



greater victoria
coalition to end
homelessness

hope has found a home

211-611 Discovery Street

Victoria BC V8T 5G4

August 8, 2019

625 Fisgard Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

Dear CRD Board of Directors,

RE: Letter of Support for Funding Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH)

Please accept this letter in support of the funding application for the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness.

In order to effectively address the issue of homelessness, the homelessness serving sector must meet the needs of Indigenous people experiencing homelessness, and whereas capacity building of appropriate organizations must be supported the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (GVCEH) is pleased to provide this letter of support for the ACEH.

In particular, it is critical that core funding be provided to coordinating organizations. Core funding alleviates the need to allocate often limited and precious human resources to the constant demand of grant writing and fund raising. The ACEH requires financial support and the opportunity to develop the necessary human resources to meet the needs of the Indigenous community.

In addition, the GVCEH and the ACEH have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which will support the work of coordination and collaboration between the two homelessness serving coalitions. To this end, the GVCEH is acting to fulfill the following commitment:

Excerpt from MOU

31. *Work together to establish a funding model that can support both the integrated and independent activities of the GVCEH and ACEH to jointly present to*
 - a. *Capital Regional District*
 - b. *Island Health*
 - c. *BC Housing*

Further rationale for the financial support of the ACEH is to enable the organization to provide representation and meaningful participation in the broad Community Plan planning process and to be able to address the gaps identified in the outcomes mapping process that have transpired to date.

Previous community development work of the GVCEH in Outcomes Mapping has not comprehensively supported culturally relevant service development.



Discussions have transpired indicating a need to create an Indigenous culturally relevant 'overlay' of the current Regional Housing First Outcomes Map. While there is complete acknowledgment and agreement that this is a necessity, the resources to support the work of an Indigenous perspective and a culturally relevant and inter-culturally competent method for achieving Indigenous community outcomes has not been achieved.

The specific outcomes identified in the table below are an example of gaps in Indigenous participation and service implementation that currently exist in a) Outcomes Based Planning and b) Systems Improvement.

The following excerpt from the Regional First Outcomes Map under the outcome of Health, Wellness and Day to Day Services identifies a specific outcome and intervention strategy to address Indigenous needs. (PEH – Persons Experiencing Homelessness).

SS01 Indigenous PEH can access health and wellness services that are welcoming and respectful in understanding of their culture and history.	SS01i Consult with indigenous peoples on what culturally-appropriate health and wellness services should comprise.
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It is recommended that the ACEH would be an appropriate support for the development and implementation of these outcomes as well as needing to review and 'Indigenize' the overarching Regional First Outcomes Map. Currently the ACEH's limited human resources are not adequate to meet this need in a comprehensive manner. This is not the fault of the ACEH, but a system's failure in providing adequate targeted resources. In light of the considerations outlined in this letter, the GVCEH strongly supports the funding application of the ACEH.

Sincerely,

Kelly Roth
Executive Director



ABORIGINAL COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

101-2860 Quadra Street

Victoria BC V8T 4E7

778-432-2234

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 DTPS (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.

