



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: August 13, 2025
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Meeting Date: September 17, 2025
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TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services
SUBJECT: Grant to BC Housing to Support Continuation of Temporary Shelter at 15-27 West Hastings (Bud Osborn Shelter)

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve a grant of up to \$300,000 to the British Columbia Housing Management Commission ("BC Housing") to provide 50% of the cost of BC Housing's lease at 15-27 West Hastings (the "Premises") for the continuation of the temporary shelter, to be funded from the previously allocated Empty Homes Tax (EHT) reserve funds through the ACCS Homelessness Services 2025 operating budget.
- B. THAT Council, for the purposes of the grant set out in Recommendation A, deems BC Housing to be an organization contributing to the culture, beautification, health or welfare of the city in accordance with Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*.
- C. THAT Council authorize the City's General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services to negotiate and execute an agreement to disburse the grant in Recommendation A on terms and conditions that are satisfactory to the City's General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services and Director of Legal Services.
- D. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of Recommendation A unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

Recommendation A requires 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members per Section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report recommends Council approve a grant contribution of up to \$300,000 to BC Housing in order to secure a one-year extension to their lease of an existing temporary shelter at 15-27

W. Hastings. The temporary shelter opened in May 2021 with 60 beds and is operated by Portland Hotel Society (PHS). In October 2022, the shelter expanded to include a total of 80 beds.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Council Report RTS 16096 (January 2024) – Army and Navy Lease Contribution for Temporary Shelter – authorized payment to BC Housing for \$270,000, representing 50% of the lease costs for the Premises for February 2024 to February 2025

Council Report RTS 15556 (March 2023) – Army and Navy Lease Contribution for Temporary Shelter – authorized payment to BC Housing for up to \$75,000, for increase in rent costs.

Council Report RTS 14067 (October 2020) – Army and Navy Lease Contribution for Temporary Shelter – authorized payment to BC Housing for \$825,000, representing 50% of the lease costs for the Premises for 2021, 2022 and 2023

Housing Vancouver Strategy 2017 outlines goals to work with partners to create temporary shelters to provide immediate support to individuals experiencing homelessness while transitional and permanent social housing is made available to foster pathways out of homelessness.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

Persistent Homelessness

The response to homelessness requires partnership and investment across multiple levels of government and agencies for temporary and permanent solutions. One solution is temporary shelters. Since 2009, the City has partnered with BC Housing to open temporary shelter beds. Temporary shelters help to add much-needed capacity to the permanent shelter system, which is comprised of approximately 900 beds. There are currently approximately 500 temporary shelter beds in Vancouver.

15-27 W. Hastings: Bud Osborn Shelter

The Bud Osborn shelter is located in the south side of the former Army & Navy building. It was opened in response to the encampment in Strathcona Park in 2020-2021 originally with 60 beds and expanded to 80 during the winter season of 2022-2023. This shelter plays a vital role in bringing people inside and connecting them with supports and longer-term housing.

BC Housing initially entered into a two-year lease for the building on February 17, 2021, that included an option for Extension of Term for an additional period of one (1) year. Following renovations and selection of the Portland Hotel Society (PHS) as the operator, the shelter

opened in May 2021. Upon conclusion of the initial lease, BC Housing entered into a one-year lease reviewed annually.

The most recent annual lease expired on February 17, 2025 and currently, BC Housing has entered into a month-to-month overholding lease at the rate of \$50,000 per month (\$600,000 annually). The grant contribution being recommended in this report is contingent on the continued operation of the shelter.

Discussion

Ensuring the Continuation of Much Needed Shelter

BC Housing is seeking a 50% contribution (\$300,000 of the \$600,000 lease cost) from the City of Vancouver based on a one-year financial commitment to continue the operation of the shelter.

Historically, the City would provide for the creation of physical shelter spaces through making City-owned space available and/or leasing privately owned sites and funding tenant improvements. As lease and tenant improvement costs have escalated in recent years, the City funding envelope is only sufficient to support a contribution towards the opening of new sites in partnership with BC Housing. In the case of the Bud Osborn shelter, BC Housing leased the privately-owned site with a financial contribution from the City, carried out the tenant improvements, and provides the operational funding for the shelter.

Council approval of staff's recommendation would ensure the continued operation of 80 beds to support people experiencing homelessness. This grant would come from the City's Empty Home Tax funding, as shelters serve as a gateway to housing.

Securing Longer Term Options

The City has a long partnership with BC Housing to deliver the temporary shelter program, as well as longer-term solutions for those who are unhoused. The City will continue to work with provincial partners, including BC Housing, on the creation of solutions that provide safe and secure housing and supports for all who need them.

Financial Implications

Since the opening of the shelter at 15-27 W Hastings in 2021, the City has generally contributed \$275,00 annually to the lease. This report recommends a grant of \$300,000 to BC Housing to support the extension of the lease at 15-27 W. Hastings for the provision of temporary shelter.

As in previous years, the City grant would contribute to half the annual lease costs for 2025, through to February 2026. The source of funds will be from the previously allocated Empty Homes Tax through the 2025 ACCS Homelessness Services operating budget.

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