

Council Member Motion For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 22, 2021

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** September 16, 2022

From: Councillor Ben Isitt

Subject: Housing Outreach Support Program

BACKGROUND

In 2021, Council authorized an investment of \$60,000 in the Housing Outreach pilot project. This pilot project delivers housing outreach services to prevent homelessness through several community centres and agencies in the city. The results of this pilot project in the period from November 2021 to August 2022 are described in Attachment 1.

The administrator of the program, the Quadra Village Community Centre / Downtown Blanshard Advisory Committee ("QVCC"), is now requesting a \$45,000 contribution from the City of Victoria to continue operating the program for another year, leveraging a \$30,000 investment from the Victoria Foundation (see Attachment 2).

Funding for this program is required to ensure continuity beyond October 2022.

As noted by QVCC: "Our goal for year 3 is to persuade BC Housing to fund an expanded version of this project and to annually decrease the amount of the City's contributions."

Support for the Housing Outreach Support Program is documented in letters of support from several community organization (see Attachments 3 to 6). As noted by QVCC:

"local agencies have encountered an overwhelming rise in the number of single people and couples that are losing their housing. In our experience, there is an intense need to rally resources and one to one support to attempt to find short and long term housing options, before folks end up living outside, in vehicles etc. ...

The extremely difficult housing market is particularly difficult for individuals competing for the most affordable rentals in the city when they are contending with challenges like low literacy, limited support, social isolation and moderate anxiety and depression."

The Housing Outreach Support Program also plays a key role in delivery of the Greater Victoria Rent Bank, as noted in the letter from the Community Social Planning Council.

Based on the level of ongoing need in the City of Victoria, and the documented record of success of the Housing Outreach Support Program, it is recommended that Council authorize an expenditure of \$45,000 from the 2022 contingency to ensure continuity of the program beyond October 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Authorizes an expenditure of \$45,000 to the Quadra Village Community Centre and partner agencies for the Housing Outreach Support Program, funded from the 2022 contingency.
- 2. Requests a presentation and report from the QVCC on the results of the program in Q3 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Isitt

Attachments:

- 1. Snapshot of Housing Outreach Pilot Project, November 2021-August 2022
- 2. Proposal from Quadra Village Community Centre, August 2022
- 3. Letter of support from Cridge Centre for the Family
- 4. Letter of support from Burnside-Gorge Community Association
- 5. Letter of support from Together Against Poverty Society
- 6. Letter of support from Community Social Planning Council