



REPORT

Report Date: March 2, 2020
Contact: Rena Kendall-Craden
Contact No.: 604.673.8121
RTS No.: 13681
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: March 31, 2020

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Director of Civic Engagement and Communications
SUBJECT: West End Participatory Budgeting Pilot – Grant Approval

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council receive for information an update on the progress of the West End Participatory Budgeting Pilot.
- B. THAT Council approve allotting \$100,000 of incremental new revenue from the market based West End resident parking permit sales for funding and implementation of the three recommended projects outlined in this report, increasing the 2019-2022 Capital Plan and increasing the Multi-Year Capital Budget by the allotted amount, and with no change to the current overall 2020 Capital Expenditure Budget.
- C. THAT Council approve 2 grants totalling \$20,000 to The Board of Education of School District No. 39 (Vancouver) to implement a community improvement project (listed as the “Christine Fretwell and Kathryn Gibbons Memorial Gift to West End Students” in Appendix A) on behalf of the West End Participatory Budgeting Pilot.

Approval of recommendation C requires two-thirds affirmative votes of all Council members per Section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

REPORT SUMMARY

In 2017, City Council approved a Participatory Budgeting Pilot in the West End to explore a unique opportunity to reinvest incremental revenue from the West End Parking Strategy back into the community, through community engagement and localized community improvement projects. This report provides an update back to Council on the progress of the Participatory Budgeting pilot, including the results of the community vote.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On February 8, 2017, Council approved the West End Parking Strategy.

On December 12, 2017, Council authorized the Director of Communications and General Manager of Finance, Risk, and Supply Chain Management to undertake a Participatory Budgeting Pilot in the West End and requested that staff report back on the results.

On March 12, 2019, Council rescinded the resolution regarding the West End Parking Management Strategy and Participatory Budgeting Process, passed at the February 26, 2019, meeting, and approved moving forward with both the West End Parking Strategy and Participatory Budgeting Pilot.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

Participatory budgeting (PB) is a best practice engagement process for allocating spending democratically that has been successfully implemented around the world, mainly by cities in the Americas. In brief, residents identify projects that would benefit their community. The community then helps shape the ideas into feasible proposals and creates cost estimates. These vetted proposals are voted upon by residents and the City implements the selected projects to the maximum funding available. This process is repeated, usually on an annual basis.

Outcomes of participatory budgeting in other cities have included: greater civic participation, particularly in communities that are typically under-represented in civic affairs; improved relationships between residents and government through the lens of transparency and shared accountability; and localized budget decisions that better reflect local interests.

In 2013, the Engaged City Task Force recommended the development of a participatory budgeting pilot project. Following two years of research and study into best practices, a viable pilot opportunity emerged in 2017, via the West End Parking Strategy, which received Council approval for funding of up to \$175,000 to support implementation of project proposals (up to \$100,000) and to cover administrative costs.

In September 2018, the City of Vancouver convened members of the West End community to decide how \$100,000 of incremental parking revenue generated in their community should be spent as part of the City's first ever participatory budgeting process. Community members were invited to learn about PB, establish and participate in a stewardship committee ("the We Choo\$e Impact Team"), and to develop guidelines for the pilot. Throughout 2019, staff worked closely with the We Choo\$e Impact Team, including a group of 20 local residents and community leaders, to implement the participatory budgeting process.

Although the mechanics and processes of PB vary including geographic scale (city-wide, neighbourhood), funding and criteria, PB generally follows an agreed upon series of steps over

the course of six to eight months that includes: community outreach, project development, community vote, report back and project implementation.

The Participatory Budgeting Pilot has completed following actions to date:

- **Public Brainstorming and Ideation (January - February 2019)**
The Impact Team launched the idea collection phase of the process. Members of the community submitted their ideas on how the \$100,000 should be spent online at or at one of six public information sessions, which included pop-up events and community assemblies that included a presentation and an ideation session. More than 1,700 ideas were collected from the West End community for the Impact Team and its subcommittees to deliberate.
- **Proposal Development (April - October 2019)**
Taking all the ideas submitted, the Impact Team worked with project/idea proponents, consultants and City staff to develop, through a predetermined criterion, meaningful, actionable proposals and to cost them in preparation for voting. Individual proposed projects could request funding ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000, allowing multiple projects to be selected.
- **Community Voting (January 25 - February 4, 2020)**
The Impact Team led a community vote, with the support of City staff, and provided voting opportunities both online via Talk Vancouver and in-person at 15 various pop-up locations throughout the West End. The community vote was promoted through community partners, local media outlets and on-the-ground canvassing to encourage members of the community to have their say in selecting the local projects to be funded.

Strategic Analysis

Results of WE Choo\$e Participatory Budgeting Community Vote

More than 8,500 individuals who live, work, or volunteer in the West End voted, either online or in-person, between January 25 and February 4 on their preferred projects from a shortlist of 14. The voting process asked people to rank their top four projects, and the projects that receive the most weighted votes and fitting within the \$100,000 funding budget, were recommended for implementation. Three project recommendations came from this process:

- West End Calisthenics Park - \$50,000
- Sidewalk Improvements (beyond typical City repairs) - \$30,000
- Christine Fretwell and Kathryn Gibbons Memorial Gift to West End Students - \$20,000 in grants (requires City Council approval).

As per Section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*, projects that involve grants to community partners must also receive Council approval before disbursement and implementation. Other projects will be implemented through appropriate operating departments.

The full results, descriptions of projects and general demographic information of the community vote can be found in Appendix A.

Next Steps

The Participatory Budgeting Pilot is now preparing to enter the following phase:

- **Evaluation (March – April 2020)**
Staff will work with external and internal stakeholders to evaluate the Pilot and recommend future steps for participatory budgeting in Vancouver.
- **Project Implementation (ongoing 2020)**
The winning projects must begin implementation within a year and be completed within 18 months. City staff and community partners will implement the community improvement projects, and the community monitors implementation. City staff and the Impact Team will also promote and publicly communicate about each project as they are implemented.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

Financial

In 2017, Council authorized the undertaking of a Participatory Budgeting Pilot in the West End, agreeing to a funding formula that allotted up to \$175,000 of incremental net revenue from the market based West End resident parking permit sales for funding of a Participatory Budgeting pilot program. The award amount of \$100,000 was determined based on incremental revenue received from market-based West End resident parking permit sales, which are held in the Participatory Budgeting Reserve. To facilitate implementation of the awarded projects, this report recommends that Multi-Year Capital Budgets be set up for the allotted amounts, with a resulting \$100,000 increase to the 2019-2022 Capital Plan.

CONCLUSION

The West End Participatory Budgeting pilot has generated a unique opportunity for the City to explore a new model of community engagement centred on civic financial literacy, collaboration and empowerment. The projects recommended for implementation in this pilot reflect over a year's worth of idea collection, deliberation and collaboration from the community. A more in-depth evaluation and examination of potential expansion of participatory budgeting in the City of Vancouver will follow in the upcoming months.

* * * * *

West End Participatory Budgeting Pilot: Results of Community Vote

RANK	Project Name	Brief Description/Location/Amount	Votes/ Weighted Points ¹
1	SELECTED: West End Calisthenics Parks \$50,000	Creation of local calisthenics/fitness park to enable residents to pursue and maintain a simple but effective strength and skills workout through pull-up, parallel and wall bars Location(s): Barclay Heritage Square	4,761 votes 15,456 points
2	SELECTED: Sidewalk Improvements \$30,000	Replace the sidewalk at six locations to remove tripping hazards and enhance safety. ² Proposed Location(s): - Bute Street between Nelson and Comox Streets (west side) - Bute Street between Jepson-Young Lane and Pendrell Streets (west side) - Bute Street at Harwood Street (north side) - Burnaby Street between Beach and Bidwell Streets (south side) - Burnaby Street between Nicola and Broughton Streets (south side) - Burnaby Street between Broughton and Jervis Streets (south side)	1,876 votes / 5,424 points
3	HONORABLE MENTION: West End Food Hub ³ \$50,000	Funding for food, services, and programming for neighbours who are nutritionally vulnerable, experiencing homelessness, newcomers, and low-income seniors and families. Grant to Gordon Neighbourhood House. Location(s): Gordon Neighbourhood House	1,707 votes / 5,122 points
4	SELECTED: Christine Fretwell and Kathryn Gibbons Memorial Gift to West End Students \$20,000	A memorial donation of \$20,000 (\$10,000 for both Lord Roberts Elementary and King George Secondary) for sports and/or music equipment. Location(s): Lord Roberts Elementary and King George Secondary Grant to Vancouver School Board, on behalf of Lord Roberts and King George Parent Advisory Committees	1,590 votes / 5,035 points

¹ Votes: the number of times a project was selected as a person's top four picks.

Weighted Points: top four ranks are assigned weighted points (1st = 4pts, 2nd = 3pts, 3rd = 2pts, 4th = 1pt), based loosely on the Borda counting method. Final project points for each project = (number votes) x (weight of each rank).

² Note: these sidewalks would otherwise be a lower priority based on the City's criteria for sidewalk maintenance; emphasis will be on slope removal and safety enhancements.

³ While the West End Food Hub was the third most recommended project, the \$20,000 remaining in the \$100,000 funding pot was insufficient to implement the project. Therefore, the 4th place project was selected.

5	Healthy Minds, Healthy Hearts \$35,000	Funding to Gordon Neighborhood House (GNH) to expand their free mental health services by hiring part-time staff for 12 months. Grant to GNH. Location(s): Gordon Neighborhood House & Dr. Peter Centre	1,514 votes / 4,159 points
6	West End Childcare Emergency Grants \$10,000	15-20 one-time grants for sole parents/caregivers unable to make monthly childcare payments. To be assessed on income level, need, employment, and number of children. Grant to YMCA YMCA childcare location: Robert Lee YMCA	1,492 votes / 4,085 points
7	Seniors' Transportation Service \$15,000	A grant to West End Seniors' Network's (WESN) Better at Home service to support the costs of transporting West End seniors around the Vancouver area to medical and other related appointments. Grant to WESN Location(s): No permanent location, transportation based.	1,518 votes / 3,818 points
8	Happy Denman: Transforming the Street Before Your Eyes \$20,000	A community-led project where your ideas will guide temporary street re-designs to test changes that make Denman Street more safe, inclusive and people-friendly. Grant to Happy City Institute Location(s): Various location on Denman Street	1,163 votes / 3,015 points
9	West End Placemaking Mural \$25,000	Funding to commission a large community placemaking mural (or several smaller murals) in the West End. Location(s): Multiple possible sites within the public realm throughout the West End.	901 votes / 2,236 points
10	Pedestrian Crossing at Barclay and Nicola Streets \$15,000	Improvements to pedestrian crosswalk at Barclay and Nicola Streets, including a zebra crossing, signage and curb ramp upgrades. Location(s): Barclay at Nicola Streets	910 votes / 2,198 points
11	West End Care Kits \$12,000	Distributed by the Gordon Neighbourhood House (GNH), these welcome kits for individuals experiencing homelessness will encourage a sense of belonging, community and security. Grant to GNH Location(s): GNH	860 votes / 1,906 points

12	Eat.Play. Connect Summer Series 2020 \$50,000	Connecting our community through free outdoor food, fitness and art events during the summer of 2020. Location(s): West End (beaches, parks, community centres, seawall, pool)	620 votes / 1,464 points
13	Davie Village "Flower Power" \$40,000	A Hanging flower basket program along the 3 blocks of the Davie Village (Burrard to Jervis) in partnership with the West End Business Improvement Association (WEBIA). Grant to WEBIA Location(s): Davie Village – Burrard to Jervis Street	464 votes / 1,038 points
14	Chalk Art Block Party \$15,000	A chalk and art block party for all ages in the streets and sidewalks of the West End supported by Gordon Neighbourhood House. Grant to GNH. Location(s): Multiple Possible Sites. Blocks of Bute Street between Robson and Davie / Walls at Laneway Entrances / Area around Gordon Neighbourhood House	358 votes / 984 points

* * * * *

West End Participatory Budgeting Pilot Community Vote:

Overall participation: 8540 votes (online and in-person)

Connection to West End: (6,262 respondents)

Lives in the neighbourhood: 4,351 (69%)

Works in the neighbourhood: 758 (12%)

Volunteers in the neighbourhood: 792 (13%)

Other relationship⁴ to the neighbourhood: 361 (6%)

Age of Voters: (5,790 respondents)

12 - 18 years – 861 (15%)

19 - 39 years – 1,832 (32%)

40 - 64 years – 2,121 (37%)

65 years and over – 977 (17%)

Gender of Voters: (5398 respondents)

A woman – 2,523 (44%)

A man – 2,486 (43%)

Gender diverse – 692 (13%)

None of the above – 91 (2%)

Preferred Language of Voters (5757 Respondents)

English – 3,884 (67.5%)

Japanese – 429 (7.5%)

French – 403 (7.0%)

Korean – 344 (6.0%)

Farsi – 260 (4.5%)

Mandarin/Cantonese – 182 (3.2%)

Other – 89 (1.5%)

Punjabi – 90 (1.6%)

Spanish – 23 (0.4%)

Vietnamese – 17 (0.3%)

* * * * *

⁴ Such as: student, caregiver, frequent user/visitor of neighbourhood amenities