

DATE OF MEETING May 15, 2024

AUTHORED BY DAVID STEWART, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER

**SUBJECT COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GRANT**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To present to the Finance and Audit Committee the recommended Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant allocations for the 2024 spring intake.

### **Recommendation**

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve a total of \$20,000 in accordance with the Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant Guidelines and Criteria as attached, and that the grant allocations be as follows:

- a) Light House Sustainability Society - \$2,500  
Project: Building Material Exchange (BMEx)
- b) Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association - \$800  
Project: DBNA Environmental Engagement
- c) Altrusa Club of Nanaimo - \$5,000  
Project: Nurture Nature
- d) Nanaimo Foodshare - \$2,800  
Project: Compost Revitalization Project
- e) Nanaimo Old City Association with the Harewood Neighbourhood Association and Dover Community Association - \$1,600  
Project: Thermal Imaging and Home Energy Reduction Neighbourhood Project
- f) Rock City Neighbourhood Association - \$4,800  
Project: Seed to Table Workshop
- g) South End Eco Development Cooperative - \$2,500  
Project: The Toolshare Project

## **BACKGROUND**

On 2023-SEP-25, Council endorsed the Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant Guidelines and Criteria. The first Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant intake

was completed in late 2023. A second grant intake was launched on 2024-FEB-12, and closed on 2024-APR-02, to align with the Community Watershed Restoration Grant. A total of \$20,000 in funding is available for this grant intake.

The purpose of the grant is to support small, environmental sustainability and climate projects that aim to improve the environmental health of natural systems, enhance residents' connections to nature, provide educational values, and contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation. The grant can provide up to \$5,000 per project for eligible projects not already supported by another City of Nanaimo grant.

The evaluation of applications involved an integrated review committee with staff from Sustainability; Engineering and Environment; Community Planning; Parks, Recreation and Culture; and Finance. The same team of staff also reviewed the Community Watershed Restoration grant applications.

## **DISCUSSION**

Ten Community Environmental Sustainability Grant applications were received. A total of \$38,330 was requested, which was \$18,330 more than the available grant funding. Staff are recommending a total of \$20,000 be allocated to seven applicants as follows:

| Applicant   | Project   | Requested | Recommended |
|---|---|-----------|-------------|
| Light House Sustainability Society  | Building Material Exchange (BMEx)                                     | \$5,000   | \$2,500     |
| Dover Bay Secondary   | Dover Bay Outdoor Education- Rutherford Park Native Plant Restoration | \$260     | \$0         |
| Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association   | DBNA Environmental Engagement   | \$1,000   | \$800       |
| Altrusa Club of Nanaimo   | Nurture Nature  | \$5,000   | \$5,000     |
| Nanaimo Foodshare   | Compost Revitalization Project  | \$4,970   | \$2,800     |
| Nanaimo Old City Association in partnership with the Harewood Neighbourhood Association and Dover Community Association | Thermal Imaging and Home Energy Reduction Neighbourhood Project       | \$2,300   | \$1,600     |
| Rock City Neighbourhood Association   | Seed to Table Workshop  | \$4,800   | \$4,800     |
| South End Eco Development Cooperative   | The Toolshare Project   | \$5,000   | \$2,500     |

|                                   |   |                 |                 |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Vancouver Island Regional Library | Nanaimo Harbourfront Branch HVAC Upgrade                | \$5,000         | \$0             |
| Wildcoast Ecological Society      | Nanaimo Natural Areas Education and Stewardship Project | \$5,000         | \$0             |
| <b>Total</b>                      |   | <b>\$38,330</b> | <b>\$20,000</b> |

Staff recommend that the Altrusa Club and the Rock City Neighbourhood Association receive their full funding request; and that partial funding be awarded to the Light House Sustainability Society, Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association, Nanaimo Foodshare, Nanaimo Old City Neighbourhood Association, and the South End Eco Development Cooperative. Staff's recommendations are based on a review of the grant guidelines and criteria in the following categories: merit/project team capacity and experience, project relevance and feasibility, and project impact. Both Altrusa and the Rock City Neighbourhood Association are active participants in the City's Acting for Climate Together program and have demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing City Plan Green goals. The evaluation team were impressed by the quality of Altrusa and Rock City's applications, established program uptake among broad age groups, and the programs' ability to address City Plan goals.

Dover Bay Secondary submitted the same application for a Community Watershed Restoration Grant, as such the grant review team elected to consider the application within that grant stream rather than the Community Environmental Sustainability Grant stream. The Vancouver Island Regional Library application was deemed ineligible, and no funding is recommended for the Wildcoast Ecological Society application.

## **OPTIONS**

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve a total of \$20,000 in accordance with the Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant Guidelines and Criteria as attached, and that the grant allocations be as follows:
  - a) Light House Sustainability Society - \$2,500  
Project: Building Material Exchange (BMEx)
  - b) Departure Bay Neighbourhood Association - \$800  
Project: DBNA Environmental Engagement
  - c) Altrusa Club of Nanaimo - \$5,000  
Project: Nurture Nature
  - d) Nanaimo Foodshare - \$2,800  
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  - e) Nanaimo Old City Association with the Harewood Neighbourhood Association and Dover Community Association - \$1,600  
Project: Thermal Imaging and Home Energy Reduction Neighbourhood Project
  - f) Rock City Neighbourhood Association - \$4,800  
Project: Seed to Table Workshop

g) South End Eco Development Cooperative - \$2,500  
Project: The Toolshare Project

- The advantages of this option: Seven proposed projects of higher merit based on fulfilling the guidelines and criteria of the Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant will receive full or partial funding.
- The disadvantages of this option: Some applicants will only receive partial or no funding. Those applicants receiving partial funding may need to scale down their intended project or seek another funding source.
- Financial Implications: The recommendation allocates the full \$20,000 in available project funding.

2. That the Finance and Audit Committee provide alternate direction. |

#### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- The Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant was launched in 2023 to support small and creative environmental sustainability and climate projects.
- The City received ten applications requesting a total amount of \$38,330.
- Staff are recommending the full amount of \$20,000 be awarded to seven proposed projects.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

ATTACHMENT A: Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant Guidelines and Criteria

#### **Submitted by:**

Ting Pan  
Manager, Sustainability |

#### **Concurrence by:**

Wendy Fulla  
Director, Finance

Jeremy Holm  
Director, Planning & Development

Laura Mercer  
General Manager, Corporate Services |