



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: January 15, 2019
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Meeting Date: February 12, 2019

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services
SUBJECT: 2019 Street Cleaning Grants

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the 2019 Street Cleaning Grant Program totalling \$1,210,000 to the following recipients for programs that support improvements to street cleanliness, as detailed in the report, with funding from the 2019 Street Cleaning Operating Budget:

- Save Our Living Environment – United We Can (\$360,000)
- Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program (\$330,000),
- Mission Possible Enterprises Society – MP Maintenance (\$330,000),
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action (\$66,000),
- The Kettle Friendship Society – SEED Employment Program (\$44,000),
- Tides Canada Initiatives Society - The Binners' Project (\$55,000), and
- Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative – The Rat Project (\$25,000).

Approval of this grant recommendation requires at least 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members under Section 206 (1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report recommends grants to seven non-profit agencies totalling \$1,210,000 for supplementary street cleaning services, waste diversion initiatives and related research for 2019. The provision of these grants:

- Results in job support and life skills training opportunities for youth and adults with employment barriers;
- Assists the recipients with leveraging additional funding;

- Results in cleaner streets and lanes for communities where there is the greatest need;
- Results in partnerships with BIA's to support business area cleaning programs;
- Supports socially inclusive waste diversion initiatives; and
- Supports work aimed at more effectively addressing challenges related to rat populations in the City through the Vancouver Rat Project.

The services provided by the non-profit agencies are outside the scope and in addition to work performed by City staff. The recommended grant program for 2019 represents the same amounts granted to each organization in 2018. Staff are intending to come back to Council in the coming months with an update on ongoing efforts aimed at improving public realm cleanliness, and with recommendations for an expanded grant program as approved in the 2019 budget.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On November 3, 2015 Council adopted the Greenest City Action Plan 2015-2020 Strategy as the second phase of the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan, including actions to reduce street litter and abandoned garbage in public spaces.

In July 2011, the Greenest City Action Plan passed and included a goal of supporting a green economy along with a target to double the number of green jobs over 2010 levels.

In July 2014, the Healthy City Strategy passed and included a goal of Making Ends Meet along with a target to reduce poverty.

In March 2014, the Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan passed which identified the need to support opportunities for low barrier employment and other community economic development initiatives.

In May 2016, Council received for information, a staff presentation outlining the City's multi-pronged approach to improve public realm cleanliness, which included information on an expanded grant program as a key component of Partnerships & Collaboration.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval of the Street Cleaning Grant Program for 2019. This is a long-standing program with significant social and environmental benefits, complimenting efforts of the Greenest City Action Plan, Healthy City Strategy and related initiatives, including the DTES Local Area Plan. The recommendations outlined in this report will provide continuity of existing micro-cleaning programs, support BIA's citywide in dealing with litter challenges, support waste diversion initiatives involving the binning community, and assist in developing strategies aimed at addressing challenges related to rat populations in the City.

REPORT

Background/Context

To supplement the City's street cleaning services, for the past 20 years Council has approved annual grants to non-profit agencies that have the capacity to provide micro-cleaning services. Micro-cleaning involves daily collection of litter and needles on foot using brooms, shovels and wheeled garbage carts, and is work that is outside the scope of services provided by the City's forces. City micro-cleaning grants also complement other street cleaning services, such as programs coordinated by BIA's. In addition, the grant program supports initiatives involving the local binning community and assists in developing strategies to address challenges with rat populations.

Grants for work performed in 2018 were awarded as follows:

Organization	Recipient Since	2018 Total Award
Save Our Living Environment - United We Can	1999	\$360,000
Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program	2008	\$330,000
Mission Possible Enterprises Society – MP Maintenance	2016	\$330,000
Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action	2007	\$66,000
Kettle Friendship Society – SEED Employment Program	2009	\$44,000
Tides Canada Initiatives Society – The Binners' Project	2016	\$55,000
Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative – The Vancouver Rat Project	2018	\$25,000
Grant Programs – Total		\$1,210,000

2018 grant funding resulted in the following:

- Micro-cleaning in an area covering approximately 400 City blocks and 22 BIA's;
- Collection of 9,800 bags of litter and 63,000 needles from streets and lanes under the traditional micro-cleaning program, and an additional 5,000 bags of waste, 9,200 needles and 81,000 single-use items from 22 BIA's under the BIA program; and
- Provision of 55,000 work hours to individuals with barriers to traditional employment.

In addition to achieving cleaner streets, these grants support employment and life skills training for local community residents. The grant program provides linkages with the following Council priorities and corporate strategies:

- Low threshold employment supports an inclusive city and helps marginalized individuals to become more self-reliant, contributing to the goals of making ends meet, reducing poverty and ending street homelessness; and

- Cleaner streets promotes a safe and welcoming public realm, shows a commitment to protecting the environment, helps convey “Greenest City”, and supports Healthy City objectives of creating environments to thrive in.

Rodents

Of approximately 35,000 animal-related inquiries the City receives annually fewer than 1,000 are rodent-related. In 2018, the City received 812 rodent-related inquiries, a decrease of 13 per cent from the 932 calls received in 2017. The majority of these calls relate to issues on private property including construction sites and the removal of dead animals. While we rely on 311 calls and VanConnect interactions to receive rat related complaints the focus is on individual rats rather than the bigger issue of rat infestations.

Researchers indicate that rat populations, because they rely on humans to survive, are thriving as Cities around the world continue to grow and densify. The Vancouver Rat Project, an initiative of the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, began researching rat populations in the City in 2010. Working primarily in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) their work has focused on rat populations in the area and included assessments of population development, rat movement, disease risks and the effect of the urban environment on rat populations.

The 2018 grant funding allowed the Vancouver Rat Project to take initial steps to assist in developing a science-based rat monitoring and mitigation strategy for Vancouver. Activities included compiling relevant local data, undertaking a comprehensive literature review, and consultations with a wide variety of pest control professionals and key government contacts from cities with programs in place including Chicago, New York, and New Orleans.

Strategic Analysis

For 2019 staff recommend the following grants:

Organization	Program	Recommended 2019 Grant
United We Can	-Micro-cleaning (DTES)	\$360,000
Coast Foundation	-Micro-cleaning (DTES) -Mobile BIA pilot	\$115,000 \$215,000
Mission Possible	-Micro-cleaning (Kingsway/Broadway) -Mobile BIA pilot	\$115,000 \$215,000
Street Youth Job Action	-Micro-cleaning (Downtown Peninsula)	\$66,000
Kettle	-Micro-cleaning (Commercial Drive)	\$44,000
The Binners' Project	-Various initiatives involving binner's	\$55,000
Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative	-Vancouver Rat Project support	\$25,000
Grant Program Total		\$1,210,000

Highlights of the various programs covered under the 2019 Street Cleaning Grant Program are provided below.

Micro-cleaning Program (\$700,000)

United We Can (\$360,000) – The 2019 grant will allow UWC to continue their current micro-cleaning program in the DTES, Chinatown and in the areas surrounding their depot site on Industrial Ave.

Coast Foundation (\$115,000) – Coast's micro-cleaning program is focused in the DTES, generally east of Gore just beyond Clark, into neighbouring communities where litter and drug paraphernalia are also a concern.

Mission Possible (\$115,000) – MP's micro-cleaning program covers an area stretching along Kingsway from Victoria to Broadway and extending west along Broadway to Granville. The program reaches into nearby residential areas, close to schools and parks, where City and VCH staff have previously received reports of needles and condoms.

Street Youth Job Action (\$66,000) – SYJA's micro-cleaning program is focused in lanes and some residential areas in the Downtown, typically within an area commonly referred to as the "horseshoe" (Robson-Davie-Denman) and nearby Granville St. lanes.

Kettle (\$44,000) – The grant to Kettle supplements their existing Commercial Drive BIA cleaning program by extending into areas just beyond the BIA boundaries, such as north of Venables and east/west of Broadway around the Commercial Drive transit station, where litter is an ongoing challenge.

BIA Micro-Cleaning Program (\$430,000)

The BIA Pilot was launched in May 2016 with the goal of enhancing existing BIA cleaning efforts. The program involves two non-profit organizations, Coast and Mission Possible, providing micro-cleaning services to each of the 22 BIA's. Feedback from both BIA's and the non-profits involved continues to be positive, highlighting the value of this work and supporting the shift from pilot to program in 2018.

For 2019, each BIA will receive three cleaning shifts per month (same as 2018) and will be able to direct the crews to a specific area within the BIA. An online booking system allows BIA's to choose their preferred dates and organization. The 2019 funding will provide each BIA access to approximately 600 hours of cleaning per year.

The Binners' Project (\$55,000)

The Binners' Project is dedicated to improving economic opportunities for binners and reducing the stigma they face as informal recyclable collectors. Binners positively contribute to our environment and align with the City's Zero Waste goals by diverting materials from landfill.

The 2018 grant program supported the Binners' Project with expansion and development of various initiatives involving the binning community, including outreach through regular workshops and meetings, waste sorting at special events, facilitating refundables collection from residents and businesses, and supporting the Coffee Cup Revolution.

Funding for 2019 will continue to support the Binners' Project initiatives, including the growth of successful events such as the Coffee Cup Revolution.

Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (\$25,000)

Funding will support the Vancouver Rat Project to further assist in developing a science-based rat monitoring and mitigation strategy. The strategy aims to put the City in a position to better understand rat infestations and support the development of future policies and programs.

The 2019 funding allocation of \$25,000 is the same amount as in 2018 and represents year two of a three year project, with the total project estimated at \$72,000. The final year award (\$22,000 in 2020) would be brought to Council as part of the annual Street Cleaning Grant Report, should staff's ongoing review determine that continued project support is warranted.

Appendix A provides background information on each of the seven organizations recommended for the grant awards outlined in this report.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

Financial

This report recommends a total street cleaning grant in 2019 of \$1,210,000 consisting of \$360,000 to United We Can, \$330,000 to Coast, \$330,000 to Mission Possible, \$66,000 to SYJA, \$44,000 to Kettle, \$55,000 to The Biners' Project, and \$25,000 to Vancouver Rat Project. The source of funding is the 2019 Street Cleaning Operating Budget which was approved as part of the 2019 budget process.

Human Resources/Labour Relations

There are no personnel implications. The incremental services under the grant program supplement work performed by City crews and the micro-cleaning services funded through the program do not constitute work that has historically been performed by City staff.

CONCLUSION

Street cleaning grants to the seven non-profit agencies listed in this report will continue to benefit marginalized residents by providing job and life skills training and benefit the City by improving the cleanliness of the public realm, and in developing socially inclusive, waste diversion initiatives, and strategies to monitor and mitigate rat populations.

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Background Information on Recommended Street Cleaning Grant Recipients:

Save Our Living Environment – United We Can (UWC)

Save Our Living Environment is a non-profit urban environmental group active in the DTES. The Society sponsors several projects, including the United We Can (UWC) 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.

UWC has utilized City grant funding over the past 20 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 UWC to leverage additional funding through Business Improvement Associations (BIA's) and through special events.

UWC has approximately 55 stable employees with a range of assorted barriers that clean lanes and sidewalks. As a result of this opportunity, some of the UWC staff no longer require income assistance. UWC's total pool of active work participants is sustained at 150 people, many of whom participate in the lane cleaning program. UWC's cleaning activities cover approximately 120 blocks and several parks in the DTES and surrounding areas.

Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program (Coast)

Coast Mental Health is an accredited non-profit society that was created in 1972 in response to a growing need in the community for services to assist people recovering from a serious mental illness. Coast operates in the Lower Mainland and provides approximately 4000 people with supportive housing coupled with a drop in resource centre, a clubhouse, homeless outreach, clinical supports, leisure services, vocational skills training and employment programs.

Coast has operated employment services for people with a mental illness for 30 years with funding support from Government of B.C, Coastal Health and City of Vancouver. The employment program provides an opportunity for people with a mental illness, along a continuum of recovery, to build skills and self-esteem through pre-vocational skills training, transitional employment, basic education and placement in competitive employment. The Clubhouse operates Coast Street Cleaning Team, a low barrier street cleaning service. Coast's employment service has long standing partnerships with 20 Business Improvement Associations and the City to provide micro-cleaning services.

The Coast's lower barrier clean team employs 60 clients with a mental illness and addictions. Crews work casual and part-time and gain valuable essential skills for the work place, increased self-esteem and some have successfully transitioned to competitive employment. All of the micro-cleaners are residents of the area and take great pride in work they do by contributing to the beautification of their neighborhood. They are the eyes on the street for reporting refuse dumping in laneways.

Coast provides micro-cleaning services in an area covering approximately 50 blocks in the DTES. Coast also operates a mobile street cleaning service to clean sidewalks and laneways in each BIA on a rotational basis.

Mission Possible Enterprises Society – MP Maintenance

Mission Possible (MP) is a community economic development organization that transforms lives by helping those challenged by homelessness and poverty achieve a renewed sense of dignity and purpose through meaningful work. MP uses the motivation and desire for meaningful work as a catalyst for total life transformation. MP's 4 stage Employment Readiness Program assists those with employment barriers reach their full potential.

Since 2007 Mission Possible has been looking beyond simple provision of resources toward comprehensive community economic development strategy that creates a pathway to sustainable livelihoods. This pathway includes soft-skill training, employment coaching, and paid jobs that lead to lasting change for downtown eastside residents. In the last year alone MP has provided over 12,000 training hours and transitional employment opportunities to over 60 local residents.

The City grant supports participants working in MP's largest social enterprises, MP Maintenance, a full service exterior property cleaning company. MP performs micro-cleaning along the Kingsway and Broadway corridor and participates in the BIA Micro-cleaning services.

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 homeless or at risk youths per year 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 peer counsellors within Directions Youth Services.

SYJA provides life skills and job training to youth which includes; establishing healthy boundaries, assertiveness in the work place, employee rights and responsibilities, Health and Safety, being work ready, Naloxone – OD response training, and recognising and responding to signs of heat stroke. Information sessions offered to youth increase the likelihood of successful linkages to program and resources and have involved; Gathering Place Learning Centre, Mission Possible, YMCA Skills Link, YMCA Beat program, YMCA Strive Program, Quest Food exchange, Open Door Group, Embers Employment Services, Kaleidoscope Program and Zero Ceiling.

SYJA has an established community enhancement program (micro-cleaning initiatives, needle sweeps, and graffiti removal) for its youth through partnerships with BIA's, Waste Management of Canada, and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA). SYJA provides micro-cleaning in an area covering approximately 150 blocks of streets and sidewalks in the downtown peninsula.

The Kettle Friendship Society – SEED Employment Program

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

The SEED (Skills, Esteem & Employment Development) employment program offers individuals an opportunity to build vocational skills, gain financial independence as well as develop the confidence and stamina necessary to make the transition from unemployment to satisfying work opportunities. SEED creates a supportive work environment where positions are permanent and schedules are tailored to help individuals reach their individual employment goals while offering the flexibility needed to maintain employment while facing complex health barriers. SEED employees gain a stronger sense of inclusion and community by working alongside Kettle staff at each work site in a variety of positions including cooking in housing buildings, janitorial or maintenance work, providing goods and services to Kettle members in the Drop-In Centre, facilitating Arts and Music groups, as well as, street cleaning in the community. The support offered by Kettle's SEED Support Worker through daily job coaching and monthly team meetings helps individuals with barriers flourish in their positions.

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, during special events such as Italian Days, and has employed 83 people since 2003. They also have regularly been hired by organizers of the annual Parade of Lost Souls to ensure public spaces are maintained following the event. 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 as well as breaking down stigmatizing beliefs about mental illness.

Kettle's service area is approximately 43 blocks around Commercial Drive from Adanac to 13th Ave. as well as Broadway Ave (around the Sky train station) to Clark Drive, and a 'horseshoe' area: Veneables (Clark to Commercial); Commercial (Veneables to Hastings); Hastings (Commercial to Clark). The grant supplements Kettle's regular cleaning program and allows for an extended area covering 15 blocks outside the BIA boundaries.

Tides Canada Initiatives Society – The Bidders' Project

The Bidders' Project builds urban resilience, social inclusivity, and community connections for bidders, also known as informal waste-pickers, through community-driven initiatives. At its core, the Bidders' Project aims to foster face-to-face interactions between bidders, residents, and the community at large. Staff, students, volunteers, and bidders, all work closely on implementing pilot programs at the local level, while the overall mission of the project is to build a stronger social presence and voice for one of the most marginalized communities.

Started in 2014 by Ken Lyotier, a bidder himself, who founded the bidder-run bottle depot, United We Can, the Bidders' Project brings together bidders to achieve: 1) greater recognition of bidders function in society; and, 2) new informal economic opportunities across the city. The Bidders' Project became a project on Tides Canada Initiatives' shared platform in the spring of 2015. Joining Tides Canada allows the Bidders' Project a base for future growth as well as high quality administrative support for governance, human resources, financial and grant

management. Tides Canada is a registered Canadian charity dedicated to providing uncommon solutions for the common good by leading and supporting actions that foster a healthy environment and just Canadian society.

The past two years have seen rapid growth for the Bidders' Project. Volunteers, media coverage, and bidder engagement have taken off and the appetite for these programs has exceeded expectations, creating ongoing challenges with finding resources to respond to demand, and delivering results in a timely manner. The City grant will support the Bidders' Project with implementing pilot programs and initiatives aimed at developing increased economic inclusion for bidders and fostering their financial independence. All programs are developed by bidders, working together with staff, students and volunteers involved in the Bidders' Project.

Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative - The Vancouver Rat Project

The Vancouver Rat Project, an initiative of the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC), has been studying urban rats and disease spread in their populations in Vancouver for a number of years and the City has supported aspects of their field work. According to the project team, urban rats are the source of numerous zoonotic pathogens (harmful microbes that can be transmitted from animals to people) responsible for significant human illness in cities globally. Some of these microbes can also be transmitted among rats and from rats to people by fleas (e.g., the etiologic agent of the plague). Despite anecdotal evidence that rats are thriving in Canadian cities, there is little data in our country on rats, and their pathogens. The project for the City of Vancouver aims to bridge the rat monitoring and management gap.

The project team is comprised of leading experts and includes Michael Lee – PhD candidate at UBC, Dr. Chelsea Himsworth - veterinary pathologist and founder of VRP, Dr. Craig Stephen – Executive Director of CWHC, Dr. Bobby Corrigan – President of RMC Pest Management Consulting, and Kevin Brown – Information Services Manager of CWHC.

Grant funding will support the work undertaken by Michael Lee, including direct costs for project research and development activities. All other project activities will be provided through in-kind contributions by remaining team members and are estimated to be valued at \$240,000 over the course of the 3-year project (no cost to the City).

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