

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
ON
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES' SERVICES 2022 GRANT APPLICATION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council resolution of support for an application to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

This report supports Council's strategic priorities and areas of focus regarding:

- **Governance and Accountability**
 - Community Engagement: We are committed to engaging and connecting with Kamloops residents and stakeholders.
 - External Relationships: We understand the importance of maintaining and improving key relationships.
 - Fiscal Responsibility: We are fiscally responsible and accountable.
- **Livability**
 - Healthy Community: We foster an environment that supports and promotes healthy living through recreation, community, and social connection.
 - Housing: We focus on improving diversity and access throughout the housing continuum.
 - Inclusivity: We are committed to supporting inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility in our community.
 - Safety: We recognize the importance of a safe and secure community.
- **Vibrant Economy**
 - Business Health: We cultivate a positive business environment and maintain a framework that facilitates jobs, economic sustainability, and growth.
 - Partnerships: We continue to nurture partnerships with key agencies and organizations.

SUMMARY

The City is preparing a grant application for funding from the UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program, and staff are seeking a Council resolution of support for the grant application. Details of the program, including intended program outcomes and eligibility requirements, and the City's proposed activities and associated program funding requests are described in the discussion portion of this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize:

- a) **staff to submit a grant application to the Union of BC Municipalities Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program for \$1,509,400 to support the proposed activities, as outlined in the Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Grant Application report**
- b) **staff to provide overall grant management of the funds**
- c) **Administration to hire 2.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) Community Service Officer (CSO) positions and establish contracts with local agencies for 2.8 FTE outreach worker positions to provide the CSO Outreach and Response Program, to be funded from Community and Protective Services Reserve and to be reimbursed by Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program funds if the grant application is successful**
- d) **the Corporate Services Director to update the 2021–2025 Financial Plan accordingly**

DISCUSSION

Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program Details

The intent of the UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program is to assist local governments and Treaty First Nations with the following four outcomes:

- 1. improved health and safety of unsheltered homeless people living in public or private spaces, including reduced risk of COVID-19 or other disease transmission
- 2. reduced community concerns about public health and safety in neighbourhoods where unsheltered homeless populations are seeking temporary shelter
- 3. improved coordination among eligible applicants and health/social service providers; Indigenous organizations; and others working on housing, homelessness, and service provision
- 4. increased capacity of eligible applicants to work with homeless persons and Indigenous organizations towards culturally safe and trauma-informed responses

To be eligible for funding, applicants must be able to demonstrate that proposed activities meet one or more of the intended outcomes listed above. The application guide includes a table with potential activities that would be eligible for funding under each of the intended outcomes.

Projects must also do the following:

- demonstrate evidence of need in the community (e.g. unsheltered homeless population estimates, housing needs report, and community concerns about public health and

- safety) and provide a rationale for how these issues have been exacerbated by COVID-19
- provide solutions that address increased urgent and immediate needs related to unsheltered homelessness and do not create ongoing, long-term financial obligations that will not be supported by the applicant
- include new activities or a clearly phased expansion of existing activities, and for applicants that were previously funded, include costs incurred from the date the application is submitted
- be capable of completion by the applicant within one year of the date of grant approval

As per the application guide, staff anticipate receiving a response on the status of the application by late July 2022. Given that activities must be completed within one year of the date approval is received, the proposed activities (and corresponding funding requests) that are noted below will conclude in late July 2023. Eligible costs can be incurred from the date the application is submitted.

The application guide includes a table with funding guidelines based on population size. Kamloops is in the 75,000 to 200,000 population bracket, which has a corresponding \$625,000 funding guideline. The guide notes that applications that exceed the funding guidelines may be considered for additional funding if applicants can demonstrate evidence of community need and a rationale for the request. However, the guide notes that if total funding requests exceed available funding, applicants that have requested additional funds may be asked to reduce their funding request. Given the potential opportunity for additional funding, the list of proposed activities described below is not built around the funding guideline. Instead, the proposed activities focus on projects that meet community need, are eligible for funding as outlined in the application guide, and help to achieve the intended program outcomes.

Proposed Activities

Staff are seeking a Council resolution of support for the proposed activities, as described below. These six activities are grouped under three areas—outreach and response, peer-based programming, and community coordination and collaboration. The proposed funding request from the Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program to conduct the proposed activities is \$1,509,400.

Outreach and Response

- Proposed Activity 1: Envision Outreach Shuttle
Program funding request: \$138,000 at \$11,500/month

The Envision shuttle provides outreach and transportation to shelters for people experiencing homelessness. The shuttle service has been an asset in community since its inception in August 2021. During the extreme cold weather event in December 2021 and January 2022, the service was transporting on average more than 30 unsheltered individuals to shelters per night. The shuttle service runs 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Monday to Friday, and is also available on an on-call basis on Saturdays and Sundays. The program was funded through federal Reaching Home program to March 2022 and is currently funded (to July 31, 2022) from a portion of the funding allocated to the Sharps

Recovery Peer Program under the City's 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services funds.

The Envision Program supports intended program outcome 1 and links to the following eligible activity, as outlined in the application guide: "Providing temporary, incremental services...that are specifically related to supporting unsheltered homeless populations such as: food, water, and cooking supplies; bathroom facilities, showers, laundry;...and outreach teams to connect people to resources and support programs."

- Proposed Activity 2: Community Service Officer (CSO) Outreach and Response Program
Program funding request: \$468,000 at \$39,000/month

The CSO Outreach and Response Program would involve pairing an outreach worker with a CSO to provide outreach and connection to shelters and support services for people experiencing homelessness. The teams would utilize foot and bike patrols to provide outreach to unsheltered homeless individuals and to support a safe and secure environment in mixed-use and commercial centres and corridors and in areas around shelter sites. The teams would also liaise with the outreach teams that provide the Envision outreach shuttle to connect unsheltered homeless individuals to shelter and services as and when required. In recognition of the work of researchers and social justice advocates, which has identified that uniforms can be perceived as threatening and/or intimidating for many people experiencing homelessness, the CSOs working in this program would dress in plain clothes to reduce barriers and help build trust and rapport.

While the primary focus of the CSO Outreach and Response Program would be to provide an urgent outreach response for people experiencing homelessness, the program model also offers several additional benefits to support the efforts of the City, government agencies, and community partners. The outreach worker positions would help provide on-the-job training and a social perspective to increase the organizational knowledge and capacity of outreach services within the City's CSO program. The teams would also aim to participate on various community tables focused on preventing, addressing, and reducing homelessness to further integrate the CSO program in coordinated community response efforts.

Pending Council approval, the City will aim to hire 2.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) CSO positions and to establish contracts with local agencies for 2.8 FTE outreach worker positions to provide the CSO Outreach and Response Program during evenings, weekends, and peak response hours, with up to 16 hours of program coverage per day, 7 days per week. The City will fund these positions from the Community and Protective Services Reserve. Given that eligible costs can be incurred from the date the application is submitted, the City will be able to reimburse the Community and Protective Services Reserve if the grant application is successful.

Since its inception, the CSO program has worked to support the RCMP in its role and to provide an alternate response model for non-enforcement-related situations where de-escalation and mitigation approaches are most applicable. The anticipated surplus in the Community and Protective Services Reserve is a direct result of the challenges faced by the RCMP in meeting its budgeted complement of roadable members in the

community. While this situation is a priority of the local detachment, there are challenges in securing members to meet the budgeted complement with a plan to add additional members over the current funded level. Kamloops is not the only community facing staffing challenges of this nature, and it will take time to increase the number of members to the budgeted staffing levels. Utilizing this funding source to provide the CSO Outreach and Response Program aligns with the Community and Protective Services mission as a whole.

The CSO Outreach and Response Program supports intended program outcome 1 and links to the same eligible activity as the Envision Program. The CSO Outreach and Response Program also supports intended program outcome 2 and aligns with the following eligible activity, as outlined in the application guide: "Fostering positive dialogue between unsheltered homeless people, bylaw and protective services, and neighbourhoods or community members (e.g. liaison program with bylaw enforcement)."

- Proposed Activity 3: Security Services
Program funding request: \$720,000 at \$60,000/month

To help augment the work of CSOs in supporting a safe and secure environment, the City contracts security services to patrol in mixed-use and commercial centres and corridors. These services help contribute to a sense of safety in these areas for business owners, property managers, staff, patrons, and residents. Through the 2022 application, the City would request funding to be able to provide three security positions that would operate 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, in the Victoria Street West entry corridor and the Tranquille Market Corridor. Security services support intended program outcome 2 and align with the following eligible activity, as outlined in the application guide: "Funding incremental expenditures relating to protective services and bylaw enforcement."

Peer-Based Programming

- Proposed Activity 4: Sharps Recovery Peer Program
Program funding request: \$143,400 at \$11,950/month

The Sharps Recovery Peer Program provides supportive employment opportunities to peers with a lived or living experience of homelessness, poverty, and/or substance use issues. The City has been actively involved in this initiative since 2019. The program initially involved working with clients of ASK Wellness (ASK), who have collected more than 10,000 improperly discarded sharps (needles) from streets, parks, and alleyways since the program began collecting data in 2019. Through the City's 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services funds, the program has expanded to incorporate peers working with two other service providers—The Mustard Seed and the Canadian Mental Health Association - Kamloops.

While the program provides supportive employment in the pickup of sharps and refuse, employed peers also play a key role in engaging with people experiencing homelessness and/or struggling with substance use disorder, building trust and rapport and connecting them to services and supports. The program provides supportive employment, reduces stigma, contributes to public safety, and assists with community resilience. As a peer employed through the program shared, "I felt important, wanted,

needed, but most of all I really started to like myself again and I know that I mattered to others. I felt like a regular member of society in a most positive manner. My self-confidence grew quite a bit, I now like myself in more than one way."

The Sharps Recovery Peer Program supports intended program outcome 3 and directly links to the following eligible activity, as outlined in the application guide: "Participating in, supporting or coordinating peer-based support services including development of peer teams." The program also supports intended program outcome 2 and links to the following eligible activity: "Promoting understanding and cooperation through peer-based and/or neighbourhood participatory activities for site cleaning."

- Proposed Activity 5: Peer Supportive Housing, Recovery, and Employment Video Project
Program funding request: \$35,000

The Peer Supportive Housing, Recovery, and Employment Video Project would involve working with a local filmmaker to create short, educational videos that feature peers from different demographics with a lived or living experience of homelessness and/or substance use disorder. The intent would be to create three videos, each with a slightly different focus. One video would focus on a person's journey from homelessness to permanent supportive housing, while another would focus on a person who had struggled with substance use disorder and their journey into recovery. A third video would feature a local supportive employment program and tell the story of a person transitioning from homelessness and unemployment toward being gainfully employed.

Peers who participate in the video project and share their stories would receive an hourly wage for every hour they participate in the process (i.e. pre-production, filming, and post-production). Once completed, the videos would be shared publicly on the City's website, on social media, and at community engagement events as appropriate. The videos would also be used internally as educational tools to help inform perspectives and reduce stigma with CSOs and other staff who interface with vulnerable populations.

The Peer Supportive Housing, Recovery, and Employment Video Project supports intended program outcome 2 and directly links to the following eligible activities, as outlined in the application guide: "Participating in, supporting or coordinating community engagement strategies e.g. ...public education materials" and "promoting understanding and cooperation through peer-based...activities for...communications." The project also directly links to an additional eligible activity: "Honoraria for community members with lived experience of unsheltered homelessness that are participants in funded activities."

Community Coordination and Collaboration

- Proposed Activity 6: Safe and Secure Kamloops Network Meetings
Program funding request: \$5,000 at \$2,500/event

The four Safe and Secure Kamloops engagement groups—Protective and Safety Services, Business Sector, Social Agencies, and Neighbourhood Associations—include representatives from community groups, government agencies, Indigenous organizations, social service providers, business organizations, and neighbourhood associations. Members have expressed interest in engaging across and between the

different engagement groups. Safe and Secure Kamloops Network Meetings would provide opportunities for engagement group representatives to engage across sectors. The City would utilize Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program funding to host the network meetings biannually. The meetings would feature presentations on key safety and security issues and discussions focused on community strategies and local solutions that require coordination and collaboration across sectors and jurisdictions.

The Safe and Secure Kamloops Network Meetings support intended program outcome 3 and directly link to the following eligible activity: "participating in, supporting or coordinating cross-jurisdictional working groups and service teams related to housing, homelessness, and service provision."

Next Steps

Pending Council's support, staff will incorporate Council feedback and finalize the application. Staff will be presenting the proposed activities to the Safe and Secure Social Agencies Engagement Group on April 11, 2022, after this Council report has been finalized. Staff will also incorporate feedback received from that meeting into the application prior to submission to UBCM.

Based on the application guide, approval of grant funding will occur in late July 2022. Pending approval of grant funding, the City will initiate all proposed activities. If UBCM asks the City to reduce the funding request, staff will prioritize projects based on community need and work within the program's funding guidelines.

One exception is the CSO Outreach and Response Program. Pending Council's approval, the City will aim to initiate this program by summer 2022, regardless of whether or not the grant application is successful.

Additionally, the contracted security services are currently in place and are funded through a combination of the 2021 Strengthening Communities' Services Grant and taxation funding. This program is currently being assessed to ensure the funds are being used to provide enhanced security in areas of greatest need.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

City of Kamloops Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Application Budget

Proposed Activity	Program Funding Request
Envision Outreach Shuttle	\$138,000 at \$11,500/month
CSO Outreach and Response Program	\$468,000 at \$39,000/month
Security Services	\$720,000 at \$60,000/month
Sharps Recovery Peer Program	\$143,400 at \$11,950/month
Peer Supportive Housing, Recovery, and Employment Video Project	\$35,000
Safe and Secure Kamloops Network Meetings	\$5,000 at \$2,500/event

Total Request	\$1,509,400

Pending a successful grant application, all proposed activities will be funded by the Strengthening Communities' Services 2022 Program funds. If UBCM asks the City to reduce the funding request, staff will prioritize projects based on community need and work within the program's funding guidelines.

The CSO Outreach and Response Program will initially be funded from current operational variances and the Community and Protective Services Reserve. Should the grant application be successful, any funds used out of the Community and Protective Services Reserve will be reimbursed.

The CSO Outreach and Response Program will be reviewed and evaluated on its overall effectiveness and results in spring 2023. Should this program be determined to be successful, after the projected exhaustion of this grant funding in July 2023, a combination of current year operational variances and Community and Protective Services Reserve will be utilized to fund the program. Again, based on the results of the pilot program, Administration will bring forward a business case for the provisional 2024 budget for Council's consideration for inclusion in the 2024 budget and beyond.

If the City is not awarded the full requested amount, the following is provided for Council's consideration as to how the identified programs can be revised to fit a lower or unsuccessful grant application result.

Proposed Activity	Funding Alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO Outreach and Response Program 	<p>There are currently five vacancies (FTE and PTE) in the staffing complement. These positions are currently being recruited for and are expected to be filled over the course of the next couple months; however, the vacancies amount to approximately 3 FTEs, or \$310,000 in savings. To provide the coverage beginning in July 2022, the additional roles will amount to 1.5 FTEs, or \$165,000.</p> <p>Alternatively, Administration can scale back the CSO Outreach and Response Program to one CSO and one outreach position to fit the available approved funding.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security Services 	<p>The current security program will be assessed for effectiveness and need and scaled to fit into the available approved funding.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Envision Outreach Shuttle Sharps Recovery Peer Program 	<p>Staff would explore alternative external grant funding sources to fund these programs. This could include reprofiling federal Reaching Home funding that has been allocated to projects in the community that are underspending or not fully utilizing allocated funds.</p>

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MAKING KAMLOOPS SHINE

Proposed Activity	Funding Alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peer Supportive Housing, Recovery, and Employment Video Project• Safe and Secure Kamloops Network Meetings	Staff can fund these items from existing operating budgets. Staff could also pursue other grant funding opportunities to fund these items.



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Approved for Council

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