

Status Report - Action Plan for Housing, Supports and City Services for Sheltering in City Parks

2015-2016 Housing Initiatives

Initiatives	Recommendation	Lead/Timeline	Status
1. Temporary Housing Initiatives			
a. Increase the supply of emergency shelter spaces in the region. (260 beds year round)	Support Coalition strategy to reduce demand for shelter beds by placing homeless people directly into housing.	Council July 2015	Communicate to the Minister and BC Housing the City's request that more funding be made available through rent supplements to house people in need.
	Write to Provincial government to raise awareness of issue and request additional funding and supports.	Mayor Helps July 2015	Follow-up City communications (above) with a meeting with the Minister to request funding for additional rent supplements for people in need to free up capacity in emergency shelters.
	Support Cool Aid Society in seeking \$112,000 in funding to open 40 adult emergency mats between May and October 2015 or seek additional rent supplements from BC Housing.	Director, SPCD September 2015	BC Housing has rejected additional funding to increase emergency shelter capacity. Funding for 20 rent supplements may be available to help people move to permanent housing. Cool Aid Society and Our Place advise they are able to open additional emergency shelter spaces for adults if City funding is available. Our Place is proposing a low barrier model that may serve the needs of people currently sheltering in parks.
	Support Out of the Rain program in seeking funding of \$40,000 to open 35 youth emergency mats for September 2015 and April/May 2016.	Director, SPCD September 2015	As above with respect to BC Housing funding. Out of the Rain advise they are able to open additional emergency shelter spaces for youth in the months of September 2015 and April/May 2016 if City funding is available.
b. Develop micro-housing model	Identify and support a local group(s) wanting to implement a micro-housing village by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping to identify a site - Provide a project grant - Support site with City services 	Director, SPCD External partner. Status report Sept. 2015	Micro-Housing Victoria (Society) formed to lead development and organization of a village within the City of Victoria. Short-term focus is the development of organizational capacity, governance and the concept plan for the village. City staff met with MHV Society members to review the concept, approach, building code application and moving forward with further site identification. Preliminary concept developed for ~0.5 acre site to house about 35-40 people. Site identification and evaluation being undertaken by MHV, but no specific site identified at this time. <u>A City park site is not recommended for a micro-housing village.</u> MHV has potential partners to build micro-housing units and may request funding to build a prototype housing unit.

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2. Advocacy for Permanent Housing & Supports			
a. Proposals for New Transitional & Supportive Housing	<p>Support the Priority Housing Project List, and fund projects that apply for Victoria Housing Reserve capital funding.</p> <p>Facilitate timely processing of applications for funded PHPL projects.</p>	<p>Council As grant applications received</p> <p>Director, SPCD As applications received</p>	<p>Grants approved for two projects in 2013/2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wilson's Walk - \$840,000 – project underway – 108 units - Siem Lelum – \$390,000 – project underway – 15 units <p>Pending grant applications for 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cottage Grove Manor – 43 units - Saanich - Rosalie's Village – 41 units - Saanich <p>Affordable housing and supportive housing projects receive priority processing through City's planning and building construction application processes.</p>
b. Social Service and Health Service Supports	<p>Support Coalition recommendations in <i>Creating Homes, Enhancing Communities</i> report.</p> <p>Continue to support Coalition with City funding (\$100,000) and staff support.</p> <p>Support Island Health and their partners to establish a safe consumption site.</p>	<p>Council June 2015</p> <p>Council April 2016</p> <p>Council Social Planner, SPCD External partners</p>	<p>Endorsed by Council July 9, 2015.</p> <p>Endorsed by Council July 9, 2015. Consider funding application as part of 2016 Grant process.</p> <p>City representatives available to attend and represent City perspective in service model development process.</p>

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2015 Operational Initiatives

Initiative	Recommendation	Lead/Timeline	Status
1. Storage Project for homeless' belongings	Establish site(s) with service partner. Evaluate 2015 project and make recommendations for 2016 budget.	Social Planner (SPCD) Comm Dev Coordinator (CESP) September 2015	Discussions with potential service providers underway. Additional funding sources identified. Site selection and service model not confirmed at this time. Next steps: Continue discussions with potential service providers. Initiate a proposal call to stimulate service provider interest if there is no progress by September.
2. Additional Social Service Outreach	Fund a six month outreach position to provide immediate support to homeless individuals, assess need level and refer to required services. - \$35,000 for six month pilot	Social Planner (SPCD) September 2015	Consultation with VicPD and Island Health undertaken and service model scope identified. Opportunities to partner pilot project with Island Health being explored (funding and coordination). Next steps: 1. Formalize terms of reference for the position. 2. Seek a qualified person to fill the position.
3. City Services	A. Approve seasonal special clean-up crew from 2015 contingencies - 2 person crew, late June to October - 7 days per week - \$100,000 total additional cost	Asst Director, Parks July 2015	Service model implemented. Additional sharps bins installed in needed locations.
	B. Fund washroom services from 2015 contingencies to Nov 30 th . - \$85,000 for washrooms - \$65,000 for portable toilets	Asst Director, Parks July 2015	Extended washrooms hours with security from dusk to 2:30am open in Beacon Hill Park and Stadacona Park. Portable toilets installed at Topaz Park to provide overnight washroom availability. Evaluate additional locations for portable toilets. Consult with area residents prior to portable toilet installation where new service may cause neighbourhood impacts.
	C. Install signs in specific parks - \$5,000 approved.	Assistant Director, Parks (PR) July 2015	Specific parks identified to receive additional signs to delineate environmentally sensitive areas. Development of signs underway.
	D. Distribute information materials to service providers and people sheltering in parks that informs about housing and support services and the City's regulations.	Director, CESP (VicPD & BLS) July 2015	Draft information materials in final review and will be printed by end of July.

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	E. Fund Bylaw Officer salary expense to maintain seven days per week monitoring.	Director, LRS June 2015	Service model implemented.
	F. Support small incentives to acknowledge cooperation with VicPD and City.	Director, LRS July 2015	Coordinated service approach implemented with VicPD.
	G. Improve compliance monitoring for travellers and visitors who are not homeless, but are taking shelter in City parks.	Director, LRS (Bylaw Officers) (VicPD) June 2015	Coordinated service approach implemented with VicPD.
4. Amend Parks Bylaw	Adopt proposed bylaw amendments to improve City management of parks: a. Limit areas within parks where overnight sheltering is permitted b. Limit continuous park occupation c. Improve authority to close park for restoration d. Identify parks where sheltering is not permitted	Director, LRS City Solicitor Director, P&R September 2015	Draft bylaw amendments under review. Assessment of parks unsuitable for overnight sheltering underway. Bylaw amendments will be proposed to Council once progress on temporary housing initiatives is made.
5. Compliance Strategy	Support compliance strategy for problematic sheltering activities.	City Solicitor September 2015	Development of progressive compliance strategy underway. Progressive compliance strategy will come forward to Council concurrent with proposed bylaw amendments.