

NO: **R032**

COUNCIL DATE: **February 24, 2020**

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **February 18, 2020**  
FROM: **General Manager, Planning & Development** FILE: **4815-01**  
SUBJECT: **Application for a Union of BC Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program Grant**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information;
2. Authorize staff to submit an application to the Union of BC Municipalities (“UBCM”) Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program for a grant of \$25,000 to work in partnership with the Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition (“SPRC”) to prepare an updated Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan; and
3. Support the City’s willingness to provide overall grant management, as outlined in this report.

## INTENT

The intent of this report is to provide Council with information about a grant application for submission to the UBCM’s Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program in the amount of \$25,000, with the potential for securing an additional \$50,000.

## BACKGROUND

### **2012 Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan**

In 2011-2012, a coalition of community organizations, including the City of Surrey, conducted research and consultations to develop a poverty reduction plan for Surrey (see Appendix “I”; Corporate Report No. R086; 2012).

In July 2012, as part of Corporate Report No. R160; 2012 (attached as Appendix “II”), Council adopted the *Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan* (the “Plan”) and authorized staff to proceed within available resources to implement the recommendations in the Plan that required City action.

In April 2015, as part of Corporate Report No. R062; 2015 (attached as Appendix “III”), and in July 2017, as part of Corporate Report No. R152; 2017 (attached as Appendix “IV”), Council was provided with updates on the implementation of the Plan.

## **Federal Poverty Reduction Strategy**

In August 2018, the Government of Canada released Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy which targets a 20% reduction in poverty by 2020 and a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030, relative to 2015 levels. The Strategy brings together investments that the Government has already made in the social and economic well-being of Canadians.

## **Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy**

In March 2019, the Province of BC released Together BC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy and passed the Poverty Reduction Strategy Act in November 2019. The Strategy includes targets to reduce the overall poverty rate in BC by at least 25% and the child poverty rate by at least 50%, by 2024.

The Plan identifies six priority action areas and includes policy initiatives and investments designed to break the cycle of poverty. The six priorities actions areas are:

- Making housing more affordable;
- Supporting families, children and youth;
- Expanding access to education and training;
- More opportunities, more jobs;
- Improving affordability; and
- Investing in social inclusion.

## **UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program**

The Province recognizes that local governments are crucial partners in implementing TogetherBC, including developing local solutions with community partners and other levels of government. To support local efforts, the Province has provided \$5 million over three years to the UBCM to administer the Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program.

The UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program includes two funding streams:

- "Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans and Assessments" is to support communities to develop or update plans to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 1 is \$25,000 per single applicant; and
- "Stream 2: Poverty Reduction Action" is to support communities to undertake projects to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 2 is \$50,000 per single applicant. In order to be eligible for Stream 2 funding, applicants are required to have completed a poverty reduction plan.

The application deadline for the 2020 Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program is February 28, 2020.

## **DISCUSSION**

Staff are preparing an application to submit to the UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program, Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans and Assessments. The City is proposing to work collaboratively with the Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition to develop an updated poverty reduction plan. Surrey is eligible for funding of up to \$25,000.

Staff will work in partnership with the SPRC to develop a new Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan. The following activities are proposed to be undertaken:

### Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan

A community-based Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan will be created based on the evidence and engagement results. The Plan will include key information on poverty in Surrey, identified strategic priorities, and recommendations for action.

A workplan for the SPRC to begin implementation of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan will also be prepared as a companion document to the Plan. The workplan will include a governance plan for the SPRC itself including reviewing the Terms of Reference and membership.

### **Related City of Surrey Plans & Policies**

The City has a number of existing plans and policies related to poverty reduction including:

- Sustainability Charter 2.0 (2016);
- Official Community Plan (2014);
- Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey (2013); and
- Surrey Affordable Housing Strategy: A Focus on Rental Housing (2018).

The Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan will not replace these existing City plans and strategies, but rather provide Surrey residents and key stakeholder groups with an opportunity to be meaningfully engaged in reviewing up-to-date poverty-related data and prioritizing strategies for action.

### **Estimated Project Timeline**

Upon approval of the UBCM grant (estimated to be in May 2020), the City, working in partnership with the SPRC, will have one year to complete the activities associated with the development of a new Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan. It is anticipated that background work including collecting and analyzing data will begin in the spring of 2020. The community engagement activities will be implemented in the summer and fall of 2020, with the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan to be finalized in early 2021. Once the Plan is completed in 2021, the City will be eligible to apply for the UBCM's Stream 2 project funding.

### **Finance Department Review**

The Finance Department has reviewed this report and has no concerns.

## SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The work of this project supports the objectives of the City’s Sustainability Charter 2.0. In particular, this project relates to Sustainability Charter 2.0 theme of Inclusion. Specifically, this project supports the following Desired Outcomes (“DO”) and Strategic Direction (“SD”):

- Inclusion DO8: No individuals or families in Surrey live in poverty.
- Inclusion DO9: Supports and services are in place to prevent and help people transition out of poverty.
- Inclusion DO10: Everyone has access to an adequate income, and income gaps are minimized.
- Inclusion SD8: Support the Surrey Poverty Coalition’s efforts to implement the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.

## CONCLUSION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council approve the submission of an application to the UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program for a grant of \$25,000 to support the development of a new Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.

An updated Plan will help to prioritize community poverty reduction efforts, and to bring to Surrey the needed social infrastructure to help lift people up and break the cycle of poverty.

*Original signed by*  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager, Planning & Development

AM/PH/ss

Appendix “I” Corporate Report No. R086; 2012  
Appendix “II” Corporate Report No. R160; 2012  
Appendix “III” Corporate Report No. R062; 2015  
Appendix “IV” Corporate Report No. R152; 2017

NO: **R086**

COUNCIL DATE: **April 23, 2012**

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**REGULAR COUNCIL**

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **April 23, 2012**  
FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development** FILE: **5080-01**  
SUBJECT: **"this IS HOW WE END POVERTY IN SURREY" - Update on the  
Development of a Poverty Reduction Action Plan**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

**INTENT**

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the poverty reduction project entitled "this IS HOW WE END POVERTY IN SURREY" (the "Project"). The Project is being led by Vibrant Surrey with the City of Surrey being an active partner in this collaborative community project.

To date, the Project has resulted in the development of fact sheets that compile existing data on poverty in Surrey. A community dialogue was held in late March 2012 to engage stakeholders in a discussion of the information in the fact sheets and to identify strategies for addressing poverty in Surrey. The research and community feedback, to date, will be used to develop a Surrey Poverty Reduction Action Plan.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

The Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents (the "Social Plan") identifies "child poverty alleviation" as a priority and "advocacy by municipal government to champion the issues/problems related to child poverty and the long term impact on child/adult development" as a key gap. The Social Plan recommends the establishment of an intergovernmental roundtable to address the issue.

**BACKGROUND**

Alice Sundberg, Vibrant Surrey's Manager of Projects and Partnerships, presented the Project at a Council in Committee meeting on July 11, 2011. Her presentation included some key highlights emerging from the research work. Council was advised that in 2012, the Project team would report to Council on the results of the community engagement process and with recommendations for action.

## DISCUSSION

The Project is being led by Vibrant Surrey, a non-profit society, which encourages and facilitates efforts to reduce poverty. The Project partners include the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force, Fraser Health Authority (Aboriginal Health), Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the City of Surrey. The Chair, Councillor Villeneuve, and a member of the Social Planning Advisory Committee, along with staff from the Planning and Development Department and the Engineering Department have been representing the City on the Project team.

The Project has three components, as follows:

1. preparation of fact sheets;
2. community dialogue; and
3. development of a Surrey Poverty Reduction Action Plan, including recommendations.

To date, the first two components have been completed.

### Fact Sheets

The Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) was contracted by Vibrant Surrey to prepare a series of 12 fact sheets compiling existing data related to poverty in Surrey. The fact sheets, as described below, are included as Appendix I to this report.

- The Facts on Poverty in Surrey: This booklet includes an overview of key facts and figures focused on four policy areas – transportation, housing, income and support; and
- Living in Poverty in Surrey: This booklet provides fact sheets on seven population groups – families, seniors, people with health and activity limitations, women, men, Aboriginal people, and immigrants.

The fact sheets provide the base of evidence for the development of Surrey's Poverty Reduction Action Plan. This information will ensure that the Plan is based on accurate and credible facts in addition to community dialogue. The fact sheets will be available on the City's website and will serve as a useful resource for community and government agencies.

### Community Dialogue

On March 30, 2012, a full-day community dialogue was held to engage stakeholders in the Project. The objectives of the dialogue were to:

- inform stakeholders about the Project research and fact sheets and identify how these can be used for advocacy, program development and evaluating progress;
- consult stakeholders on strategies and actions that should be included in the Surrey Poverty Reduction Action Plan; and
- consult stakeholders on how the Action Plan should be implemented and how they wish to be involved.

Approximately 100 people, representing diverse community and government agencies, participated in the dialogue. The dialogue confirmed the keen interest and commitment that the community has in working together on solutions to break the cycle of poverty in Surrey.

### **Next Steps - Preparation of a Poverty Reduction Action Plan**

Over the next three months, Surrey's Poverty Reduction Action Plan will be developed, based on the data and research that has been undertaken and the results of the community dialogue. The process will be a collaborative effort between Vibrant Surrey, SPARC BC, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research: Community Learning and Engagement (CIR:CLE) at Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the City of Surrey. It will be presented to Council for consideration during the summer of 2012.

### **Provincial Pilot Child Poverty Project**


On April 12, 2012, the Province of BC and UBCM announced that Surrey was one of seven communities selected for a pilot Community Poverty Reduction Strategy Project. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), this project will focus on families with children who are living in poverty. A News Release related to this project is attached as Appendix II.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The Poverty Reduction Project, which is the subject of this report, will assist in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly the Sustainability Charter's Action Item SC5, which is focused on the implementation of the recommendations of the Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents.

### **CONCLUSION**

While Surrey's poverty rate of 18% is below the Metro Vancouver average of 21%, it represents many families. Over the past year, the City of Surrey has been working in collaboration with Vibrant Surrey and other community partners on a Poverty Reduction Project. To date, a series of 12 fact sheets on poverty in Surrey have been prepared and a community dialogue has been held to engage stakeholders in identifying potential solutions. Over the next few months, the fact sheets and related research, along with the community feedback will be used to prepare a Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan complete with recommendations. The Plan will be forwarded to Council for consideration during the summer of this year.



Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

AM:saw

#### Attachments:

Appendix I Fact Sheets

Appendix II Ministry of Children and Family Development News Release



# CORPORATE REPORT

## Appendix "II"

NO: R160

COUNCIL DATE: July 9, 2012

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### REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council

DATE: July 9, 2012

FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development

FILE: 5080-01

SUBJECT: Poverty Reduction Plan for the City of Surrey

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### RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Adopt the Plan titled "*this is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan*" (the "Plan"), a copy of which is attached as Appendix I to this report, as the basis for City and community action in relation to addressing poverty in Surrey; and
3. Authorize staff to proceed within available resources to implement the recommendations in the Plan that require City action.

### INTENT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for a poverty reduction plan titled "*this is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction*" and Council authorization for staff to proceed with the implementation of the recommendations in the Plan that require City action.

The Plan provides a comprehensive set of recommendations toward the eradication of poverty in Surrey. The priorities and recommendations for action are organized into four policy areas; being transportation, housing, income and support.

The Plan is the product of a collaborative community partnership. With Vibrant Surrey as the lead, the Plan was developed by a partnership group that included the City of Surrey, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force, the Centre for Inter-disciplinary Research: Community Learning and Engagement (CIR:CLE) at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, SPARC BC and the Fraser Health Authority Aboriginal Health.

### POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The Plan responds to recommendations contained in a number of other City plans including:

- The Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents;
- The Transportation Strategic Plan;
- The Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy;



- The Learning for Life Strategy; and
- The Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey (under development).

## BACKGROUND

In September 2010, the Social Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) identified poverty as a priority social issue on which the Committee would focus in 2010-2011. At that time, Vibrant Surrey, a non-profit society that encourages and facilitates efforts to reduce poverty, was initiating a research project. The SPAC decided that the best approach for addressing poverty in Surrey was to work collaboratively with Vibrant Surrey. The Chair of the Social Planning Committee, along with staff from the Planning and Development Department and the Engineering Department, became active members of a partnership group working on the project.

Alice Sundberg, Vibrant Surrey's Manager of Projects and Partnerships, made a presentation on the poverty reduction research project at a Council-in-Committee meeting on July 11, 2011. Council was advised at that time that the research project and development of a poverty reduction plan would be completed in 2012.

As part of the agenda for its Regular meeting on April 23, 2012, Council received an update on the project (Corporate Report No. Ro86). The report noted that a set of 12 fact sheets had been completed; the fact sheets representing the compilation of existing data related to poverty in Surrey. The report also noted that a one-day community dialogue had been held in late March 2012 to engage stakeholders in a discussion about the information in the fact sheets and to identify strategies for addressing poverty in Surrey. The report noted that the research and community feedback would be used in the development of the poverty reduction plan.

## DISCUSSION

The Plan is focussed in four policy areas; being

- transportation,
- housing,
- income, and
- support.

Rather than focusing on vulnerable population groups, the Plan focuses on policy areas that can make a difference for all low-income people. Access to affordable housing and transportation, an income that covers living expenses, and supports and opportunities that promote health, well-being, and inclusion are key features for addressing poverty among all individuals and families who are living on very low incomes.

The Plan is organized by the four policy areas or themes referenced above with each area including:

- key facts taken from the fact sheets that were developed as part of the project;
- a few examples of initiatives highlighting work that is already underway in Surrey to address poverty in the specific policy area; and
- priorities and recommended actions in the specific policy area.

Each recommendation identifies the level(s) of government (federal, provincial or municipal) responsible for its implementation. In addition, the Plan makes reference to the broader community as having responsibility for selected recommendations; in this context, the "community" may include the private sector, non-profit and faith based organizations, and the general citizenry. The transportation section also includes TransLink as an agency that is responsible for implementation of some of the recommended actions.

The Plan includes a total of 19 priorities and 75 recommended actions. While the Plan includes a local role to advocate for federal and provincial action to support the recommendations in the Plan, it is primarily focused on actions that the City of Surrey and local community groups can take to tackle poverty.

The Plan outlines the activities that need to be taken to implement the Plan, including the establishment of a collaborative community roundtable with representatives from government, non-profit, and other groups.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**


The implementation of the actions recommended in the Plan will assist in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly action item SC5, which is focused on the implementation of the recommendations of the Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents that includes poverty reduction as an objective.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Plan titled "*this is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan*" was developed to provide strategic direction for addressing poverty in Surrey. It provides a comprehensive and practical set of recommended actions towards the eradication of poverty. The Plan was based on a series of community consultations and grounded in a set of 12 fact sheets developed to ensure evidence-based decision-making in relation to the recommended actions. This Plan represents a starting point – a commitment by the community to take action. It is expected that the Plan will continue to evolve as ideas and opportunities emerge.

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Adopt the Plan, a copy of which is attached as Appendix I to this report, as the basis for City and community action in relation to addressing poverty in Surrey; and
- Authorize staff to proceed within available resources to implement the recommendations in the Plan that require City action.

  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

AM:saw

Attachment:

Appendix I Document titled "*this is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan*"

# CORPORATE REPORT

## Appendix "III"

NO: *R062*

COUNCIL DATE: *April 27, 2015*

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### REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: April 27, 2015  
FROM: General Manager, Planning and Development FILE: 5080-01  
SUBJECT: Update on the Implementation of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan

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### RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

### INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the implementation of ***This is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan*** (the "Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan") that was adopted by Council in July 2012.

### BACKGROUND

In September 2010, the Social Policy Advisory Committee ("SPAC") identified poverty as one of the priority social issues for the SPAC to focus on. At that time, the SPAC determined that the best approach was to work collaboratively with Vibrant Surrey, a non-profit organization that was engaged in conducting research on poverty in Surrey.

On April 23, 2012, Council received an update on the research that had been completed and the work that was underway to develop a Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan (Corporate Report No. R086;2012).

On July 9, 2012, Council adopted the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan (Corporate Report No. R160;2012). The Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan provides a comprehensive set of 75 recommendations that are organized into four key policy areas: transportation, housing, income and support.

On February 3, 2014, Council received a report on *Low Cost and Free* – a brochure series and inter-active web pages providing information on a range of resources that are available at a low cost or at no cost in Surrey (Corporate Report No. R021;2014). *Low Cost and Free* was developed by Surrey Libraries. The City developed and maintains the web-based map of resources. *Low Cost and Free* responds to recommendations in the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan related to increasing awareness about the services, programs and opportunities available to low-income residents in Surrey.

## **DISCUSSION**

After the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan was adopted in July 2012, the Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition ("SPRC") was established to champion its implementation. The SPRC has taken the lead on a number of actions that include:

- convening community forums;
- developing and disseminating user-friendly information on poverty in Surrey;
- piloting innovative projects;
- advocating for the elimination of the refugee transportation loan program; and
- evaluating the impact of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.

These activities are described below.

### **Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition**

The SPRC was established in 2012 to promote the implementation of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan. According its Terms of Reference, the role of the SPRC is to:

- Promote and disseminate the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan;
- Mobilize and inspire the community to take actions to reduce poverty; and
- Monitor and measure achievements/progress/outcomes in implementing the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.

Co-chaired by Councillor Judy Villeneuve and Stephen Dooley, Executive Director of SFU Surrey, the SPRC consists of representatives from relevant sectors, including government, business, health services, community service agencies, and population groups impacted by poverty. With 20 members, the SPRC balances representation with the need to be productive and effective. The current membership list is attached as Appendix I to this report.

The Vancity Foundation administers the SPRC's funds. To date, the Vancouver Foundation, Vancity Credit Union, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society and United Way of the Lower Mainland have provided grants to support the facilitation of the SPRC. All SPRC member agencies provide in-kind support.

### **Convening the Community**

Three forums have been held as a means of engaging and inspiring the community to implement the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan as follows:

- The first forum, held in March 2012, involved the community in developing the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan;
- The second forum, held in November 2013, focused on sharing what was already happening to reduce poverty in Surrey and discussing additional actions that could be taken. The keynote speaker was James Hughes who was instrumental in the development and implementation of New Brunswick's provincial poverty reduction plan; and

- The most recent forum was held on February 16, 2015 at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Approximately 60 community leaders who are engaged in poverty reduction work in Surrey were invited to attend.

The focus of the 2015 forum was "collective impact", which is an innovative approach for tackling complex social issues. The keynote speaker and forum facilitator was from the Tamarack Institute in Ontario. In addition to learning about collective impact, forum participants identified a number of priority issues/projects including:

- encouraging Surrey employers to adopt a living wage policy;
- engaging private sector landlords in addressing homelessness through a Housing First approach;
- implementing a pilot project in a neighbourhood(s) that has a high child poverty rate;
- promoting a "yes" vote on the Transportation Referendum;
- supporting access to healthy food for low income residents; and
- addressing mental health issues.

The SPRC has started to plan the next steps for following up on the ideas that emerged at the forum.

The community forums have been funded by the Vancouver Foundation, Vancity Credit Union, and City of Surrey. Kwantlen provided the venue at no cost for the 2013 and 2015 forums and its Faculty of Arts funded the catering at the 2015 forum.

### **Sharing Knowledge**

To ensure that decisions made and actions taken to reduce poverty are evidence-based, the SPRC has compiled and disseminated information on poverty in Surrey.

A series of fact sheets, using the 2006 census and other data sources, were prepared as part of the process of developing the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan. These fact sheets were recently updated using 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) data by Jacopo Miro, a UBC School of Community and Regional Planning student. Surrey Libraries staff assisted in collecting the information. A fact sheet was prepared on each of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan's four themes – transportation, housing, income and support (see Appendix II).

The 2011 NHS was also used to prepare a set of maps that show low income by census tract for all of Metro Vancouver and in Surrey. Maps are available showing low income for all ages, seniors, children and youth (17 years and less) and young children (five years and less).

The information on poverty shows that Surrey's poverty rate is the same as the Metro Vancouver average (16% which represents 72,000 Surrey residents living in low income). Of note is the information on child poverty. Of the 20 Metro Vancouver neighbourhoods with the largest number of children and youth living in poverty, 11 neighbourhoods are in Surrey.

The SPRC has recently developed a new website where the fact sheet and maps are available for downloading at [www.surreyprc.ca](http://www.surreyprc.ca). The fact sheets and maps of 2011 data are attached as Appendix II to this report.

### **Piloting Projects**

The SPRC has undertaken pilot projects to test new and innovative approaches to reducing poverty at the local level. Three of these projects are described below.

#### ***Somali Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency Pilot Project***

The Somali Women's Economic Self Sufficiency Project is assisting a group of Somali women to build their skills and confidence in order to pursue employment and/or to develop a socially/culturally relevant business together. The project stemmed from a delegation to the SPAC in February 2013. The delegation included representatives from the Surrey School District's Welcome Centre, Common Thread Cooperative, and three Somali women from the Welcome Centre's ESL Class. The Somali women expressed a strong desire to be engaged in paid work.

Phase I of the project (April to June 2013) included three workshops to give the Somali women a chance to hear about different cooperative models of employment and gauge their initial interest in the possibility of working together to develop a cooperative or social enterprise.

In Phase II (May to December 2014) two facilitators, one with expertise in community economic development and one Somali speaker, were contracted to work with the group. The facilitators conducted weekly skill building workshops focusing on employment as well as topics such as women's health and basic first aid. Due to the marginalization of these women, activities to increase their social connections to the community were also undertaken (e.g., signing up for library cards and recreation passes, setting up a stall in the Surrey Farmer's Market and taking a field trip to Dress for Success). In December 2014, a celebration/graduation was held at City Hall to recognize the women's progress. In January 2015, the Somali women's group appeared as a delegation to the SPAC to provide an update.

Phase III of the project will begin in April 2015 with the same facilitators and cohort of Somali women. It will focus on employment through individualized employment plans and continued exploration of a group cooperative model.

The Somali Women's Project has/is being funded by grants from the Vancity Credit Union. Surrey Libraries provides the space for the weekly sessions at no cost. The Surrey Women's Centre is the project lead with women from Vancity Credit Union, Vancity Community Foundation, Surrey School District and Planning and Development (Social Planning) serving as project advisors.

#### ***Community Leaders Igniting Change (CLIC)***

Inspired by the Neighbourhood Leadership Institute in Hamilton, CLIC is a free education program for Surrey residents who are interested in making positive changes in their neighbourhoods. Its main objectives are to:

- enhance community leadership and engagement;
- increase community connectedness through strong social networks;

- develop a sense of "place" within the distinct neighbourhoods of Surrey; and
- build our capacity to engage more citizens more meaningfully in poverty reduction and developing social capital within their communities of interest.

Led by Dr. Katherine Burke of the SFU Beedie School of Business, the program covers concepts such as inclusion, compassion, listening, strategizing, relationship building, self and other awareness, engagement and critical thinking.

Eighteen students were selected to participate in the pilot CLIC program. The 12 week program started on February 26, 2015 and will end May 14, 2015. Students will continue to meet monthly for six months following the completion of the education program.

CLIC is being supported by funding from SFU, Vancity Credit Union and the Vancouver Foundation.

### ***Housing First Landlord Project***

Housing First is an approach to ending homelessness that is based on providing permanent affordable housing with supports to people who are chronically or episodically homeless. The Housing First model has proven to be highly effective. A recent Canada-wide study provided evidence that the vast majority (85%) of homeless people who participated in a Housing First model remained successfully housed after one year. The model relies on a supply of rental housing in the private and public sectors, which is a challenge in Surrey.

The SPRC's Housing First Landlord Project is intended to facilitate the connection between private landlords and the health and service agencies that are using a Housing First approach to support people who are homeless.

The first Landlord project event was a breakfast networking and education event entitled *Engaging Landlords - Homes for Good: A Dialogue for a Vibrant Surrey* held on June 5, 2014. The event was co-sponsored by the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC, Landlord BC, Surrey Board of Trade and SPRC. The breakfast was an opportunity for Surrey landlords to have an open dialogue about homelessness, the Housing First approach and how landlords can benefit by being part of the solution.

The SPRC is currently preparing to offer a workshop in late May to Surrey landlords, both apartment owners and those with secondary suites. The workshop will inform landlords about Housing First and invite them to be part of the solution by offering their rental units to Surrey-based agencies serving homeless people. To enhance attendance, the workshop will also promote opportunities to improve energy efficiencies through BC Hydro's and Fortis BC's Energy Conservation Assistance Program, available only to low-income households. In partnership with LandlordBC, those who attend the workshop will also learn about tools and partnerships to help them address challenging tenants.

## **Advocating for Change**

The Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan includes a number of recommendations that are the responsibility of the federal and provincial levels of government. While the SPRC is primarily focused on local actions, the SPRC is a member of the *BC Poverty Reduction Coalition* and supports their advocacy calling for a provincial poverty reduction plan. BC is one of only two provinces without a provincial Poverty Reduction Plan.

The SPRC has recently become of a member of *Cities Reducing Poverty*, a connected learning Institute in Ontario, the community of Canadian cities with multi-sector roundtables. An initiative of the Tamarack goal of *Cities Reducing Poverty* is "to align poverty reduction strategies in cities, provinces and the federal government resulting in reduced poverty for 1 million Canadians".

The SPRC is continuing to work with the SPAC on advocacy to eliminate the federal government's requirement for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) to repay the cost of their transportation to Canada. This federal requirement is further impoverishing GARs in Surrey, about half of whom are children and youth, who face significant challenges in settling in Canada. The SPAC is currently circulating a petition calling on the Government of Canada to eliminate the refugee transportation loan program.

## **Evaluating the Impact**

The impact of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan and work of the SPRC was recently evaluated using a "ripple effect mapping" (REM) methodology. REM is an innovative mind mapping technique used to assess both intended and unintended impacts of a program. The evaluation was conducted by Dr. Natalie Gagnon and Etta Brodersen of Kwantlen Polytechnic University. The ripple effects of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan were categorized into three themes: knowledge sharing, partnerships and new initiatives.

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The implementation of Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan is assisting in achieving the Sustainability Charter's Action Item SC5, which is focused on the implementation of the recommendations of the Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents.

## **CONCLUSION**

The 2011 NHS indicates that poverty continues to be an issue in some neighbourhoods and among some population groups in Surrey, especially children and youth. The City of Surrey adopted the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan in 2012 to provide strategic direction for tackling poverty in Surrey. Since then, Council members and staff have been actively involved as part of the SPRC in promoting the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan and implementing its recommendations. These efforts have included:

- developing strong partnerships among various agencies and sectors in the community and with funders;



- sharing knowledge and information on poverty in Surrey and increasing awareness about the resources available for low-income residents; and
- undertaking innovative local pilot projects that promote the economic inclusion of all Surrey residents.



Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager, Planning and Development

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Attachments:

Appendix I Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition Membership  
Appendix II Fact Sheets and Maps

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**\*Appendices available upon request.**

NO: *R152*

COUNCIL DATE: *July 10, 2017*

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**REGULAR COUNCIL**

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **July 6, 2017**  
FROM: **General Manager, Planning & Development** FILE: **5080-01**  
**Acting General Manager, Finance & Technology**  
SUBJECT: **Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition Progress Report**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning & Development Department and the Finance & Technology Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Approve a contribution of \$25,000 from the Council Initiatives Fund to support the Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition in its continued efforts to implement the "THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan," attached as Appendix "I."

**INTENT**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the work of Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition (SPRC) through a report entitled "Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition Progress Report: Actions and Achievements, 2012 – 2016" (the "Progress Report"), attached as Appendix "II." The Progress Report documents the activities of the SPRC in the implementation of "THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey: Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan" (the "Plan").

In addition, this report serves as a request for a financial contribution of \$25,000 from the Council Initiatives Fund to be assigned to support the facilitation of the Leadership Committee.

**BACKGROUND**

In September 2010, the Social Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) identified poverty as one of the priority social issues for focus. At that time, the SPAC determined that the best approach was to work collaboratively with Vibrant Surrey, a community-based organization that was engaged in conducting research on poverty in Surrey.

On April 23, 2012, Council received an update on the research and consultations that had been completed and the work that was underway to develop a Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan (Corporate Report No. R086; 2012, included as Appendix "III").

On July 9, 2012, Council adopted the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan and authorized staff to proceed within available resources to implement the recommendations in the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan that require City action (Corporate Report No. R160; 2012, included as Appendix “IV”).

On February 3, 2014, Council received a report on “Low Cost and Free,” a brochure series and inter-active web pages providing information on a range of resources that are available at a low cost or at no cost in Surrey (Corporate Report No. R021; 2014, included as Appendix “V”). “Low Cost and Free” was developed by Surrey Libraries, working in collaboration with Planning & Development and Engineering staff.

On April 27, 2015, Council received a report providing an update on the implementation of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan (Corporate Report No. R062; 2015, included as Appendix “VI”).

## DISCUSSION

Poverty affects us all, not just those with low incomes. It impacts individuals, families, and communities. The effects of poverty are felt in increased health care costs, expanded policing burdens, and diminished educational outcomes.

It was a deep concern about the impacts of poverty in Surrey – especially in certain population groups such as children and youth, and in specific low income neighbourhoods in North Surrey – that mobilized community leaders to develop the Plan. It drives the continued commitment of the SPRC to work collaboratively towards the goal of reducing poverty in Surrey.

### Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition

The SPRC was established in 2012 to guide the implementation of the Plan. According to its Terms of Reference, the role of the SPRC is to:

- Promote and disseminate the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan;
- Mobilize and inspire the community to take actions to reduce poverty; and
- Monitor and measure achievements/progress/outcomes in implementing the Plan.

Co-chaired by Councillor Judy Villeneuve, SPAC Chair, and Stephen Dooley, Executive Director of SFU Surrey, the SPRC consists of members selected to represent relevant sectors and population groups impacted by poverty. The current membership list is attached as Appendix “VII” to this report.

### Progress Report: Actions and Achievements 2012 - 2016

Over the past five years, the SPRC has taken the lead on a number of actions toward implementing the Plan. These include projects that involved:

1. **Mobilizing the community** through convening community forums;
2. **Understanding poverty** by conducting research and disseminating user-friendly information;

3. **Championing change** through targeted advocacy projects; and
4. **Taking community action** by piloting innovative projects.

1. Mobilizing the Community

Three forums have been held as a means of engaging and inspiring the community to implement the Plan. Each forum was attended by approximately 100 people.

- **Poverty Dialogue, March 2012:** The first forum involved the community in developing the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.
- **Let's Make THIS Happen, November 2013:** The second forum focused on sharing successful poverty reduction initiatives in Surrey and beyond, and generated action steps to reduce poverty in Surrey. The keynote speaker was James Hughes, who was the senior bureaucrat responsible for the development of the poverty reduction strategy in the Province of New Brunswick.
- **THIS Is The Change, February 2015:** A third forum was a professional development forum on Collective Impact, designed to improve Surrey's impact in reducing poverty. The Tamarack Institute from Ontario provided the Collective Impact training.

2. Understanding Poverty

To ensure that decisions made and actions taken to reduce poverty are evidence-based, the SPRC has compiled and disseminated information on poverty in Surrey:

- A series of fact sheets were prepared using 2011 National Household Survey and census data. A separate fact sheet was prepared on each of the Plan's four themes (transportation, housing, income, and support); and
- A set of maps was created showing low-income by census tract for all of Metro Vancouver and in Surrey. Maps are available showing low income for all ages, seniors, children, youth (17 years and less), and young children (five years and less).

3. Championing Change

The SPRC has taken action to advocate for changes at the local, provincial, and federal levels that will make a real difference in the lives of low-income Surrey residents. Actions to champion change are as follows.

**Refugee Transportation Loan:** The SPRC is continuing to work with the SPAC on advocacy to eliminate the federal government's requirement for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) to repay the cost of their transportation to Canada.

**Provincial Poverty Reduction Plan:** The SPRC is a "Supporter" of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition and its campaign for a provincial poverty reduction plan.

**Transit Fares:** The SPRC is continuing to monitor and participate in the TransLink fare review process and advocate for reduced fares for low income transit users.

**Seeing is Believing Tour 2014:** The SPRC and SPAC invited members of service clubs in Surrey to learn about poverty in Surrey through a tour of local agencies and a school breakfast program and hearing first-hand from Surrey residents who are struggling with poverty.

**A Living Wage for Surrey Campaign 2015:** In partnership with the Living Wage for Families Campaign, SPRC convened a gathering to launch the campaign in Surrey in November 2015.

**Presentation at UBCM 2015:** SPRC organized a workshop on poverty reduction at the municipal level at the 2015 UBCM annual convention. The workshop featured panelists from Revelstoke, Victoria, and Surrey.

#### 4. Taking Community Action

The SPRC has implemented pilot projects to test new and innovative approaches to reducing poverty at the local level. These include:

##### **Somali Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency Pilot Project (2013 – 2015)**

The Somali Women's Economic Self Sufficiency Project assisted a group of Somali women to build their skills and confidence in order to pursue employment and/or to develop a socially/culturally relevant business together. The SPRC project resulted in a group of women forming a non-profit business called Women 4 Women Foundation; the Foundation supports women who are seeking to develop employment skills, Canadian certification, and entrepreneurial skills.

Funder: Vancity Credit Union

##### **Housing First Landlord Project (2014 – 2016)**

Housing First is an approach to ending homelessness that is based on providing permanent affordable housing with supports to people who are chronically or episodically homeless. The SPRC's Housing First Landlord Project facilitated connections between private landlords and the agencies that are using a Housing First approach and looking for rental units. Working in partnership with Landlord BC, the SPRC hosted a landlord forum and created an information brochure for landlords.

Funder: Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society

##### **Community Leaders Igniting Change (CLIC) (2015 – ongoing)**

CLIC is an education program for Surrey residents who are interested in making positive changes in their neighbourhoods. The 12-week leadership program is provided through a partnership between SPRC, SFU, and the Beedie School of Business. Three cohorts of students have completed the course.

Funder: Envision Financial

##### **Connecting Community to Surrey Youth Leaving Care (2016 – 2019)**

This project aims to engage the whole community in supporting youth who are 'aging out' of government care at 19 years old. The first phase of the project involved research, workshops and a public awareness event. The second phase includes identifying and implementing two or three priority projects to support youth transitioning out of care in Surrey. A youth committee composed of young people in and from care, has been established to provide input and guidance to the project.

Funder: Vancouver Foundation; Coast Capital Savings (grant to assist with youth engagement)

### **Low Cost and Free Library Resources (ongoing)**

Surrey Libraries developed a series of brochures and the City created an interactive website of resources available at no-cost or low-cost in Surrey. Approximately 15,000 of the print brochures are given out every year.

Funder: City of Surrey

Additional information on the SPRC is available on the SPRC website at [www.surreyprc.ca](http://www.surreyprc.ca).

### **Funding**

Since 2012, the SPRC has been supported through project-based funding and in-kind support from diverse sources including: United Way of Lower Mainland, Vancity Community Foundation, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, Vancouver Foundation, Coast Capital Savings, Envision Financial, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Simon Fraser University, Surrey Schools, Surrey Libraries, SPARC BC, Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC, and the City of Surrey.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the SPRC and continued implementation of the Plan, the SPRC is requesting a contribution of \$25,000 from the Council Initiatives Fund. The funding will be used to retain a consultant to facilitate SPRC meetings, prepare funding proposals, maintain and develop SPRC communications materials, and organize events/workshops. The City's contribution will assist in leveraging other resources that will accelerate the SPRC's impact in addressing poverty in Surrey.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

This corporate report supports the following Desired Outcomes (DO) and Strategic Directions (SD) identified in the Sustainability Charter 2.0.

#### **Inclusion**

- DO8: No individuals or families in Surrey live in poverty.
- DO9: Supports and services are in place to prevent and help people transition out of poverty.
- DO10: Everyone has access to an adequate income, and income gaps are minimized.
- SD6: Create, enhance and increase awareness of services that support people with economic barriers.
- SD7: Increase access to education, training and inclusive employment opportunities for people who face barriers within the community.
- SD8: Support the Surrey Poverty Coalition's efforts to implement the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.

### **CONCLUSION**

Poverty impacts individuals, families, and communities, and its effects are felt in several ways. It was a deep concern about the impacts of poverty in Surrey that mobilized community leaders to develop the Plan. It drives the continued commitment to work collaboratively towards the goal of reducing poverty in Surrey.

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Receive this report as information; and
- Approve a contribution of \$25,000 from the Council Initiatives Fund to support the SPRC in its continued efforts to implement the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan.



Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning & Development



Kam Grewal, CPA  
Acting General Manager,  
Finance & Technology

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|----------------|---|
| Appendix "I"   | - Council Initiatives – Allocations for 2017  |
| Appendix "II"  | - Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition Progress Report: Actions and Achievements, 2012 – 2016 |
| Appendix "III" | - Corporate Report No. R086; 2012 (without appendices)                                      |
| Appendix "IV"  | - Corporate Report No. R160; 2012 (without appendices)                                      |
| Appendix "V"   | - Corporate Report No. R021; 2014 (without appendices)                                      |
| Appendix "VI"  | - Corporate Report No. R062; 2015 (without appendices)                                      |
| Appendix "VII" | - Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition Membership List 2017                                   |

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**\*Appendices available upon request.**