

COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date:January 6, 2024Contact:Jonathan McDermottContact No.:604.871.6241RTS No.:16048VanRIMS No.:08-2000-20Meeting Date:February 6, 2024Submit comments to Council

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: 2024 Street Cleaning Grant Program

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve the 2024 Street Cleaning Grants totalling \$2,639,150 to the following recipients for programs that support improvements to street cleanliness, as detailed in the report, with funding from the approved 2024 Street Cleaning and 2024 Plaza Stewardship operating budgets:
 - United We Can Save Our Living Environment (\$469,100);
 - Coast Mental Health Foundation Employment Services Program (\$745,250);
 - Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society MP Maintenance (\$1,211,900);
 - Family Services of Greater Vancouver Street Youth Job Action (\$73,100):
 - B.W.S.S: Battered Women's Support Services Association (\$36,000):
 - The Kettle Friendship Society SEED Employment Program (\$48,800); and
 - MakeWay Charitable Society The Binners' Project (\$55,000).
- B. THAT Council approve annual grants for 2025 and 2026, using the same allocations, organizations and funding sources as outlined in Recommendation A, bringing the three-year total to \$7,917,450, subject to approval of grant funding as part of the annual budgeting process, and each grant recipients continued ability to meet grant requirements.
- C. THAT Council delegate its authority to the General Manager of Engineering Services to negotiate and execute agreements to disburse the grants described in Recommendations A and B on the terms and conditions set out herein or such

other terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the General Manager of Engineering Services and the Director of Legal Services.

D. THAT pursuant to Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*, Council deems any organization listed in Appendix A of this report that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency to be contributing to the culture of Vancouver.

No legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of these Recommendations unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

Approval of Recommendations A and B 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 seven non-profit organizations totaling \$2,639,150 for supplementary street cleaning and waste diversion initiatives for 2024. The report also recommends grants for 2025 and 2026, subject to approved annual funding and performance. The shift to a multi-year award cycle is intended to provide more certainty for non-profit organizations and create efficiencies in the granting process. 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 (BIAs) to support business area cleaning programs; and
- Supports socially inclusive waste diversion initiatives.

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

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

In March 2014, Council approved the Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan which identified the need to support opportunities for low barrier employment and other community economic development initiatives.

In July 2014, Council approved the Healthy City Strategy which included a goal of "Making Ends Meet" along with a target to reduce poverty.

In July 2023, the 2024 Social Policy Grants Program was approved by Council, which included actions to lower barriers to access and creating efficiencies, such as consideration of multi-year grants in order to provide key community partners with stable funding commitments.

To supplement the City's street cleaning services, for the past 24 years Council has approved annual grants to non-profit organizations that have the capacity to provide micro-cleaning services.

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations. This program is a longstanding program with significant social and environmental benefits, complementing efforts of the Greenest City Action Plan, Healthy City Strategy and related initiatives, including the Downtown East Side (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 a feces collection program to help address this issue within five BIA's (Strathcona, Downtown, Chinatown, Hastings Crossing, and Gastown).

Organization	Recipient Since	2023 Total Award
United We Can – Save Our Living Environment	1999	\$469,100
Coast Mental Health Foundation – Employment Services Program	2008	\$735,000
Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society – MP Maintenance	2016	\$1,258,150
Family Services of Greater Vancouver – Street Youth Job Action	2007	\$73,100
The Kettle Friendship Society – SEED Employment Program	2009	\$48,800
MakeWay Charitable Society - The Binners' Project	2016	\$55,000
Grant Programs – Total		\$2,639,150

Grants for work performed in 2023 were awarded as follows:

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 2023 grant funding resulted in the following:

- micro-cleaning in an area covering 7 km² and within 22 BIA's;
- provision of over 72,300 low-threshold employment hours;
- collection of 35,400 bags of litter and 100,100 needles;
- micro-cleaning at 25 permanent and pop-up plazas and 18 parklets; and
- 19,900 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, show a commitment to protecting the environment, and supports Healthy City objectives of creating environments to thrive in.

Discussion

For 2024, 2025 and 2026, staff recommend the following grants, with the 2025 and 2026 grants being subject to annual approval of the operating budget and each organizations ongoing ability to meet grant requirements:

Organization	Program	Recommended Annual Grant (2024-2026)	
United We Can	Micro-cleaning	\$469,100	
Coast Mental Health Foundation	Micro-cleaning	\$308,395	
	BIA Micro-cleaning	\$318,605	
	Uplifting Chinatown	\$72,000	
	Plazas & Parklets	\$46,250	
Mission	Micro-cleaning	\$247,395	
Possible Compassionate	BIA Micro-cleaning	\$318,605	
Ministries Society	Feces Collection Program	\$100,000	
	Uplifting Chinatown	\$128,000	
	Plazas & Parklets	\$417,900	
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Micro-cleaning	\$73,100	
The Kettle Friendship Society	Micro-cleaning	\$48,800	
MakeWay Charitable Society	Various initiatives involving binners	\$55,000	
B.W.S.S.:Battered Women's Support Services Association	Micro-cleaning	\$36,000	
Grant Programs – Total		\$2,639,150	

Historically, Street Cleaning grant recommendations have been brought to Council annually for consideration. However, to improve program efficiency and provide funding stability to the partner organizations, their programs, and the clientele they support, as well as to better align with Council's direction to prioritize multi-year grant agreements, staff recommend shifting to a three-year award cycle. Each cycle would involve a comprehensive open application process, as was undertaken for 2024, to allow opportunities for new intake or program adjustments. Council approval of annual program funds will still be required as part of the regular budgeting approval process, however Council approval of grants will be only be required once every three years instead of annually.

Background on each of the seven organizations is provided in Appendix B, and information on each of the various programs covered, including recommended annual funding allocations, are described below.

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

The base Micro-Cleaning Program provides an additional layer of cleaning in many core/higher needs areas of Vancouver and involves collecting litter and needles from sidewalks, boulevards, and laneways. Work is provided by a number of organizations, each focused on specific areas of the City.

Coast Mental Health Foundation (Coast) (\$308,395) – Coast will continue to provide service to over 340 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 are adjusted to respond to emerging priorities.

Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society (Mission Possible) (\$247,395) – Mission Possible will continue to focus in the DTES, overlapping with Chinatown, Strathcona and Hastings Crossing BIA's. Their program is also mobile and flexible, and covers areas outside of the downtown core, including sections of Broadway, Kingsway, 49th Ave, Fraser and Knight St.

Street Youth Job Action (SYJA) (\$73,100) – SYJA will continue to focus on lanes and some residential areas in the Downtown, West End, and nearby Granville lanes.

The Kettle Friendship 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.

B.W.S.S.: Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) (\$36,000) – BWSS is a new recommended recipient this year. One of the key services that BWSS provides is the Advancing Women's Awareness Regarding Employment (AWARE) program, which inspires women affected by trauma, violence, or abuse to reclaim their lives and build financial security through education and employment programs. BWSS will provide micro-cleaning services in select areas of Main St., deploying crews from My Sister's Closet, one of their initiatives, near 23rd Ave.

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

Launched in May 2016 with the goal of enhancing existing BIA cleaning efforts, this program involves 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 recommended grant amounts will continue to provide four cleaning appointments per BIA per month, resulting in almost 800 hours of cleaning per BIA annually. Annual grant allocations of \$318,605 to Coast and \$318,605 to Mission Possible are recommended.

Public Plazas Micro-Cleaning Program (\$464,150)

The Public Plazas Micro-Cleaning Program was launched in August 2019 with the goal of ensuring existing and new public spaces in the City remain clean, safe and inviting gathering places. These are well-used spaces that require dedicated micro-cleaning, including collection of litter and needles, light sweeping, and wiping tables and chairs, and addressing occasional/seasonal needs like power washing, leaf removal, winter response. The 2023 program covered 25 temporary and permanent plazas and 18 parklets, with Council approving an additional grant in June 2023 to further enhance service levels in plazas and parklets.

Grants recommended for the plazas and parklets program is split between two organizations – Mission Possible (\$417,900) and Coast Mental Health (\$46,250).

Feces Collection Program (\$100,000)

The Feces Removal Response Program was launched in March 2021 to better respond to public complaints and proactively patrol known hot-spots. The program is low-tech, with a 2-person response team collecting feces for disposal then using a disinfectant spray to sanitize the area, and operates on weekdays in the Downtown, between Clark Drive and Burrard Street, extending south to Union Street. A grant of \$100,000 to Mission Possible is recommended.

Uplifting Chinatown Initiatives (\$200,000)

In January 2023, Council approved the Uplifting Chinatown Action Plan, which included additional micro-cleaning and feces removal shifts in Chinatown. Staff recommend grant allocations of \$128,000 to Mission Possible and \$72,000 to Coast to continue this work.

The Binners' Project (\$55,000)

The Binners' Project is dedicated to improving economic opportunities for "binners" (informal waste-pickers) and reducing the stigma they face, while aligning with the City's Zero Waste goals by diverting materials from landfill. The grant supports expansion and development of various initiatives, including outreach, waste sorting at events, facilitating refundables collection from residents and businesses, and initiatives such as the Coffee Cup Revolution. An allocation of \$55,000 to the Binners' Project for 2024 will allow this work to continue.

Human Resource Implications

There are no personnel implications. The incremental services under the grant program supplement work by City crews and do not constitute work historically performed by City staff.

Environmental Implications

The grant program supports maintaining a clean and welcoming environment, and helps prevent litter, including plastics, from reaching the surrounding waterbodies.

Financial Implications

Finance has reviewed and confirmed that the following is available from the 2024 Annual Public Works Operating Budget:

- \$2,175,000 from micro-cleaning grants funds
- \$464,150 from stewardship of new and existing plazas/public spaces funds

Legal Implications

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

Conclusion

Street cleaning grants to the seven non-profit organizations listed in this report will continue to benefit marginalized residents by providing job and life skills training, improve the cleanliness of the public realm, and support socially inclusive, waste diversion initiatives.

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

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - 5 YEAR SUMMARY

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Work Hours Provided	65,100	50,000	65,400	71,200	72,300
Bags of Garbage Collected	19,000	21,350	29,800	34,000	35,400
Number of Needles Collected	111,000	80,600	113,500	109,900	100,100
Number of Feces Collected	-	-	13,000	20,800	19,900

HISTORICAL AND PROPOSED FUNDING - 5 YEAR SUMMARY

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 (Proposed)
Kettle	\$47,300	\$48,800	\$48,800	\$48,800	\$48,800	\$48,800
Mission Possible	\$552,350	\$681,000	\$796,000	\$876,000	\$1,258,150	\$1,211,900
Coast	\$477,350	\$566,000	\$663,000	\$663,000	\$735,000	\$745,250
SYJA	\$71,000	\$73,100	\$73,100	\$73,100	\$73,100	\$73,100
United We Can	\$387,000	\$398,600	\$469,100	\$469,100	\$469,100	\$469,100
Binners' Project	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000
BWSS	-	-	-	-	-	\$36,000
Canadian Wildlife Health Coop	\$25,000	\$17,500	-	-	-	-
Total	\$1,615,000	\$1,840,000 ¹	\$2,105,000 ²	\$2,185,000 ³	\$2,639,150 ⁴	\$2,639,150

1. Funding increase of \$225,000 in 2020 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 in 2021 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 in 2022 supported the expansion of the Plaza Pilot.

4. Funding increase of \$454,150 in 2023 supported 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's total pool of active work participants is sustained at approximately 125 people with a range of assorted barriers to employment. Roughly 55 of these people are directly involved in the lane cleaning program.

UWC has utilized City grant funding for over 20 years to provide job training and employment to individuals by performing micro-cleaning of streets and lanes in the DTES. UWC's cleaning activities cover over 120 blocks of streets and lanes in the DTES and surrounding areas. This funding has enabled UWC to leverage additional funding through BIAs and through special events.

UWC's micro-cleaning program seeks to improve the health and safety of local sidewalks, alleyways and green spaces in the DTES. Currently over 80% of their program participants live within a 8-block radius of Main Street and East Hastings Street, where UWC's operations are based. As a result of this opportunity, some of the UWC staff no longer require income assistance.

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 four 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 transitional employment opportunities to 181 local residents, 39 of whom successfully transitioned to employment outside of MP after their time in the Employment Readiness Program.

The City grant supports participants working in MP's largest social enterprise, MP Maintenance, which provides full-service exterior property maintenance to businesses in Vancouver. MP performs micro-cleaning throughout the DTES, plazas, priority area and BIAs. Additionally, MP Maintenance provides the feces removal service in targeted areas of the downtown area.

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 54 locations throughout the Lower Mainland and serves approximately 5,000 people annually through housing, support services, education and employment opportunities.

The Coast 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 the 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. Coast's employment service has long-standing partnerships with 20 BIA's in the Lower Mainland and the City of Vancouver to provide micro-cleaning services.

In 2023, Coast's low barrier clean team employed 87 members 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 businesses report they feel safer when the streets are clean and they value the work of the micro-cleaners.

With the grant provided by the City, 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)

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 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 also 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. SYJA has an established community enhancement program

(microcleaning initiatives and needle sweeps) for its youth through partnerships with BIA's and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA).

The core employment program provided by SYJA is the micro-cleaning and graffiti removal services of Downtown Vancouver, which is where the City's funding is directed. SYJA provides micro-cleaning in an area covering approximately 150 blocks of streets and sidewalks in the downtown peninsula. Over the past year, 120 youth have participated in SYJA and completed 1,595 street cleaning shifts.

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 has historically worked closely with the Commercial Drive BIA, providing regular street cleaning services as well as micro-cleaning during special events such as Italian Days. They have also 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 Binners' Project

Binners' Project builds urban resilience, social inclusivity, and community connections for binners, also known as informal waste-pickers, through community-driven initiatives. At its core, the Binners' Project aims to foster face-to-face interactions between binners, residents, and the community at large. The Binner's Project operates programs centered around waste diversion in Vancouver to provide legitimate and reliable income for binners, while maintaining an overall

mission 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 binner himself, who founded the binner-run bottle depot United We Can, Binners' Project brings together binners to achieve:

- Greater recognition of binners function in society; and,
- New informal economic opportunities across the city.

Binners' Project joined MakeWay's shared platform in the spring of 2015. MakeWay is a national charity that builds partnerships and solutions to help nature and communities thrive together. Being associated with MakeWay provides Binners' Project with a solid base for growth as well as access to high quality administrative support for governance, human resources, and financial management.

A core initiative of the Binners' Project is the Coffee Cup Revolution program, which is a oneday depot where binners can refund used coffee cups for 10 cents each. During the 2023 event, over 145,000 cups were collected in three hours, resulting in nearly \$15,000 going back to binners at the event. This program demonstrates binners' readiness and willingness to assist with waste diversion in the City.

Since its inception, Binners' 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. Funding provided by the City directly supports the Binners' Project, including the Coffee Cup Revolution, Binners' Hook and various community engagement programs. These programs will help destigmatize binners' work across the City and foster relationships with businesses and residents. All programs are developed by binners, working together with staff involved in Binners' Project.

B.W.S.S.: Battered Women's Support Services Association

BWSS provides education, advocacy and support services to all women. In particular, BWSS provides a crisis line, crisis intervention services, victim services, legal and housing advocacy, and temporary housing and employment services for women that have experienced trauma, violence or abuse. They offer a variety of free programs designed to meet the individual needs of each woman, supporting them to break the cycle of abuse and trauma through healing, education, and pre-employment training.

One of the key services that BWSS provides is the Advancing Women's Awareness Regarding Employment (AWARE) program, which inspires women affected by trauma, violence or abuse to reclaim their lives and build financial security through education and employment programs. The prospect of adding micro-cleaning services to the AWARE program will allow survivors to build their confidence and skillsets while contributing a vital service to the community.

BWSS is a new recommended recipient for street cleaning grant funding in 2024 and will be providing micro-cleaning services along Main Street.