

**DATE:** July 18, 2022

**FILE:** 1700-02 / 451

**TO:** Chair and Directors  
Regional District Board

**FROM:** Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson  
Chief Administrative Officer

***R. Dyson***

**RE: Homelessness Supports Service Funding Allocation**

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to follow up on Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board direction and provide a recommendation from the Coalition to End Homelessness Leadership Team regarding further 2022 funding allocation.

### **Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:**

THAT the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board provide \$35,000 to the Comox Valley Transition Society, as the fiscal host for the Coalition to End Homelessness, \$30,000 to be used towards the cost of funding a Coordinator position for the Coalition and \$5,000 to be used towards the cost of honoraria for peers to attain first-hand information to aid the Coalition, and the community, subject to the preparation of a funding agreement that addresses matters such as term, reporting requirements, roles and responsibilities and use of funds.

### **Executive Summary**

- On March 8, 2022, the board, through resolution, instructed staff to report back to the board with options to use up to \$114,972 (i.e. unallocated funding) of the service's approved 2022 financial plan.
- The Coordinator for the Coalition's Leadership Team has provided a recommendation on the Leadership Team's behalf to allocate \$30,000 for the Coordinator's position and \$5,000 for peer honoraria (see Appendix A).
- Completed in early 2021, the five year service review highlights the need for consistent funding for a coordinator role and the importance of including peers in the Coalition's outreach and decision-making processes.
- If the board supports staff's recommendation to allocate \$35,000 for these purposes, \$79,972 will remain unallocated in 2022. Staff will work with the Leadership Team, Village of Cumberland and the City of Courtenay to ascertain whether there is a 2022 Homelessness and Supports service related project that could be supported with the unallocated funds. If unspent, this amount would be carried forward to 2023.

Prepared by:

***A. Mullaly***

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and Development Services

**Government and Community Interests Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)**

Coalition to End Homelessness Leadership Team c/o Christopher Bate	✓
City of Courtenay	✓
Village of Cumberland	✓

**Background/Current Situation**

On March 8, 2022, the CVRD Board resolved:

“THAT the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness’ 2022 Housing Plan, including the following allocations from the 2022 – 2026 financial plan for Homelessness Supports Service, function 451, be approved:

- a. \$10,000 towards construction of a townhouse in Courtenay (Habitat for Humanity – Vancouver Island North, 1375 Piercy Avenue); and
- b. \$115,000 towards 40 studio and one bedroom units, with some supports, for Indigenous elders at McPhee Avenue and 17t Street (Wachiay Friendship Centre);

AND FURTHER THAT if the Comox Valley Regional District is unsuccessful in claiming the February 25, 2022 \$91,028 expenditure to the Comox Valley Transition Society, for the operation of the Connect Warming Centre at 685 Cliffe Avenue between September 2021 and January 2022, as an eligible activity under the terms of the CVRD’s approved Strengthening Communities Services grant, that \$91,028 be allocated in 2022 to cover the expenditure;

AND FURTHER THAT if the grant funder deems the \$91,028 expenditure to the Comox Valley Transition Society eligible under the approved grant that staff report back to the board with a recommendation on reallocating the \$91,028;

AND FURTHER THAT \$19,000 be allocated in 2022 to engage consulting support to assist with implementation of the service, including the recommendations stemming from the 2021 service review;

AND FURTHER THAT the 2022 tax requisition for the service be set at \$350,000 and that staff bring back a report with options for the unallocated funds;

AND FINALLY THAT the proposed 2022 - 2026 financial plan for the Homelessness Supports Service, function 451, be approved.”

Since March, Habitat for Humanity has entered into a funding agreement to receive their \$10,000 allocation and the City of Courtenay has replaced the CVRD as the lead applicant on the Strengthening Communities Services grant. Courtenay staff will be submitting final documentation to the grant funder in 2023 (following receipt of a grant extension), at which time it will be known whether the grant funder deems the \$91,028 payment to the Comox Valley Transition Society for the operation of the Connect program eligible for reimbursement. Staff will report back to the board with information from the City of Courtenay once this eligibility is known.

The Coordinator of the Coalition, on behalf of the Leadership Team, submitted a recommendation to use \$35,000 in 2022 to support the work of the Coalition, specifically a contribution towards funding the Coordinator position and peer honoraria (Appendix A). The \$30,000 will be used to contribute to funding the Coordinator position which includes responsibility for:

- Facilitation of the Coalition’s activities, including supporting the Leadership Team to liaise with agencies to identify proposed housing projects; identifying, collecting and summarizing data; researching information on housing and homelessness; and tracking information for evaluation of strategies;

- Supporting a coordinated response to homelessness, including supporting the Homelessness Response Team to enhance responses and case planning between social service agencies; and liaising with social service agencies, Island Health, RCMP, municipal staff, BC Housing, provincial ministries, the local business community and neighbourhoods impacted by homelessness; and
- Community Engagement, including production of promotional material; coordinating education and outreach efforts with the Coalition’s Public Awareness Committee; working with peers to ensure inclusion in work of Coalition; and maintaining the Coalition’s webpage and social media accounts.

The recommendation to provide coordination funding is consistent with the needs identified in the 2021 five year service review related to the sustainability of service, wherein the service review consultant recommended that the service provide funding to the Coalition for management and administration of up to the greater of \$30,000 per year or 5 per cent of the value of the service. Other related recommendations are:

1. That the Coalition develop mechanisms for participation of individuals with a lived/ living experience of homelessness in the service, for example, through an advisory committee or similar body and revising the eligibility criteria for membership in the Coalition and participation in the Leadership Team or in an evaluation committee.
2. That the service allocates funding to support the participation of individuals with a lived/ living experience of homelessness in the Service.

The Coalition Leadership Team proposes to use the \$5,000 to provide honoraria to peers “to attain first-hand information to aid the Coalition, and the community, in providing the best supports possible to the individuals themselves and to the community as whole”. The Leadership Team offers recent peer participation in the “Supply Drive” as an example of an initiative where the Coalition has engaged peers.

**Options**

The Board may proceed with the recommendations or not allocate funds from the service at this time.

**Financial Factors**

In 2022, the board approved an increase in the service’s requisition; the requisition totals \$350,000 for 2022. Financial factors are discussed throughout the report. At this time staff is recommending allocation of \$35,000 to the Coalition Leadership Team to support their work (Comox Valley Transition Society is the fiscal host). Staff is proposing to consult with partners to consider the remaining unallocated \$79,972.

**Strategic Considerations: Strategic Drivers and Regional Growth Strategy**

CVRD Board Strategic Drivers:						
Fiscal Responsibility		Climate Crisis and Environmental Stewardship and Protection		Community Partnerships	✓	Indigenous Relations

The Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness provides the expertise and leadership to execute projects and work with the various community partners to deliver housing and supports. Annually, the Coalition’s Leadership Team coordinates an expression of interest process to solicit proposals from providers to use the Service’s funds.

CVRD Regional Growth Strategy Goals:						
Housing	✓	Ecosystems, Natural Areas and Parks		Local economic development		Transportation
Infrastructure		Food Systems		Public Health & Safety	✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	Climate Change

Among the goals of the Regional Growth Strategy this service most directly responds to the Housing, and Public Health and Safety goals, being:

- Housing: Ensure a diversity of housing options to meet evolving demographics and needs.
- Public health and safety: Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being.

**Intergovernmental Factors**

The Village of Cumberland, the City of Courtenay and the three electoral areas (not including Denman and Hornby Islands) are service participants. The CVRD administers the service. Staff’s second recommendation is intended to understand any specific interests of the municipal partners. For example, there has been reference by City of Courtenay staff to discussions with BC Housing about a possible supportive housing proposal. Staff recommends using this opportunity to assess whether the Homelessness and Supports service could be used to support any work on this front.

**Citizen/Public Relations**

There are no public relations matter directly arising from the recommendations within this report.

Attachments: Appendix A – Letter from Coalition to End Homelessness