



ABORIGINAL COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

101-2860 Quadra Street

Victoria BC V8T 4E7

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August 6, 2019

625 Fisgard Street
 Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

Dear Capital Regional District Board of Directors,

Re: Request for Support Towards Core-Operational Funds**Introduction**

On behalf of the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society (ACEH), we are requesting financial support towards our **core-operational funding needs for the next three years**. We project that within three years we will be better established financially and have the capacity to meet our core-operational costs.

In late 2015 the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (GVCEH) Director reached out to Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi to assist the GVCEH to engage First Nations communities and to encourage Indigenous participation in addressing the disproportionate number of Indigenous people experiencing homeless in Victoria. With the creation of the ACEH this goal is well on its way to being realized and we believe is a direct result of the ACEH governance structure and community engagement processes. Currently the ACEH has broad Indigenous leadership and people with lived experience involvement yet to date, despite many attempts, our society has not been able to access core funding required like our sister organization the GVCEH has (City of Victoria, Island Health and the CRD for example). We believe we add value to their work and the organization networks in the city and that the ACEH provides a unique lens, and culturally appropriate strategies and services towards meaningful systems improvements.

Significant strides have been made since the ACEH became a BC Non-Profit Society and a Registered Charity. The ACEH has gathered critical baseline data and facilitated surveys and focus groups leading to evidence-based learning, and therefore planning and delivery to address and reduce Indigenous homelessness in our city.

Through our work and the raising of our profile, there is increasing demand of our time, resulting in our inability to be present at some important tables, and our spending too much time proposal writing to keep operations afloat to ensure there are funds for the Executive Director to do this work. Thus, we are not maximizing our time, efforts, or potential.

Consequently, we are requesting **financial support to contribute to the Executive Director's salary and the costs associated with retaining an Associate Director** to ensure the ACEH is represented at numerous important tables community-wide and to maximize our time beyond proposal/grant writing.

New Era of Relationships

The landscape is changing, whether considering the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action or the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - we are in an era of building relationships, co-development, and sharing resources. The National Housing Strategy of Canada also bases its intent in the spirit of self-determination and reconciliation and encourages long term approaches and investments. That is how we see this request. As a partnership, and a long-range commitment to work together, to align our strategies and to formalize a collaborative effort overall.

As well, we believe this request aligns with the CRD Statement of Reconciliation: **"commitment alone is not enough and that action is needed** to show that the CRD is taking measurable steps towards a better relationship with Indigenous peoples." In a similar vein, the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations final report released October 10, 2018 states: "as the CRD continues to advocate for more inclusive governance models, there is an opportunity to join the emerging Indigenous economy as a partner, a customer or advocate of innovative business ventures – ones that are inherently sustainable, equitable, build understanding and tackle systemic poverty."

Three Year Financial Request | (2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23) | \$150,000 Annually

Contribution to Staffing:

Example for 2020/21: Executive Director (\$50,000), Associate Director salary (\$70,000), and Overhead/Administration related costs (\$30,000).

It is in our ACEH Strategic Plan/Operational Plan to also access a store-front location in the downtown core where we can better provide wrap-around services within a cultural context for the Indigenous Street Community (drop-in space, cultural-ceremony room, office spaces, storage, kitchen and so on). In an environmental scan of rental spaces, those costs range between \$5,000 and \$7,000 per month in the downtown core. This remains a critical need and a longer-range goal of the organization. Any support in this regard would be helpful, whether it be financial support or by flagging opportunities for rental spaces for us.

In the meantime, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the CRD for providing temporary office space on Quadra Street for our existing staff.

Conclusion

The funding will ensure the ACEH can stay actively engaged as the city works towards systems and structural improvements for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people experiencing homelessness in Victoria, and will allow us to be represented at important tables including the CAA, GVCEH Steering Committee, VCAT, and DTSPS (to name a few), and to support the goal of 33% of Indigenous people having access to housing in Victoria but not only access, but housing stability. Within this context, we intend to incorporate decolonized harm reduction practice into all levels of our work, and continue the momentum in addressing violence against Indigenous women on the streets, as well as strengthen our working relationship with Vic PD.

Lastly, a Memorandum of Understanding between the ACEH and GVCEH has identified 14 initiatives to be undertaken by the two Coalitions. The focus over the next year is the creation of an Indigenous-specific Systems Improvement Map - a resource that will be helpful to many

organizations locally. With less time on proposal/grant writing we can also turn our attention to much needed prevention and work with Indigenous youth in our city.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. We trust you agree that the ACEH has played a critical and significant role over the last three years.

Our four Strategic Priorities are: 1) provide Island-wide culturally appropriate housing through the use of leading-practice housing models, 2) strengthen existing programs and services through an Aboriginal worldview, 3) advocate for public policy and support for Aboriginal housing and services, and 4) secure core funding and infrastructure for operations, and adopt sound business practices for service delivery.

With Respect,



Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi
Executive Director | ACEH

Our way is to care for all our people, from the youngest to the oldest. We are all one. Some of our people living away from home are suffering, isolated, and homeless. We stand together to end homelessness.

