



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: September 22, 2014
Contact: Jim de Hoop
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: October 1, 2014

TO: Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment
FROM: General Manager of Community Services
SUBJECT: Capital Grant to Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a Capital Grant of up to \$116,700 to Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House (FHNH) as the City's contribution to capital improvement, subject to the conditions outlined in this report; source of funds is the 2014 Capital Budget for Neighbourhood House Renewal.

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to RECOMMEND a capital grant of up to \$116,700 to Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House (FHNH) as the City's contribution to renovation and repair work to improve safety, preserve the asset, and enhance efficient use of the space. The grant will assist with replacement of aging playground equipment, a partial roof repair, and a modification to the large multi-purpose room to allow for multiple, simultaneous users. The grant is conditional on FHNH providing evidence that the funds are applied to the agreed-upon uses. The grant will be provided in one instalment on receipt of evidence satisfactory to the General Manager of Community Services that work has been completed as described.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Approval of Capital Grants requires eight affirmative votes.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

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

REPORT

Background/Context

Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House (FHNH) has operated out of a City-owned facility at 2131 Renfrew Street since 1985. FHNH provides a wide range of services and programmes to local residents, from infants to the very senior. Most participants speak a language other than English as their first language and approximately 10% are of First Nations heritage. Approximately two-thirds of program participants are from low income families.

The demand for services has grown with the population, and the organization has been creative and diligent in meeting the challenges, but the facility is limited in size and design. Over the years, FHNH has raised funds to invest in the building including the addition of a second floor in 2001.

FHNH received a small capital grant of \$26,883 in 2013 from a Community Amenity Contribution. That grant provided modest renovations to the seniors' room within the neighbourhood house.

In response to the need to expand programme options for other users within their limited footprint, and to maintain the facility, FHNH has initiated much needed capital maintenance and upgrades to make full use of the program space they have.

The proposed work includes replacement of some of the aging outdoor play equipment, replacement of a portion of the roof, and installation of a modular wall in the large multi-purpose room to enable multiple user groups to be in the space at the same time.

This works follows several large investments in the building that FHNH has made to improve energy performance and functionality, including a second floor addition, and complete lighting, HVAC, and washroom upgrades. FHNH raised funds for the lighting, HVAC and washroom upgrades, approximately \$165,000, from a variety of sources including federal infrastructure grants, grants from local philanthropic organizations and small scale fundraising campaigns.

Strategic Analysis

Neighbourhood houses are volunteer-based, community-driven organizations offering a wide range of programs for the diverse populations living the communities they serve. FHNH offers childcare, family programming, youth services and programs, programs for new immigrants, and seniors' programming. With an emphasis on self- and mutual-help, they occupy an important niche in the strategic spectrum of facilities and programs supporting City residents supporting Council's priority of *Cultivating Connections* from the Healthy City Strategy.

The current Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House structure is almost 30 years old so it is time for some improvements such as those discussed in this report to ensure on-going safe and efficient use of the asset and to promote a longer, useful life.

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

The source of funds for the proposed capital grant of \$116,700 to Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House is in the 2014 Capital Budget for Neighbourhood House Renewal.

Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House, a non-profit organization, has a current lease with the City which assigns responsibility for capital maintenance to them. FHNH has met their capital maintenance responsibilities over the years and raised funds to expand and enhance the usability of the facility. The contribution recommended in this report follows a period of significant capital investment in the facility by FHNH to enhance the usability of major programme spaces, and protect the asset.

CONCLUSION

Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House has undertaken repairs and improvements to ensure the on-going safe and efficient use, as well as preservation, of the asset. FHNH has made significant investments to the building, at their expense, over the years. They are seeking City assistance with these repairs and modifications. A capital grant of up to \$116,700 will enable the upgrades to proceed and allow the organization to focus resources on programs and services to meet the community's needs.

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