



## Committee of the Whole Report

### For the Meeting of January 28, 2021

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** January 15, 2021  
**From:** Kerri Moore, Head of Business & Community Relations  
**Subject:** My Great Neighbourhood Grant 2020 Program Summary

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### RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves the following:

1. Continue accepting applications for the interim category of *Community Recovery & Resiliency* to be funded from the regular funding stream
2. Continue with a rolling intake giving the City Manager the decision-making power to approve the grants following the internal adjudication process, and
3. Accept proposed language changes to the grant policy

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the summary of activity for the 2020 *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program*, and recommendations for minor policy language additions for Council's consideration.

The grant program intake was delayed due to COVID-19 and opened on June 1, 2020 with a rolling intake until the end of December 2020. A total of 51 grant applications were received and \$184,205 in matching funds were distributed to all neighbourhoods. Overwhelmingly, the highest need identified this year was to support gardening for residents (15), followed by food security (8). Other types of grants applied for included planting trees, traffic calming, murals, lighting and seating.

Summary tables for each category are included in this report.

### PURPOSE

This report presents a complete summary of grants for the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant 2020* program. As well minor policy language additions have been suggested for Council's consideration.

## BACKGROUND

Launched in 2016, this program supports community-development and placemaking projects in the public realm. Up to \$5000 is available for placemaking grants and up to \$1000 is available for activity grants. Due to COVID 19, the 2020 spring intake of the grant program was put on hold. At the May 28, 2020 meeting, Council approved the addition of a new interim category of Community Recovery & Resiliency, with up to \$5000 per application available as a matching grant. A rolling intake until the end of December, and City Manager sign-off, was also approved. At the June 4th Council meeting, an additional \$100,000 was added to the grant fund, to be directed at the new category.

The 2020 program was launched on June 1. In addition to direct communication with neighbourhood associations and residents, staff used social media, a poster campaign and email to advertise the 2020 program. A briefing note providing an interim update on the program was sent to Council on October 1, 2020.

## ISSUES & ANALYSIS

The budget for the 2020 My Great Neighbourhood grant program was split into two separate categories:

- Placemaking & Activity: \$136,955 (\$126,200 budget for 2020 + \$10,755 from 2019)
- Community Recovery & Resiliency: \$100,000

At the end of the year, there were 51 approved applications from all neighbourhoods. The expedited approval process allowed for a nimbler response to meet community needs. Residents were appreciative of the quick turnaround time and ability to get their project approved quickly. Many groups also provided positive feedback to the new flexible deadline, indicating a rolling intake allows for the grant program to respond to the changing needs of the community.

Of note, in the Community Recovery & Resiliency category, 16 of the 24 grants (two-thirds) were in direct response to food security. This included supporting the *Get Growing Victoria* program, additions to community gardens and increased food distribution networks.

Community Activity	9	\$9,000
Placemaking	18	\$73,617
Community Recovery & Resiliency	24	\$101,588
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>\$184,205</b>

Budget Category	Opening Balance	Remaining Balance
Placemaking and Activity	\$136,955	\$54,338
Community Recovery & Resiliency	\$100,000	-\$1,588
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$236,955</b>	<b>\$52,750</b>

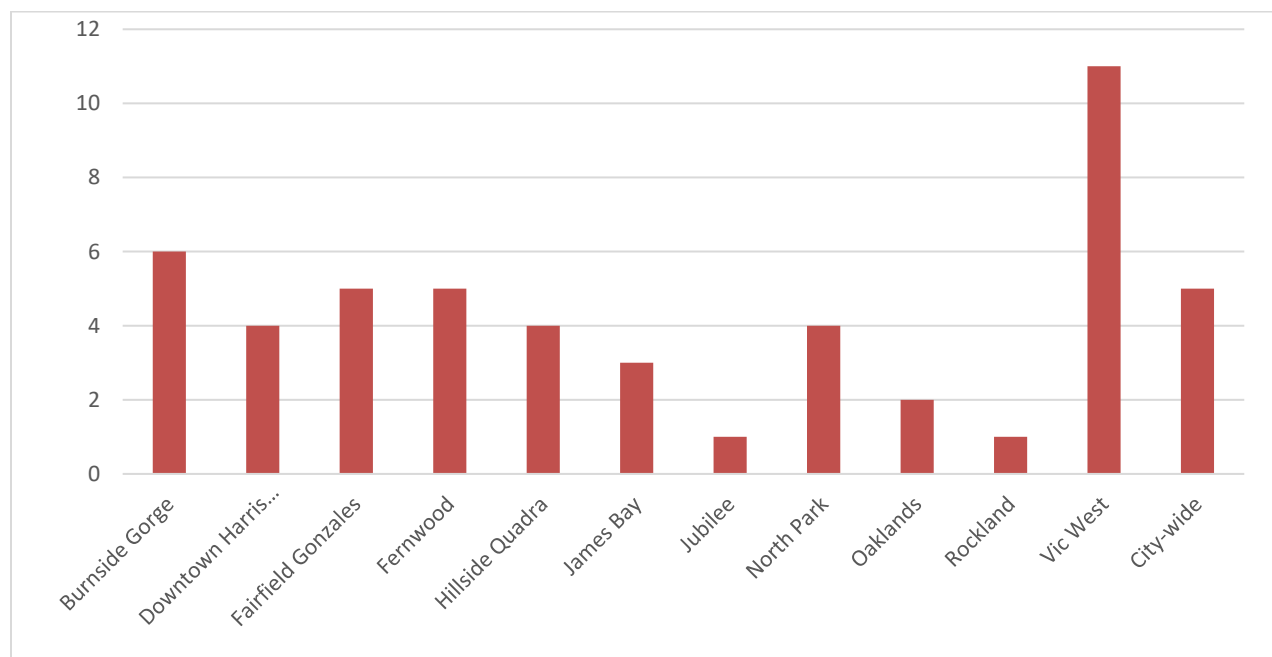
Summary tables for each category are included below.

Community Activity	Description	Grant
Mobile Hygiene Access project	Providing homeless residents of North Park with access to free hygienic products	\$1,000
Tree planting on seven streets	Trees in the City challenge by 7 groups of residents from Vic West)	\$7,000
Pioneer Co-Op Tree Challenge	Tree planting at the co-op	\$1,000
	<b>Total 9 Activity grants</b>	<b>\$9,000</b>

Placemaking Project	Description	Grant
Community Garden Fencing	Upgrade of fencing that surrounds the perimeter of the Cecelia Ravine community garden	\$3,500
Raised food garden beds at Point Ellice House	Installing food bearing beds at Point Ellice House	\$3,400
Chinatown Placemaking 2020	Chinatown education project	\$5,000
Broad St Lights	Overhead (catenary) lighting on the 1000 block of Broad Street	\$5,000
Broad St Placemaking	Addition of seating, planters and performance stage 1000 block Broad St	\$5,000
Maddison St Greenway	Addition of vegetated planters to support placemaking and traffic calming	\$5,000
Brighton St Greenway	Addition of vegetated planters to support placemaking and traffic calming	\$5,000
Margaret Jenkins school garden Ph 2	Addition of garden shed to student garden	\$4,965
Cobb oven and community baking	Building a cob oven at the Compost Education Centre / community baking days	\$2,700
Community mural	Mural on Cornerstone building	\$4,000
Lifecycles Haultain Boulevard Garden	Haultain boulevard education garden	\$2,700
Fernwood Community Association	Earthbound Garden Improvements	\$3,061
Stanley St Mural	Mural to be added to the street	\$4,000
Gaga ball play area	Addition of a gaga ball play area at Quadra Elem school	\$5,000
JBNA Fisherman's Wharf Community Garden	Enhancement of edible garden space in Fisherman's Wharf	\$5,000
Re-Imagining a People Priority Street	Traffic calming in Oaklands	\$2,551
Russel St Mural	Wall mural to cover highly visible and frequently tagged site	\$5,000
Firefly trail	Strings of solar lights installed in Banfield Park	\$2,740
	<b>Total 18 Placemaking grants</b>	<b>\$73,617</b>

Community Recovery & Resilience	Description	Grant
Treelane Resident Security	Addition of security infrastructure and programs for residents	\$ 5,000
Anti-Stigma Community Learning event	One day anti stigma education session on homelessness and addictions for residents	\$ 2,000
Bill's Bag Lunches	Weekly lunch distribution for homeless people in Rock Bay	\$ 3,725
Burnside Gorge BIA	Formation of BIA to aid economic resiliency	\$ 5,000
Yates St Garden Community Food	Addition of wooden planters outside garden gate on sidewalk	\$ 1,500
Get Growing Fairfield	Resource support for Get Growing Program	\$ 4,400
FGCA Neighbourhood Pantry	Expansion of Food Rescue program for low-income families	\$ 5,000
Communities in Motion	Bike Victoria bike skills webinars and community mural	\$ 4,488
HQ Parklet Furnishings	Parklet furnishings on Kings Road	\$ 5,000
Community Food Support program	Collection and distribution of food hampers for those in need	\$ 5,000
JBNH Food Security for Seniors	Expansion of food program to include fresh produce from local farmers	\$ 5,000
JBNA Wee free seed box expansion	Increasing access and skills for food growing in James Bay	\$ 2,550
Accessible Recreation for NP Residents	Matching low-income residents with recreation programming in the North Park	\$ 5,000
Homeless Art Project	Homeless art project	\$ 4,970
Slahal (Bones) Game	Build a Slahal game at the Cultural Support House on Mason St	\$ 2,800
Seedlings and Supplies	Providing essential planting supplies for low-income houses, to supplement the City's seedling distribution program	\$ 1,360
VIRCS Victoria Garden	Victory over COVID-19 (Battling food insecurity and providing food distribution to vulnerable families)	\$ 5,000
SJNA Get Growing program	Education and supplies for growing food in South Jubilee	\$ 5,000
Get Growing Vic West	Distribution of food growing planters/starts and support for growing in Vic West	\$ 5,000
Good Food Summit	Two Day Online Conference on Food Security and Equity	\$ 5,000
IYE Solstice Food Boxes	Food boxes for 70 families across the city	\$ 3,795
Schools get growing	Education gardening program for 6 city schools	\$ 5,000
Victoria Community Food Hub	Good Food for Victoria (Farmbucks) program	\$ 5,000
FED Farm	Distribution of food growing planters/starts and support for growing	\$ 5,000
	<b>Total 24 Community Recovery &amp; Resiliency grants</b>	<b>\$ 101,588</b>

## Distribution by Neighbourhood



*\*Vic West numbers include 8 activity grants to plant trees in the city*

### Language Updates to the Grant Policy

Staff are recommending the following language be added to the policy. These changes will provide greater clarification regarding the amount of grant funds that can be spent on human resources as well as more concise language regarding the maximum number of grants one organization can apply for in a fiscal year. Additional clauses regarding murals have also been added and an update on the grant intake dates has been clarified.

#### Category D: Eligibility Criteria

*(new language to follow eligible expenses)*

My Great Neighbourhood grants are an investment in community and often include payment to individuals (e.g., project facilitation) to ensure the project is successfully implemented. Honourariums may be helpful in undertaking a community project where specific contributions are deserving of acknowledgement. An honourarium is intended to be modest and a small part of the budget. Staff salaries cannot be paid from this grant program, however, they can be accounted for in the matching portion of the budget.

The following guidelines are provided to assist in budget preparation:

- Project facilitation costs for an individual are capped at 25% of the total budget
- Honorariums per individual contributors are capped at \$100 per person
- Administration costs for the sponsoring not-for-profit agency are capped at 15% of the total budget

Artists rates are exempt from these limits as the City has overarching guidelines for arts-related projects. Please email [culture@victoria.ca](mailto:culture@victoria.ca) to discuss these guidelines with a member of the Arts, Culture & Events staff.

And

*(clarifying language)*

Applicants are limited to one application per category per year for a maximum of 3 applications. For a multi-phased project to be considered, a substantial new element must be introduced with each application for a maximum of 3 phases.

And

**Category E: Examples of Projects**

*(new language to follow Placemaking murals\*)*

\* Community murals are subject to the guidelines provided through the City's Arts Policy. Once the original design has been submitted and signed off from the City and artist, major alterations or additions will not be allowed. Refusal to comply may require removal of the mural by the City. In addition,

- I. Profanity, hateful language and any other words and/or images that are likely to be perceived by the general public as offensive will not be permitted.
- II. Any language or images that convey or portray drug and/or alcohol use will not be permitted.
- III. Explicit or encrypted signatures or acronyms will not be permitted.

And

**Category F: Grant Review Process**

Clarifying language has been added regarding dates of the rolling intake.

This new language is highlighted in the attached policy document.

**Interim Measures from June 2020**

The new category of *Community Recovery and Resiliency* was introduced in June 2020 to support grassroots efforts responding to the emerging needs of the community due to COVID 19. Given the current pandemic conditions, staff recommend extending this category into 2021 and to revisit for the 2022 grant period.

Staff are also recommending the continuation of a rolling intake for 2021. Many residents have provided positive feedback saying it allows them to respond quickly to the changing needs of the community. Furthermore, City Manager signing authority for *My Great Neighbourhood* grant applications allow staff to continue to provide expedited approval, which permits the community to get programs in place as they are needed both quickly and efficiently. Staff are proposing Council receive updates on the 2021 program through the Term Operational Highlights report, and an annual summary report in December 2021. The proposed intake period for 2021 is April 1 – October 31.

**Other Activities**

**A. Community Virtuals Lunch & Learn Program**

In 2017 staff launched an annual community building event in conjunction with the spring intake of the grant program. This event has an annual budget of \$5,000. Due to COVID 19, the event was unable to happen this year. In its place this budget was used to cover costs of a new online lunch & learn program called **Community Virtuals**. The intention of the program is to educate, inspire and create small connections with the added bonus of promoting City programs that are directly targeted at residents, specifically referencing the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant* program. To date three online events have taken place over three months which covered topics on residential tree planting programs, the social impacts of loneliness and a session on engaging neighbours. Sessions are recorded and posted on the City's YouTube channel. Presenters are typically a

combination of staff and community organizers.

There are currently four more scheduled to cover topics including food security, the power of community art and the placemaking toolkit. The program will run until May and resume again in September. This program will now replace the annual spring gathering as staff concur this platform provides a greater reach into the community over a single event.

### **B. GIS Link of Placemaking Projects**

Over the past five years, residents have created many great placemaking projects across the city. Working with the City's GIS team, a user-friendly map has been created containing photos and addresses of these projects. The [link](#) to this gallery forms part of the VicMap function available to the public. As more placemaking projects come online, photos linked to the address will be added.

## **OPTIONS & IMPACTS**

### **Option 1 (Recommended):**

For the 2021 intake of the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program*, that Council approves the following:

1. Continue accepting applications for the interim category of *Community Recovery & Resiliency* to be funded from the regular funding stream
2. Continue with a rolling intake giving the City Manager the decision-making power to approve the grants following the internal adjudication process, and
3. Accept proposed language changes to the grant policy

### **Option 2:**

Council to provide alternative direction to staff.

#### *Accessibility Impact Statement*

The *My Great Neighbourhood Grant* program provides an opportunity to support accessibility objectives through community building projects and activities. Grants are available to all non-profit organizations in Victoria including accessibility-focused groups. Applicants are required to identify ways in which their proposed project supports equity and inclusion in the community and how it contributes to reducing barriers or improving accessibility for people with disabilities. City staff are available to provide support through the application process. As the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is established in 2021, the City will continue to seek out new ways to promote and encourage applications which support accessibility goals.

#### *2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan*

The *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program* supports the objective and/or the action and outcome statements of the Strategic Plan, specifically:

- Objective 8: Strong Livable Neighbourhoods

#### *Impacts to Financial Plan*

As part of the 2021 Financial Plan, \$132,500 for the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program* is included for consideration of approval by Council.

#### *Official Community Plan Consistency Statement*

The *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program* supports the following OCP objective:

##### Community Wellbeing

- 15 (d) That strong partnerships build the capacity of individuals and the community.

- 15 (e) That all citizens have the opportunity to participate in civic affairs

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Many of the City's neighbourhood organizations, community and seniors' centres and residents continue to work with the City to improve their neighbourhoods. Updates to the grant policy will provide added clarity. Extending the new interim category of *Community Recovery & Resiliency* for the 2021 *My Great Neighbourhoods Grant Program* will further assist residents and organizations in their recovery efforts. The expedited approval process allows for funds to be dispersed in an efficient and timely manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberley Stratford  
Neighbourhood Liaison

Kerri Moore  
Head of Business & Community Relations

**Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager**

## **List of Attachments**

Appendix A: Updated *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program* policy