



IN CAMERA

## REPORT

Report Date: September 28, 2020  
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-21  
Meeting Date: October 6, 2020

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services (ACCS) and  
General Manager of Real Estate and Facilities Management

SUBJECT: Army and Navy Lease Contribution for Temporary Shelter

### IN CAMERA RATIONALE

This report is recommending for consideration by Council on the In Camera agenda as it relates to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*: (e) the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the Council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city; and (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public.

### RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council authorize the following payments to the British Columbia Housing Management Commission ("BC Housing") to contribute to BC Housing's lease and operation of the property located at 15-27 West Hastings (the "Premises"), for use as a temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness as further described in this report:
- Up to s.17(1), representing s.17(1) of the lease costs for the Premises for a three year period, of which one year is structured in the lease as an option to renew; and
  - Up to s.17(1) for tenant improvements at the Premises

The source of funds for the contribution to tenant improvements is the Arts, Culture, and Community Services (ACCS) Homelessness Services operating budget. The scope of

work undertaken for tenant improvements will be approved by the General Manager of ACCS, in consultation with REFM

Recommendation A constitutes a grant and therefore requires 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members in accordance with Section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

- B. THAT Council, for the purposes of the grant set out in Recommendation A deem BC Housing to be an organization “contributing to the culture, beautification, health or welfare of the city” in accordance with Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*
- C. THAT Council authorize the General Manager of ACCS to negotiate to the satisfaction of the General Manager of ACCS, General Manager of Finance, Risk & Supply Chain Management and Director of Legal Services and to execute any agreements necessary to give effect to the transactions contemplated in Recommendation A.
- D. THAT no legal rights or obligations be created or arise by Council’s adoption of Recommendation A until the agreements contemplated in Recommendation C have been executed by all parties.

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report recommends Council authorize contributing s.17(1) of lease costs payments to BC Housing in connection with BC Housing’s lease and operation of the Premises for the purpose of operating a temporary homeless shelter. BC housing will select a non-profit shelter operator to manage and operate 50-60 shelter beds at the Premises.

## **COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

The City of Vancouver partners with BC Housing each winter on rapid responses to homelessness to ensure residents have a space to come indoors during the cold winter months. Since 2009, the City has partnered with BC Housing to open temporary shelter beds, in addition to the more than 900 permanent year-round shelter beds that are available.

### ***Housing Vancouver Strategy 2018-2027 and Housing Vancouver 3 Year Action Plan 2018-2020:***

The Housing Vancouver Strategy (2018-2027), as well as the Housing Vancouver Three Year Action Plan (2018-2021), outline goals to work with partners to create temporary shelters to provide immediate support to individuals experiencing homelessness while transitional and permanent social housing is made available to foster pathways out of homelessness.

Homelessness is one of the most significant issues facing Vancouver today. The City, together with its partners, has made significant progress in taking action to address homelessness, including increasing the supply of social and supportive housing, interim Housing First housing (temporary modular housing), and ensuring access to emergency

low-barrier services such as temporary shelters, warming centres, and homelessness services outreach to connect people to income, housing, and supports. Council policy is to maintain services for individuals experiencing homelessness and at-risk individuals, while working on a Poverty Reduction Strategy, with the awareness that a major underlying cause of homelessness is poverty.

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

The City Manager concurs with the recommendations.

### **REPORT**

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

This privately-owned building at 15-27 West Hastings (the “Premises”) is a seven storey building. The first three floors will be leased to BC Housing for a total of 32,320 sq. ft. This space is being contemplated for use as a temporary 50-60-bed shelter for people experiencing homelessness. BC Housing will lease the Premises from the Landlord for the use of a temporary shelter for two (2) years, with the option to renew for up to one (1) additional year.

#### ***Strategic Analysis***

##### *Homelessness in Vancouver*

The City of Vancouver’s 2020 point-in-time homeless count found 2,095 people homeless in Vancouver on March 3 & 4, 2020 with 1,548 people sheltered and 547 people sleeping on the streets.

##### *Shelter Services for people experiencing homelessness*

In Vancouver, there are over 980 permanent, year round shelter beds. Since 2009, the City of Vancouver, in partnership with and funded by BC Housing, has opened additional temporary shelter beds over the winter months to accommodate those sleeping outside during the coldest, wettest months of the year. Over the 2019-2020 season, over 300 temporary shelter beds were opened. The temporary shelter beds operate at full capacity throughout their opening months. Despite the additional temporary winter shelter beds, 547 people were identified as street homeless in the 2020 Homeless Count (held while the temporary shelters were open), indicating an overall need in Vancouver for more shelter space and housing that is affordable for those experiencing homelessness. In early March 2020, BC Housing announced they would be extending 259 of these temporary shelter beds until March, 31, 2021.

##### *COVID-19 Pandemic*

The COVID-19 Pandemic has disproportionately impacted marginalized population, particularly people experiencing homelessness. The pandemic has put an additional

strain on the shelter system in Vancouver, with the need for physical distancing in shelter, which has meant the already at-capacity system has seen an overall decrease in the amount of available shelter beds since March 2020. This exacerbates the issue of availability of shelter beds leading into the 2020-2021 Winter season.

### ***Implications/Related Issues***

#### ***Financial***

This report recommends a financial contribution in the amount of s.17(1) to BC Housing towards: (i) leasing the Premises for up to three years, of which one (1) year is structured in the lease as an option to renew; and (ii) tenant improvements at the Premises.

The s.17(1) would contribute to s.17(1) the annual lease cost implication (s.17(1) per annum, for a total of up to s.17(1) for the three (3) year term of the lease).

The contribution to the tenant improvements at the Premises would be the maximum of s.17(1) and the GM of ACCS, in consultation with the GM of REFM must approve the scope of the tenant improvements.

Timing of payments for both lease and tenant improvements to BC Housing will be outlined in the Contribution Agreement with BC Housing.

The source of both of the above payments will be the annual ACCS Homelessness Services operating budget.

If BC Housing does not move forward with the lease, the proposed plan would need to be re-evaluated and any recommendations to move forward without BCH support would need to be brought back to council for approval.

### ***CONCLUSION***

Staff recommends that Council authorize payments to BC Housing to contribute to lease costs to open a 50-60 bed temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness; as well as funding to carry out necessary tenant improvements and directing staff to enter into negotiation and execution of agreements to give effects to those payments.

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