

APPENDIX A - 2021 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET REQUEST

MITIGATING IMPACTS OF SHELTERING

1. REQUEST DESCRIPTION

For the past five years, the City has approved annual investments to mitigate the negative impacts of outdoor sheltering in parks and public spaces. The purpose of the funding program is to address the need for increased public washroom cleaning, temporary infrastructure (ie. portable toilets, handwashing stations, etc), waste removal in parks and other public areas, security patrols, as well as bylaw enforcement. This program has expanded in recent years, due to the increasing number of individuals experiencing homelessness and mental health and addictions issues, who are living in City parks.

2. REQUEST RATIONALE

The City has experienced a particularly large increase in the volume of outdoor sheltering activity in the past year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At present, an estimated 250-270 shelters are erected in parks and other public spaces. As the level of homelessness has grown, concerns relating to safety and cleanliness in parks and public space have also increased.

City parks are not designed to accommodate sheltering and the expansion of this activity has led to various impacts, including:

- Debris and hazardous material such as hypodermic needles, broken glass, and biological hazards
- Conflicts between various other user groups and persons sheltering
- Damage to property
- Incidents of threats and harassment towards City staff by persons sheltering
- Criminal activity
- Risk of fire due to open burning for heat, cooking, drug manufacturing and consumption and presence of combustibles
- Damage to natural assets, such as trees, vegetation, garden beds, through cutting, digging, burning, and staking

Based on the experiences of the past year, staff are proposing additional resourcing to assist with managing the higher need for supports. The increased budget will allow for the following:

- Daily response to the impacts of sheltering activity.
- Expanded access for individuals sheltering to basic services (i.e. washrooms, water fountains, waste removal)
- Enhanced security services

3. SERVICE LEVEL IMPACT IF NOT APPROVED

The homelessness crisis is complex and the services identified are required to effectively respond to issues of safety and other risks. If the proposed budget is not approved, a reduction in the delivery of core services, such as those noted below, would be required to manage these impacts.

- Reduced street sweeping and washing
- Reduced pressure washing and sidewalk cleaning
- Reduced garbage collection
- Reduced parkade cleaning
- Reduced weeding and boulevard maintenance

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4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

Service Stream	2020 Budget	2020 Projected Actuals	2021 Proposed Budget	Notes
Sheltering Clean-Up in Parks	266K	560K	656K	Six staff seven days a week
Street Cleaning Services	0	150K	500K	Four staff seven days a week
Security Patrols	65K	352K	260K	24/7 mobile patrols to monitor park sites
Janitorial Services	30K	140K	140K	One staff seven days a week + Centennial Square extra cleaning
Portable Toilet Service (10 units)	8K	113K	114K	Hydrovac costs for toilet servicing and disposal of sharps
Temporary infrastructure (fencing, fountains handwashing stations, etc)	0	90K	70K	
Fleet	22K	22K		
Total	391K	1.4M	1.74M	

Due to the fact that a significant portion of the costs noted above are required because of the pandemic, staff will continue to seek reimbursement of expenses wherever possible from the province through Emergency Management BC (EMBC).

5. ONE-TIME OR ONGOING FUNDING

One-time

6. FTE REQUIRED

11 FTE's

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LEGAL SERVICES

1. REQUEST DESCRIPTION

One full-time Assistant City Solicitor position to replace the temporary funding (0.6 FTE) that expires on December 31, 2020.

The incumbent is retiring from the legal profession at the end of his term in December, therefore, new recruitment will be required. A full-time position is being proposed to address growing workload demands and to increase our chances of recruiting qualified candidates.

2. REQUEST RATIONALE

In 2018, temporary funding was provided for an additional Assistant City Solicitor (0.6 FTE) to address increased demands on Legal Services due to a number of strategic plan initiatives that required legal work. While that temporary funding is expiring in December, the workload has not decreased and is not expected to decrease in 2021 and beyond. In fact, the demand for legal services has increased due to the growing legal complexity of new initiatives/programs Council is exploring or pursuing, as well as new and increased demands for legal assistance to address emerging and continuing issues such as homelessness, sheltering in parks, and climate change. All of these issues involve novel responses, which require considerable legal analysis to ensure that they are legally sound and defensible.

3. SERVICE LEVEL IMPACT IF NOT APPROVED

Legal Services is a service department as it supports all other City departments. Therefore, there would be impacts on all other departments if the position is not approved, as all legal services would require more time to process, having ripple effects throughout the organization. The most immediate impact of not approving the requested position would be on:

- a) Development Services (SPCD) – There has been no reduction in the volume of land use and land development applications. The majority of these include preparation of numerous legal agreements and bylaws, as well as, frequent legal advice regarding various creative proposals and initiatives. Without the proposed new position, the response time for these applications would likely be increased by 30%, impacting Development Services response times and, potentially, delaying public hearings.
- b) Strategic Real Estate (SRE) – Virtually every transaction contemplated or negotiated by SRE heavily relies on Legal Services both at the strategic level of structuring the transaction and the actual preparation of legal agreements to implement it or to properly secure the City's interests. A delay in Legal Service's ability to respond promptly to SRE's inquiries would have significant impacts on their ability to successfully pursue various initiatives or opportunities.
- c) Community Planning (SPCD) – Many initiatives pursued by Community Planning explore the limits of the City's legal authorities to maximize achievement of Council's objectives.

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All of them require legal review and advice, frequently in areas that are novel and very complex. Without such review, availability of which would be severely limited if the proposed position is not approved, there is a risk of initiatives that exceed City's jurisdiction and expose the City to legal challenges and failure, in addition to slower response times.

- d) Energy and Climate Action (EPW) – Municipal authorities in the field of climate change and sustainability remain uncertain and most initiatives are open to potential legal challenges (e.g., plastic bags). Early and comprehensive involvement from Legal Services is critical to successful development and implementation of most new initiatives for addressing climate change and sustainability. Failure to approve the proposed new position would make legal review and advice significantly slower (the ability to process requests would be reduced by as much as 25%) significantly delaying development and implementation of the projects required to meet the Climate Action Leadership plan.
- e) Bylaw Services – enforcement of City bylaws is critical to successful implementation of most of Council's policies and priorities. Successful enforcement relies on close co-operation between Bylaw Services and Legal Services. Without the proposed new position, Legal Service's ability to provide prompt assistance to Bylaw Officers would be severely impacted with significant impacts on successful enforcement outcomes.

It is theoretically possible to address some of these impacts by utilizing external legal resources (i.e., send work to external law firms) rather than by creating an additional in-house position. However, external legal services cost, on average, twice as much as in-house lawyers. Therefore, that option would have much greater financial impacts.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

The total cost of a full-time Assistant City Solicitor (salary and benefits) is \$183,410. However, recently the City has increased air space subdivision fees to \$15,000. This increase was primarily driven by the legal work associated with processing air space subdivisions. Land Development (EPW) estimates that the City will receive three to five such applications every year, generating between \$45,000 and \$75,000 in fees, which could offset a significant portion of the cost of the new position.

5. ONE-TIME OR ONGOING FUNDING

Ongoing funding to replace expiring one-time funding.

6. FTE REQUIRED

1 FTE – one permanent full-time position.

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YOUTH STRATEGY

1. REQUEST DESCRIPTION

Part-time Youth Strategy Assistant to continue to implement the City of Victoria Youth Strategy.

2. REQUEST RATIONALE

In 2017, the City of Victoria adopted a Youth Strategy designed to get more youth involved in local government, give young people a voice in local government and be part of planning the future of their community. Written by a team of 10 youth between the ages of 12 and 25, and informed through engagement with hundreds of youth, educators, youth workers, and community members, the plan includes practical and creative initiatives to get youth involved in their local government.

The youth strategy identifies more than 20 actions over a three-year period that fall under three broad categories:

- Openness and inclusivity
- Communication and education
- Opportunities and support

Activities include creating tools for City staff to better engage youth, connecting youth with local support services, and developing a curriculum for schools to teach youth about local government.

Work in 2021 will continue to advance key actions identified in the strategy that have not yet been fully realized or that have been delayed due to COVID. As well, the Youth Strategy Assistant will lay the groundwork for a review and refresh of the Youth Strategy in 2022.

The Youth Strategy Assistant and responsibility for the Youth Strategy will move to the Neighbourhoods Team in 2021 from Engagement to further align ongoing work to implement the strategy with other youth-related programs and services delivered across the City.

Key activities include:

- Revamping the Youth section of the City's website to act as a clearinghouse for all City of Victoria youth-related initiatives, services and opportunities.
- Pilot a YouthHub drop-in space, as part of the downtown NeighbourHub, once COVID restrictions are lifted.
- Continue to work closely with the City of Victoria Youth Council to coordinate activities and projects
- Advise and support youth engagement on City projects including ZeroWaste, Climate Action, Park improvements, Active Transportation, and Budget 2021
- Support the Welcoming City Strategy development

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3. SERVICE LEVEL IMPACT IF NOT APPROVED

Will slow further progress on implementation of some Youth Strategy initiatives and halt action to implement others. Some of the previously completed initiatives have been operationalized as part of regular service delivery within departments, particularly Engagement, Arts, Culture and Events, Community Relations and Human Resources.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

\$30,000

5. ONE-TIME OR ONGOING FUNDING

One time