

**Attachment #1**  
*SCARP Studio Project – Project Description  
and Request for Proposal*

# SCARP Studio Project – Project Description and Request for Proposal

## 1. Project Abstract

### *City of New Westminster Homelessness Action Strategy – Planning With and Not For Individuals with Lived and Living Experience in Homelessness*

Homelessness is a pervasive issue in Metro Vancouver, including New Westminster, and it has been aggravated by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The City recently completed a draft of its Homelessness Needs Assessment, and will soon be commencing work on a new Homelessness Action Strategy.

The strategy will build on the recently completed assessment and provide a vision and plan for addressing homelessness over the next five years. It will be a guiding document for the City of New Westminster, the Homelessness Coalition Society and its 20+ member organizations, and the senior levels of government.

Recently, the City forged an important partnership with the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition to host a Community Action Network (CAN) Leadership Training Program, in which individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness, poverty and other social issues learned how to be better self-advocates and to inform municipal planning, policy and decision-making processes.

Key to the development of the strategy will be engaging individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness as subject matter experts, and ensuring that their experience and knowledge shape the strategy, and that it is responsive to their needs, and leads to meaningful change and results.

SCARP Project students will work closely with the Supervisor of Community Planning and the Affordable Housing Planning Analyst, who is a SCARP graduate, to develop the strategy, and to ensure that there are engaging and meaningful opportunities for individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness to not only shape the strategy but to be part of its ongoing implementation.

## 2. Background

Homelessness is prevalent in New Westminster, with 41 unsheltered and 82 sheltered homeless people enumerated in the March 2020 Homeless Count, for a total of 123 homeless people. As with all homeless counts, this is likely a significant undercount of the true extent of homelessness.

Since the count, there is evidence that homelessness has experienced a significant increase. Police and Bylaw Enforcement are receiving more calls for service; faith-based and non-

profit service providers are experiencing increased demand; and visible homelessness is more prevalent, including the presence of smaller encampments. Based on discussions with homeless outreach workers, contributing factors include but are not limited to: reductions in shelter capacity due to physical distancing requirements; the impacts of employment and income disruption, which are contributing to mental health and substance misuse issues; and the reluctance on behalf of family members and friends to accommodate people on a temporary basis given fears of virus transmission.

### **3. Partner Profile**

The key partners will be as follows:

#### *City of New Westminster*

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, who will be the project lead and who the students will report to on a regular basis, and Emily Huang, Affordable Housing Planning Analyst, who will assist the project team and will be available to address any requests or issues that arise.

#### *Homelessness Coalition Society*

Betina Wheeler, Coordinator, Homelessness Coalition Society, who will act in a resource capacity and will facilitate access to the 20+ member organizations that have a mandate to address homelessness in New Westminster.

#### *Community Action Network (CAN) Leadership Training Program Graduates*

CAN Program graduates will be instrumental in informing and implementing engagement activities with individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness; being members of the working group tasked with developing the strategy; and sharing their experience and knowledge with City staff and SCARP Project students.

In support of this component of the project, the City successfully applied for a \$20,000 Strengthening Communities Services Program grant for CAN Program activities, including \$10,000 to engage CAN Program graduates to assist with the Homelessness Action Strategy.

### **4. Scope of Work**

The scope of work for SCARP Project students would include but not be limited to the following:

- participation on the Homelessness Action Strategy Working Group;

- review of homelessness plans and strategies in other jurisdictions in British Columbia, with particular reference to actions and implementation steps;
- development of an engagement strategy in close consultation with City staff and CAN Program graduates in order to solicit meaningful input and feedback as to future actions from individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness;
- presentation, with CAN Program graduates, to the membership of the Homelessness Coalition Society, and the City’s Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee, in order to identify and document actions to address communicated needs;
- preparation of the strategy, in close consultation with City staff and CAN Program graduates, including an action and implementation plan;<sup>1</sup>
- presentation, with City staff and CAN Program graduates, to City Council if the dates align with the SCARP Project deliverable timelines.

## 5. Deliverables

The deliverables and anticipated timelines would be as follows. The text in red font reflects SCARP Project deliverables.

Deliverables	Timelines
• Project Proposal and Request for Proposal Response	mid-October 2021
• Homelessness Action Strategy Working Group Participation	mid-October 2021 to March 2022
• Case Study Research of Homelessness Plans and Strategies	mid-October and November 2021
• Engagement Strategy Preparation and Implementation	November to early-December 2021
• SCARP Interim Report	early-December 2021
• Presentations to Homelessness Coalition Society and Affordable Housing and Child Care Advisory Committee	January 2022
• Preparation of Strategy, including an Action and Implementation Plan	January to early-March 2022
• SCARP Final Draft Report	early-March 2022
• SCARP Final Report	early-April 2022

<sup>1</sup> Depending on the COVID-19 pandemic, and any restrictions as to public gatherings which may impact engagement activities, and emergent issues which may arise during the project, SCARP Project students would complete as much as the strategy as possible, with City staff completing any unfinished sections.

Deliverables	Timelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="250 249 656 281">Presentation to City Council</li> </ul>	mid-April or early-May 2022

## 6. Required Skills and Experience

The project would be well suited for SCARP students with an interest in community or social planning. A willingness to work with and learn from individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness is essential; recognizing that these individuals are subject matter experts and their experience and knowledge is essential to developing the strategy. Research and interview skills would be beneficial, as would organizational skills given the tight timelines involved in developing the strategy, and the importance of the engagement.

## 7. Project Costs

The City, through its Partner Contributions, would contribute \$3,000 per term (total of \$6,000 for two terms) to defray some of the costs associated with the studio work, including materials, printing and travel. The City has also accessed a Strengthening Communities Services Program grant in the amount of \$20,000, in which up to \$10,000 is available to cover the cost of engaging CAN Program graduates and involving individuals with lived and living experience in homelessness. Additionally, the City would provide in-kind financial support, including staff time, advertising, caterings and venues. The Coordinator of the Homelessness Coalition Society, as part of their funded activities, has allocated time to dedicate to strategy development.

## 8. Contact Information

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