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To: Mayor Helps and Victoria City Council      Date: September 26, 2019  
From: Janine Theobald, Inclusion & Collaboration Manager, GVCEH  
Subject: Summary Pandora Task Force Report and Recommendations

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## **Executive Summary of Pandora Task Force Report and Recommendations (Appendix A)**

The report provides background on the Pandora Task Force, the outcomes of engagement activities and provides immediate, short, medium and long-term recommendations regarding action on the 900 block of Pandora Avenue. A plan to move from consultation to collaborative community action is described.

April 14, 2016, BC's provincial health officer declared a public health emergency regarding the rise in drug overdoses and deaths. A local response was to open a Safe Consumption Site on the 900 block of Pandora Avenue. Additional ongoing systematic issues, some outside the jurisdiction of the City of Victoria, such as: the lack of affordable and shelter rate housing (Victoria hovers at approx. 1.2% rental vacancy rate<sup>1</sup>), over-capacity health care services (including Mental Health & Addictions Services), lack of on-demand detox and stabilization services have facilitated a concentration of people gathering on the 900 block of Pandora Avenue for safety and services. This has resulted in challenges in community from increased bylaw and police calls to the block, to residents and businesses reporting fear, frustration and impact on their businesses and well-being.

The Mayor's Pandora Task Force, convened in 2015, has been working in consultation with varied stakeholders to work collaboratively and inclusively on the 900 block of Pandora Avenue. September 2018, the Greater Victoria Placemaking Network presented a research paper and made recommendations for actions to support effective change in the area.

In March of 2019 an engagement of the community via workshops and a charette on the 900 block was undertaken in partnership with the City of Victoria and the GVCEH<sup>2</sup>.

## **Recommendation Summary:**

### **IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Conduct no further consultations. The community has been engaged in discussion regarding this topic at many tables over the past decade, and clear action items have been identified.
2. Implement the recommendations from community consultations and previous reports.
3. Appoint the GVCEH and City of Victoria to coordinate implementation and report on results.
4. Request funding from Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions to support Peer engagement in Acton Teams and implementation of recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> (CMHC, Rental Market Report- 2018)

<sup>2</sup> (See pages 4 to 7 of Appendix A for consultation results)

## SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS<sup>3</sup>

1. Develop pilot program “Victoria On Call” modeled after the Downtown on Call program in Kelowna. Pilot is designed in collaboration with peer leaders.
2. Installation of Water Bottle Refill Station.
3. 24-hour accessible restrooms are installed on the 900 block maintained by street community members as a social enterprise.
4. Collaborative Space Making is undertaken on the 900 block. i.e., seating, clear walkways.

## MEDIUM TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Declare the 900 block of Pandora Avenue a ‘Special Area’ in alignment with the Motion carried by Victoria City Council, June 13, 2019, re: Application of Equity and Affordability Policies, which “Council direct the City Manager to imbed these four principles<sup>4</sup> for the City’s emerging equity policies.”
2. Embed social enterprise into future development on the block by partnering with the business sector, i.e., GT Hiring Solutions, DVBA, Chamber of Commerce and service providers to develop a sustainable employment initiative.

## LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Using the learnings from this community consultation process, implement a coordinated response in areas with a high demographic of community members who are underserved within the City of Victoria, and have a high number of calls to police and bylaw.

### BUDGET

<b>Pandora Task Force and Action Team Coordination</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting Costs</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Support of Community Action Teams</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Action Team Meetings</li> </ul>	
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>\$295,000</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$180,000 Restrooms x 2</li> <li>• \$15,000 Water Station</li> <li>• \$100,000 Seating &amp; Divider on Boulevard</li> </ul>	
<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$100,000 Memorial, History of Place Monument</li> </ul>	
<b>Social Enterprise &amp; Community Development</b>	<b>\$394,000</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$332,500 Victoria On Call Pilot/Participatory Action Research</li> <li>• \$61,500 Restroom Maintenance &amp; Supplies</li> </ul>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$839,000</b>

<sup>3</sup> (See table on pages 9 and 10 of Appendix A)

<sup>4</sup> (See page 11 of Appendix A)