

# Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of December 9, 2021

To: Committee of the Whole Date: November 17, 2021

From: Kerri Moore, Head of Business & Community Relations

**Subject:** 2021 My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program Summary

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve:

- 1. The permanent addition of the temporary category "Community Recovery & Resiliency" renamed as *Community Resiliency* to the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant* program, and
- 2. Make permanent the monthly intake and City Manager approval process, with staff providing Council an annual summary of the grant program.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents the summary of activity for the 2021 My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program, and recommendations for minor process changes for Council's consideration.

The grant program intake opened on April 1, 2021 with a rolling intake until the end of October 2021. A total of 41 grant applications were approved and \$125,484 in matching funds were distributed across all neighbourhoods. Oaklands (7), Downtown Harris Green (6) and Fernwood (6) had the highest submissions by neighbourhood. The main themes for grants this year included community celebrations and block parties, murals and the addition of benches and little free libraries in the neighbourhoods.

Summary tables for each category and distribution by neighbourhood are included in this report.

#### **PURPOSE**

This report presents a summary of grants for the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant* 2021 program, as well as permanent process and category changes suggested for Council's consideration.

### **BACKGROUND**

Launched in 2016, this program supports community development and placemaking projects in the public realm. In 2020, in response to the pandemic, a temporary new category called *Community Recovery & Resiliency* was introduced. Up to \$5000 is available for placemaking and community recovery & resiliency projects, and up to \$1000 for activity grants.

The 2021 program was launched on April 1. In addition to direct communication with neighbourhood associations and residents, staff used social media, a poster campaign and email to advertise the program.

# **ISSUES & ANALYSIS**

The total funding available for 2021 was \$127,500. At the end of the intake period, all but \$2,016 had been allocated to 41 applications across three funding categories.

Working on a rolling intake over six months, neighbourhood team staff met with potential applicants and supported the development of applications throughout the application period. Once the proposals had been reviewed by an internal team, they were presented to the City Manager at the end of each month for final approval. The monthly approval system allowed applicants to flesh out their proposal with feedback from staff and take advantage of receiving approvals in a timely manner. Applicants were appreciative of the quick turnaround and ability to get their project approved quickly. Many groups also provided positive feedback to the flexible deadlines.

The following table provides a breakdown of the approved applications by category for 2021

Opening Balance \$127,500 Budget remaining \$2,016

Table 1: 2021 Approved Applications by Category

| Total                           | 41 | \$125,484 |
|---------------------------------|----|-----------|
| Placemaking                     | 20 | \$75,788  |
| Community Recovery & Resiliency | 10 | \$39,096  |
| Activity                        | 11 | \$10,600  |

Summary tables for each category are included below. Projects must be completed within a year of receiving approval, and while some have already started and/or been completed, most will be undertaken in 2022.

Table 2: 2021 My Great Neighbourhood Grants Approved Activity Applications

| Project                | Applicant (Sponsor)                     | Brief Description of Activity Proposals  | Grant received |
|------------------------|---|--|----------------|
| Selkirk block party    | Burnside Gorge<br>Community Association | Block party  | \$1,000        |
| BGCA 30th celebration  | Burnside Gorge<br>Community Association | Community event  | \$1,000        |
| Virtual Tea Party      | Downtown Residents Association          | Online tea party celebrating<br>Chinatown  | \$650          |
| Good Food<br>Gathering | CRFaire                                 | Gathering of food system advocates, organizations and initiatives in the Capital Regional District | \$1,000        |
| Who is your (S)hero    | Kulea Society                           | A celebration of International Women's Day   | \$1,000        |

| Graham St block                     |                             | 1_, ,   |         |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---------|
| party                               | Dance Victoria              | Block party   | \$950   |
| Post Pandemic Party Oaklands School | Atomic Vaudeville           | Art event celebrating post pandemic Raising of the totem pole and | \$1,000 |
| Totem Raising                       | SD61                        | ceremony  | \$1,000 |
| Clawthorpe St block party           | Oaklands Community<br>Assoc | Block party   | \$1,000 |
| Myrtle Block Party                  | Oaklands Community<br>Assoc | Block party   | \$1,000 |
| Human Library project               | Oaklands Community<br>Assoc | Creation of a human library                                       | \$1,000 |
|                                     |                             |   |         |

11 Activity Grants \$10,600

Table 3: 2021 My Great Neighbourhood Grants Approved Community Recovery & Resiliency Applications

| Project                                 | Applicant (Sponsor)                                 | Brief Description of Community Recovery & Resiliency Proposals                        | Grant received |
|---|---|---|----------------|
| Community Fridge                        | Capital Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable | Installation of a community fridge  | \$5,000        |
| Comedy Festival                         | Downtown Residents<br>Association                   | Street comedy night   | \$1,500        |
| Our Place COVID response                | Our Place Society                                   | Additional cleaning protocol for COVID  | \$5,000        |
| Vimy Place Emergency<br>Preparedness    | Building Resilient<br>Neighbourhoods                | Emergency planning for Vimy Place residents   | \$4,300        |
| Get Growing Fernwood                    | Fernwood NRG  | Support of the Get Growing program for Fernwood                                       | \$4,250        |
| Get Growing Plus                        | Quadra Village<br>Community Centre                  | Seedling distribution, gardening resources and education                              | \$2,000        |
| JBNA Recycle Saturday                   | James Bay<br>Neighbourhood<br>Association           | Monthly recycling depot for items not taken in the Blue Box program                   | \$4,100        |
| Parents 4 Climate Tree planting         | South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association             | Planting native and fruit trees in Jubilee  | \$3,000        |
| Supply Creative Re-use<br>Pop Up Shop   | Victoria Supply Creative Reuse Society              | Launch a pop-up shop to provide the community access to free second-hand art supplies | \$4,946        |
| Harvest and Share food relief operation | Harvest and Share Food Relief Society               | Indoor food production for local food banks   | \$5,000        |
| 10 Community Resilience                 | y Grants  |   | \$39,096       |

Table 4: 2021 My Great Neighbourhood Grants Approved Placemaking Applications

| Project                       | Applicant (Sponsor)                              | Brief Description of   | Grant           |
|-------------------------------|--|--|-----------------|
|                               | r pp. com (openior)                              | Placemaking Proposals  | received        |
| 01 - 51 0 (1                  |  | Bench seating, community notice  |                 |
| Chown Pl. Outdoor             |  | board, little library pocket space                                     | <b>^-</b> •••   |
| Gathering Space               | The Gorge View Society                           | (11 Chown Pl. )  | \$5,000         |
|                               |  | Mural installation on southeast  |                 |
|                               |  | corner of Government and Bay   |                 |
| Lexington Park Mural          | Lexington Park Strata                            | Streets  | \$5,000         |
| Yates St Pollinator<br>Garden | Pollinator Partnership<br>Canada                 | Boulevard pollinator garden at 1031 Yates St                           | \$4,860         |
|                               | F  | BBV patio space furnished in   |                 |
| Francophone Patio             | Francophone Society of                           | Boomerang Court (Bastion   |                 |
| Project                       | Victoria   | Square) over summer season.  | \$5,000         |
|                               |  |  | φο,σσσ          |
|                               | Greater Victoria                                 | Traffic calming on 1000 block of                                       | <b>#</b> 4.000  |
| Reclaiming Clare St           | Placemaking Network                              | Clare St   | \$4,000         |
| Vining St mural and           |  | Mural and boulevard garden in  |                 |
| boulevard garden              | Fernwood NRG                                     | the Vining Street laneway  | \$2,000         |
| Pandora Arts Little           |  | Little art gallery (1923 Fernwood                                      | <del>+-</del> , |
| Gallery                       | Pandora Arts Collective                          | Road)  | \$328           |
| Gallery                       |  | Mural on Rise Health building  | ψ320            |
| Rise Health Mural             | Fernwood NRG                                     | (Fernwood and Bay Streets)   | \$2,850         |
| Nise Health Mulai             | I elliwood NiCG                                  |  | Ψ2,030          |
| Harris Green                  |  | Installation of a picnic bench, little library and birdhouse in 1000   |                 |
|                               | Formused NDC                                     | 1  | ΦE 000          |
| placemaking                   | Fernwood NRG                                     | block of Harris Green  | \$5,000         |
| Wark Community                | Quadra Village                                   | Installation of little free library in                                 | <b>\$600</b>    |
| library                       | Community Centre                                 | Wark St community garden   | \$600           |
| Alter Arts Society            |  | NA 16 6 1  | <b>#</b> 5 000  |
| Mural Fest                    | Alter Arts Society                               | Mural festival   | \$5,000         |
| D. 1 0 "                      | James Bay  |  |                 |
| Birdcage Community            | Neighbourhood                                    | Boulevard enhancement project  | <b>#</b> = 000  |
| Corner                        | Association                                      | on Michigan @ Government   | \$5,000         |
|                               | South Jubilee                                    |  |                 |
| a. a. a                       | Neighbourhood                                    | Mural on commercial wall   |                 |
| SJ Rebellion mural            | Association                                      | (Pandora at Oak Bay Junction)  | \$3,000         |
| <del></del> :                 |  | Installation of a mural at the Tiny                                    |                 |
| Tiny Homes Village            | Greater Victoria Coalition                       | Homes Village facility (RAP  | <b>^-</b> •••   |
| Mural                         | to End Homelessness                              | parking lot)   | \$5,000         |
| <b>.</b>                      |  | Installation of mural at Balmoral                                      | <b>A</b>        |
| Our WorkPlace Mural           | Fernwood NRG                                     | and Quadra Streets   | \$2,750         |
|                               |  | Mural installed on east facing   |                 |
| Eden Barbershop               |  | commercial wall in Haultain  |                 |
| Mural                         | Fernwood NRG                                     | Village  | \$3,400         |
|                               |  | Community mural on a small   |                 |
| Gosworth St.                  | Oaklands Community                               | neighbourhood business wall on   |                 |
|                               | Association                                      | Gosworth St  | \$2,000         |
| Community mural               |  |  |                 |
| Community mural               | Kiwanis Pavilion Oak                             | Creation of original live-edge oak                                     |                 |
| Community mural               | Kiwanis Pavilion, Oak<br>Bay Kiwanis Health Care | Creation of original, live-edge oak benches for installation along the |                 |

| St Matthius                        | St Matthius Anglican          | Placemaking on corner of Richmond and Richardson on St.                                |          |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| Placemaking                        | Church                        | Matthius property  | \$5,000  |
| Vic West Elem<br>Children's Garden | Vic West Elementary<br>School | Create a children's garden at<br>Victoria West Elementary School<br>(750 Front Street) | \$5,000  |
| 20 Placemaking Grants              |                               |  | \$75,788 |

Table 5: 2021 Distribution by Neighbourhood and Totals by Neighbourhood since 2016

| Neighbourhood      | 2021 Grants | 2021 \$<br>Allocations by<br>neighbourhood | Total Grants* | Total \$ Investment by neighbourhood |
|--------------------|-------------|--|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Burnside Gorge     | 5           | \$17,000                                   | 25            | \$70,616                             |
| Downtown           | 6           | \$18,010                                   | 32            | \$110,124                            |
| Fairfield Gonzales | 2           | \$8,300                                    | 27            | \$98,892                             |
| Fernwood           | 6           | \$15,428                                   | 34            | \$92,077                             |
| Hillside Quadra    | 4           | \$8,550                                    | 19            | \$55,108                             |
| James Bay          | 3           | \$10,100                                   | 17            | \$51,906                             |
| Jubilee            | 2           | \$6,000                                    | 9             | \$29,000                             |
| North Park         | 3           | \$12,696                                   | 14            | \$42,416                             |
| Oaklands           | 7           | \$14,400                                   | 28            | \$75,661                             |
| Rockland           | 2           | \$10,000                                   | 7             | \$28,490                             |
| Vic West           | 1           | \$5,000                                    | 15            | \$49,505                             |
| City-wide          | 0           | 0  | 9             | \$35,770                             |

<sup>\*</sup>totals based on fulfilled projects and not on total approved

Table 6: Total My Great Neighbourhood Approved Grant Applications by Year

|         | Grants x year | Total \$<br>Approved |
|---------|---------------|----------------------|
|         | Granto A your | 7.6610100            |
| 2016    | 22            | \$97,630             |
| 2017    | 38            | \$115,906            |
| 2018    | 43            | \$120,000            |
| 2019    | 55            | \$112,245            |
| 2020    | 51            | \$184,205*           |
| 2021    | 41            | \$125,484            |
| 6 years | 250 grants    | \$755,470            |

\*in 2020, Council provided a one-time additional \$100,000 to address COVID.

Table 7: My Great Neighbourhood Approved Grants from 2016 to current year

|       | Placemaking | Activity | Community<br>Recovery &<br>Resiliency | Total |
|-------|-------------|----------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 2016  | 22          | n/a      | n/a                                   | 22    |
| 2017  | 24          | 14       | n/a                                   | 38    |
| 2018  | 27          | 16       | n/a                                   | 43    |
| 2019  | 27          | 28       | n/a                                   | 55    |
| 2020  | 18          | 9        | 24                                    | 51    |
| 2021  | 20          | 11       | 10                                    | 41    |
| Total | 138         | 78       | 34                                    | 250   |

In 2016, this grant program was introduced with placemaking as a focus. In 2017, staff heard from residents that they needed a second category that allowed for community development activities. In 2020, a temporary category was introduced to respond to the pandemic and support building resiliency in the neighbourhoods. There were 24 applications in the first year of this temporary category and in 2021,10 applications were received. Projects in 2021 focused on community food systems, climate change activities and emergency planning. Staff are recommending that this temporary category become permanent, and the name of the category be shortened to *Community Resiliency*.

Moving to a monthly approval process has allowed this grant fund to get money into the community more efficiently, making ongoing and immediate positive impacts to residents. Staff are recommending that Council approve as permanent, an ongoing monthly intake and City Manager approval process. Staff will provide an annual summary of the grant program to Council at the end of each year.

In addition to managing the intake of the 2021 program, staff have been designing a new online application form which will be introduced for the 2022 program. The online form is intended to

make applying for this fund more accessible, reduce technical issues faced by fillable pdfs, and meet best practices requirements on the City's website.

# **Updates to the Neighbourhood Program**

Community Virtuals

As COVID continued to prevent large community building events, the Neighbourhood Team launched Season 2 of the Community Virtuals Lunch & Learn in September 2021. Three events took place in the fall covering topics of tackling graffiti in the neighbourhoods, profiling the *Local Champions* program and highlighting the City's Zero Waste goals. The winter program will include traffic calming in neighbourhoods, the introduction of the *Neighbourhood-Led Action Plan Guide* and just prior to the April launch of the 2022 program, a session on the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant* program.

# New Resource for Residents

Staff will be completing the *Neighbourhood-Led Action Plan Guide* as part of the Neighbourhood Team T3 activities. This guide is designed to empower residents to achieve their neighbourhood improvement goals. The guide is broken into nine steps that take residents through a process of identifying and prioritizing projects they can undertake to establish a resident-led plan for community development. The guide will be rolled out in T1 2022 to all the neighbourhoods.

#### Combatting Graffiti

Through the VTAG program (Victoria Together Against Graffiti) the Neighbourhood Team has been working with residents to tackle graffiti in the neighbourhoods. Staff provide paint-out kits and have been identifying and supporting neighbourhood coordinators who in turn manage teams of volunteers. There has been a very positive uptake on this program and staff are working on securing more funding from external partners to continue to expand this program.

# Neighbourhood Coordinators

In March, 2021, Council approved the additional funding of \$20,000 for neighbourhood coordinators for North Park, Downtown, Rockland, Jubilee and James Bay. The Neighbourhood Liaisons invited proposals from these neighbourhoods, which were to outline how these funds would be used. To date, North Park, Downtown and James Bay have received these grants, however Rockland and Jubilee indicated they lacked the capacity to take advantage of this program for this year. Staff will be bringing forward a report to Council in early 2022 outlining a draft policy, sharing the successes and challenges faced by the neighbourhoods in taking advantage of this grant and providing recommendations for this program.

#### **OPTIONS & IMPACTS**

# Option 1 (Recommended):

For the future intakes of the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant Program*, that Council approves the following:

- 1. The permanent addition of the temporary category "Community Recovery & Resiliency" renamed as *Community Resiliency* to the *My Great Neighbourhood Grant* program, and
- 2. Make permanent the monthly intake and City Manager approval process, with staff providing Council an annual summary of the grant program.

#### 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 all people. City staff are available to provide support through the application process. As the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion was established in 2021, the City continues to seek out new ways to promote and encourage applications which support equity and diversity 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 2022 Financial Plan, \$ 136,480, which is comprised of \$131,330 for the actual grants and \$5,150 for the community development activity to promote 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.
- o 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. Permanently adding the new category of *Community Resiliency* to the *My Great Neighbourhoods Grant Program* will assist residents and organizations in furthering their community building 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