

Council Member MotionFor the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 8, 2024

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** February 2, 2024

From: Councillor Kim

Subject: Emergency Bridge Funding for Housing Outreach Program

BACKGROUND

Currently, Quadra Village Community Centre is looking for a path to sustainable funding for their Housing Outreach Program (HOP). This crucial program has played a valuable role in preventing people from being unhoused. HOP was developed as a direct response to the high numbers of people facing eviction for a wide range of reasons and the lack of availability of timely, available, affordable housing. Further, HOP operates in a particular niche, assisting single adults and couples, differentiating their work from other similar local programs.

Since its beginnings in November 2021, the Housing Outreach Program has been able to provide 1742 sessions to 631 individual community members, as of August 31st, 2023. Additionally, HOP has provided 7280 types of resources and provisions. HOP has been able to prevent upwards of 95 people from losing their current housing by advocating to landlords, helping them find employment, providing small amounts of short-term funding, supporting folks with obtaining Income Assistance, and finding subsidies. Additionally, they have supported over 20 individuals obtain housing who were either currently unhoused, or at great risk of becoming unhoused.

The program began as a one-year pilot project, funded one-time through the City of Victoria. The program secured an external grant, funding half its second year of operations, while the City stepped in to fund the other half. However, neither of these funding streams are ongoing. Meanwhile, HOP had to hire a second staff member to better respond to the growing demand of the community living through a housing crisis. Unfortunately, funds are running out.

HOP continues to make every effort to find funding, yet the timing of grant and funding options is such that there are a few months of operations that require "bare bones" emergency funding. HOP's efforts include considering launching a rescue fundraising campaign, applying for grants, as well as advocating to BC Housing for sustainable funding.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council allow \$25,000 to be provided to the Quadra Village Community Centre's Housing Support program from the Contingency Fund; and
- 2. That the Mayor provide a letter of support for the Housing Outreach Program to assist in their fundraising efforts.

3.	That this motion	be	forwarded	to	the	February	8,	2024	daytime	meeting	of	Council	for
	consideration.												

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Kim