van where the general public will sign up to tour four Lookout buildings where the art installations will also be installed. The tours will engage the broader city community. The art will be available to view on line as a permanent exhibition.</p>	<p>Emergency Aid Society</p>				
<p><b>6. Marpole Homeless Connect Event:</b> Provide the homeless and those at risk of homeless in the Marpole area with access to services, meals, and clothing.</p>	<p>Marpole Oakridge Area Council Society</p>	<p>HAW 2013</p>	<p>\$3,000</p>	<p>\$1,800</p>	<p>\$2,990</p>
<p><b>7. WoRK: Community Workshops:</b> Fund DTES community training workshops in the soft skills (identified as a gap) such as healthy communication &amp; conflict resolution as component of job training. Funding printed communication brochures.</p>	<p>Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society</p>	<p>HAW 2013</p>	<p>\$2,800</p>	<p>\$2,000</p>	<p>-</p>
<p><b>8. Working Together to Promote Health, Safety and Affordable Independent Living:</b> An event that brings students (some who are homeless - many who are at risk) together with Aboriginal service providers and community partners for information and resource sharing, food and cultural celebration.</p>	<p>NEC Native Education Society</p>	<p>HAW 2013</p>	<p>\$3,000</p>	<p>\$2,700</p>	<p>\$3,000</p>
<p><b>9. Vancouver Rent Bank Public Information Sessions:</b> The Rent Bank will deliver five information sessions to target six low income communities at locations around the city. Translation, advertising and printing are costs supported.</p>	<p>Network of Inner City Community Services Society (NICCS)</p>	<p>HAW 2013</p>	<p>\$2,885</p>	<p>\$2,885</p>	<p>-</p>

<p><b>10. Nearly Neighbours:</b> Work with five youth to produce a video about the life of one youth and his experience with his neighbours. The video will be screened in locations around the City during HAW.</p>	Pacific Community Resources Society	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$2,360	\$2,800
<p><b>11. Take a Bite out of Winter:</b> Provide a community meal and clothing to the homeless and those at risk of homelessness in Marpole. In collaboration with Marpole Place Neighbourhood House Homelessness Committee, they will also create a resource guide of available food, housing, supports and other resources in the community.</p>	Parish of St. Faith's	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$1,800	\$2,910
<p><b>12. Kensington - Cedar Cottage Connect Project:</b> Provide the homeless and those at risk of homeless in the Kensington-Cedar Cottage area with access to services, meals, and clothing.</p>	Pacific Legal Education Association	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$2,100	-
<p><b>14. DTES Kitchen Tables Community Food Access Map:</b> Fund printing of the updated Food Access Map for distribution by outreach team members to distribute the Map at Connect events during HAW Week.</p>	Potluck Café Society	HAW 2013	\$2,825	\$500	-
<p><b>15. Vancouver Housing First Speakers Bureau and ACT Film Event:</b> An evening event at Café Deux Soleil on Commercial Drive includes a panel discussion, including homeless members of the community and the screening of Raincity's Assertive Community Team Film(ACT).</p>	Raincity Housing	HAW 2013	\$825	\$825	-
<p><b>16. We All Care About You:</b> An intergeneration project with Grade 3 students and seniors where they paint 40 - 50 lunch bags with caring messages and fill the bags with lunch, knitted gifts &amp; a card from the students. The seniors will deliver the bags to the neighbourhood houses to distribute to the homeless in the community.</p>	Renfrew Collingwood Seniors' Society	HAW 2013	\$1,000	\$1,000	-
<p><b>17. Connecting the Ends: A Thanksgiving dinner.</b> Provide the homeless and those at risk of homeless in the West End, Yale</p>	St Paul's Anglican Church, Catholic	HAW 2013	\$2,820	\$2,700	

Town, Vancouver South and Broadway Corridor areas with access to services, meals, and clothing. Partnering with The First Baptist Church.	Charities Society				
<b>18. Eastside Stride 2.0: A purpose-drive walking tour of the DTES:</b> Local community members struggling with homelessness will be trained as tour guides and paid to lead walking tours of the DTES. Last year 350 people from outside the DTES took the tour.	Union Gospel Mission (UGM)	HAW 2013	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
<b>19. Under One Umbrella Connect Event:</b> A day long service fair for homeless or at risk individuals with up to 40 community service providers. Average annual attendance over 6 years is around 500 people per year.	Watari, Youth Family and Community Services Society	March 2014	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$3,000 (2011)
<b>20. A Way Home:</b> Funding for bus tickets, outstanding rent, damage deposits or other supports to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	Aboriginal Mother's Centre Society	HAW 2013	\$3,000	-	-
<b>21. Connecting the Dots: Violence against Women and Homelessness:</b> Work with potential partners to design and deliver workshops & information sessions on the connection between violence and homelessness.	Battered Women's Support Services	HAW 2013	\$3,000	-	-
<b>22. Access to Public Transit Forum:</b> Fund attendance of staff at a community forum during HAW week to discuss public transit for the homeless.	Collingwood Neighbourhood House	HAW 2013	\$3,000	-	\$1,650
<b>23. Youth Council Team Action Project (TAP):</b> Youth will mobilise to collect socks for the homeless in the DTES. Tap will reach out to youth and refer them to services.	Little Mountain Neighbourhood House	HAW 2103	\$3,000	-	-
<b>24. Salvage and Serve:</b> Employ residents to collect garbage in the DTES and separate out what can be salvaged by artists or recycled.	Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society	HAW 2013	\$3,122	Only one grant application can be approved per non-profit society.	-
<b>25. The Downtown Eastside Food Assessment, Conference and Zine:</b> Conduct a food assessment with a final report launched at a conference during	DTES Neighbourhood House Society	HAW 2013	\$3,000	-	-

HAW. A special addition of the Zine (small magazine) released during HAW.					
26.3K House: Construct a small house in a public location as a catalyst for public discussion engaging at risk or homeless, the general public to participate in the construction.	Vancouver Design Nerds Society	HAW 2013	\$3,000	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$70,049</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>