

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING May 2, 2022

AUTHORED BY BILL CORSAN, DIRECTOR, CORPORATE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT NANAIMO SYSTEMS PLANNING ORGANIZATION SOCIETY CHARTER

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide Council with background information on the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society Charter and to seek Council approval to move forward with creation of the society.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. give final approval to the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society Charter document;
2. direct Staff to develop the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society Constitution, Bylaws and Statement of Directors and Registered Office required by the *Societies Act*;
3. direct Staff to complete and file, with the Registrar of Companies, an incorporation application for the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society; and
4. direct Staff to advertise for the director positions as outlined in the Charter document to enable the Transition Team to appoint the initial board.

BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, the City of Nanaimo has witnessed a significant increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness. The impacts of the City's vulnerable population on the wider community is significant and there has been a concerted effort by the City to work with partners such as BC Housing, Island Health, and local non-profits to help coordinate delivery of services.

Despite these efforts, the City recognized the need to develop a comprehensive plan to tackle the challenge. In May 2019, Council approved the Terms of Reference for a Health and Housing Task Force to oversee the creation of a Health and Housing Action Plan (HHAP) that would outline priorities for Nanaimo and identify targets, gaps, and costs to address current and projected needs of our most vulnerable population. The work of the Task Force concluded in early 2021.

One of the key recommendations from the HHAP was to support the incubation of a Health and Housing Systems Planning Organization (SPO) to help optimize the current approach and maximize return on investment. The SPO would be responsible for several key areas of plan

implementation, focusing especially on improved coordination and organization of existing health and housing resources.

At the 2021-FEB-22 Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

- “1. That Council endorse the draft Health and Housing Action Plan.*
- 2. That Council direct Staff to convene a transition group to establish the overall governance requirements as well as guide the implementation of the System Planner Organization and report back to Council.”*

Following direction from Council, a Transition Group was established with the following members:

- Don Bonner (City of Nanaimo)
- Erin Hemmens (City of Nanaimo)
- Marine White (Snuneymuxw First Nation)
- Emmy Manson (Snuneymuxw First Nation)
- John McCormick (Local Service Agency Representative)
- Kim Smythe (Chamber of Commerce)

The draft SPO Charter was presented to Council at the 2021-AUG-30 meeting. Council directed staff to undertake further consultation and refine the document as necessary. The Transition Team presented to the business community via the Chamber of Commerce in the fall of 2021 and have had four sessions with a working group from the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition.

Based on the feedback received, the Charter (Attachment A) has been revised and is being presented to Council for final approval.

DISCUSSION

The Charter provides a framework for the governance of the SPO. Ultimately, the Board will determine the direction of the organization using the Charter as a guiding document. The key elements of the Charter are as follows:

Purpose: To provide research, data, analysis, education and information related to the community's collective homelessness prevention and response priorities to enable coordinated action and advocacy by Nanaimo's non-profit organizations, Snuneymuxw First Nation and other levels of government, the business sector and the broader community to address an end to homelessness in Nanaimo.

Vision: That all people, regardless of their background, situation or past experiences, can access a full spectrum of health and housing services. This means that responses are coordinated and resources are aligned to ensure homelessness is prevented whenever possible, and if homelessness occurs, it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.

Mandate: The SPO recognizes the collective value of multiple sectors and organizations working together with a common goal to build strong relationships, develop a well-resourced and high-functioning sector and to address homelessness by fulfilling the following mandate:

- Convene transparent leadership in support of the entire community;

- Coordinate a systems approach to homelessness planning that connects the sectors together through information and analysis about funding and resources, client service needs, and shared accountability measures to advance strategic outcomes; and
- Identify, communicate, and coordinate approaches to dealing with system gaps, priorities and opportunities.

Governance Structure: The SPO is an independent, non-aligned agency that jointly manages and makes decisions through an equitable structure. This structure is defined within the parameters of the *Society Act*.

Board of Directors: The SPO is comprised of nine voting directors, with representation by:

- The City and Snuneymuxw First Nation (one vote each).
- Individuals with current or past experience in the housing sector, health services sector and shelter providers (three representatives, one vote each).
- The Nanaimo Prosperity Corporation (one vote).
- Members at-large with governance board experience, or specific identified skills in health and housing (three representatives, one vote each).

The Transition team will advertise and appoint the initial board of directors.

Funding: The City will provide core funding for the SPO for the initial five years to provide support and certainty for the SPO to function effectively, particularly in its early years. Funding is intended to support the activities of the SPO that are initially guided by the HHTF Action Plan. The Society will look for funding opportunities to support the objectives of the HHTF Action Plan.

Remuneration: All Board members representing organizations and agencies serve without remuneration. Board members with no affiliation to an organization or agency are provided an honorarium per meeting. All Board members may claim expenses incurred to conduct SPO Board business in accordance with Board policies.

Operations: The SPO will identify its own space, either independently or shared with an existing non-profit or government agency. The SPO will attend to its own operational needs, including those related to financial management, accounting, legal matters, human resources, purchasing, information technology, etc. If the SPO chooses to outsource any or all of these functions to a partner, or non-profit service provider, the Board will need to consider the risk to governance and sustainability that may be compromised.

Administration: The SPO will hire an Executive Director who will be accountable to the Board. The Executive Director will be responsible for overseeing the work of contractors, consultants and support staff and will administer the day-to-day operations of the Society.

Review of Society: In 2026, an independent review of the SPO will be completed by a consultant hired by the City to ensure the organization is operating in an effective manner and recommend changes if need be.

NEXT STEPS

The Charter provides a framework for the governance and structure of the Nanaimo SPO. To implement the organization, more detail needs to be incorporated into actual bylaws and

policies for the Society. Should Council wish to proceed with the creation of the Nanaimo SPO, the following next steps are anticipated: |

- The City solicitor will prepare the formal Constitution and Bylaws for the Nanaimo SPO Society and register the society.
- Staff, working with the Transition Team, will fill the director positions as outlined in the Charter.
- Policies and procedures for the new Society will be developed to help guide the initial board.

It is anticipated the SPO will have an inaugural meeting before the summer of 2022 and recruit an Executive Director by the early fall. This will enable the SPO to hit the ground running and begin the important work of coordinating the response to homelessness and providing reliable data on the efforts to tackle homelessness.

OPTIONS

1. That Council:

1. give final approval to the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society Charter document;
2. direct Staff to develop the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society Constitution, Bylaws and Statement of Directors and Registered Office required by the *Societies Act*;
3. direct Staff to complete and file, with the Registrar of Companies, an incorporation application for the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society; and
4. direct Staff to advertise for the director positions as outlined in the Charter document to enable the Transition Team to appoint the initial board.
 - The advantages of this option: The Nanaimo SPO is a key tool to help address homelessness in Nanaimo. The SPO undertakes research, helps identify gaps in service provision and works with service providers to address homelessness. The work of the SPO combined with the continued efforts of local non profit service providers and further investment from the Federal and Provincial Government can help tackle the challenge of homelessness.
 - The disadvantages of this option: The Nanaimo SPO will be a new entity and will need the support of Council and local non-profits to be effective. The SPO can not end homelessness itself and expectations for the Society need to be tempered.
 - Financial Implications: The City has budgeted \$480,000 from 2022 to 2026 for the Nanaimo SPO. It is anticipated that the Society will be able to secure additional funding from other programs to bolster operations going forward.

2. That Council provide alternative direction

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SUMMARY POINTS

- In May 2019, Council approved the Terms of Reference for a Health and Housing Task Force to oversee the creation of a Health and Housing Action Plan (HHAP).

- The work of the Task Force concluded in early 2021 with the endorsement by Council of the HHAP.
- One of the key recommendations from the HHAP was to support the incubation of a Health and Housing Systems Planning Organization (SPO) to help optimize a current approach and maximize return on investment.
- Council established a Transition Group to oversee the creation of a Charter document for the Nanaimo SPO. An early draft of the Charter was presented to Council at the 2021-AUG-30 meeting. Council directed Staff to conduct further engagement on the document.
- The Transition Team made further revisions to the document and sought input from the business community and a working group of the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition.
- The final Charter document, presented in Attachment A provides an overview of the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Society.
- The purpose of the SPO is to provide research, data, analysis, education and information related to the community's collective homelessness prevention and response priorities to enable coordinated action and advocacy by Nanaimo's non-profit organizations, Snuneymuxw First Nation and other levels of government, the business sector and the broader community to address an end to homelessness in Nanaimo.
- The Society is managed by an Executive Director and overseen by a governance board with nine directors.
- If approved by Council, the City Solicitor will prepare the formal Constitution and Bylaws for the Nanaimo SPO Society. In addition, the Transition Team will fill the Boards director positions as outlined in the Charter.
- It is anticipated the Nanaimo SPO will have an inaugural meeting before the summer of 2022 and have an Executive Director in place by the early fall.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization Charter |

Submitted by:

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Development |