



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: January 17, 2023  
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: February 14, 2023  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services  
SUBJECT: 2023 Street Cleaning Grants

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve the 2023 Street Cleaning Grant Program totalling \$ 2,259,150 to the following recipients for programs that support improvements to street cleanliness, as detailed in the report, contingent on funding from the 2023 Street Cleaning and 2023 Plaza Stewardship operating budgets:
- United We Can – Save Our Living Environment (\$469,100);
  - Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program (\$663,000);
  - Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance (\$950,150);
  - Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action (\$73,100);
  - The Kettle Society – SEED Employment Program (\$48,800); and
  - MakeWay Charitable Society - The Binners' Project (\$55,000).
- B. THAT if funding is allocated to items A1 and A2 under Appendix A of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan (RTS 15432) through the 2023 budget process, that Council approve additional Street Cleaning grants to the following recipients from the approved funding:
- Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program (\$72,000);
  - Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance (\$128,000).

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

## **Purpose and Executive Summary**

This report recommends grants to six non-profit agencies totaling \$2,459,150 for supplementary street cleaning and waste diversion initiatives for 2023. 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 Associations (BIA) to support business area cleaning programs; and
- Supports socially inclusive waste diversion initiatives.

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

In January 2023, the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan was approved in principle and included action items to increase micro-cleaning and feces collection in Chinatown, subject to funding approval.

To supplement the City's street cleaning services, for the past 23 years Council has approved annual grants to non-profit agencies that have the capacity to provide micro-cleaning services.

## **City Manager's Comments**

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations. This program 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.

## **Context and Background**

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 beginning in 2021, funded a feces collection pilot to help address feces complaints within five BIA's including Strathcona, Downtown, Chinatown, Hastings Crossing, and Gastown. Grants for work performed in 2022 were awarded as follows:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Recipient Since</b>	<b>2022 Total Award</b>
United We Can – Save Our Living Environment	1999	<b>\$469,100</b>
Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program	2008	<b>\$663,000</b>
Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance	2016	<b>\$876,000</b>
Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action	2007	<b>\$73,100</b>
The Kettle Society – SEED Employment Program	2009	<b>\$48,800</b>
MakeWay Charitable Society - The Binnars' Project	2016	<b>\$55,000</b>
<b>Grant Programs – Total</b>		<b>\$2,185,000</b>

Organizations are required to provide ongoing metrics reporting on their work throughout the year, which are used for program and performance monitoring. Appendix A provides a summary of key program performance indicators over the last 4 years.

The 2022 grant funding resulted in the following:

- micro-cleaning in an area covering 7 km<sup>2</sup> and within 22 BIA's;
- provision of over 71,200 low-threshold employment hours;
- collection of 34,000 bags of litter and 109,900 needles;
- micro-cleaning at 25 permanent and pop-up plazas; and
- 20,800 cumulative feces removals in the downtown area.

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 reducing street homelessness;
- Cleaner streets promote a safe and welcoming public realm, shows a commitment to protecting the environment and supporting Healthy City objectives of creating environments to thrive in.

## Discussion

For 2023 staff recommend the following grants:

Organization	Program	Recommended 2023 Grant
United We Can	Micro-cleaning	\$469,100
Coast Mental Health Foundation	Micro-cleaning	\$344,395
	BIA Micro-cleaning	\$318,605
	Uplifting Chinatown – Micro-cleaning	\$72,000
Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society	Micro-cleaning	\$247,395
	BIA Micro-cleaning	\$318,605
	Pilots	\$384,150
	Uplifting Chinatown – Feces Collection	\$80,000
	Uplifting Chinatown – Micro-cleaning	\$48,000
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Micro-cleaning	\$73,100
The Kettle Society	Micro-cleaning	\$48,800
MakeWay Charitable Society	Various initiatives involving binners	\$55,000
<b>Grant Programs - Total</b>		<b>\$2,459,150</b>

Background information on each of the six organizations recommended for the grant awards are provided in Appendix B.

Highlights of the various programs covered under the recommended 2023 Street Cleaning Grant Program are summarized in the above table and are described below.

### Micro-Cleaning Program (\$1,182,790)

*United We Can (UWC) (\$469,100)* – UWC will continue to provide micro-cleaning services in the Downtown Eastside (DTES), Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona and areas surrounding their depot site.

*Coast Mental Health Foundation (Coast) (\$344,395)* – Coast will continue to provide micro-cleaning service to over 360 blocks in higher-need areas throughout the City, including sections of Kingsway, Broadway, Northeast False Creek, Olympic Village, downtown Granville corridor, Crosstown, Strathcona, and along several arterials. Their micro-cleaning program is mobile and flexible, and the frequency and number of cleanings in the various areas of the City are adjusted to respond to emerging priorities.

*Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society (Mission Possible) (\$247,395)* – Mission Possible will continue to focus in five zones within the DTES, including areas overlapping with Chinatown, Strathcona and Hastings Crossing BIA's. 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, totaling over 290 blocks in the City.

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

*The Kettle Society (Kettle) (\$48,800)* – Kettle will continue to focus 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 2023 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 to continue the mobile BIA program is recommended.

#### Public Plazas Micro-Cleaning Program Pilot (\$284,150)

The Public Plazas Micro-Cleaning Pilot was launched in August 2019 to maintain existing and new public spaces in the City so that they remain clean, safe and inviting gathering places. In 2022, the City serviced 25 temporary and permanent plazas, supporting public life and allowing residents to gather and socialize in outdoor locations across the City.

Public plazas and social service parklets are well-used spaces 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 \$74,150 in funding to Mission Possible for micro-cleaning plazas and social service parklets is recommended, for a total of \$284,150 to continue the pilot for 2023. This increase reflects the addition of seasonal leaf removal services in selected plazas, micro-cleaning of 3 social service parklets outside of the DTES, and a minor increase in service levels for up to 26 plazas and public spaces.

#### Feces Collection Pilot (\$100,000)

The Feces Collection Pilot was launched in March 2021 to respond to feces complaints submitted via Van311 and to proactively patrol Strathcona, Downtown, Chinatown, Hastings Crossing, and Gastown BIA's for feces collection. The pilot is low tech, and the 2-person response team collects feces for disposal and the affected areas are sanitized using a disinfectant spray.

A grant of \$100,000 to Mission Possible is recommended to continue funding the feces response pilot in 2023. The response team will continue to operate during weekday mornings in the downtown core, proactively patrolling in areas where feces are a known problem and responding to specific complaints re-directed by City staff.

#### Uplifting Chinatown Initiatives (\$200,000)

On January 17, 2023, Council approved in principle the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, subject to funding through the 2023 operating budget process, which included two action items within scope of the Street Cleaning Grant work:

- Expanding the Feces Collection pilot program to provide additional proactive servicing in Chinatown (\$80,000)

- Increase micro-cleaning in Chinatown to provide an additional 4 cleaning shifts per week (\$120,000)

Staff recommend allocating the grants for the above work within this report, subject to subsequent funding approval by Council through the 2023 operating budget process, in order to facilitate a quick start-up of this work if funding is approved. If funding is approved, the current feces pilot would be expanded to provide the additional proactive feces removal in Chinatown, and the BIA program would be expanded to include the additional micro-cleaning appointments in Chinatown, providing the BIA an opportunity for input on the schedule and priority cleaning areas within Chinatown.

A grant allocation of \$80,000 to Mission Possible is recommended to expand the current Feces Collection Pilot to provide 5 day per week proactive feces collection in Chinatown. Grant allocations of \$72,000 to Coast (3 weekday cleanings) and \$48,000 (one weekend cleaning) to Mission Possible are also recommended to add a total of four Chinatown micro-cleaning appointments per week to the mobile BIA program.

#### The Bidders' Project (\$55,000)

The Bidders' Project is dedicated to improving economic opportunities for bidders and reducing the stigma they face as informal recyclable collectors. Bidders positively contribute to our environment and align with the City's Zero Waste goals by diverting materials from landfill. In 2022, as in the past, the annual grant has supported the Bidders' 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 2023 to continue supporting many of their initiatives, including the growth of successful events such as the Coffee Cup Revolution.

#### **Human Resource Implications**

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 consulted and does not object to this program.

#### **Environmental Implications**

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.

#### **Financial Implications**

Finance has reviewed and confirmed that the following is available from the proposed 2023 Annual Public Works Operating Budget:

- \$1,975,000 from the micro-cleaning grants funding
- \$284,150 from stewardship of new and existing plazas/public spaces funds

The additional \$200,000 of funding for items A1 and A2 of the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan will be considered as part of the 2023 operating budget process, and the grants associated with that work are contingent on funding being approved.

**Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications associated with this report’s recommendations.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**MICRO-CLEANING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND HISTORICAL FUNDING**  
**AMOUNTS**

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – 4 YEAR SUMMARY

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Work Hours Provided</b>	65,100	50,000	65,400	71,200
<b>Bags of Garbage Collected</b>	19,000	21,350	29,800	34,000
<b>Number of Needles Collected</b>	111,000	80,600	113,500	109,900
<b>Number of Feces Collected</b>	-	-	13,000	20,800

HISTORICAL FUNDING AMOUNTS – 5 YEAR SUMMARY

Year	Funding Total							Annual Total
	The Kettle Society	Mission Possible	Coast Mental Health	Street Youth Job Action	United We Can	Binner's Project	Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative	
<b>2019</b>	\$47,300	\$552,350	\$477,350	\$71,000	\$387,000	\$55,000	\$25,000	<b>\$1,615,000</b>
<b>2020</b>	\$48,800	\$681,000	\$566,000	\$73,100	\$398,600	\$55,000	\$17,500	<b>\$1,840,000<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>2021</b>	\$48,800	\$796,000	\$663,000	\$73,100	\$469,100	\$55,000	-	<b>\$2,105,000<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>2022</b>	\$48,800	\$876,000	\$663,000	\$73,100	\$469,100	\$55,000	-	<b>\$2,185,000<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>Proposed 2023</b>	\$48,800	\$1,078,150	\$735,000	\$73,100	\$469,100	\$55,000	-	<b>\$2,459,150<sup>4</sup></b>

1. Funding increase of \$225,000 supported the expansion of the BIA Program, Priority Area Program and Plaza Pilot, the introduction of a new Transitional Employment Program, and accommodated for the increase in minimum wage.

2. Funding increase of \$265,000 supported the expansion of micro-cleaning in Downtown/DTES and Plaza Pilot, as well as the introduction of the feces collection pilot.

3. Funding increase of \$80,000 supported the expansion of the Plaza Pilot.

4. Funding increase of \$274,150 would support the expansion of the Plaza Pilot and the micro-cleaning and feces removal service increase in Chinatown (as per the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan).



## **APPENDIX B BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON GRANT RECIPIENTS**

### **United We Can – Save Our Living Environment**

Save Our Living Environment is a non-profit urban environmental group active in the Downtown Eastside (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) and through special events.

UWC has approximately 55 stable employees with a range of assorted barriers that clean lanes and sidewalks. Currently over 90% of the lane cleaning employees live within a 6-block radius of Main Street and East Hastings Street. 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 of streets and lanes in the DTES and surrounding areas.

### **Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance**

Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society (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 DTES residents. Over the past year MP has provided over 37,000 hours of work & training hours and transitional employment opportunities to over 105 local residents. The City grant supports participants working in MP's largest social enterprise, MP Maintenance, a full-service exterior property cleaning company. MP performs micro-cleaning throughout the DTES, plazas and priority service areas, and participates in the BIA micro-cleaning services and the feces removal service.

### **Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program**

Coast Mental Health (Coast) 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 vital outreach services in Vancouver that include clinical supports. The Employment Services operates out of 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 BC, Coastal Health and City of Vancouver. The employment program provides an opportunity for people with mental health challenges, 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 BIA's and the City of Vancouver and to provide micro-cleaning services. Coast's low barrier clean team employs 70 clients with a mental health challenges and addictions. Micro-cleaning crews work casual and part-time and gain valuable essential skills for the workplace, increased self-esteem, work hardiness skills and transition to competitive employment. All 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. Our Landscaping with Heart program currently has 3 landscaping contracts for Sanford Housing Society, MPA Society, and CMH (43 properties in total) and a pressure washing contract for COV's Green Infrastructure Implementation, including other maintenance services for their department. For the last 2 years LWH has pressure washed for the Downtown BIA, Yaletown BIA and the Vancouver Mural Festival.

### **Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action (SYJA)**

Street Youth Job Action (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 workplace, employee rights and responsibilities, Health and Safety, being work ready, Naloxone – OD response training, and recognizing 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, Coast Mental Health-Landscaping with Heart and Environmental Unit, 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 and needle sweeps) for its youth through partnerships with BIA's 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 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 four days a week as well as during special events such as Italian Days and has employed 95 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 – The 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 shared platform in the spring of 2015. Being a part of 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.

Since its inception, Binnners' Project continues to experience continuous growth. Volunteers, media coverage, and binner 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 Binnners' Project with implementing pilot programs and initiatives aimed at developing increased economic inclusion for binnners and fostering their financial independence. All programs are developed by binnners, working together with staff involved in Binnners' Project.