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Date: 11/18/2020 11:02:58 AM
Subject: Update on SVNH Food Access Programs

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find below an update from ACCS on the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House's search for space to continue food hamper provision after the first wave of COVID.

Background

As you may be aware, in response to increased food insecurity rates due to COVID—19, South Vancouver Neighbourhood House (SVNH) began running a grocery hamper program early in Phase 1 of the pandemic. To the best of staff's knowledge, this program was one of only three charitable/emergency food programs operating in Sunset, Killarney, and Victoria-Fraserview. Soon after launching, the program was providing free grocery hampers to over 300 individuals per week, many of whom are isolated Chinese, Vietnamese, and Filipino seniors, all with very limited to no English ability.

SVNH was able to operate the hamper program from their site since their regular programming was shut down due to COVID – however, knowing that they would face space constraints when they began to reopen regular in-person childcare and other programming in September, SVNH launched a search for an alternate location from which to run the hamper program. However, the search was unsuccessful and the program shut down in mid-August.

Discussion

In late August, City staff connected SVNH with the YMCA, which was interested in exploring community uses for its Langara site, which shut down operations in Phase I of the pandemic. That site is scheduled for redevelopment within the next 2 years, and the Y has determined that it is not financially viable to reopen it in the face of ongoing pandemic restrictions.

After several weeks of negotiation with the YMCA, early this month SVNH's Executive Director reported that the Langara Hub had started operations. They are:

- receiving food deliveries from the Greater Vancouver Food Bank (GVFB) as well as exploring other food sources;
- working with CityReach and Pacific Immigrant Resources Society (PIRS) to support their food distribution sites in Killarney and Victoria-Fraserview;
- setting up systems to register people to prepare for direct distribution by SVNH; and,
- identifying additional **spokes** that will be needed to support food security across South Vancouver (especially Sunset).

SVNH has also identified the immediate need for funding for a walk-in fridge and Social Policy food policy staff have referred SVNH to potential external funders.

Final Remarks

Staff are very pleased to see this arrangement between YMCA and SVNH come to such a positive outcome in terms of food access and will stay connected with the partnership.

If you have any further questions, please contact General Manager of ACCS Sandra Singh at Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca

Best,
Sadhu

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Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.