



## REPORT

Report Date: January 18, 2021  
Contact: Albert Shames  
Contact No.: 604.873.7300  
RTS No.: 14156  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: February 9, 2021  
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TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services  
SUBJECT: 2021 Street Cleaning Grants

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council approve the 2021 Street Cleaning Grant Program totalling \$2,105,000 to the following recipients for programs that support improvements to street cleanliness, as detailed in the report, with funding from the approved 2021 Street Cleaning and 2021 Plaza Stewardship operating budgets:

- Save Our Living Environment – United We Can (\$469,100);
- Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program (\$663,000);
- Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance (\$796,000);
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action (\$73,100);
- The Kettle Friendship Society – SEED Employment Program (\$48,800); and
- Makeway Charitable Society - The Binnars' Project (\$55,000).

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 six non-profit agencies totalling \$2,105,000 for supplementary street cleaning and waste diversion initiatives for 2021. 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 Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) to support business area cleaning programs; and
- Supports socially inclusive waste diversion initiatives.

Council approved additional funding for the street cleaning grant program as part of the 2021 budget process to support improved street cleanliness. The additional approved funding supports the following program additions for 2021:

- An additional 18 micro-cleaning shifts per week in Downtown Eastside (DTES), Chinatown, Gastown, Hastings Crossings, Granville, Crosstown, and Strathcona;
- Micro-cleaning in 8 existing and an anticipated 3 new pop-up plazas; and
- A new feces removal pilot in the downtown, Chinatown, and DTES areas, 5 days per week.

The services provided by the non-profit agencies are outside the scope and complementary to work performed by City staff.

### ***COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS***

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.

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.

To supplement the City's street cleaning services, for the past 21 years Council has approved annual grants to non-profit agencies that have the capacity to provide micro-cleaning services.

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

The General Manager of Engineering Services recommends approval of the Street Cleaning Grant Program for 2021. This is a long-standing program with significant social and environmental benefits, complementing 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 provide job support and life skills training opportunities for youth and adults with employment barriers.

## REPORT

### Background/Context

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. In addition, the grant program supports initiatives involving the local binning community and over the last few years, has assisted in developing strategies to address challenges with rat populations.

Grants for work performed in 2020 were awarded as follows:

Organization	Recipient Since	2020 Total Award
Save Our Living Environment - United We Can	1999	<b>\$398,600</b>
Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program	2008	<b>\$566,000</b>
Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance	2016	<b>\$681,000</b>
Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action	2007	<b>\$73,100</b>
Kettle Friendship Society – SEED Employment Program	2009	<b>\$48,800</b>
Tides Canada Initiatives Society – The Bidders' Project	2016	<b>\$55,000</b>
Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative – Vancouver Rat Project	2018	<b>\$17,500</b>
<b>Grant Programs – Total</b>		<b>\$1,840,000</b>

2020 grant funding resulted in the following:

- micro-cleaning in an area covering almost 7 km<sup>2</sup> and within 22 BIA's;
- provision of approximately 50,000 low-threshold employment hours;
- collection of 21,350 bags of litter and 80,600 needles; and
- micro-cleaning at 13 temporary and permanent plazas

The majority of organizations temporarily suspended operations in March/April 2020 to review and update their safety procedures in light of the pandemic. Organizations continued to support their employees/clients with honorariums, meals, mental health supports and some micro-cleaning continued at limited capacity in areas of DTES, Chinatown, Gastown, Hastings Crossing and Strathcona. The organizations started to ramp up services again through May and June. By July, organizations were fully operational and working closely with City staff to ensure micro-cleaning was strategically focused around public gathering spaces and areas of higher emerging needs through the pandemic.

The pandemic significantly impacted the Bidders' Project's ability to run their programs through 2020, including waste sorting at events and their annual Coffee Cup Revolution. Outreach work continued with meetings being held outside to support ongoing capacity building and networking amongst bidders, and to provide available shifts or honorariums where needed. Some 2020 funding for the annual Coffee Cup Revolution has been set aside to proceed with the event in 2021, once Provincial Health Orders are lifted.

Over the last 3 years, funding has been provided to support the Vancouver Rat Project, which involved the development of an evidence-based strategy for a City-wide approach to track,

address, and prevent rat infestation, as well as an implementation plan. The work on this plan was substantially completed in 2020. The Project Team is currently working on a final report and staff will present the findings in a memo to Council in the coming months. The funding allocated to the Rat project in 2020 (\$17,500) will be reallocated to support more micro-cleaning.

In addition to achieving cleaner streets and public spaces, 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.

### **Strategic Analysis**

For 2021 staff recommend the following grants:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Recommended 2021 Grant</b>
United We Can	Micro-cleaning	<b>\$469,100</b>
Coast Mental Health Foundation	Micro-cleaning	<b>\$344,395</b>
	BIA Micro-cleaning Program	<b>\$318,605</b>
Mission Possible	Micro-cleaning	<b>\$247,395</b>
	BIA Micro-cleaning Program	<b>\$318,605</b>
	Pilots	<b>\$230,000</b>
Street Youth Job Action	Micro-cleaning	<b>\$73,100</b>
Kettle	Micro-cleaning	<b>\$48,800</b>
The Bidders' Project	Various initiatives involving bidders	<b>\$55,000</b>
<b>Grant Program Total</b>		<b>\$2,105,000</b>

Highlights of the various programs covered under the recommended 2021 Street Cleaning Grant Program are summarized in the following table and are described below.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>2020 Cleaning Areas</b>	<b>Additional Cleaning Added in 2021</b>
United We Can	DTEs, Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona	Gastown (3 shifts/week) Chinatown – East of Main (3 shifts/week) Chinatown – West of Main (2 shifts/week) Strathcona (3 shifts/week) DTEs – Hastings lanes (3 shifts/week)
Coast Mental Health Foundation	Kingsway, Broadway, Northeast False Creek, Olympic Village, Downtown Granville, arterials	Crosstown (1 shift/week) Strathcona Park (2 shifts/week) Downtown Granville (1 shift/week)
Mission Possible	DTEs, Broadway, Kingsway, 49 <sup>th</sup> Ave, Fraser and Knight St, 13 Plazas	Feces collection pilot (5 shifts/week) Additional 8 plazas

*Micro-cleaning Program (\$1,182,790)*

United We Can (UWC) (\$469,100) – UWC will continue focusing in the DTES, Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona and areas surrounding their depot site. However, an increase of \$70,500 to their 2020 grant amount is recommended, which would allow UWC to expand their current micro-cleaning program in the DTES by an additional 2 shifts per day, 7 days per week.

Coast Mental Health Foundation (Coast) (\$344,395) – Coast provides micro-cleaning service to over 305 blocks in higher-need areas throughout the City, including sections of Kingsway, Broadway, Northeast False Creek, Olympic Village, and several arterials. Their micro-cleaning program is mobile and flexible, and the frequency and number of cleaning in the various areas of the City can be adjusted to respond to emerging priorities. In July 2020, Downtown Granville Street was added due to an increase in urban issues between Drake and Cordova.

It is recommended that an additional \$97,000 be allocated in 2021 to provide an additional cleaning shift per week on the downtown Granville corridor and an additional shift in the Crosstown area, as well as two shifts per week in the neighbourhood surrounding Strathcona Park.

Mission Possible (\$247,395) – Mission Possible will continue to focus in 5 zones within the DTES, including areas overlapping with Chinatown, Strathcona and Hastings Crossing BIA. Mission Possible's micro-cleaning program is also mobile and flexible, and they provide micro-cleaning in several other areas outside of the downtown core, including sections of Broadway, Kingsway, 49<sup>th</sup> Ave, Fraser and Knight St.

Street Youth Job Action (\$73,100) – Focused in lanes and some residential areas in the Downtown and nearby Granville lanes. Additional effort will be spent on Granville Street where emerging urban issues have resulted in increased litter along blocks between Drake and Hastings.

Kettle (\$48,800) – Focused in the Commercial Drive area, extending into areas just beyond the BIA boundaries, such as north of Venables and east/west of Broadway around the Commercial Drive transit station.

*BIA Micro-Cleaning Program (\$637,210)*

Launched in May 2016 with the goal of enhancing existing BIA cleaning efforts, this program involves two non-profit organizations, Coast and Mission Possible, shuttling their crews to each of the 22 BIA's to provide micro-cleaning services on a pre-booked schedule for the year. Feedback from both BIA's and the non-profits involved continue to be positive, highlighting the value of this important work.

The 2021 recommended grant amounts will continue to provide four cleaning appointments per BIA per month, resulting in almost 800 hours of cleaning per BIA annually. A grant allocation of \$318,605 to Coast and \$318,605 to Mission Possible for the mobile BIA program is proposed.

*Pilots (\$230,000)*

- Public Plazas Micro-Cleaning Pilot (\$130,000)

The Public Plazas Micro-Cleaning Pilot was launched in August 2019 to maintain new public spaces in the City so that they remain as clean, safe and inviting gathering places. We continue to learn about the cleanliness needs of public plazas, which intensified in 2020 as a result of COVID-19, and the increased use of outdoor gathering spaces. In 2020, the City also created 12 new parklets and 13 new public plazas to support public life recovery and to allow residents to safely gather and socialize in outdoor locations. Despite service interruptions due to COVID-19, over 2500 work hours were provided to plazas in 2020.

Public plazas are well-used and require dedicated micro-cleaning, including collection of litter and needles, light sweeping, wiping tables and chairs, and addressing seasonal needs like leaf pickup in the fall. An increase of \$40,000 in grant funding to Mission Possible for plaza micro-cleaning is recommended, totaling up to \$130,000 to continue the Pilot for 2021.

- Transitional Employment Pilot (\$25,000)

An allocation of \$25,000 to Mission Possible is proposed to support a pilot transitional employment program. This pilot was planned for 2020 but deferred due to the onset of the pandemic. The funds would be used to support further transition of Mission Possible associates to gainful employment potentially in the City or other organizations. The pilot concept would allow for selected Mission Possible associates to have a temporary entry-level work term in the City's Sanitation Services Branch while still receiving support and being actively managed by Mission Possible. This pilot program would allow the individual(s) to further develop their employment skills, improving their ability to compete for a City or other market employment position in the future. The CUPE 1004 Union has been consulted and supports this program.

- Feces Removal Response Team Pilot (\$75,000)

In 2020, the City received about 743 complaints of feces through 311. While City crews rinse streets and lanes clean using a mechanical flusher or sweeper, there is currently no dedicated response program for feces removal. To help address this, a grant of \$75,000 to Mission Possible is proposed to support a new pilot response team. The team would operate during weekday mornings in the downtown core, proactively focusing in areas where feces is a known problem, and available to react to specific complaints redirected by City staff. The pilot will be low tech, the 2-person response team will collect feces for disposal and the affected areas will be sanitized using a disinfectant spray. The pilot would run between March and November 2021 and staff will work closely with Mission Possible to monitor the effectiveness of the pilot.

*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. In the past, the annual grant has 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.

An allocation of \$55,000 to the Bidders' Project is recommended for 2021 to continue supporting and re-starting many of their initiatives, including the launch of their Universal Cart system and the growth of successful events such as the Coffee Cup Revolution.

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

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

#### ***Financial***

Finance has reviewed and confirmed that funding is available from the approved 2021 Annual Public Works Operating Budget.

The grant funding would be as follows:

- \$1,975,000 from the micro-cleaning grants funding, and
- \$130,000 from Stewardship of new and existing plazas/public spaces funds

#### ***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. The CUPE 1004 Union has been advised of the recommended 2021 program.

#### ***Environmental***

The micro-cleaning services provided by these non-profit agencies significantly reduce street litter in areas of the greatest need. Collection of this litter reduces the amount of litter, including plastics, from reaching the surrounding waterbodies.

### ***CONCLUSION***

Street cleaning grants to the six 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.

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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 125 people, many of whom participate in the lane cleaning program. UWC's cleaning activities cover approximately 120 blocks and of streets and lanes in the DTES and surrounding areas.

### **Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries 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.

Mission Possible looks 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. Despite the pandemic, in the last year alone MP has provided over 15,000 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 throughout the Downtown Eastside, plaza and priority service area cleaning, and participates in the BIA Micro-cleaning services.



### Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program (Coast)

Coast Mental Health is an accredited non-profit society 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 303 supportive housing sites in the Lower Mainland, and house 5,200 individuals in specialized rehabilitation, recovery and low barrier homes. Coast Resource Centre operates a vital outreach services in Vancouver that include clinical supports. Their employment program and services operates out the Coast Clubhouse which operates a vocational employment program and social enterprise business.

Coast has operated employment services for people with a mental illness for over 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 occupational skills training, basic education and 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 of Vancouver and to provide micro-cleaning services.

Coast's low barrier clean team employs 60 clients with a mental illness and addictions. Micro-cleaning crews work casual and part-time and gain valuable essential skills for the work place, increased self-esteem, work hardiness skills and transition 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 and business report they feel safer when the streets are clean and they value the work of the micro-cleaners.

Coast performs micro-cleaning along Kingsway, Broadway, Northeast False Creek, Olympic Village, Downtown Granville, and several major arterials, in addition to their participation 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 89 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 skytrain station) to Clark Drive, and a 'horseshoe' area: Venables (Clark to Commercial); Commercial (Venables 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.

MakeWay Charitable Society – Bidders' Project

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. A group of core staff and bidders 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 in Vancouver.

Founded in 2014 by Ken Lyotier, a bidder himself, who founded the bidder-run bottle depot United We Can, Bidders' Project brings together bidders to achieve: 1) greater recognition of bidders function in society; and, 2) new informal economic opportunities across the city. Bidders' Project became a project on MakeWay's (formerly Tides Canada Initiatives) shared platform in the spring of 2015. Joining MakeWay allows Bidders' Project a base for growth as well as high quality administrative support for governance, human resources, financial and grant management. MakeWay is a national charity that builds partnerships and solutions to help nature and communities thrive together.

The past five 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 supports 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 involved in Bidders' Project.

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