

## **REPORT**

### ***Parks and Recreation***

**To:** Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council  
**Date:** April 22, 2024

**From:** Dean Gibson  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
**File:** 2479191

**Item #:** 2024-250

**Subject:** **Programs to Serve Isolated Seniors Funded by the United Way British Columbia**

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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** Council endorse the implementation of the City's Social Meals, Community Connector and Volunteer Coordination initiatives to be funded by the United Way of British Columbia as described in this report; and

**THAT** the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Parks and Recreation be authorized to enter into the project funding agreement with the United Way of British Columbia substantially in the form as per Attachment 2 and subject to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

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#### **PURPOSE**

1. To recommend, and seek Council's endorsement for the implementation of three United Way of British Columbia funded program initiatives intended to address isolation and social determinants of health factors impacting vulnerable seniors in New Westminster.
2. To seek authority to enter into a project funding agreement with the United Way of British Columbia for the delivery of the above initiatives.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The City of New Westminster is home to 12,680 persons aged 65 and over according to the 2021 census. 16.0% of these seniors were living with low income and 32.6% were living alone. There is a higher proportion of seniors living alone in New Westminster as

compared to the 23.4% of seniors living alone in Metro Vancouver, the 24.5% of seniors living alone in BC, and the 25.9% of seniors living alone in Canada. The City of New Westminster was identified by the United Way British Columbia as an area in need of targeted interventions to support food security and to address social isolation for these seniors because of their vulnerability factors.

The United Way British Columbia supports the development of healthy, caring, and inclusive communities by strengthening vital connections that support people in need. The 2024-2025 United Way Healthy Aging Enhancement Grants support non-profits and municipalities to address social determinants of health for seniors. City of New Westminster staff have successfully applied for three streams of grant funding:

**Social Meals Enhancement Grants** are province-wide enhanced funding opportunities for community-based senior serving (CBSS) organizations to design and deliver services that combine social engagement with the provision of nutritious meals, for vulnerable community-dwelling seniors.

**Volunteer Coordination & Supports Grants** are province-wide enhanced funding opportunities for community-based senior serving organizations to design and implement strategies for increased coordination of, and supports for, volunteers.

**Seniors Community Connector Grants** are province-wide funding for a staff position that will work with older adults to connect them with community supports and services through referrals, applications, advocacy, and introductions.

The guiding principles that shape these funding opportunities are:

- Responsive and Flexible
- People-Centred, Seniors-Centred
- Collaborative and Connected
- Innovative and Sustainable
- Learning, Growth & Accountability

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the above-mentioned criteria, city staff met with partners and developed the following program proposal to meet the needs of the seniors in New Westminster. This information has formed the basis of the funding proposal to United Way British Columbia.

### ***Program Proposal***

#### **Social Meals - Seniors in the City - Eat & Greet**

This program hosts free community meals representing local cultures. These meals are enhanced with social opportunities, diversity programming and connection to resources. Seniors in the City - Eat & Greet will host three social meals per month (one at Century House, one at Queensborough Community Centre, and one at təməsewtx<sup>w</sup> Aquatic and

Community Centre). The meals will be offered in different neighbourhoods so seniors can meet people in their community. Staff will work with partners to identify and refer vulnerable seniors and to support increasing accessibility of these meals. Community-based senior serving (CBSS) partners will attend each meal as part of a resource fair so they can share information about their services. In an effort to provide food security and connection, free lunch vouchers to the Century House Connections Café will also be provided to CBSS partners to share with seniors they identify in need.

### **Volunteer Coordination & Supports**

This funding will be used to hire a staff to coordinate and support the Century House Association, City of New Westminster, and Seniors Services Society volunteers. This person would support the recruitment, training, support, recognition and retention of volunteers for all three organizations. The Volunteer Coordinator would provide general training, identify volunteer opportunities in each organization and match volunteers to opportunities. They would spend time engaging with the seniors' population to recruit and recommend placements. They would be responsible for workshops and education on volunteering, leadership and opportunities. They will coordinate and implement volunteer recognition events and activities as a way of showing appreciation and encouraging retention. The Volunteer Coordinator will be housed out of Century House to support the extensive volunteer program offered at this site.

### **Seniors Community Connector**

The Seniors Community Connector will work with older adults who are referred from Health Care Professionals and community partners to connect the older adults with community supports and services through referrals, applications, advocacy, and introductions. The Community Connector will co-develop personalized wellness plans to provide practical support to older adults and their families. Wellness plans may include connections to recreation, opportunities for meaningful volunteering, referrals to community services including Century House Association Support Groups and connection to low cost social meals through the Connections Café. The Seniors Community Connector will attend the regular Community Connectors Table as well as Community-based senior serving (CBSS) network meetings.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Partnerships with community-based senior serving (CBSS) organizations including but not limited to the United Way British Columbia, Century House Association, Senior Services Society, Fraser Health and BC Housing will be developed and strengthened through these grant opportunities that will sustain these program initiatives. A coordination and collaboration of support services will create more readily available resources for seniors in New Westminster.

Full program details are available in the Applicant Guide included as Attachment 1 to this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

United Way British Columbia has considered and approved \$225,000 funding for the program proposal. 100% of the direct project cost is funded by United Way British Columbia. Key provisions of the funding agreement (Attachment 2) includes:

<b>Amount:</b>	\$225,000
<b>Term:</b>	12 months, expected start date April/May 2024
<b>Scope:</b>	Increasing deliverable scope in Seniors services, Food services and Volunteer services program areas; hiring of one temporary full-time program coordinator to support the senior's community connector position; hiring one temporary part-time volunteer recreation leader attendant; and, auxiliary staff support hours for food services.
<b>City Deliverables:</b>	Quarterly project reporting (progressive use of funds); provision of success stories; engage with Community-based senior serving (CBSS) networks; initiate discussions with funder in the third quarter of the project cycle to discuss potential for funding to be extended into future years.

The \$225,000 is considered sufficient to execute on program scope and deliverables, resulting in no incremental impacts on the approved 2024 operating budget. As per the draft Letter of Agreement, the funding will be received through two installments as follows:

<b>Grant Stream</b>	<b>Apr 2024</b>	<b>Oct 2024</b>	<b>Total \$</b>	<b>Total %</b>
Social Meals Seniors in the City	\$25,000	\$25,000	<b>\$50,000</b>	22%
Volunteer Coordination & Supports	\$37,500	\$37,500	<b>\$75,000</b>	33%
Seniors Community Connector	\$50,000	\$50,000	<b>\$100,000</b>	45%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$112,500</b>	<b>\$112,500</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Staff will update Council on the receipt and expenditure of funding through the quarterly performance review process. All staff hiring related to the program will be temporary in nature. Any adjustments or extensions to the operating budget or staff hiring beyond the current term of the program will be presented to Council as part of the 2025 operating budget proposal.

## **INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON**

This report was created in liaison with Finance Department, Recreation Services, and the CAO's Office.

**OPTIONS**

1. THAT Council endorse the implementation of the City's Social Meals, Community Connector and Volunteer Coordination initiatives to be funded by the United Way of British Columbia as described in this report.
2. THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Parks and Recreation be authorized to enter into the project funding agreement with the United Way of British Columbia substantially in the form as per Attachment 2 and subject to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor
3. THAT Council provide staff with alternate direction.

Staff recommend options 1 and 2

**CONCLUSION**

Staff are recommending the implementation of the above-mentioned programs funded by the United Way British Columbia to deliver initiatives that provide food security, promote social opportunities, and provide meaningful, supported volunteer opportunities. The intention is to support seniors in New Westminster to be connected to opportunities, engaged in the community and thriving as they age in place.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 - Funding/Program Application Guide

Attachment 2 – Letter of Agreement with United Way British Columbia (Draft)

**APPROVALS**

This report was prepared by:

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This report was approved by:

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