



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of May 21, 2020

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** May 11, 2020
From: Thomas Soulliere, Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities
Subject: Reallocation of funding to support *Get Growing, Victoria!*

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the reallocation of \$30,000 from the 2020 Community Garden Coordinator Grant to provide direct awards grants to community organizations supporting distribution and education components of the *Get Growing, Victoria!* food production program.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a request to reallocate funding to support the education and distribution components of the *Get Growing, Victoria!* food production program.

BACKGROUND

The Community Garden Volunteer Grant was established in 2015 and is intended to provide funding for community outreach, volunteer coordination and to promote educational opportunities relating to local food production.

In January 2020, on Council's direction, the grant program's terms of reference were expanded to include non-food producing gardens, new gardens and eligible garden projects, community boulevard gardening and the urban food tree stewardship program.

In April 2020, Council directed staff to temporarily reprioritize the municipal nursery and greenhouses for the growth and distribution of food starts in the 2020 growing season. In addition, Council directed staff to report back on options for reallocating funds within the food systems budget to expand the distribution of gardening materials to neighborhoods.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

The January 2020 intake of the 2020 *Volunteer Coordinator Grant* resulted in the allocation of \$100,000 in funding supporting 11 community gardens leaving a balance of \$30,000. Staff propose reallocating the remaining funding to support direct award grants for community partner organizations formed through *Get Growing, Victoria!* program.

This change in use would align with the spirit of the grant program, supporting organizations who would use the funding to hire a coordinator to manage volunteers to distribute food starts, support community growing activities, and assist in the creation and dissemination of educational materials.

Community partner organizations proposed to receive the grants are listed below.

Partner Organization	Program Role	Outcomes	Proposed Grant
LifeCycles Project Society Farm to School BC	Distribution and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20,000+ plants distributed to families in the Greater Victoria School District 2000 families from 47 schools provided access to seedlings 250 families provided healthy fresh food grown on school grounds 400-600 lbs. of produce grown at School District farmyards for families from May to September 	\$18,000
Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable (CRFAIR)	Education and Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Growing Together</i> will support 15,000+ novice gardeners with information and tools including educational videos, resources and gardener mentorship-matching program 	\$9,000
Power to Be	Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation of seedlings to Indigenous communities across CRD as a part of the <i>SWŌŌENENITEL</i> initiative, seniors programs and other organizations facing limitations to transport the seedlings 	\$1,500
Food Eco District - My FED Farm	Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing free, pop-up, raised home gardens, with seedlings, soil, set-up and consultation to 500 low income families and laid off workers across Greater Victoria 	\$1,500
Total			\$30,000

The success of Get Growing, Victoria! depends on the participation of community partners. The City is the supplier of the seedlings, and community groups play an essential role in the distribution of the seedlings to the marginalized populations this program aims to serve. The direct award of these grants would provide the organizations with the necessary capacity to ensure the program deliverables are met.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

That Council direct staff to reallocate \$30,000 from the 2020 Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grant program to provide direct award grants to fund the distribution and education components of Get Growing, Victoria!

To fund the distribution and education actions for the *Get Growing, Victoria!* seedlings program, staff recommend that funding be reallocated from the Community Gardens Volunteer Coordinator Grant (2020 intake now completed).

Accessibility Impact Statement

Increase accessibility of seedlings and educational resources to communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Impacts to Financial Plan


In 2020, Council allocated \$130,000 towards Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grant. Upon the 2020 intake of the grant \$100,000 will be awarded to non-profit organization, leaving a balance of \$30,000.

The reallocation proposed would result in no net impact to the 2020 Financial Plan.

CONCLUSIONS

Within weeks of Council's direction, staff initiated the planning with community groups to develop the Get Growing, Victoria! Program. The participation of community organizations will ensure the success of seedlings, through established distribution streams and tailored educational resources. The funding support outlined in this report will ensure that organizations have the capacity to support the program effectively.

Respectfully submitted,



Alex Harned
Food Systems Coordinator
Parks, Recreation and Facilities



Thomas Soulliere
Director
Parks, Recreation and Facilities



Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date: May 19, 2020

List of Attachments

Attachment A: [Community Garden Volunteer Coordinator Grant Terms of Reference](#)