

Memorandum

To: Lisa Spitale,
Chief Administrative Officer

Date: December 4, 2023

From: Richard Fong,
Director of HR and IT

File:

Dean Gibson
Director of Parks and Recreation

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Senior Manager, Economic
Development and Communications

Subject: **Budget 2024: Creating Synergies and Community Partnerships with a new Community Services Department – Analysis if Funding were Reduced**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to answer Council's question regarding the impacts to new Community Services Department work plans should requested funding not be provided for 2024, including related impacts to Council's strategic priorities.

BACKGROUND

Attached with this memo is the November 20th memo which outlines the funding request needed to create synergies and community partnerships with a new Community Services Department. At the November 20th Budget Workshop, Council requested that staff provide an analysis of the impacts to the new department's work plans that support the *People-Centered Economy* and *Community Belonging & Connecting* strategic priorities, if funding could not be approved. This memo outlines those anticipated impacts.

Following Council's adoption of the Strategic Priorities Plan on May 8, 2023, Economic Development staff in the Office of the CAO led an interdivisional process to align work plan items to new strategic priorities, notably the objectives and outcomes outlined in the *People-Centered Economy* and *Community Belonging and Connecting* focus areas. This resulted in an overarching work plan for the Economic Development, Business



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Licensing, Anvil Centre Conference Services, Community Arts and Theatre, Museum and Heritage, and Art and Technology divisions with 75 items planned from 2023-2026. One third of these items are planned to commence, or continue, in 2024.

Similar efforts focusing on the *Community Belonging & Connecting* strategic priority have occurred through the Special Events division (presently housed in the Parks and Recreation department), with additional events, activations, and campaigns planned in 2024

The bulk of the enhancement request for the new Community Services Department is for funding of new staff positions focused on implementation of two of Council's strategic priorities: *People-Centred Economy* and *Community Belonging & Connecting*.

Funding Request: People-Centred Economy

- Business Growth Coordinator: 1.0 TFT, \$66K plus benefits (funding phased in over 2024 and 2025). This role would provide support to implement strategic plans and priorities (e.g. 2023-2026 Council Strategic Priorities Plan, Retail Strategy Action items, committed work plan items, etc.), including the development and actioning of processes and programs targeting retention and expansion of existing local business.
- Business Licensing Clerk (Clerk 3): 0.6 (20 hours) TPT, \$28K plus benefits. This role, which has been funded on an auxiliary basis in 2022 and 2023, supports the Business Licensing front counter and application processing.

Without support for these positions, existing staff will have to fulfill related tasks, and will be unable to prioritize new work plan items as envisioned. Additionally, responsiveness to action items requested by Council, initiated by committees, through other departments, or through consultation with business stakeholders, will be challenged. Further, given the interplay between the new community partnerships function and economic development division work, failure to fund these staff enhancements will make it challenging for the new department to fulfil its leadership role and meaningfully advance work plan items with respect to the *People-Centred Economy* strategic priority.

The following *People-Centred Economy* work plan items will experience a ripple effect as a result of not funding the staff enhancement requests:

- Retail Strategy Implementation – The Business Growth Coordinator is a direct recommendation from the Retail Strategy and implementation actions resulting from it will be delayed.
- Economic Impact Model – Work will be delayed.
- Patio Program – Will move from proactive planning to reactive response only.
- Street Entertainment Policy Refresh and Parklet Activation – Will not be initiated in time for the summer 2024 season, as requested by business stakeholders, and will move from proactive planning to reactive response only.
- Scoping and initial engagement for Economic Impact Study of local tech and creative industry – Work will likely be postponed to a future year.
- Bolster tourism sector – Will move from proactive planning to reactive response only.
- Shop Local Campaigns with Collaborative Marketing Group – Will be reduced to minimally-acceptable levels based on staff capacity.
- eApply – As it relies on the redevelopment of the Business Licence Bylaw and Liquor Policy development, completion of this will be delayed as a result of staff capacity.
- Updated Materials and Information - Will move from proactive planning to reactive response only.
- Business Licence Bylaw Update – Work is nearing completion but has a communications and implementation component for 2024 which may be challenged based on staff capacity.
- Liquor Policy Update – Work will commence, but will be governed by staff capacity. If necessary, will be shifted to later in 2024 or into a future year.
- Business Resiliency Policies - Will move from proactive planning to reactive response only.
- Administer a business survey every 3 years – Based on staff capacity, may be postponed if resourcing is inadequate to launch the planned economic development strategy refresh.

Funding Request: Community Belonging & Connecting

- Assistant Program Coordinator (Special Events): 1.0 FTE, \$67.5K plus benefits (funding phased in over 2024 and 2025). This role, which has been funded on a temporary basis in 2022 and 2023 has proven essential in supporting and sustaining community festivals and activations to the levels recently enjoyed.
- Events and Activations: \$14K, specific to auxiliary staffing and supplies for weekly Pier Park activations as a part of the Downtown Livability response.

The service delivery model for the Special Events division includes the production and hosting of two major city events involving many community partners: Canada Day and Remembrance Day. Staff also work throughout the year to coordinate city services for 10+ local organizations that produce events through the City Grant Program, in addition



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to acting as a primary resource to over 20+ community organizations for planning and execution of local events and festivals.

The following *Community Connecting & Belonging* work plan items will be impacted as a result of not funding related staff enhancement requests:

- Annual campaigns such as Shine Bright, Family Day, Easter Across the City, etc.: City support will be ended to accommodate other priorities (per the service delivery model.)
- Park Activations at Westminster Pier Park (July and August), and neighbourhood activations at Hume Park and Moody Park will be removed from the work plan.
- Logistical support for Indigenous Peoples' Day, Truth and Reconciliation, and Chief Ahan Commemoration: Special Events participation will be eliminated due to limited staff capacity.

It is also important to note that, given a new community partnerships function within the Community Services department is envisaged as the resource lead for the *Community Belonging & Connecting* strategic priority moving forward, failure to fund the related staff enhancement request will challenge ability to perform this critical role and meaningfully address work plan items.

CONCLUSION

Staff work plans for implementing the *People-Centred Economy* and *Community Belonging & Connecting* strategic priorities through the new Community Services Department are comprehensive and interconnected. Should necessary related funding enhancements not be approved, staff will work to adjust work plans and delivery timelines accordingly. In that event, it should be noted that additional consultation may be required to re-visit related Council and community priorities.

APPENDIX 1: November 20, 2023 Council Report – 2024 Budget: Creating Synergies and Community Partnerships with a new Community Services Department