



REPORT

Report Date: October 6, 2022
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Meeting Date: October 25, 2022
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TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management
SUBJECT: Applications to UBCM Funding Programs

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorse the funding applications listed below:

1. UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services for \$4,000,000 to address safety issues related to the encampment on the Downtown Eastside, particularly along East Hastings Street; and
2. UBCM Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation funding stream for \$975,000 to reduce risks from future disasters due to natural hazards and climate-related risks.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's endorsement of two funding applications to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM).

The funding applications staff are seeking Council's endorsement for are:

- UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Program for \$4,000,000 to provide increased services to address safety issues related to the encampment on the Downtown Eastside.
- UBCM Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation funding stream for \$975,000 for the following three projects:
 1. Fraser River Floodplain Flood and Drainage Options Study – Knight to Oak Street (\$150,000)

2. Public Education Tool: Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Story (\$75,000)
3. Shoreline Protection to Increase Climate Resilience at Spanish Banks and Vanier Park (\$750,000)

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

UBCM funding programs require a resolution of Council as part of the funding application package, which can be submitted after the application has been submitted.

On May 18, 2021, Council endorsed an application to the UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Program for \$20 million to help offset costs incurred by the City to support vulnerable populations in its pandemic response.

On May 17, 2022, Council endorse an application to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Strengthening Communities' Services Program for \$2.5 million to provide safe access to washrooms in locations serving specific homeless/at risk populations.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Program

This program is part of the federally and provincially funded Safe Restart Program and is meant to address costs related to supporting unsheltered homeless populations and addressing the related community impacts.

Within the Safe Restart funding, \$100 million was allocated for the Strengthening Communities' Services Program. The initial intake of the Strengthening Communities' Services Program saw approximately \$80 million delivered to local governments, with \$19.4 million being awarded to the City of Vancouver for COVID-19 related support and an additional \$2.5 million to provide safe access to washrooms in locations serving specific homeless/at risk populations. The City has been invited to apply for an additional \$4 million through an amendment to the 2022 Safe Access to Washrooms application.

The funding is being administered by UBCM on behalf of the Province and the Government of Canada to support unsheltered homeless populations and address related community impacts.

In July 2021 the City's application to the initial intake of the Strengthening Communities' Services Program for \$19.4 million to help offset costs incurred by the City to support vulnerable populations in its pandemic response was approved.

In July 2022 the City's Application to the second intake of the Strengthening Communities' Services Program for \$2.5 million to provide safe access to washrooms in locations serving specific homeless/at risk populations was approved.

In August 2022 the City was made aware of up to \$4 million of additional funding available the Strengthening Communities' Service Program and advised to submit an amendment to our second intake application to access this funding.

Eligible activities under this program must demonstrate evidence of need in the community and provide solutions that address increased urgent and immediate needs related to unsheltered homelessness and do not create ongoing long-term financial obligations that will not be supported by the applicant.

UBCM Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation Funding Stream

The Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation funding stream is part of UBCM's Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) suite of funding programs intended to enhance the resilience of local governments, First Nations and communities in responding to emergencies.

The CEPF was created by the Province of British Columbia in March 2017 with an allocation of \$32 Million. Funding for this program is provided by the Province of BC and is administered by Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM).

The intent of the Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation funding stream is to support eligible applicants to reduce risks from future disasters due to natural hazards and climate-related risks through the development and implementation of:

- Accurate foundational knowledge of the natural hazards they face and the risks associated with BC's changing climate; and
- Effective strategies to prepare for, mitigate, and adapt to those risks.

Funding in this program is divided into three categories:

- Category 1: Foundational activities (risk mapping, risk assessments, planning)
- Category 2: Non-structural activities (land use planning, community education, purchase of eligible equipment)
- Category 3: Small scale structural activities)

The City submitted the allowable maximum of one project per category.

Strategic Analysis

UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Program

Since the submission of the City's 2022 Strengthening Communities' Services application, the situation on the Downtown Eastside, particularly along East Hastings Street, has changed substantially. Over the course of the summer, there has been a significant increase in the number of structures present along several blocks of East Hastings and general non-compliance on the part of people using those structures with requests to remove them,

particularly during the day. The number of structures, along with an accumulation of other materials, has created significant safety, health and accessibility challenges along East Hastings.

In August 2022, the City was invited to submit an amendment to the May 2022 application to add up to \$4 million to support unsheltered residents presently staying on East Hastings and mitigate the above-referenced safety, health and accessibility issues. If the amended application is successful, the additional funding will be used to provide increased access to washrooms, hire additional temporary peer support positions, create an Encampment Response Team, provide enhanced street cleaning in the area and support additional temporary park ranger positions at Crab Park.

While the long term solution to improving public health, safety and wellness along East Hastings Street is more safe affordable housing options, if the funding application is successful this amendment to the application will provide the City with the resources required to address the crisis on an interim basis.

UBCM Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation Funding Stream

The City has included the following projects under each of the 3 categories in the Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation application:

Category 1 – Fraser River Flood and Drainage Options Study – Knight to Oak Street

This is a technical study that will prepare the City for future implementation of flood mitigation measures in the central part of Vancouver's Fraser River floodplain. The study will build on previous and current flood mapping, risk assessment, planning, engagement, policy, and financial strategy development work.

Category 2 - Public Education Tool: Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Story

Vancouver recently updated its Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Assessment, but lacks an engaging way to communicate this information to the public. This project will develop a public-facing, interactive Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Story Map with Vancouver's Hazards of greatest concern to enable residents to better understand their exposures and prepare.

Category 3 - Shoreline Protection to Increase Climate Resilience at Spanish Banks & Vanier Park

This project is for detailed design, permitting, and implementation of shoreline protection measures at Spanish Banks and Vanier Park in Vancouver. The work would increase resilience of these coastal assets to sea level rise and extreme weather, as well as wave events caused by climate change.

Financial Implications

UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Program

The City is applying to the Strengthening Communities' Services fund for 10 months of funding from October 1, 2022 to July 31, 2023. The funding will cover 100% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$4 million. The breakdown of the funding request is shown in the table below.

| ACTIVITY | AMOUNT |
|--|--------------------|
| Increased safe access to washrooms, including peer monitoring and support services | \$1,255,000 |
| Peer employment programs | \$805,000 |
| Encampment Response Team | \$400,000 |
| Enhanced Street Cleaning | \$880,000 |
| Temporary Park Rangers at Crab Park | \$660,000 |
| Total | \$4,000,000 |

Staff will work on a plan well in advance of July 31, 2023 to scale down the response to mitigate the risk of having to continue to deliver services without a funding source.

UBCM Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation Funding Stream

Fraser River Flood and Drainage Options Study – Knight to Oak Street: The total project budget is \$350,000 and included in the Integrated Sewer and Drainage Planning capital budget under Modelling Studies and Services. The City is applying for the maximum of \$150,000 from UBCM funding to offset a portion of the total costs.

Public Education Tool: Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Story: This project has a budget of \$75,000 and is not currently funded. The City is applying for 100% of the costs from UBCM funding. If the funding application is successful, this external funding will be included in the 2023 Operating budget.

Shoreline Protection to Increase Climate Resilience at Spanish Banks and Vanier Park: This project has estimated costs of \$810,000. The UBCM funding in this category is 100% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$2 million. The City is applying for \$750,000 as \$60,000 of the costs are ineligible because the money was spent prior to the date the application was submitted.

A summary of the UBCM funding request and the City share of funding is in the table below.

| ACTIVITY | UBCM FUNDING REQUEST | CITY SHARE | TOTAL |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Fraser River Flood and Drainage Options Study | \$150,000 | \$200,000 | \$350,000 |
| Public Education Tool | \$75,000 | \$- | \$75,000 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Shoreline Protection Project | \$750,000 | \$60,000* | \$810,000 |
| Total | \$975,000 | \$260,000 | \$1,235,000 |

CONCLUSION

This Council report seeks approval for a funding application to the Strengthening Communities' Services program for \$4 million to address safety issues related to the encampment on the Downtown Eastside and a funding application to the Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Adaptation Program for \$975,000 for three projects to support the City in reducing risks from future disasters due to natural hazards and climate-related risks.

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