

External Grant Review Committee Report

External Grant Review Committee
Report to Council
July 16, 2020

INTRODUCTION

In October 2017, Council received a report on the pilot project initiated in 2017 to use an external grant review committee to assist it in its annual deliberations on Strategic Plan Grants. The mandate of the pilot “Strategic Plan Grant Review Committee” according to its Terms of Reference was to

“... review all applications received by the City under the Strategic Plan Grants program and to make recommendations to City Council on the annual Strategic Plan Grants to be funded by the City.

The Committee’s recommendations will be guided by the City’s Strategic Plan and in particular the evaluation matrix specifically established for Strategic Plan Grants.”

Council decided to formalize this approach and created the External Grant Review Committee. This Committee has provided recommendations on the Strategic Plan Grants since 2017. All members of the original pilot committee have completed their terms or resigned due to other commitments. Council appointed new members to the Committee at the beginning of the 2020. Members of the Committee include:

- Chris Tilden (Chair), returning Committee member
- Colleen Kasting, returning Committee member
- Athena Madan, returning Committee member
- Alan Humphries
- Serena Klaver

Since October 2017, Council has agreed to a number of recommendations to update the application process itself. The changes were greatly appreciated by the Committee and facilitated review of the project applications. A few more suggestions for improvement have been made to staff as a result of the 2020 review process, and are outlined in the section called “Suggestions for 2021”, below.

The committee received support from the City Clerk’s office and Finance Department. The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank staff for their support preparing material and providing the committee with background information essential to a full assessment of the applications. Christine Havelka, Deputy City Clerk, and Jennifer Lockhart, Manager, Revenue, provided invaluable input and assistance through the 2020 deliberations as the committee needed to adapt to an online meeting process.

It should be noted that this year's review of Strategic Plan Grants was the first review based on the 2019-2022 Strategic Objectives. A total of \$592,285 is available for the grant program in 2020, which was increased by \$100,000 from the initial \$492,285. Sixty-five eligible applications totaling \$1,195,733 were received.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Committee met three times:

May 6, 2020:

- New members were introduced.
- Staff reviewed with the committee the grant process and how the applications were reviewed by the previous committee.

May 15, 2020:

- Set up a process for determining the allocation of the grants.
- Reviewed opportunities for improvements to applications and the review process.

June 12, 2020 and June 17, 2020:

- Two half-day sessions were conducted online to review and discuss committee members' results to make the final determination for grant allocations.

The Committee's timeline was designed to meet deadlines for Council's meeting on July 16, 2020

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The elements of the evaluation framework adopted by the Committee are the same as those used in 2019 and included the new Weighted Strategic Plan Objectives:

1. Council Weighted Strategic Plan Objectives:

OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL RANKING
Affordable Housing	6.00
Sustainable Transportation	5.63
Strong, Livable Neighborhoods	5.50
Climate Leadership and Environmental Stewardship	5.25
Reconciliation and Indigenous Relations	4.75
Health, Well-Being and a Welcoming City	4.50
Prosperity and Economic Inclusion	3.88

In 2018, grant applications were instructed to select the one objective that was most applicable. This process was continued for 2020. Applicants could select multiple objectives but were only weighted on the objective that was most applicable.

Of the applications submitted, 61.5% of applications selected Health, Well-Being and a Welcoming City as the most applicable objective, with the remaining applications split between the remaining five objectives. No applications were received for Sustainable Transportation.

OBJECTIVE	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
Affordable Housing	4
Sustainable Transportation	0
Strong, Livable Neighborhoods	7
Climate Leadership and Environmental Stewardship	6
Reconciliation and Indigenous Relations	3
Health, Well-Being and a Welcoming City	40
Prosperity and Economic Inclusion	5

2. Criteria used for analysis grant applications.

Capacity of Organizations to Deliver the Project (20%): Project aligns and advances organization mission and mandate; organization has experience and capacity to undertake project successfully; the people who will lead and implement the project have relevant experience; and strong leadership is evident

Evidence of Need (20%): Demonstrated strong evidence of need for the project, project addresses a City Strategic Plan Objective.

Community Impact (30%): Project benefits a priority target population (or environmental area); expected results are well-considered and will have significant impact; applicant identifies appropriate methods for evaluating project results; project will involve appropriate partners/amplify impact through collaboration; community impacts are reasonable, well-considered and are applicable to the project.

Project Feasibility (30%): Work plan is detailed and feasible with stated timelines; budget expenses are appropriate and well considered amounts are identified for proposed activities; budget revenues include adequate funding sources to meet project expenses; other sources of funding are identified as potential or confirmed, including in-kind sources.

Each application was given a score between 1 and 5 in each category and scores were weighted according to the percentages above.

3. Overall Evaluation Taking Multiple Factors into Consideration

The combination of scores from 1 and 2 above resulted in a total “Merit Score” for each grant application. Scores ranged from a high of 28.20 to a low of 7.11. The average was 17.63 and the median was 17.55. Thirty-three applications scored at and above the mean while thirty-two fell below.

In assessing the final recommended awards for 2020, the committee applied a process so that the higher the final weighted merit score would result in a greater percentage of the eligible amount requested being received. With the additional funding of \$100,000 and the overall breadth and quality to the applications presented, the committee wanted to provide funding to as many applications that qualified, with only five of the sixty-five eligible applications not receiving funding. The committee elected to set a minimum grant of \$1,500 that two applications were recommended for that level of funding.

Given demand relative to funds available, no applications received full funding. No notional maximum was set, but awards of \$40,000 (or 7% of total funds available to be awarded) for a single grant were considered at or near maximum.

For most of the high merit scoring applications, most grants amounted to between 65-80% of the amount requested. The average being 47%, the median 45%.

The largest grant amount recommended is \$31,600 (Victoria Women's Transition House Society); the smallest \$1,500 (Story Studio Writing Society; Jewish Community Centre of Victoria); average \$9,112; median \$7,500.

RESULTS

Each Committee member completed the agreed upon template and the results were consolidated. The Committee met on June 12 and June 17, 2020 to review and make final decisions and recommendations to Council regarding the allocation of grant funds.

The results, including recommended grants and comments on each application, are summarized in the tables below. Table 1 shows applications sorted by merit scores; Table 2 shows comments for each application.

Table 1. Victoria Strategic Plan Grants: Total Merit Scores and Suggested Awards

(The Merit score represents the average of the committee members individual scoring results prior to the meeting on June 12 and June 17, 2020)

ORGANIZATION NAME	REQUESTED	ELIGIBLE	MERIT	SUGGESTED AWARD
Threshold Housing Society	35,000	35,000	28.20	28,750

Rent Smart Education and Support Society (formerly Ready to Rent BC Assc)	7,245	7,245	25.00	5,900
Victoria Women's Transition House Society (VWTH)	40,000	40,000	24.80	32,500
Victoria Compost and Conservation Education Society (Compost Education Centre)	11,000	11,000	23.28	8,800
The Mustard Seed Street Church	26,000	26,000	22.50	20,800
Our Place Society	30,000	28,161	21.60	22,000
Living Edge Community	10,000	10,000	21.45	7,750
Quadra Village Community Centre	29,198	29,198	21.45	22,620
Burnside Gorge Community Association	20,000	20,000	20.85	15,000
The Victoria Youth Empowerment Society (YES)	13,000	13,000	20.55	9,100
Victoria Native Friendship Centre	12,000	12,000	20.43	8,300
Victoria Sexual Assault Centre	40,000	40,000	19.95	26,000
Greater Victoria Cross Guards Association	47,000	47,000	19.80	30,550
Victoria Brain Injury Society	12,000	12,000	19.80	7,800
Victoria Tool Library	7,500	6,375	19.65	4,144
Peninsula Streams Society	18,000	18,000	19.60	11,700
Coastal Research Education and Advocacy Network	15,563	15,563	19.50	10,500
LifeCycles Project Society	20,000	20,000	19.50	13,000
Victoria Community Micro Lending Society	15,350	15,350	19.35	9,978
Victoria Conservatory of Music	9,500	9,500	19.35	6,175
Chinese Community Services Center of Victoria	10,600	10,600	19.00	8,000
Vancouver Island Local History Society (VILHS)	20,000	20,000	18.70	11,000

BC Black History Awareness Society (BCBHAS)	15,000	15,000	18.60	9,500
Disaster Aid Canada (Soap for Hope)	30,000	30,000	18.45	17,750
Surfrider Foundation Vancouver Island Chapter	5,900	5,900	18.38	2,950
Cerebral Palsy Association of British Columbia	5,000	5,000	18.30	2,500
Crisis Intervention & Public Information Society of Greater Victoria dba NEED2 Suicide Prevention Education & Support	22,000	22,000	18.30	11,000
Bridges for Women Society	40,000	40,000	18.15	20,000
The Proulx Global Education and Community Foundation	36,820	36,820	18.15	18,410
Peers Victoria Resource Society	15,000	15,000	17.85	7,500
Refugee Sponsorship Program of the Anglican Diocese of BC	40,000	40,000	17.78	16,800
Canadian Paraplegic Association (BC), Operating as Spinal Cord Injury BC	10,500	10,500	17.55	4,725
CanAssist at the University of Victoria	40,000	40,000	17.55	16,800
Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiative Roundtable Society	12,000	12,000	17.40	5,400
Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees (VICCIR)	40,000	40,000	17.10	18,000
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria and Area	20,000	20,000	17.00	8,000
Oaklands Community Association	12,131	12,131	16.65	4,852
Stigma-Free Society (Formerly Bipolar Disorder Society of BC)	9,000	9,000	16.65	3,600
Victoria Epilepsy and Parkinson's Centre (Headway)	8,500	8,500	16.50	3,400
Fernwood Neighborhood Resource Group Society	39,850	39,850	16.47	12,750
Ballet Victoria Society	10,000	10,000	16.43	3,500

Creatively United for the Planet	37,000	37,000	16.28	11,800
Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society	20,100	20,100	16.04	7,035
Jewish Community Centre of Victoria	2,120	2,120	16.00	1,500
Drop The Plastic	10,000	6,800	15.90	2,040
FED Urban Agriculture Society	9,000	9,000	15.90	2,700
Society for Kids at Tennis (KATS)	10,000	10,000	15.90	3,000
Fairfield Gonzales Community Association	12,650	12,650	15.80	3,795
Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria	18,700	15,548	15.75	4,664
Greater Victoria Volunteer Society dba Volunteer Victoria	10,000	10,000	15.75	3,000
Power to Be Adventure Society	12,000	11,785	15.75	3,535
Victoria Literacy Connection	13,000	13,000	15.75	3,900
Friends of Learning and Living Through Loss	10,030	7,523	15.30	2,257
Leadership Victoria Society	13,515	13,515	15.00	4,055
Maritime Museum of BC	20,000	20,000	15.00	6,000
Story Studio Writing Society (Story Studio)	3,000	3,000	15.00	1,500
Junior Achievement B.C (JABC)	20,000	20,000	14.87	6,000
Tides Canada Initiatives Society - Keeping it Human	25,000	25,000	14.85	7,500
KidSport Greater Victoria	25,000	25,000	14.40	7,500
Pandora Arts Collective Society (PACS)	10,000	9,000	14.12	2,700
Victoria Innovation, Advanced Technology and Entrepreneurship Council (VIATEC)	20,000	20,000	13.58	-
Cine-Vic Society of Independent Filmmakers	6,000	6,000	12.90	-

Theatre SKAM Association	12,000	12,000	11.85	-
Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission	5,000	5,000	9.70	-
Greater Victoria Visitors & Convention Bureau	24,000	24,000	7.11	-
TOTAL	1,208,772	1,195,733		592,285

**Table 2. Victoria Strategic Plan Grants: Application Comments
(Sorted by Merit Score Ranking)**

ORGANIZATION NAME	COMMENTS
Threshold Housing Society	New/unfunded program. Youth Homeless Prevention & Housing Stabilization. Programming guided Housing First For Youth Model. Well aligned and clear activity framework mapped out with success measurements. Clearly articulated what applicant was trying to accomplish / do with funding dollars and the impact this would have.
Rent Smart Education and Support Society (formerly Ready to Rent BC Assc)	Well laid out, learning from other regions, support from organizations in Victoria, measurements good. Train the educator approach. Success is indirect - depends on trained educator following through.
Victoria Women's Transition House Society (VWTH)	Ongoing program to support women suffering domestic abuse and violence. Assisted 220 individuals last year. Funding to assist access to affordable housing and counselling, appears to be an element of the overall services provided by VWTH. Extensive funding from many sources (gov, fundraising and donations). Victoria only funder for the program. Long standing org supporting woman fleeing abuse and paints picture of need once leaving 30 day emergency housing. Measurements of success could capture more useful and robust data.
Victoria Compost and Conservation Education Society (Compost Education Centre)	Program meets and supports the city's Strategic Objective of Climate Leadership & Environmental Stewardship. Focuses on food security and education. Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes. Target numbers feasible.
The Mustard Seed Street Church	Clear ask and detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes.
Our Place Society	Clearly articulated, partnerships and referral networks identified in working with the targeted population. City only funder. Proposal could be improved as some confusion over seniors vs newly homeless

Living Edge Community	Program sounds solid, and needed and they collaborate with others. Measures of success are less objective and appear to be less program focused (board of director recruitment, 3 year plan).
Quadra Village Community Centre	Well put together application, lots of details and clear outcomes and a one time project for getting gardens set up. Not clear how many gardens they are planning. Program, which has been under discussions since 2003 will commence Spring 2021
Burnside Gorge Community Association	Clear ask and detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes and specific measures of success.
The Victoria Youth Empowerment Society (YES)	Alliance Club Drop-In (The Club) - Supports high-risk vulnerable youth 13-19. Art Hive at the VNFC is an arts space for Indigenous people - alignment with Reconciliation and Indigenous Relations strategic objective. Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes. Program heavily reliant on cash funding from City.
Victoria Native Friendship Centre	New initiative (Funding for the Bruce Parisien library and reading circles) which proves high-level and sustained impact at the community level. Heavy focus on victoria funding, measurements well laid out, need explained about expanding existing program.
Victoria Sexual Assault Centre	Informative and clear details on outcomes and plan. Partnership funding with other GV municipalities and Province. Measurements of success could capture more useful and robust data.
Greater Victoria Cross Guards Association	This is core funding for a critical program for safety. 2nd year of org, application better than last year but could improve on details and information supplied (such as the Harbour Authority mention - working with businesses to provide staff) as well as milestones. A direct award by Council for such programming may be better suited than through a granting committee to ensure public safety meets with city requirements.
Victoria Brain Injury Society	Existing program supporting 50 individuals + families/week. Quantitative success measures. Significant fundraising and support from Island Health, United Way. Clear indication of how funding money would be applied.
Victoria Tool Library	Expansion of lending library for tools and workshops on safe use (power tools, bike repair, drywall). Fully volunteer. Est. 2015. 46% matching funding in place. Smaller grant ask, program and plan clear, as only a volunteer run organization some concern on organization ability to manage.
Peninsula Streams Society	Has identified both measurements for success and staged approach (4) to completing work. The shoreline/beach cleanup is always necessary as it relates to climate change adaptation measures.

Coastal Research Education and Advocacy Network	Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities. GV School District are not participants and more engagement with and including them would help applications. Unclear how report would translate into meaningful actions particularly with limited involvement from Vic High and none from GVSD.
LifeCycles Project Society	Organization has long track record in this work. Well thought out, including measures of success. Food security efforts are important work.
Victoria Community Micro Lending Society	Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes. New program for ongoing training & support for local entrepreneurs.
Victoria Conservatory of Music	New program. Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes. Good outreach. Early Childhood music education for marginalized families/communities
Chinese Community Services Center of Victoria	Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes. Timely also to promote business continuity / revitalisation and intercultural cooperation. New centre, volunteer run. Limited matching funds.
Vancouver Island Local History Society (VILHS)	Interesting program & new initiative - good interdisciplinary. 1 FTE. Funding nebulous - \$6k required from local business. Imprecise/generic success measure, does not provide mention or strategy to attract local tourists (schools, etc).
BC Black History Awareness Society (BCBHAS)	Limited FTE for a large event. Timely and socially relevant. Clear output / outcome planning which is useful. Could have broad community reach. Good work plan.
Disaster Aid Canada (Soap for Hope)	Facing challenges due to supply cut off from hotels, drastically increasing costs and reducing in kind donations. Measure of success could be stronger but feasible and make sense and consider long-term sustainability (ie creation of supply chain).
Surfrider Foundation Vancouver Island Chapter	Blue Water Task Force (BWTF) - flagship water sampling and advocacy program - collaborative partnership with VIHA and CRD. Clear measurements of success but I did not see these reflected in program activities. City will be contributing a high level of funding.
Cerebral Palsy Association of British Columbia	Introduction of program in Victoria following success in Vancouver. Well designed program. Matching funds in place. Use of evaluation tools. Collaboration/partnerships with other charities.
Crisis Intervention & Public Information Society of Greater Victoria dba NEED2 Suicide Prevention Education & Support	Measurements of success are clear and definable, highlights both needs and reasons for need. Various funders and large volunteer base. Budget provided was for the agency, not just the Youth Suicide proposal.
Bridges for Women Society	Established organization looking to maintain specialized program for Indigenous women. \$105k for funding pending. Unspecific success measures, single date work plan. Would be helpful to understand impact if measurements of success included main

	outcome narrative description suggests, which is job readiness / income generation
The Proulx Global Education and Community Foundation	Established program serving proven community needs for a broad range of individuals. Programming consists of art therapy between Indigenous youth and Elders. Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes.
Peers Victoria Resource Society	Well thought out success measurements, has other funders, and addresses key issues with a vulnerable population.
Refugee Sponsorship Program of the Anglican Diocese of BC	Multiple funders, multiple partnerships, program is about created a strategy to keep welcoming privately placed refugees. Small staff, only concern their ability to do the work entailed.
Canadian Paraplegic Association (BC), Operating as Spinal Cord Injury BC	Support for ongoing, established program. Subjective evaluation. Defined schedule. Interesting qualitative outcomes / statements to support initiatives.
CanAssist at the University of Victoria	Quantitative outcomes seem low for scope of program / funding ask. Would be useful to know how/where in budget funding would contribute. Unclear as to how other funding dollars might be leveraged/applicable through Uvic. Are the 600 participants from Greater Victoria or all BC or nationwide? Provided evidence of academic research to support value of the program. Strong performance measures.
Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiative Roundtable Society	Events will need to be re-visioned because of social distancing, but it could be manageable. Important work now that food security is becoming more real for islanders. Clear ask & detailed budget which made sense with activities & outcomes.
Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees (VICCIR)	Rapid growth in program suggests high demand but may also strain resources. Serves catchment wider than Victoria itself, no quantitative results on past impacts. Use of formal external evaluation of level of service provision. Multiple partners - including UVIC, Island Health, GVSD. Some clarity of measurements of success but it is not clear how this is a Program Grant as opposed to an Operational Grant.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Victoria and Area	Extension of existing program. BBBS long track record of success. Substantial (75k) BC Gaming funding pending; 50% of funding not in place. National standards for monitoring. Some of the measurements of success still a bit too vague to understand program applications. Some attention to ethnic / ancestral matching / discussions of how adversity would be supported (to meet measurements) unclear

Oaklands Community Association	Articulated need for program in the local community. New program, could provide more qualitative measures for need in Oaklands.
Stigma-Free Society (Formerly Bipolar Disorder Society of BC)	Application identifies key measures of success, program details, and is well conveyed.
Victoria Epilepsy and Parkinson's Centre	Create support groups in Fairfield/Cook St/James Bay and provide remote (online) support. Relies on City funding, only other funding from Island Health. Objective performance measures. Low number of funders asked for project. Track record in performing this work.
Fernwood Neighborhood Resource Group Society	Strong outline to including indigenous representation in their programs and starting with a holistic approach. Funding is limited to the city and one other funder. Would be more tangible to support outcomes of this then the process.
Ballet Victoria Society	Outcomes feasible and impact achievable / make sense for grant ask. Multiple sources of confirmed funding. Builds on strengths of organization. Advertising and marketing seems high considering they are partnering with Parkinson Society.
Creatively United for the Planet	Interesting and innovative. Partnerships referenced. Appears most of the grant is actually going to arts organizations. Unsure of need, and how feasible it is. Small staffing and volunteer base. Success measures could be more tangible and objective.
Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society	Assist new immigrant youth apply for post-secondary education and financial assistance. Seeking over 70% funding from City. Previously partnered with Community Micro Lending volunteers, no indication of volunteer source for this program. Imprecise success measures. Measurements of success could capture more useful and robust data. Location of participants not identified.
Jewish Community Centre of Victoria	Small grant request and aligned project. Supportive of work to help combat anti-Semitism. 1 of 2 applications funded at minimum grant level of \$1,500.
Drop The Plastic	No paid staff, all volunteers. Smaller grant request/ask. Thorough details and measurements of success, less statistical but clear on what they want to achieve.
FED Urban Agriculture Society	Small team and volunteer base. Small ask, for small % of total budget. Measurements of success could be stronger.
Society for Kids at Tennis (KATS)	Established program with 12,500+ participants in 6 years. Community impact somewhat limited as participants must be interested in tennis. Light on measurements, appears to be simply a continued funding request. Lots of referral partners and collaboration.
Fairfield Gonzales Community Association	Victoria only real funder and should expand funding requests to other organizations. Measurements seem reasonable considering scope of request.

Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria	Project ask seems incommensurate with stated outcomes but activities and rationale are clear and reasoned. Funding ask also seems to cover all program costs. New and socially relevant initiative. Environmental equity appears to be more focused at a global response. Proposed outcomes and measures are nebulous. No partners or matching funding identified except minor amount from CSPC themselves
Greater Victoria Volunteer Society dba Volunteer Victoria	Interesting and unique pilot project to increase informal volunteerism. Seems well weighted and worth while for consideration. Program looks good and would help plus increased learnings about volunteerism.
Power to Be Adventure Society	Measurements clear. Lack of other funders noted for this program. More information on where participants are coming from to ensure adequate representation from the city itself.
Victoria Literacy Connection	Literacy skills development and new program for financial literacy. Min Ad Ed funding partner. Application and program could be better served showing and mentioning partnerships with other societies and partners. Would be useful to know how/where in budget funding would contribute.
Friends of Learning and Living Through Loss	Appears to be a core program, but measurements are light, other funding sources indicated Good Grief workshop but not listed in the application for this grant? Are they compartmentalizing these workshops in to other grants? City of Victoria listed as only granter. 1 of 3 locations planned is in Victoria suggest focusing on grant request for this location.
Leadership Victoria Society	Program is a Leadership Immersion for Immigrants and Refugees. Program is an ongoing one with the organization. Good leadership development and good idea for incorporating newcomers to the program.
Maritime Museum of BC	Outreach to marginalized groups with partnerships and bringing inclusive approach to the museum.
Story Studio Writing Society (Story Studio)	Storytelling and mental wellness programming for youth. Have been reliant on Pacifica Housing for collaborative efforts. Good growth & partnerships demonstrated from last year's iteration. Clear ask & reasonable / lean budget which made sense with activities & outcomes. 1 of 2 applications funded at minimum grant level of \$1,500.
Junior Achievement B.C (JABC)	Thorough, informative, with success measures clear and measurable. More specific information on who will be locally coordinating and recruiting volunteers would have improved applications. Working with schools would also be highly suggested to demonstrate

Tides Canada Initiatives Society - Keeping it Human	Tides Canada national organization Vancouver/Toronto/Yellowknife. The Existence Project - shared platform of storytelling for marginalized people. Unclear who is the intended audience and what outcomes are expected. Clear ask & detailed budget which aligns with activities & outcomes. Would be useful to know how/where in budget funding would contribute.
KidSport Greater Victoria	Various funding. Program is an ongoing one, and appears worthy of funding kids in need. There is a significant need for youth and sport.
Pandora Arts Collective Society (PACS)	City is only funder. While need appears there, application could improve metrics or other measurement tools to improve success measures and further demonstrate qualitative approach
Victoria Innovation, Advanced Technology and Entrepreneurship Council (VIATEC)	Program called strategic planning, but beyond mention of a salary survey, appears to just be a core funding ask. Project has two vast funding asks of 900k confirmed. Receives significant funding from City Econ Dev & Promo. Funding to be used for general revenue rather than specific program/project. Non-specific outcomes or success measures.
Cine-Vic Society of Independent Filmmakers	Half of program budget is screening fees. Would be useful to know how/where in budget funding would contribute. Useful to note gender parity in planning design. Some good clarity on outcomes which helped understand lack of clarity in program description. Limited target audience. Not sure how significantly it would contribute to City strategic objectives.
Theatre SKAM Association	Indicates project can only proceed with full funding. Measures of success could be improved/stronger.
Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission	Small grant request. Appears to act as a catalyst to work at bringing sporting events to the city. City funding only a small part of budget. Attracting major sporting events with current uncertainty made project seem less plausible to happen this year.
Greater Victoria Visitors & Convention Bureau	With current border closures, lack of cruise ships and tourists from outside Canada during peak season, assuming that this season will not proceed like last year.

SUGGESTIONS FOR 2020

The committee (EGRC) has some recommendations for improving the Application Form and the Application Process, as outlined below.

1. Application Form

Revise Strategic Plan Grant Application Form to ensure consistency of responses and improve oversight of grant applications submitted:

a. In Section Six:

- *Suggestion:* Provide clarity on application form to the question “What percentage of residents benefit from this project or program.” or change question to “What percentage of program participants benefit from this project or program.”

Rationale: It is the EGRC’s understanding that the Strategic Plan Grants are primarily intended to benefit the residents of the City of Victoria, and to a lesser degree, residents of the CRD.

In current state, applicants either answer the question as the number of program participants over the number of total residents of the city/CRD, or answer it as what percentage of their program participants come from the city of Victoria/CRD.

To guide applicants to applying a consistent approach to answering this question, it is recommended to change the wording to suggested above with one or two sentences included in the application to further assist those completing it to the methodology described above and thus improve consistency.

b. In Section Six:

- *Suggestion:* Allow for applicants to provide some explanation to provide some rationale to “How many will benefit from the project or program?”

Rationale: Some programs and applications you can clearly discern that those that are benefitting from this program or project are directly benefitting from it, whereas other applications it appears that there are people indirectly benefitting from the program.

Requesting applicants to provide a short answer to this question will help understand the full scope and impact of how this program benefits the community at large though indirect benefits and further justify the answer to this question.

c. In Section Seven:

- *Suggestion:* Remove or change the question “Partial funding may be available. Will the project occur without full funding by the grant?”

Rationale: Granting programs are highly competitive and most often over subscribed to and general expectations by applicants is that they can expect to not receive full funding.

If applicant were to answer No to this question, the ERCCG is left with making a decision whether to fully fund or not fund the application. In the methodology used

for this granting cycle, the ERCG applied a percentage of funding formula with applications receiving a higher merit score weighting receiving the greatest proportion of their ask. Therefore, applicants requesting full funding only will potentially skew such methodology.

It would be suggested to change this question to “What is the minimum level of funding required for this program or project to continue” as this better allows the applicants to understand that full funding is likely not going to be possible. It will also inform the ERCG if, depending on the weighted score and the potential level of funding other applications with a similar weighted score will receive (by a % of funding), whether the funds available will be of assistance to the applicant organization.

2. The Application Process

- a. *Suggestion:* To have Council provide any specific additional considerations that will be applied to the review process in any given year.

Rationale: While each granting review cycle is reviewed against the Strategic Plan Objectives as established in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, there may be additional considerations that Council may wish to provide the ERCG for making decisions in light of any emerging trends in each granting year. This could be provided as an additional document or to specify any of the points within the four assessment criteria that should be given more consideration and weighing by the ERCG during their review.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

The External Grant Review Committee makes the following recommendations to Council:

1. Approve the Grants and amounts proposed in Table 1, above.
2. Approve recommendations to improve the process for 2020, as proposed in “Suggestions for 2020”, above.