

DATE OF MEETING November 18, 2020

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SUBJECT **UPDATE ON 2019/2020 GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL INITIATIVES**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Finance and Audit Committee with an update on grant applications made by the City of Nanaimo to various Provincial programs that support social planning initiatives.

BACKGROUND

In addition to providing social planning grants to the community, the City also applies for and receives grant funding to support social planning initiatives. On 2019-OCT-28, Council received an information report on an application submitted to the Province of British Columbia's Community Action Initiative Community Wellness & Harm Reduction Grant for \$50,000 for the purpose of supporting a peer-run skills and employment program (see Attachment A for a detailed description of the grant purpose and deliverables). On 2020-JUL-14, Staff received notification that the City was successful in the grant application (the application review process was delayed due to COVID-19 and the City only recently received the funds).

Staff also provided an update to the Finance and Audit Committee at its 2020-JUL-15 meeting regarding two applications to the BC Healthy Communities Plan H Grant program:

- the Community Connectedness Grant for online resources for seniors (\$5,000); and,
- the Healthy Community Engagement Grant for enhanced engagement with vulnerable populations as part of REIMAGINE NANAIMO (\$15,000).

Unfortunately, both of these grant streams were highly competitive and the City was not successful with either application.

Additionally, on 2020-JUN-10, Council passed a motion directing Staff to receive the \$45,000 grant offered from the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) Foundation's COVID-19 Community Response Fund for Vulnerable Populations (this grant was provided without an application by the City). Council directed Staff to transfer the funds to the United Way Central and Northern Vancouver Island, to be administered along with COVID-19 emergency funding received through the Federal Government's 'Reaching Home' program in its capacity as the Community Entity for the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition.

This report provides an update on funding allocations.

DISCUSSION

The \$45,000 grant from the CMA Foundation's COVID-19 fund was split between two Indigenous-focused programs to enhance their prior funding application awards through the

'Reaching Home' COVID Economic Response Fund Indigenous Homeless Stream. After subtracting the United Way's administrative fee of \$2,250 (a reduced fee of 5% compared to the regular administrative fee of 15%), the net amount of grant funds available totaled \$42,750. This funding decision was made through an application process reviewed by the Allocations Committee of the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition and then affirmed by Coalition members who had previously awarded partial funding to both of these programs. The two Indigenous programs described below are the Snuneymuxw First Nation's 'Wrapping of Blankets' project, and the Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre's 'MY Connections (Qa'thut)' project.

Snuneymuxw First Nation's 'Wrapping of Blankets': To provide client service supports supplemented by Indigenous Knowledge, free of cost to Nanaimo's Indigenous homeless population who are currently most at risk for contracting COVID-19 or experiencing death via drug overdose.

This project applied for the full amount of the \$150,000 available through the Reaching Home COVID Economic Response Fund (Nanaimo Indigenous Homeless Stream) and received \$80,000. When combined with the \$21,375 received from the CMA Foundation's COVID-19 grant, the project has received \$101,375 of the requested \$150,000 (67.5% of the requested funding).

Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre's 'MY Connections (Qa'thut)': A mobile, outreach-based support program for Indigenous youth based in a recreational vehicle (RV). Youth will be able to connect with outreach workers, receive basic needs items, and receive harm reduction supplies and supports.

This project applied for \$103,900 of the \$150,000 available through the Reaching Home COVID Economic Response Fund (Nanaimo Indigenous Homeless Stream) and received \$70,000 of the available funding. When combined with \$21,375 received from the CMA Foundation's COVID-19 grant, the project has received \$91,375 of the requested \$103,900 (88% of the requested funding) toward the purchase of an RV and wages for two youth outreach workers.

One of the challenges with the additional COVID-19 funding that has come through Reaching Home and the CMA Foundation is that organizations must spend it before 2021-MAR-31. This is not the case for the \$50,000 Community Action Initiative Community Wellness & Harm Reduction Grant, which can be spent up until 2022-MAR-31. Snuneymuxw First Nation Health Department has confirmed that despite the additional challenges posed by COVID-19, they are still interested in partnering with the City to operate the peer employment program. City staff will be working with Snuneymuxw over the coming months to coordinate transfer of the funding and provide any requested assistance with program deliverables.

CONCLUSION

The City is pleased to have received additional Provincial grant funding during this period of intense demand on social service and health agencies due to COVID-19. The use of this funding addresses the disproportionate health and housing challenges faced by our Indigenous community members and helps make small steps towards achieving social equity and reconciliation objectives. We look forward to continuing to work with and support our First Nation's government and non-profit partners in this important work.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The City of Nanaimo was selected to receive a \$50,000 Community Action Initiative Community Wellness & Harm Reduction Grant, which will be used to support an Indigenous peer employment program operated by Snuneymuxw First Nation Health Department.
- The City has also received a \$45,000 grant from the CMA Foundation's COVID-19 Community Response Fund for Vulnerable Populations, which has been administered by the United Way as Community Entity for the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition and split between two Indigenous-led health promotion/harm reduction projects (Snuneymuxw First Nation's 'Wrapping of Blankets' and Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre's 'MY Connections - Qa'thut').
- Between the Reaching Home COVID Economic Response Fund (Indigenous) funding, the CMFA Foundation fund and the CAI Grant, the City is supporting three projects that aim to provide assistance to Indigenous community members who are disproportionately impacted by mental health and related substance use disorders that lead to homelessness.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Supplementary Grant Application Details for the 2019 Community Action Initiative Community Wellness & Harm Reduction Grant Application |

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