



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: May 25, 2017
Contact: Ethel Whitty
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RTS No.: 11939
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: July 11, 2017

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Community Services
SUBJECT: 2017 Homelessness Action Week (HAW) Grants

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council champion Vancouver's 2017 Homelessness Action Week by supporting neighbourhood responses to homelessness.
- B. THAT Council approve an allocation of \$43,000 in grants as outlined in Appendix A to create awareness about and engage citizens on solutions to homelessness through a variety of events during Homelessness Action Week (October 8 - 14, 2017) and throughout the year; source of funds to be the 2017 Community Services Operating Budget - Street Homelessness.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to report back by October 3, 2017 to proclaim HAW 2017 and showcase actions and events being planned.

REPORT SUMMARY

The 2017 Homelessness Action Week (HAW) is the 12th annual Metro Vancouver campaign aimed at raising awareness about and building local capacity for solutions to homelessness. This report recommends that the City support 17 community organizations to host events during HAW and throughout the year to promote HAW and connections with their local homeless populations. The \$43,000 in grants will come from the 2017 Community Services Operating Budget - Street Homelessness.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2012-2021)
Housing Vancouver Emerging Directions (March 2017)

The Vancouver Charter requires a resolution passed by two-thirds affirmative votes from all Council members for the approval of grants.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

The 12th annual Homelessness Action Week will take place across Lower Mainland municipalities from October 8th to 14th, 2017. Until 2013, Homelessness Action Week was coordinated and funded across the region through the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat (MVHS) under the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). Changes to HPS funding criteria in 2014 resulted in all HPS funding being targeted for Housing First initiatives and away from initiatives such as HAW. Despite the loss of MVHS coordination and support, Homelessness Action Week will once again take place throughout the region, with regional coordination occurring through the Council of Metro Vancouver Community Homeless Tables and local funding and coordination at the level of each municipality. Notwithstanding the withdrawal of the Federal Government as a funding partner, Homelessness Action Week will continue to provide a unique opportunity regionally and locally to engage citizens, the media and the private and non-profit sectors on the causes of and solutions to homelessness.

HAW 2017 in Vancouver 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 across the city, including providing outreach services to people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness, opening low-barrier temporary winter response shelters, opening warming centres in extremely cold weather, building new social and supportive housing, and supporting our non-profit partners to improve liveability and conditions in single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels.

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 during HAW and throughout the year. The City of Vancouver has played an integral leadership role in initiating and supporting HAW since its inception, and continues to strive to generate more events, activities and interest each year:

- 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 to nine community groups (RTS 09325)
- In 2012, the City provided \$30,000 to eleven community groups (RTS 9581)
- In 2013, the City provided \$35,000 to eighteen community groups (RTS 10135)
- In 2014, the City provided \$40,000 to sixteen community groups (RTS 10619)
- In 2015, the City provided \$43,000 to eighteen community groups (RTS 10980)
- In 2016, the City provided \$36,650 to thirteen community groups (RTS 11433)

Community interest has grown overall since 2009. Grant funds have contributed to uniting Vancouverites in a common goal to raise awareness about and create solutions to the issues of homelessness, and support organizations providing direct services to homeless individuals. This year, \$85,748 in grant requests was received from 29 Vancouver non-profit societies. Staff recommends allocating \$43,000 to fund 17 of these requests (see Appendix A).

Staff will report back by early October, 2017 to provide Council with an opportunity to proclaim October 8th to 14th as Homelessness Action Week, and to provide Council with more detailed information on the events and projects taking place for HAW 2017.

2017 HAW Grants

The goals of Vancouver 2017 HAW Grants include:

1. Creating innovative solutions to local homelessness and supporting new approaches and opportunities that prevent or eliminate homelessness.
2. Building the capacity of neighbourhoods to raise awareness about 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 the *Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021 Strategic Direction 3: Provide strong leadership and support to 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 achieve desired outcomes. HAW grants enable the City to develop new relationships with non-profit community groups and nurture existing ones.

A formal call for proposals to host events or organize projects supporting the four HAW goals during the week of HAW 2017 and throughout the year resulted in 29 applications totalling \$85,748 in requests. Total available funds are \$43,000 from which an applicant may receive a maximum of \$3,000. Grant application forms were available online. Of the 29 applications, this report recommends approval of 17 grants that were reviewed and assessed according to 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 are not part of ongoing operations or programming
- Priority was given to projects that leveraged funding from other sources

Each applicant was eligible to receive one grant. Applicants who had received HAW grants in the past were eligible to apply. 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. Personal stories of overcoming mental health and addiction and/or struggles with homelessness humanize this very tragic issue. Some of the grants being recommended in this report support giving voice to individuals who are homeless through dialogue and the visual arts. Other grants provide the opportunity for people who are homeless or at risk to connect with a range of service providers in their communities.

Interest in the HAW grants program this year was the strongest since 2009. While all applicants 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 unsuccessful applicants to build capacity for future years.

The Table in Appendix A summarizes the applications received and the recommended level of each.

Other HAW Events

Homeless Connect Events

Since 2009, the City has hosted Homeless Connect Events. These events, along with similar events organized by grant recipients (see Appendix A), connect people who are homeless and those at risk to a range of services, such as health and dental services, access to income assistance and the BC Housing registry, haircuts, foot care, food, etc. Over the years, COV-sponsored Connect events have taken place at the Carnegie Library (Alley Health Fair), the Gathering Place Community Centre (Gathering Place Connect) and the Evelyne Saller Community Centre (Evelyne Saller Community Connect). This year, the Alley Health Fair is being coordinated by the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House non-profit society, and as such is being recommended for a HAW grant (see Appendix A). The Evelyne Saller Community Centre and the Gathering Place Community Centre will be hosting their 2017 Connect events in the fall of 2017.

2017 City-Sponsored Event

Staff members are in preliminary discussion with the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee about partnering on an event that focusses on raising awareness about Aboriginal homelessness and related issues during HAW in October. People of Aboriginal origin continue to be over-represented in homelessness in Vancouver and across the region. The proposed event will highlight the significance and complexity of the issue, its colonial history and solutions. In 2014, the City was designated a City of

reconciliation. In 2017, the City, in partnership with our three Host Nations, the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, is hosting Canada 150+. As such, HAW 2017 presents a unique opportunity to highlight issues of Aboriginal homelessness and stories of strength, healing and success.

Communications Plan

Staff are working with Corporate Communications to draft a comprehensive Communications Plan for HAW 2017. A calendar of events and activities will be created and posted on the City's website and the regional HAW website: www.stophomelessness.ca.

Strategic Analysis

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

This report recommends Council approve \$43,000 in grants to 17 non-profit organizations. The source of funds is the 2017 Community Services Operating Budget - Street Homelessness.

Social Implications

Homelessness involves severe human suffering and represents a loss of individual potential. It also poses significant costs to our health, social services and criminal justice systems. Homelessness Action Week provides the opportunity to engage residents in raising awareness about homelessness issues and in providing direct support to those who are homeless. Targeting our limited resources to proactive social objectives promotes healthy and inclusive neighbourhoods and positively impacts the quality of life for all Vancouver citizens.

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council approval of \$43,000 in grants to support a variety of grassroots, positive and engaging events and initiatives taking place for Vancouver's 2017 Homelessness Action Week (October 8th to 14th, 2017).

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RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
Aboriginal Mother Centre Society	AMCS 2017 Community Open House: Community lunch during HAW for homeless, at risk and housed community members, tour of AMCS, access to service providers, Aboriginal drumming and elders. Packed lunches given to those in need.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,500	
Circle of Eagles Lodge Society	Anderson Lodge Homeless Action Day - Bannock and Stew on the Run: During HAW in October, Anderson Lodge residents and staff will prepare stew and bannock for 600 people, to be served along with care kits to homeless and at risk in the DTES and other parts of Vancouver. Through this project, Lodge residents will have an opportunity to 'give back' to the community.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,800	
Collingwood Neighbourhood House	Housing Stories: Short Film Project: To expose and dispel myths around homelessness, a film will be produced featuring interviews with five local people with lived experience of homelessness and other challenges. Following a film screening and panel discussion during HAW, the film will travel to community groups and schools.	n/a	\$2,600	\$2,300	
Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House	Alley Health Fair 2017: A street "homeless connect" event on Sept 19 that brings together 40+ service providers in the DTES to promote health and wellness and to educate participants about available local services. Target population includes people who are homeless or under-housed and living in poverty with limited access to health care providers.	n/a	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Downtown Eastside SRO Collaborative Society	Tenant Convention 2017: This convention for tenants of DTES privately-owned SRO Hotels will focus on educating tenants to be organizers in their own buildings, to protect themselves from eviction and landlord intimidation, to understand and demystify COV Inspection & Enforcement and the RTB process, and nurture a sound tenant network, all with the goal of contributing to the preservation of low-income housing in Vancouver.	n/a	\$3,000	\$2,600	

RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
Downtown Eastside Women's Centre	Ready to Rent Continuation: RentSmart preparedness training for homeless women: Two to three RentSmart workshops for groups of up to 12 women who are homeless or at risk. Training will include landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities, landlord/tenant relationships and communication, budgeting, maintenance and crisis management. The goal is empowered tenants who benefit from the stable housing and all its related impacts.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,500	
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Cardboard Vancity: Directions Youth Centre will host Cardboard Vancity, an experiential poverty simulator to let participants experience 'the system' from the other side, to build relationships between homeless youth, service providers and businesses, and to increase understanding of the realities and barriers homeless youth face. A short video will be produced and posted online.	n/a	\$2,570	\$2,200	
Gallery Gachet Society	Oppenheimer Park Community Art Show, 10th Anniversary: A month-long art exhibition at Gallery Gachet featuring work by artists who use the Park frequently, many of whom are homeless or at risk. During the art-making process, artists will be provided with direct social and peer support through Oppenheimer Park's partners and other resources.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Gordon Neighbourhood House	MPV Art Show and Drop-In Program: Youth struggling with barriers to housing and employment will create art during weekly art drop-in sessions, culminating in a community Art Show and a celebratory meal. Goals include increasing capacity to engage the community on issues of homelessness and to engage more homeless youth in the regular art drop-in program.	n/a	\$3,000	\$2,300	

RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
Inland Refugee Society	Refugee Claimant Landlord Training: Three workshops will be held across Vancouver to train community members/landlords on how to offer safe, informed support and low-cost rental accommodation to refugee claimants who live in the shelter system or are vulnerably housed.	n/a	\$2,910	\$2,500	
Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House	Welcoming Our Neighbours Part IV - Warm Feet, Full Stomachs Continued: Building on its HAW initiatives since 2014, MPHNS Youth Action Committee will host a 30-day sock drive for the homeless, make and distribute 250+ sandwiches to Raincity Triage shelter, and host "Eat + Talk = Housing for All" community dinner and facilitated intergenerational and intercultural dialogue on housing and homelessness.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,200	
Potluck Café Society	Concrete Canapes - Dignifying DTES Food Distribution: The DTES Kitchen Tables' Outreach Team will distribute Potluck's DTES Food Map to 1000+ people in DTES food lines while offering 1000 bowls of nutritious oatmeal. The outdoor street presence will allow the Team to reach community members who do not access resources and those who are most isolated while simultaneously gathering valuable feedback on the inner city food system.	n/a	\$2,992	\$2,200	
Renfrew Collingwood Seniors Society	Setting Roots in Your Community: Based on the success of previous years, this intergenerational project involves Grade 4 students, 'at risk' high-school students, and seniors welcoming new tenants to the Kingsway Continental Hotel. 40-50 lunch bags will be painted and filled with toiletries, nutritious food and a welcome card to be delivered with other essentials to new tenants 4 times over the year. A hearty meal will be delivered twice, as well as cookies and gifts at Christmas, and seeds and soil in the spring. The aims are to help new residents feel welcomed and cared for, and to help youth and seniors better understand homelessness issues.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	

RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House	New Views in Fraserview (Life Skills Series to Prevent Homelessness): The HAW Youth Council will prepare an advocacy campaign to raise awareness of homelessness and food security, collect and donate food to Covenant House and the South Vancouver foodbank, and host workshops on homelessness, housing, meal preparation and budgeting at BC Housing sites in South East Vancouver.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,200	
Watari Youth, Family & Community Services Society	Under One Umbrella Homeless Connect: A day-long service fair for people who are homeless or at risk with up to 40 community service providers. Annual attendance over 9 years has been approximately 500.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	
West End Seniors' Network	Pairing Older Adult Roommates Community Consultation: Based on grassroots interest, the WESN will hold a consultation process to gather input on the viability of a roommate program and database to match low-income older adults living alone in the West End with other older adults in need of sharing space and housing expenses. The project will raise awareness of the growing risk of homelessness among older adults and aims to prevent low-income older adults from entering homelessness or being displaced from their community.	n/a	\$3,000	\$2,300	
Youth Unlimited	Street Life Thanksgiving: Street Life's RV on Commercial Drive will open for an extra drop-in evening during HAW to provide street-entrenched youth with access to a range of community resources and programs and a special Thanksgiving meal. The event aims to take care of the immediate needs of youth, offer youth the opportunity to deepen connections with their community, and raise awareness among the community of youth homelessness.	n/a	\$3,000	\$2,400	

NOT RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
Beauty Nights Society	Homeless Action Week World Café Community Dialogue & Project Showcase: Three experienced facilitators will use the World Café format to engage citizens on solutions to homelessness that they themselves can activate. A successful Beauty Nights project will be showcased as a catalyst for change.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
First United Church Community Society	Community Art Fair 2017: First United Church proposes to co-curate and co-host a community-developed Art Fair during HAW to address the needs of talented neighbourhood artists and provide them with an opportunity and venue to exhibit their work and network with the community.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
Forest and the Femme Society	These Wild Spaces - Healing Through Nature Project: This project intends to provide an opportunity for highly marginalized women in the DTES to find healing in nature and through plant-medicine-based activities. The project will culminate with a community presentation during HAW when insights from the program will be shared.	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$0	
Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House	Frog Hollow Banquet of Warmth: Frog Hollow Youth Advisory Committee will call upon the community to encourage acts of kindness (donate clothes, provide messages of support, etc.) and build awareness about homelessness in Hastings-Sunrise through a community dinner/Hunger Banquet.	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	
Greater Vancouver Law Students Legal Advice Program	Law Students' Legal Advice Program (LSLAP): LSLAP operates free legal clinics in different areas of the lower mainland, including Vancouver. The project proposes to use money from this grant to help fund a summer student to operate the clinic at the Carnegie Community Centre.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	

NOT RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
Hives for Humanity Society	Growing Hope: The proposed project would expand the existing Therapeutic Beekeeping and Gardening Mentorship programming to allow more opportunities for community members to attend workshops and community meals centered on growing, harvesting and preparing food.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
Jewish Family Services Agency	Hope for Housing: The intentions of this project are to increase community awareness around the challenges that vulnerable populations face in securing/maintaining their housing, engage community members in dialogue on housing challenges and solutions, and encourage informed community members to advocate for affordable housing for those in need.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society	Downtown Eastside Employment Fair: To support people who are challenged by poverty and homelessness to find employment and increase their income, this two-day "employment fair" proposes to give people living on disability benefit the opportunity to access 30+ businesses that do social hiring.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
PACE Society	Lunch Lecture - Housing in the Midst of an Overdose Crisis: Partnering with the BC Centre on Substance Use and 3 academic guest lecturers, PACE proposes hosting this Open House style lunch lecture. The event also provides the public with an opportunity to learn what PACE does and the rare opportunity for sex workers who may not otherwise want to identify as such but want to see what programs and supports are available.	\$2,650	\$2,676	\$0	
Union Gospel Mission	Homelessness Action Week 2017 - Escape Room: To raise awareness and build empathy, UGM proposes to develop a gamified "Escape Room" based on the experience of a former homeless individual that offers the public a chance to experience and try to 'escape' from homelessness. A video and website will be developed as part of the campaign.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	

NOT RECOMMENDING:					
Agency	Event Description	2016 Grant	2017 Request	2017 Recom	Notes
WISH Drop-In Centre Society	ID for ME: WISH proposes to use money from this grant towards its ID for ME Project 2017-2018, giving women engaged in street-based sex work the opportunity to receive identification along with additional support services, including access to health services and housing through intake and case management.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
YWCA Metro Vancouver	YWCA Community Contribution and Kits of Support: This project proposes to distribute 200 hygiene and first aid kits to people experiencing homelessness, host an information ID table at Crabtree Corner to help people get connected to BC Housing and obtain ID, and provide food and other support as required to people who are homeless.	n/a	\$3,000	\$0	
Total Request			\$85,748		
Total Recommending				\$43,000	