



Making a difference...together

REPORT TO CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2022

SUBJECT **Report to Supplement a Motion with Notice: Funding Request for Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide additional information in support of the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board in considering a Motion with Notice: Finding Request for Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) on an ongoing basis in the amount of \$150,000 per year.

BACKGROUND

The ACEH Society, first formed in 2016 and registered with the Canadian Revenue Agency in 2017, is a non-profit and registered charitable organization whose sole focus is to support Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness. Through building partnerships locally and Vancouver Island-wide, the ACEH works to identify and address systemic and structural barriers, share information, resources and lessons learned while also providing cultural support, connections and housing stability.

The ACEH has the following Vision:

“Our way is to care for all out 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.”

In August 2019, the CRD received a request from the ACEH, attached as Appendix A, seeking core operational funding of \$150,000 per year for a period of three years, at which point the ACEH anticipated being able to meet their core operational costs. This item was considered by the Hospitals and Housing Committee where a motion was approved that the request for funding be referred to the 2020 CRD budget process. Funds to support the ACEH were included in the CRD Budget for the years 2020, 2021, and 2022.

In June 2022, the CRD received a request from the ACEH, attached as Appendix B, seeking financial support of \$150,000 for 2023/24.

At the July 13, 2022 meeting of the CRD Board, the following Motion with Notice was considered: *“That the Capital Regional District continues to funding the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness on an ongoing basis in the amount of \$150,000 per year.”* The Motion with Notice was subsequently referred back to staff for more information.

IMPLICATIONS

Intergovernmental Implications

Available data indicates that Indigenous Peoples disproportionately experience homelessness with the 2020 Greater Victoria Point-in-Time Count identifying that 35% of all survey respondents self-identified as Indigenous. According to the 2016 Census, Indigenous Peoples comprise a total of 4.7% of the Greater Victoria Population. The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness recognizes that Indigenous Peoples lack adequate access to stable housing and also experience

disconnected relationships with their land, family, community, culture and identities. Therefore, the research suggests that Indigenous homelessness goes beyond the lack of a physical structure and includes the need for Indigenous Peoples to “culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their indigeneity or lost relationships” (Thistle 2017, 6).¹

As an Indigenous-led organization active across Vancouver Island, but focussed on supporting Indigenous Peoples in the capital region, the ACEH works to bring together First Nations as well as those organizations serving Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness that are located off-reserve. Their work is centered on including the voices of the Indigenous Street Community and in listening to their immediate needs, lived experiences, structural and systemic barriers, hopes and dreams and ideas on long-term solutions. The ACEH supports the needs of Indigenous Peoples in a holistic manner working to increase their physical, mental and spiritual wellness through Indigenous teaching and worldview and within the context of taking a Housing First approach.

Social Implications

The ACEH provides a number of programs that are available to Indigenous Peoples through a dual model of care that incorporates Culturally Supportive Housing alongside decolonized harm reduction, which is built on the provision of pathways to healing from intergenerational harms that are rooted in colonial trauma. More information on the range of programs and services the ACEH provides can be found in the ACEH Annual Housing Report, attached as Appendix C.

The request for funding support will be used to enhance leadership and operational effectiveness in advancing the ACEH’s strategic directions. Specifically, and if approved, the funds will be used toward the “Executive Director (ED), required administrative support through an Executive Assistant (EA) as well as costs towards operations expenses such as the annual lease cost for the Broughton Street Office/Storefront which creates space for senior administrative offices, a nursing clinic and Registered Nurse, a Counselling room and Indigenous Clinical Counselor, Outreach Team offices, Community Kitchen, Elder Mentor meeting space, and work space for a Youth Programs & Services Coordinator”. These activities are identified as critical in supporting the ACEH’s operations in providing wrap-around services, programming space, and a facility for cross-sectoral service provider engagement and outreach.

Financial Implications

In support of the identified activities listed through the Social Implications section of the report, the June 2022 correspondence from the ACEH identified the following funding allocation:

Table 1: CRD Funding Allocation

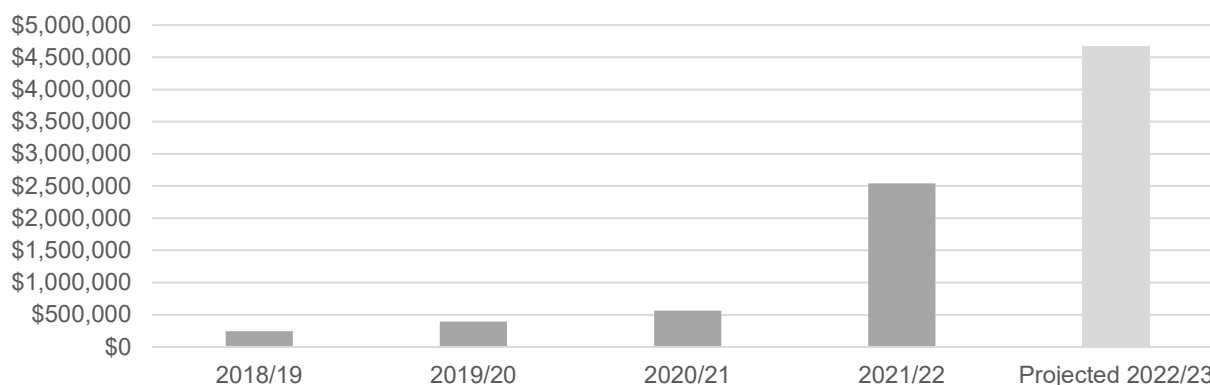
Description	Amount
Executive Director (Contribution to Salary)	\$65,000
Executive Assistance (Contribution to Salary)	\$45,000
Overhead Related Costs	\$40,000
TOTAL	\$150,000

¹ Thistle, J (2017) Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada. Canadian Observatory of Homelessness Press.
<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/COHIndigenousHomelessnessDefinition.pdf>

Funds to support the ACEH have been drawn from CRD Service 1.224 Community Health. The approved 2022 budget for Service 1.224 included a total of \$475,000 under Contracted Services in support of the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (\$325,000 including \$225,000 from the CRD and \$100,000 from the City of Victoria) and the ACEH (\$150,000). As the original funding commitment towards the ACEH was for three years including 2020, 2021, and 2022, the requisition through Service 1.224 was anticipated to decrease by a total of \$150,000 starting in 2023. However, if a commitment is made to include continued funding of the ACEH, it is expected that this will place an additional upward pressure on the overall CRD requisition starting in 2023.

The ACEH has experienced significant growth in revenue in recent years, going from a reported \$242,178 in 2018/19 to a reported \$2.5 million (M) in 2021/22. The ACEH's Annual Housing Report (Appendix C) identifies that the society has projected revenues of \$4.7M in 2022/23 for a reported growth in revenue of 84% from 2021/22 reported figures. It should be noted that as much of this growth in revenue is tied to the operations of the programs noted in the Social Implications there are few resources available to support work associated with system transformation and collaboration.

Table 2: ACEH Annual Revenue



Another source of revenue the ACEH has available is through the Government of Canada's Reaching Home Program, which the CRD administers. The ACEH received a total of \$70,791 in 2019/20, \$307,527 in 2020/21 and \$290,778 in 2021/22. These funds are provided in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Reaching Home as well as the Directives as required by the Government of Canada. These funds are for specific service delivery programs and the related administrative costs required for program reporting and are not available to fund system transformation and collaboration activities associated with core operations.

Service Delivery Implications

CRD staff negotiate and enter into annual Service Agreements with the ACEH. The service agreements explicitly identify the parameters of the CRD funding contribution and detail the activities and initiatives that the funds are to be used in support of. Critically, a component included in past service agreements includes engaging Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness and leading systems transformation in collaboration with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, but specific to the needs and experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

CONCLUSION

The ACEH has been funded by the CRD through Service 1.224 Community Health for a total of three years including 2020, 2021 and 2022. As the original funding ask was for those three years, the ACEH advanced a request for \$150,000 for 2023. Tied to this request for core operational funds, a Motion with Notice was advanced to allocate ongoing funds totalling \$150,000 per year to the ACEH.

The ACEH plays an important role in supporting the needs of Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness that includes running a range of support service and housing programs as well as work associated with system transformation and collaboration. The ACEH has experienced considerable growth in revenue 2018/19 to 2021/22 with another 84% growth in revenue projected between 2021/22 and 2022/23. The bulk of these funds are to support the delivery of services and not the capacity required to engage in broader community-based efforts to support addressing the needs of Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness.

The CRD's funds are provided through annual service agreements that include a range of identified items that align with regional interests while also explicitly identifying their purpose in supporting senior staff and overhead costs.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

Submitted by:	Don Elliott, MUP, Senior Manager, Regional Housing
Concurrence:	Kevin Lorette, P. Eng., MBA, General Manager, Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Correspondence, August 6, 2019
- Appendix B: Correspondence, June 9, 2022
- Appendix C: 2021/2022 Annual Housing Report