



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** February 1, 2022
From: Kim Somerville **File:** 07-3190-01/2022-Vol 01
 Director, Community Social Development
Re: **2022 UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program Grant Submission**

Staff Recommendations

1. That staff be authorized to submit an application to the UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program as described in the report titled "2022 UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program Grant Submission," dated February 1, 2022, from the Director, Community Social Development; and
2. That should the funding application be successful, that the Chief Administrative Officer and the General Manager, Planning and Development be authorized on behalf of the City to enter into an agreement with UBCM for the above mentioned project and that the Consolidated 5 Year Financial Plan (2022–2026) be amended accordingly.

Kim Somerville
 Director, Community Social Development
 (604-247-4671)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Finance Department Richmond Public Library	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

In 2020, the Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program was introduced by the provincial government to provide funding through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) over three years for local governments to engage in projects that reduce poverty at the local level and to support TogetherBC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy. That same year, the City received a grant through the program to develop a poverty reduction and prevention action plan that resulted in the 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond. The 2022 intake is now accepting submissions for Stream 2 of the program, which is designed to support projects that reduce poverty (Attachment 1).

The grant application requires a Council resolution indicating support for the proposed project as well as a willingness to provide overall grant management. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for submission of a UBCM 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program grant application.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018–2022 Strategy #4—An Active and Thriving Richmond:

An active and thriving community characterized by diverse social and wellness programs, services and spaces that foster health and well-being for all.

4.2 Ensure infrastructure meets changing community needs, current trends and best practices.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018–2022 Strategy #6—Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

Leadership in effective and sustainable growth that supports Richmond's physical and social needs.

6.6 Growth includes supports and/or services for Richmond's vulnerable populations, including youth, seniors, individuals with health concerns, and residents experiencing homelessness.

This report also supports the following actions in the City's 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond:

1.2 Pursue funding opportunities to advance poverty reduction and prevention initiatives;

2.9 Develop programs and services that respond to the specific needs of demographics at risk of or living in poverty; and

3.2 Implement targeted outreach that facilitates connections to community programs and services for residents at risk of or living in poverty.

Analysis

The UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program provides funding in two streams: Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans and Assessments and Stream 2: Poverty Reduction Action. Stream 2 provides funding of up to \$50,000 to fund local projects that work to reduce poverty in the community. To apply for Stream 2 funding, municipalities must have a poverty reduction plan and the proposed project's outcomes must be linked to identified actions within the municipality's plan.

On December 6, 2021, City Council adopted the 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond, which will guide the City's approach, in collaboration with the community, to reduce and prevent poverty in Richmond over the next ten years. During community engagement to support the development of the plan, both residents and stakeholder organizations reported that they are not always aware of the types of services available in Richmond or how to access these services. The need to help connect residents at risk of or living in poverty to resources as well as programs and services in the community was frequently noted during engagement sessions.

Staff are in the process of preparing a grant application for Stream 2: Poverty Reduction Action of the UBCM 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program for \$50,000 to submit by the February 11, 2022 deadline. A Council resolution supporting the grant application is required for the submission. Due to the short timeline, a Council resolution in support of the grant application can be provided to UBCM after the grant deadline. Should Council authorize staff to submit the grant application, staff will provide UBCM with a copy of the Council resolution to support the City's submitted application. Should the grant application be successful, the City would be required to enter into a funding agreement with UBCM.

The proposed project for the grant aims to develop and implement monthly outreach sessions that will connect residents who are at risk of or living in poverty to community-based resources and supports, including community-based skill building programs in key areas of digital literacy and employment readiness. Focusing on vulnerable population groups, including recent newcomers, refugees and lone-parent families, the main goals of the project are to increase community connections and social supports for vulnerable residents and to build capacity within Richmond's social support framework to help reduce poverty. Additionally, the project will work to reduce and prevent poverty in the community by increasing access to the resources and supports that residents need to move out of poverty. The proposed project will further actions within the 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond, specifically Actions 2.9 and 3.2 that relate to the development of program and service delivery, and the implementation of targeted outreach programs to support residents at risk of or living in poverty.

The Richmond Public Library has agreed to host the outreach sessions and work with City staff to co-lead the project. A project coordinator will be hired on contract to implement the project and will be funded through a portion of the grant funding. As part of the project implementation, a communication and marketing plan, including a plan to reach isolated/hard to reach residents, will be developed using existing City tools and those available from project stakeholders. The Community Poverty Reduction and Prevention Table will act as the Steering Committee for the

project and persons with lived/living experience will participate in the development and implementation of the project. Further consultation will be held with community organizations and residents, including residents with lived/living experience, as appropriate.

Staff will evaluate and monitor the project throughout implementation to address emerging community needs and to ensure demand for the program is manageable within the scope of the monthly sessions. If the COVID-19 pandemic is still impacting service delivery, the program delivery will be modified to ensure it meets Provincial Health Orders.

When households who are at risk or living in poverty are not connected to community supports, they often have limited or no resources to create opportunities to advance themselves, which can leave them in a cycle of poverty. By capitalizing on the library's recognized role in the community as a welcoming place to access information and services, this project will work to connect these households to available supports and resources in the community. It will also further stakeholders understanding of emerging and changing needs in the community and create a framework that can address gaps in service delivery in collaboration with community organizations.

Financial Impact

The proposed project expenses will be fully covered by the grant. Should the application be successful, the Consolidated 5 Year Financial Plan (2022–2026) will be amended accordingly.

Conclusion

The UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program grant provides an opportunity for the City of Richmond, the Richmond Public Library and community stakeholders to further actions in the 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond. Staff recommend the application to the UBCM 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program be approved.



Melanie Burner
Accessibility Coordinator
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Att. 1: UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program, 2022 Program & Application Guide

Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program

2022 Program & Application Guide

1. Introduction

In March 2019, the Province of BC released their poverty reduction strategy: [*TogetherBC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy*](#). Mandated through the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act*, the strategy set targets to reduce the overall poverty rate in British Columbia by at least 25%, and the child poverty rate by at least 50%, by 2024. *TogetherBC* is based on four principles: affordability, opportunity, reconciliation, and social inclusion. These principles guided the priority action areas that form the core of the strategy.

With investments from across government, *TogetherBC* reflects government's commitment to reduce poverty and make life more affordable for British Columbians. It includes policy initiatives and investments designed to lift people up, break the cycle of poverty, and build a better BC for everyone.

Local governments have long-advocated for a provincial poverty reduction strategy and are crucial partners in this work. They are at the front-line of seeing the impacts of poverty in their communities and play a central role in developing local solutions with community partners and other levels of government.

Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program

The intent of the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program is to support local governments in reducing poverty at the local level and to support the Province's poverty reduction strategy. In 2020, the Province provided \$5 million over three years and the program is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). The first two intakes of the program in Spring 2020 and Spring 2021 awarded over \$2 million to more than 70 local governments across the province.

2. Eligible Applicants

All local governments (municipalities, regional districts, and the Islands Trust) in BC are eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants can submit one application per intake, including regional applications or participation as a partnering applicant in a regional application.

3. Grant Maximum

The 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program provides two streams of funding. Projects funded under Stream 1 may receive up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$25,000. Projects funded under Stream 2 may receive up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$50,000. Regional projects under either Stream 1 or Stream 2 may receive up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$150,000.

In order to ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, all other grant contributions for eligible portions of the project must be declared and, depending on the total value, may decrease the value of the grant.

4. Requirements for Funding

As part of the approval agreement, approved projects must meet the following requirements for funding:

- Any in-person activities, meetings, or events must meet public health orders and/or guidance in relation to COVID-19.
- Activities must comply with all applicable privacy legislation under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* in relation to the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information while conducting funded activities. Personal information is any recorded information about an identifiable individual other than their business contact information. This includes information that can be used to identify an individual through association or inference.

5. Eligible Projects

To qualify for funding, applications must demonstrate the extent to which proposed activities will reduce poverty at the local level.

To qualify for funding, projects must:

- Focus on one or more of the six priority action areas identified in *TogetherBC*:
 - Housing
 - Education and training
 - Income supports
 - Families, children and youth
 - Employment
 - Social supports
- Be a new project (retroactive funding is not available);
- Be capable of completion by the applicant within one year from the date of grant approval;
- Involve key sectors of the community including community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations and/or Indigenous organizations.

Within the six priority areas, eligible projects may also address one or more of the other key priorities identified in *TogetherBC*: mental health and addictions, food security, transportation, and/or access to health care.

Regional Projects

Funding requests from two or more eligible applicants for regional projects may be submitted as a single application for eligible, collaborative projects. In this case, the maximum funding available would be based on the number of eligible applicants included in the application. It is expected that regional projects will demonstrate cost-efficiencies in the total grant request.

The primary applicant submitting the application for a regional project is required to submit a resolution as outlined in Section 6 of this guide. Each partnering applicant is required to submit a resolution that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

The total funding request for regional projects cannot exceed \$150,000.

6. Eligible & Ineligible Costs & Activities

Eligible Costs & Activities

Eligible costs are direct costs that are approved for funding, properly and reasonably incurred, and paid by the applicant to carry out eligible activities. Eligible costs can only be incurred from the date of application submission until the final report is submitted.

Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans and Assessments

The intent of this funding stream is to support communities to develop or update assessments or plans in order to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 1 is \$25,000 for a single applicant and \$150,000 for regional applications.

Under Stream 1, eligible activities must be cost-effective and include:

- Development of a local Poverty Reduction plan or assessment that addresses one or more of the six priority action areas as identified in *TogetherBC*;
- Engagement of people living in poverty or with a lived experience of poverty in planning activities;
- Adding a poverty reduction lens including specific activities and outcomes to support people living in poverty, to existing plans or policies, such as:
 - Official Community Plans or community or neighbourhood plans;
 - Zoning and other policies;
 - Development permit requirements;
 - Emergency response, evacuation, and/or emergency support services plans;
 - Food security and food systems planning;
 - Community planning processes related to social determinants of health (e.g. affordable housing, homelessness, etc.).

Stream 2: Poverty Reduction Action

The intent of this funding stream is to support communities to undertake local projects in order to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 2 is \$50,000 for a single applicant and \$150,000 for regional applications.

In order to be eligible for Stream 2 funding, eligible applicants are required to have completed a Poverty Reduction plan or assessment, or demonstrate that their Official Community Plan, or an equivalent plan, is inclusive of poverty reduction principles.

Under Stream 2, eligible activities must be cost-effective and may include:

- Pilot projects to evaluate the impact of providing supports such as reduced-fare transit, recreation passes, or other service opportunities for low-income residents;
- Supporting financial security through tax-filing programs;
- Awareness campaigns to reduce stigma around poverty and promote social inclusion;
- Social enterprise initiatives that provide supported employment opportunities for people with multiple barriers to employment;
- Local food security initiatives including food-waste diversion projects and community kitchens that support training and social inclusion, as well as access to food;
- Pilot projects to assist key populations living with low income as identified in *TogetherBC*;

Stream 2 of the 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program is not intended to be a capital funding program. However, minor capital expenditures for eligible activities that have a clear and definable benefit to people living in poverty, that are clearly linked to activities identified in the application, and that are intended to reduce poverty at the local level will be considered for funding under Stream 2.

Capital costs cannot exceed 25% of the total requested Stream 2 grant (i.e. an application for a \$50,000 grant cannot include more than \$12,500 in capital costs).

Eligible Activities Applicable to Both Funding Streams

The following expenditures are also eligible, provided they relate directly to the eligible activities identified above:

- Honoraria for community member participants who are living in poverty. It is expected that the payment of honoraria should align with current best practices and that any honoraria paid for the ongoing participation of people living in poverty should be at least the current provincial minimum wage;
- Consultant costs;
- Incremental staff and administration costs;
- Public information costs.

Ineligible Costs & Activities

Any activity that is not outlined above or is not directly connected to activities approved in the application by the Evaluation Committee is not eligible for grant funding. This includes:

- Development of funding application package;
- Development of feasibility studies and/or business cases;
- Development of architectural, engineering, or other design drawings for the construction or renovation of facilities providing services to people living in poverty;
- Long-term, permanent capital investments including the purchase of land and/or buildings;
- Major capital improvements to existing facilities and/or construction of new, permanent facilities;
- Regular salaries of applicant staff or partners;
- Routine or ongoing operating (e.g. heating and lighting; security; telephone; internet) and/or planning costs or activities that are not incremental to the project;
- Purchase of software, software licences, service subscriptions, or membership fees;
- Legal, audit, or interest fees or fees to incorporate a society;
- Project-related fees payable to the eligible applicant(s) (e.g. permit fees, DCCs, etc.);
- Existing programs with established, designated funding from other partners;
- Purchase of promotional items, door/raffle prizes, give-away items, and/or gifts for community members;
- Fundraising, lobbying, or sponsorship campaigns.

7. Application Requirements & Process

Application Deadline

The application deadline is February 11, 2022.

Applicants will be advised of the status of their application within 90 days of the application deadline.

Required Application Contents

- Completed Application Form;
- Detailed project budget, including itemized costs/activities that will be funded by the grant and separating out any in-kind and/or cash contributions from the applicant(s) or other grant funding;
- Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution, indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management;
- **For regional projects only:** Each partnering eligible local government must submit a Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution that clearly indicates support for the primary applicant to *apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf*.

Resolutions from partnering applicants must include the specific language above.

- Optional: Up to three letters of support as evidence of partnership or collaboration with community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations and/or Indigenous organizations.

Submission of Applications

Applications should be submitted as Word, Excel, or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20MB.

All applications should be submitted to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

Review of Applications

UBCM will perform a preliminary review of applications to ensure the required application elements have been submitted and to ensure that eligibility criteria have been met. Only complete application packages will be reviewed.

Following this, all eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by the Evaluation Committee. Scoring considerations and criteria include the following:

- Alignment with the intent and objectives of the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program;
- Demonstration of direct participation in the proposed activities by people living in poverty or with a lived experience of poverty;
- Anticipated outcomes and a clear and achievable evaluation framework on how the success of the project or plan will be measured;
- Demonstrated clear and definable benefit to the community as a whole;
- Partnerships and demonstrated community support, including community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations, and/or Indigenous organizations;
- Cost-effectiveness of the project, including in-kind or cash contributions to the project from the eligible applicant(s), community partners, or other grant funding.

Point values and weighting have been established within each of these scoring criteria. Only those applications that meet a minimum threshold point value will be considered for funding.

The Evaluation Committee will consider the population and provincial, regional, and urban/rural distribution of proposed projects. Recommendations will be made on a provincial priority basis. All funding decisions will be made by UBCM.

All application materials will be shared with the Province of BC

8. Grant Management & Applicant Responsibilities

Please note that grants are awarded to eligible applicants only and, as such, the applicant is responsible for completion of the project as approved and for meeting reporting requirements.

Applicants are also responsible for proper fiscal management, including maintaining acceptable accounting records for the project. UBCM reserves the right to audit these records.

Notice of Funding Decision & Payments

All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions. Approved applicants will receive an Approval Agreement, which will include the terms and conditions of any grant that is awarded, and that is required to be signed and returned to UBCM within 30 days.

Grants under the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program will be awarded in two payments: 50% at the approval of the project and when the signed Approval Agreement has been returned to UBCM, and 50% when the project is complete and the final reporting requirements have been met.

Please note that in cases where revisions are required to an application, or an application has been approved in principle only, the applicant has 30 days from the date of the written notice of the status of the application to complete the application requirements. Applications that are not completed within 30 days may be closed.

Progress Payments

In exceptional circumstances, to request a progress payment, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Written rationale for receiving a progress payment;
- Description of activities completed to date; and
- Description of funds expended to date.

Changes to Approved Projects

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Approval from UBCM will be required for any significant variation from the approved project.

To propose changes to an approved project, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Amended application package, including updated, signed application form, budget, and an updated Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution (including resolution(s) from regional application partners in the case of a regional application); and
- Written rationale for proposed changes to activities and/or expenditures.

Applicants are responsible for any costs above the approved grant unless an amended application is submitted and approved prior to work being undertaken.

Extensions to Project End Date

All approved activities are required to be completed within the timeframe identified in the Approval Agreement and all extensions beyond this date must be requested in writing and be approved by UBCM. Extensions will not exceed one year.

9. Final Report Requirements

Final Reports are required to be submitted within 30 days of the completion of the project. Applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete final report, including the following:

- Completed Final Report Form with all required attachments;
- Detailed financial summary that includes the actual expenditures from the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program and other sources of funding (if applicable) and that aligns with the actual activities outlined in the final report form;
- For Stream 1 only: electronic copy of the completed plan or assessment;
- Copies of any materials that were produced with grant funding;
- Optional: photos of the project, media clippings, and/or any reports or documents developed or amended with grant funding.

Submission of Final Reports

All final reports should be submitted as Word, Excel, or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20MB.

All final reports should be submitted to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

All final reports will be shared with the Province of BC

10. Additional Information

For enquiries about the application process or general enquiries about the program, please contact:

Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

Phone: (250) 952-9177

For more information on BC's Poverty Reduction Strategy, please refer to [TogetherBC](#).