



Council Member Motion

For the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting of September 17, 2015

To: Governance and Priorities Committee **Date:** September 17, 2015
From: Councillor Alto and Mayor Helps
Subject: Victoria Micro Housing Society Interim Funding

Background:

Victoria Micro Housing Society (VMHS), a registered BC Society, requests interim funding from the City to help move 'Solidarity Village', a pilot micro housing initiative, closer to reality.

VMHS understands that City Council set aside funds that would become available to a registered society once that society had reached a threshold of active preparation indicating sufficient capacity for the pilot to proceed to the design/build stage. That threshold has been achieved.

Registered society status has been completed. Volunteers have established a full Board, with members as required by the Societies Act. The Board has opened a bank account, and met necessary regulatory requirements and designated signing authorities. A companion advisory steering committee has created draft principles to guide the operation of the village, subject to input from future residents. Partnerships have been established with professionals, social service agents, students and faculty at Victoria High School, housing advocates, future residents, builders, and others. Steering committee and Board members have begun outreach to neighbourhoods, funders and others in positions to help facilitate success.

All efforts to date have been funded through donations from community members and, once VMHS was formally established, board members, and have relied entirely on volunteer contributions and labour. Funding is now needed to proceed with the next phases of the pilot project.

VMHS is planning for an opening date of September 2016 for the first pilot micro housing village.

At this time, VMHS seeks \$25,000 to complete the following 'next step' actions:

1. Develop design/build proposal with architectural drawings
2. Implement ongoing and regular outreach and social inclusion with potential future residents, including a 'resident interest' inventory
3. Implement public engagement and consultation on the design/build concept, including engagement with Community and Neighbourhood Associations, Community Association Land Use Committees and processes – before a site is selected – so neighbours are involved in the conversation at an early and ongoing stage
4. Outreach with social services to introduce the concept to agencies, to plan and build future relationships with the village and villagers
5. Develop intake protocols and a self-management Memorandum of Understanding MOU between residents, VMHS, and other partners

Victoria Strategic Plan relevance

Objective 6: Make Victoria More Affordable

Work with developers, BC Housing, and private sector landlords. Think and act outside the box. Be willing to pilot new ideas.

Objective 7: Facilitate Social Inclusion and Community Wellness

Continue to keep subsidized housing units a focus and work with partners to create/identify new opportunities.

Further, Mayor and Council recently approved an action plan addressing the needs of people without housing, and reducing impacts arising from sheltering activities in City parks, entitled *Supports and City Services for Sheltering in Parks*.

This action plan proposes that the City facilitate alternative temporary housing options, as it will take several years to build an adequate supply of permanent housing. While micro housing is not being considered for any public park, one of the alternative temporary housing options identified in the action plan is a pilot project micro-housing village. In a subsequent update to the report, the Victoria Micro Housing Society was identified as a responsible agency.

Motion:

Victoria Micro Housing Society be allocated interim funding of \$25,000 to execute the actions noted above, such funding to be drawn from the 'additional operating funding of up to \$350,000 from 2015 contingencies' already allocated to 'support specific Action Plan* initiatives, subject to final approval by the City Manager'.

Prior to receiving said funds, Victoria Micro Housing Society will provide to the Director of Finance a detailed budget identifying proposed expenditures.

Prior to March 31, 2016, and prior to any further funds being disbursed to Victoria Micro Housing Society, Victoria Micro Housing Society will provide a report to the Director of Finance outlining the details of expenditures from this allocation.

** This references the May 27, 2015 report "Action Plan for Housing, Supports and City Services for Homeless People Sheltering in City Parks".*

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Marianne Alto



Mayor Lisa Helps