



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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Legislation Text

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REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: March 20, 2023

Report No. DEV-23-015

TO: Dan Horan, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Mikaila Montgomery, Planner and Bill Brown, Director of Development

SUBJECT:

Regional Household Affordability and Prosperity Project (RHAP)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Township of Esquimalt support the City of Colwood as the primary applicant for a second round of grant funding from the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program, with the Community Social Planning Council leading the project in a consulting relationship.

RELEVANT POLICY:

Official Community Plan

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

Healthy, Livable and Diverse Community: Support community growth, housing, and development consistent with our Official Community Plan (OCP).

BACKGROUND:

Appendix A: RHAP Background

Appendix B: RHAP Evaluative Summary

PURPOSE:

The City of Colwood is seeking the Township of Esquimalt's support in applying for a second round of grant funding under the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program to secure funds for Phase Two of the Regional Household Affordability and Prosperity Project (RHAP). Staff from Esquimalt have been informally working with staff from other greater Victoria municipalities and the Community Social Planning Council to carry out the project in 2022 and hope to continue this work into 2023. The community of practice convenes every four to six weeks and has been instrumental in outlining priorities for the scope and work completed for the RHAP project, thus far. A preliminary summary of RHAP achievements to date is attached as

Appendix A for reference. An Evaluative Summary for proposed activities in 2023 is attached as Appendix B.

Official Community Plan Analysis:

The Official Community Plan contains several provisions in support of the proposed Phase 2 work of the Regional Household Affordability and Prosperity Project starting with the Vision Statement which in part reads:

To support the vision that Esquimalt is a caring and welcoming community that has strong relationships with our neighbours, the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, regional municipalities and the naval base.

In addition, section 3.3 of the Regional Context Statement states in part:

The RGS seeks to provide for an adequate, accessible and diverse supply of affordable housing across the housing spectrum. The OCP responds to this policy by providing for increased densification through provisions for suites in duplexes, detached accessory dwelling units, and increased height and density for medium density residential housing and local commercial mixed-use designated land...The Plan also supports the provision a variety of housing types and tenures delivered by both market and non-market developers to support the housing needs of a diverse demographic.

Furthermore, section 5.4 Affordable Housing, has the following objective:

To encourage a range of housing by type, tenure, and price so that people of all ages, household types, abilities, and incomes have a diversity of housing choice in Esquimalt.

Finally, section 5.6 Family and Child-friendly Housing, has the following objective:

To address the shortage of family and child friendly housing in Esquimalt.

Read within the overall context of the OCP, the above noted sections provide a policy framework that would support the Township's involvement in Phase 2 of the RHAP.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option

The community of practice (CoP) developed as part of the RHAP project has significantly improved communication and collaboration on affordable housing policy between staff in each municipality. The result is a more cohesive and concerted regional effort to tackle the pervasive issue of poverty and housing affordability that transcends municipal boundaries. Furthermore, there is policy support in the OCP for participation in the RHAP.

2. Organizational Implications

Staff will devote approximately two hours per month to participating in RHAP activities. The City of Colwood staff will provide overall grant management of the project.

3. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for the Township of Esquimalt. One hundred percent of the funding would come from the 2023 Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Grant Program. The maximum grant for regional scale projects such as this one is \$150,000.00.

4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications

Seeking intermunicipal solutions to the inextricably linked issues of poverty and housing affordability is integral to achieving regional sustainability.

5. Communication & Engagement

There are no public input requirements.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That the Township of Esquimalt support the City of Colwood as the primary applicant for a second round of grant funding from the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program, with the Community Social Planning Council leading the project in a consulting relationship
2. That Council does not support participation in the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.