

DATE OF MEETING OCTOBER 2, 2019

AUTHORED BY KARIN KRONSTAL, SOCIAL PLANNER

**SUBJECT DAYTIME RESOURCE CENTRE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To provide information to the Health and Housing Task Force on options for expanded daytime resource centre services for community members who are homeless and street-involved in Nanaimo, and to request that the Task Force recommend that Council support the attached Expression of Interest.

### **Recommendation**

That the Health and Housing Task Force recommend that Council support the Expression of Interest for daytime resource centre services for community members who are homeless and street-involved in Nanaimo.

## **BACKGROUND**

The term 'daytime resource centre', as used in this report, refers to a place for people without stable housing to go during the daytime hours to access physical and mental health assistance, as well as to be sheltered from the elements. The intended user population includes community members experiencing homelessness as well as street-involved individuals, who are not necessarily homeless, but who are exposed to the physical, social, and emotional risks of spending significant time on the street.

As noted in Nanaimo's 2018 Action Plan to End Homelessness, the current system of services for homeless individuals in Nanaimo has an obvious gap in that there is no indoor shelter available during the day. This has a negative impact on both community members who are homeless and/or street-involved and the rest of the community, as individuals with nowhere else to go end up in public and semi-public spaces where they are neither welcome nor comfortable (e.g. business doorways). One of the strategies recommended in the Action Plan is to create a daytime drop-in resource centre.

At the Regular Council meeting on 2018-MAR-19, Council was provided with a range of potential municipal responses to address homelessness and issues related to individuals who are homeless and/or street-involved (needles, loitering on business property, public urination, etc.). One of the options proposed was for the City to explore partnerships with the goal of opening a daytime resource centre. In response to the 2018-MAR-19 report, Council passed a motion requesting that City Staff:

*“Pursue partnerships to provide a day time drop in resource centre for homeless individuals and that Council allocate \$100,000 per year towards a drop in resource centre in the 2018 budget cycle and proceed with determining potential locations for the resource centre and report back to Council.”*

The intent of the \$100,000 funding was to leverage additional funding and resources from other partners in order to provide an appropriate level of service to meet community needs for the provision of well managed daytime supports and services. Staff worked with community partners through the Nanaimo Homelessness Coalition to identify potential funding partners, locations, operators, and costs for a daytime centre in order to determine the scope of potential services and costs required for a safe and successful operation.

In addition to discussions with members organizations involved in the Nanaimo Homelessness Coalition and Island Health, Staff engaged in conversations with Our Place, a non-profit society based in Victoria. Our Place operates one of the largest drop-in centres for the homeless on Vancouver Island, as well as offering transitional housing, shelter space, and a therapeutic recovery centre. Our Place expressed interest in working with the City and other partners to open a new service centre in Nanaimo.

On 2019-MAR-04, Staff returned to Council with an update on efforts to partner with other governments and service providers to identify options for a new daytime resource centre. This staff report included information on the interest from Our Place, and committed Staff to returning to Council with options on service models and locations.

## **DISCUSSION**

Following the 2019-MAR-04 presentation to Council, Staff received input from some stakeholders and community members expressing one or both of the following opinions:

- 1) While there is general support for the expansion of daytime options for community members are homeless/street involved, many expressed hesitancy about creating a new “magnet” or “hot spot” location given the increase in drug use and the behaviours associated with acute addictions or opioid use of those who are street involved; and
- 2) Some expressed frustration that the City was considering partnering with a Victoria-based organization to open a new centre when there are local organizations that could potentially benefit from an opportunity to expand their existing support services currently offered to their clients who street involved and/ homeless.

Following consultation with local service providers, Staff determined that the most time-effective approach for distributing some the funding in 2019 would be for the City to issue a Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) outlining the services sought, and that responses to the EOI could include the development of a new service or the expansion of an existing service to fill a known gap. The latter would allow us to stretch our funding further by supplementing and augmenting existing community capacity, in the absence of an identified funding partner.

The wording of the EOI still allows the City to consider a new service if an organization can demonstrate that it has the ability to leverage the City’s investment to secure other public or private funding so that the service is adequately resourced. It would also enable the City to fund

more than one service expansion to meet the needs of multiple and discrete sub-communities within the homeless and street-involved population (e.g. homeless youth).

Should the Health and Housing Task Force choose to recommend that Council support the EOI as attached, the goal would be to issue the EOI immediately and award funding by November 2019 for an initial eight-month pilot period, with the potential for renewal subject to a six-month evaluation and Council approval. Alternatively, the Task Force may wish to hold off on recommending Council support the EOI in favour of renewed inter-governmental discussions on the potential for shared funding of a new resource centre. This would delay the project but may lead to more substantive investment from Provincial ministries overseeing health, housing, poverty reduction and substance use.

## **OPTIONS**

1. That the Health and Housing Task Force recommend that Council support the Expression of Interest for Daytime Resource Centre services for the homeless and street-involved in Nanaimo.
  - Proceeding with the Expression of Interest immediately would allow the City to move quickly to support existing services in the community, in advance of the oncoming wet winter weather.
  - The funding available solely through the City is unlikely to be able to support a new service, so most responses to the Expression of Interest will likely be for the expansion of existing services. This may mean that sections of the population who already have access to daytime services may get enhanced access, but those who currently are not served due to more challenging health related behaviours may still remain underserved during the daytime on the street.
  - \$100,000 per annum has been allocated in the 2018 and 2019 budget towards this project, and if no money is spent this year then we may not be able to continue to carry the money forward. The 2020 and 2021 budgets allocate \$100,000 per year for a daytime resource centre but no funding is currently budgeted beyond 2021.
  
2. That the Health and Housing Task Force not recommend Council support the attached Expression of Interest, but instead recommend that Council request a meeting between Mayor Leonard Krog and Ms. Sheila Malcolmson, MLA, to request financial support from the Provincial Government for a daytime resource centre for homeless and street-involved individuals in Nanaimo.
  - This is consistent with the approach that services for the homeless fall across the jurisdictions of health, housing and poverty reduction, and that a centre aimed at serving this clientele should be funded at least in part by the relevant government agencies.
  - This approach would take more time and may delay the project until next year, with no guarantee of obtaining any more funding than we have now.
  - Any future negotiations may result in the City being asked to contribute more than is currently committed to the project.

**SUMMARY POINTS**

- Council has provided \$100,000 in the 2018 and 2019 budgets to pursue partnerships to provide a daytime drop-in resource centre for homeless individuals. If not allocated during 2019, there is a possibility that this money may not be carried forward. Additional annual funding of \$100,000 has been allocated for 2020 and 2021.
- Staff have prepared a Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) appropriate to the development of a new daytime resource centre or the expansion of an existing service to fill a known gap, and is seeking Task Force recommend Council support the EOI to proceed.
- Alternatively, the Task Force may wish to hold off on endorsing the EOI in favour of renewed inter-governmental discussions on the potential for shared funding of a new resource centre.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A: Request for Expression of Interest for Daytime Resource Centre Services in Nanaimo, BC |

**Submitted by:**

Lisa Bhopalsingh  
Manager, Community Planning |

**Concurrence by:**

Dale Lindsay  
General Manager, Development Services

Laura Mercer  
Director, Finance |

## ATTACHMENT A

# **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – Daytime Resource Centre in Nanaimo, B.C.**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Summary

The City of Nanaimo (the 'City') invites qualified proponents to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the provision of daytime resource center services for homeless and street-involved individuals in Nanaimo, B.C. **The EOI may be to support or expand existing services**, or to create a new service. The initial funding for this project is available on a pilot basis, with the potential for renewal. The successful proponent(s) must demonstrate that they have the capacity, experience and partnerships in place to provide service with a high probability of success.

### 1.2 Background

The term 'daytime resource centre,' as used in this document, refers to a place for people without stable housing to go during the daytime hours in order to access physical and mental health assistance, as well as to be sheltered from the elements. The intended clients include both Nanaimo's homeless population and street-involved individuals, who are not necessarily homeless, but who are exposed to the physical, social, and emotional risks of spending significant time on the street.

*Nanaimo's Action Plan to End Homelessness* (the 'Action Plan'), as endorsed by Nanaimo Council in 2018, notes that the current system of services for homeless individuals in Nanaimo has an obvious gap in that there is no indoor shelter available during the day. This has a negative impact on both the homeless and/or street-involved and the rest of the community, as individuals with nowhere else to go end up in public and semi-public spaces where they are neither welcome nor comfortable (e.g. business doorways). The Action Plan recommends the creation of a daytime drop-in centre for the homeless and the street-involved. In addition to providing a warm, dry, safe space to go to when the shelters are closed, a resource centre could assist health outreach workers in serving clients whom they might otherwise spend significant time trying to locate.

Nanaimo's *2019-2022 Strategic Plan* identifies a focus area of "being a safe and connected community in which all citizens can live, work, play, create and learn"; this includes our most vulnerable residents. The overall intent is to create a safe space during the daytime gap that currently exists when all other services are closed. The City is seeking proposals that take into consideration the other resources available in the community, and which are complementary to those resources.<sup>1</sup>

**This could be an expansion of existing programming, a new partnership or an entirely new service centre.** Your proposal should explain how your organization's service fits or would fit into the existing network of social service agencies in Nanaimo focused on the homeless and street-involved population.

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, right now, the 7-10 Club serves breakfast every day of the week except Sundays, and the Unitarian emergency shelter is currently open from 5 PM – 7:30 AM. For a person reliant on those two services, that leaves a gap of seven hours with no consistent services or shelter on six days of the week (and for 10 hours on Sundays). There are some drop-in services offered by various non-profit groups in Nanaimo for their service user groups, such as the Women's Resource Centre and Seniors Connect, but these have limitations (e.g., are only for particular demographics, have limited hours/space, etc.). Salvation Army's New Hope daytime shelter is only for those staying at the shelter.

The City is also seeking to support services that address the current health and social issues in our community, particularly in the downtown core, and alleviate the pressure on other institutions (e.g. the public library).

## 2.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 Operator Qualifications

Please include the following information in your proposal:

- A profile of the applicant organization including the origins and history as well as a brief description of the proponent's experience with developing and managing social service centres.
- A profile of any additional service provider(s) or government agencies anticipated to be engaged as part of the proposed service, including the origins and history of such organization(s), as well as their envisioned role in the project. Relevant correspondence or agreements confirming participation in proposed or existing services should be attached to the application.
- The organization's mandate and a description of services provided to clients.
- Human resources (numbers and types) currently employed.
- Information should be provided that describes the service provider's capacity to deliver the proposed support services. **This should include information related to the service providers existing capacity to deliver the proposed support services and capacity to leverage additional funds/resources beyond those provided by the City.**
- A copy of the organization's latest annual report and audited financial statements and current list of Board of Directors (if relevant).

### 2.2 Staffing Model and Scope of Services

A City-supported resource centre must include a core staffing function that would ensure the space is safe for attendees and staff. It must also ensure the area immediately adjacent to the centre is managed with respect to public safety and anti-social activities, and that the building and grounds are well-maintained and functionally operational.

Please identify the number of hours per day and days of the week of the proposed service. **If the requested funding is to expand existing services, clearly state what additional hours will be added.** Please also outline the proposed staffing model, including the number of staff and their minimum qualifications, as well as the maximum number of clients that can be present at any one time (e.g. staff to client ratio.) If volunteers play a role in the operation of the service, please identify the number of volunteers involved and proposed role(s).

Additional services that may be offered include but are not limited to:

- Health supports, such as wound treatment, foot care, and referrals
- Counselling and advocacy supports
- Housing placement programs and pre-employment skills training
- Support to apply for income assistance
- Clothing program
- Laundry and/or personal hygiene facilities
- Meal program/snacks
- Social/recreational programming

Please identify the number of clients that could be serviced under your proposed model. Please also outline any information on existing or proposed partnerships with government and/or non-profit organizations that ensure a well-balanced, supportive environment complementary to existing services.

### **2.3 Location**

Please identify your **current or proposed location for the service**, include the following information:

- Ownership/availability (is it under your tenure or would need to be secured?)
- Appropriate zoning
- Building code classification (i.e., approved for assembly use) and accessibility
- Capacity/occupancy load
- Proximity to other social services/downtown
- Facility amenities (e.g., showers/bathroom)
- Availability of outdoor/courtyard space, including options for temporary storage
- Potential or current impact on neighbourhood
- Potential or current impact on other building tenants (depending on location)

Please note that locations with outdoor amenity space may be given preference.

### **2.4 Budget**

Please provide a budget breakdown for the proposed resource centre, including (but not limited to) the following components:

- Staff wages and benefits
- Administration
- Rent and utilities
- Operations
- Food/supplies
- Start-up costs (if applicable)

Please advise of any additional sources of funding and/or in-kind supports committed to the proposed or existing service, as will be considered as part of the evaluation of project viability.

### **2.5 Timeline**

Funding for a daytime resource centre is available for on a 9-month pilot basis for the period of November 1, 2019 until June 30, 2020. At the 6-month mark, there will be project evaluation and a staff will make a recommendation to City Council as to whether to continue funding.

## **3.0 EVALUATION**

Proposals will be reviewed by a team of City staff. Successful proponents will be notified of next steps. Please note that the secondary application stage may require:

- Additional information on proposed programming and program delivery; and
- A site visit.

The final decision on funding allocation will be made by City Council with a recommendation from staff.