

DATE OF MEETING December 13, 2023

AUTHORED BY EMILY NOTLEY, PLANNING ASSISTANT

SUBJECT SOCIAL PLANNING GRANTS 2024

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To present to the Finance and Audit Committee the recommended Social Planning Grant allocations for 2024.

### **Recommendation**

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve a total of \$85,000, in accordance with the Social Planning Grant Guidelines and Criteria as attached, and that the grant allocations be as follows:

a) 2024 Community Vitality Grants – Total \$25,000

Growing Opportunities Farm Community Co-op - \$4,000  
Project: Seniors & Youth Growing Seedlings

Nanaimo Community Kitchens - \$6,000  
Project: Cooking out of the Box for Youth

Spinal Cord Injury Society - \$5,000  
Project: Peer Support and Outdoor Inclusion for People with spinal cord injuries in Nanaimo

Mid Island Métis Nation - \$10,000  
Project: Métis Cultural Food Share

b) 2024 Social Response Grants – Total \$60,000

Wisteria Community Association - \$30,000  
Project: Food for Thought

The Literacy Circle Society - \$30,000  
Project: The Literacy Circle – Learning for Life

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 2001, the City of Nanaimo has allocated annual Social Planning Grants to non-profit societies, neighbourhood associations, and/or recognized faith groups in Nanaimo. The purpose of the Social Planning Grant program is to assist organizations in responding to issues of a social nature with initiatives that enhance social cohesion, address the root causes and effects of poverty, contribute to the vitality of our community, and foster social inclusion and social equity.

The program is made up of two categories, the Community Vitality and Social Response Grants, with a combined total of \$85,000, annually. A total of \$25,000 can be directed to Community Vitality Grants and are targeted towards smaller initiatives. Whereas a total of \$60,000 can be directed to Social Response Grants which are generally intended to support larger scale projects. Funding cannot be used to fund projects or programs outside the City of Nanaimo, or ongoing operational expenses incurred during the organizations normal course of business.

In order to be considered, all applicants must submit an application under one of the two funding categories. The application requires that the applicant submit the project name, a brief summary including a timeline, location, staffing requirements, target market, potential programming, and community partnerships. In addition, the application requires a detailed budget of project revenue sources (e.g. donations) and expenses.

## **DISCUSSION**

The City received 23 Social Planning Grant applications for the 2024 funding cycle; this is an increase from the 13 applications received for the 2023 funding cycle. The total requested amount for the 2024 Social Planning Grant programs was \$349,175 (Attachment A). Staff from Community Planning and Finance reviewed all applications relative to the 2024 Social Planning Grant Guidelines and Criteria (Attachment B). Each evaluation was independently evaluated, scored and collated amongst the review team. The Staff review committee evaluated each application based on merit, relevance/feasibility, and potential impact.

The City of Nanaimo's strategic funding priorities for the Social Planning Grant program support the desired outcomes and policies in City Plan, in particular, the project should contribute to City Plan's goal for A Healthy Nanaimo: Community Wellbeing & Livability.

Staff recommend allocating a total of \$85,000 to six applicants, four for the Community Vitality Grant, and two for the Social Response Grant.

### **Community Vitality Grants**

A total of 13 Community Vitality Grant applications were received for 2024. Based on the evaluations, Staff are recommending that \$4,000 be allocated to Growing Opportunities Farm Community Co-op for their Seniors & Youth Growing Seedlings program; \$6,000 to Nanaimo Community Kitchens Cooking out of the Box for Youth program; \$5,000 to the Spinal Cord Injury Society for their Peer Support and Outdoor Inclusion for People with spinal cord injuries in Nanaimo; and \$10,000 to Mid Island Métis Nation for their Métis Cultural Food Share program.

### **Social Response Grants**

A total of 10 Social Response Grant applications were received for 2024. Based on the evaluations, Staff are recommending that \$30,000 be allocated to Wisteria Community Association for their Food for Thought program and \$30,000 be allocated to the Literacy Circle Society for their Learning for Life program.

## **OPTIONS**

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve a total of \$85,000, in accordance with the Social Planning Grant Guidelines and Criteria as attached, and that the grant allocations be as follows:

- a) 2024 Community Vitality Grants – Total \$25,000

Growing Opportunities Farm Community Co-op - \$4,000  
Project: Seniors & Youth Growing Seedlings

Nanaimo Community Kitchens - \$6,000  
Project: Cooking out of the Box for Youth

Spinal Cord Injury Society - \$5,000  
Project: Peer Support and Outdoor Inclusion for People with spinal cord injuries in Nanaimo

Mid Island Métis Nation - \$10,000  
Project: Métis Cultural Food Share

- b) 2024 Social Response Grants – Total \$60,000

Wisteria Community Association - \$30,000  
Project: Food for Thought

The Literacy Circle Society - \$30,000  
Project: The Literacy Circle – Learning for Life

- The advantages of this option: Six recommended projects, determined to have higher merit based on fulfilling the guidelines and criteria of the Social Planning Grant programs, will receive full or partial funding from the two grant streams.
- The disadvantages of this option: A number of organizations who submitted Social Planning grant applications will receive no funding, or less funding than requested.
- Financial Implications: The recommendation allocates the full \$85,000 Social Planning Grants budget.

2. That Council provide alternate direction.

### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- The City received 23 Social Planning Grant applications with a total requested amount of \$349,175 for 2024.
- The total budget for the 2024 Social Planning Grants is \$85,000, of which \$25,000 can be allocated to Community Vitality Grants, and \$60,000 to Social Response Grants.
- Staff are recommending that the full \$25,000 available for the Community Vitality Grant be awarded to four of the eligible projects.
- Staff are recommending that the full \$60,000 available for the Social Response Grants be awarded to two of the eligible projects.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

ATTACHMENT A: 2024 Community Vitality and Social Response Applications Received

ATTACHMENT B: 2024 Social Planning Grants Guidelines and Criteria |

#### **Submitted by:**

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#### **Concurrence by:**

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