



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: December 12, 2023  
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: January 23, 2024  
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TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services  
SUBJECT: Grant to BC Housing to Support Continuation of Temporary Shelter at 15-27 West Hastings (Bud Osborn Shelter)

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve a grant of \$270,000 from the ACCS Homelessness Services 2024 operating budget to the British Columbia Housing Management Commission ("BC Housing") to contribute to a one year extension of BC Housing's lease at 15-27 West Hastings (the "Premises"), which serves as a temporary shelter.
- B. THAT Council, for the purposes of the grant set out in Recommendation A, deems BC Housing to be an organization "contributing to the culture, beautification, health or welfare of the city" in accordance with Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*.
- C. THAT Council authorize the General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services to negotiate and execute an agreement to disperse the grant on the terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services and the Director of Legal Services.
- D. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of Recommendation A unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

Recommendation A requires 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members per Section 206 (1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report recommends Council approve a grant contribution of up to \$270,000 to BC Housing in order to provide a one-year extension to their lease of an existing temporary shelter at 15-27 West Hastings. The temporary shelter opened in May 2021 with 60 beds and is operated

by Portland Hotel Society (PHS). In October 2022, the shelter expanded to include 80 beds total.

### **Council Authority/Previous Decisions**

*Council Report 15556 (March 2023) – Army and Navy Lease Contribution for Temporary Shelter* – authorized payment to BC Housing for up to \$75,000, for increase in rent costs.

*Council Report 14067 (October 2020) – Army and Navy Lease Contribution for Temporary Shelter* – authorized payment to BC Housing for \$825,000, representing 50% of the lease costs for the Premises for 2021, 2022 and 2023

*Housing Vancouver Strategy 2017* outlines goals to work with partners to create temporary shelters to provide immediate support to individuals experiencing homelessness while transitional and permanent social housing is made available to foster pathways out of homelessness.

### **City Manager's Comments**

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

### **Context and Background**

#### Persistent Homelessness

Vancouver's current homelessness crisis is a direct result of a historic lack of sufficient investment in supportive and affordable housing, insufficient and inappropriate health supports for people with mental health and addictions, and insufficient income supports for people living in deep poverty. The most recent Homeless Count, conducted in 2023 estimated approximately 605 individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Vancouver. Noting, Point in Time counts are understood to be an undercount estimated as much as 20%<sup>1</sup>

A variety of options are needed to respond to homelessness. The City of Vancouver partners with BC Housing on rapid responses to homelessness to ensure residents have a space to come indoors year round. The existing emergency shelter system is at capacity with vacancy rates being very low, especially during the winter months. Since 2009, the City has partnered with BC Housing to open temporary shelter beds. Temporary shelters help to add much needed capacity to the permanent shelter system, which is comprised of approximately 900 beds. There are currently approximately 500 temporary shelter beds in Vancouver.

#### 15-27 West Hastings: Bud Osborn Shelter

BC Housing entered into a two-year lease for the building on February 17, 2021 that included an option for Extension of Term for an additional period of one (1) year. Following renovations and selection of the Portland Hotel Society (PHS) as the operator, the shelter opened in May 2021.

This shelter plays a vital role in bringing people inside and connecting them with supports and longer term housing. The Bud Osborn shelter, located in the south side of the former Army &

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Glynn†, Thomas H. Byrne, and Dennis P. Culhane HUD

Navy building. It was opened in response to the encampment in Strathcona Park in 2020-2021 originally with 60 beds.

For the winter season 2022-2023, BC Housing increased funding to Portland Hotel Society (PHS) to expand the capacity of the shelter to a total of 80 temporary year round shelter spaces.

## **Discussion**

### Ensuring the Continuation of Much Needed Shelter

The lease for the Bud Osborn shelter expires on February 17, 2024 and BC Housing has negotiated a one (1) year extension to February 16, 2025.

BC Housing is seeking a 50% contribution (\$270,000 of the \$540,000 lease cost) from the City of Vancouver. Historically, the City would provide for the creation of physical shelter spaces through making City-owned space available and/or leasing privately owned sites and funding tenant improvements. As lease and tenant improvement costs have escalated in recent years, the City funding envelope is only sufficient to support a contribution towards the opening of new sites in partnership with BC Housing. In the case of the Bud Osborn shelter, BC Housing leased the privately-owned site with a financial contribution from the City, carried out the tenant improvements and provides for the operational costs of the shelter.

Council approval of staff's recommendation would ensure the continued operation of 80 beds to support people experiencing homelessness for another year.

### Securing Longer Term Options

The City has a long partnership with BC Housing to deliver the temporary shelter program, as well as longer term solutions. The City will continue to work with provincial partners, including BC Housing, on the creation of solutions that provide safe and secure housing and supports for all who need them.

## Financial Implications

Council approved the City's Contribution to the lease at 15-27 West Hastings as follows:

City of Vancouver Lease Contribution Year	Date	RTS #	Council approved Recommendations	Current Report Recommendation
<b>Feb 2021 – Feb 2022</b>	Oct 2020	14067	\$275,000	
<b>Feb 2022-Feb 2023</b>	Oct 2020	14067	\$275,000	
<b>Feb 2023- Feb 2024</b>	Oct 2020	14067	\$275,000	
<b>Feb 2023- Feb 2024</b> Increased Costs for Exercised Lease Renewal Option	March 2023	15556	\$75,000	
<b>Feb 2024- Feb 2025</b>	Jan 2024	16096		\$270,000

This report recommends a grant of \$270,000 to BC Housing to support the extension of the lease at 15-27 West Hastings for the provision of temporary shelter.

The City contributions of \$270,000 would contribute to half the annual lease costs for 2024, through to February 2025.

The source of funds will be the 2024 ACCS Homelessness Services operating budget.

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