



To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** March 19, 2026
From: Kim Somerville **File:** 08-4057-11-01/2025-Vol 01
 Director, Community Social Development
 Mark Corrado
 Director, Community Bylaws and Licencing
Re: **2025 Homelessness-Related City Investment**

Staff Recommendations

1. That the report titled “2025 Homelessness-Related City Investment”, dated March 19, 2026 from the Director, Community Social Development and the Director, Community Bylaws and Licencing, be distributed to local Members of Parliament and local Members of the Legislative Assembly, including the Premier, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Transportation and Transit; and
2. That the City request that the Province of British Columbia measurably increase coordination and operational collaboration with the City of Richmond in addressing issues occurring on Crown lands and transportation corridors within the city.

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REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Environmental Programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Intergovernmental Relations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RCMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Richmond Fire Rescue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Facility Services and Project Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The City of Richmond is committed to taking a leadership role in responding to the needs of unsheltered people in Richmond in a compassionate manner and making efforts towards the prevention of homelessness. At the same time, the City has a responsibility to administer and enforce municipal bylaws, maintain safe and accessible public spaces, and address conditions that may pose risks to individuals, neighbouring residents, City infrastructure, and the broader community. This includes the monitoring and enforcement of City bylaws related to the use of public spaces, the removal and management of accumulated chattel, debris, and hazardous materials, and the restoration of vacated sites where individuals have been sheltering outdoors. These actions are undertaken to mitigate public health and safety risks, address environmental concerns, ensure access to parks, streets and public amenities. Over recent years, the intersections between homelessness, mental health, substance use and extreme poverty have continued to evolve, resulting in increasing need for resources, and increased time and expertise of staff to respond.

This report provides an overview of operating and one-time costs of City-funded services and initiatives completed in 2025 related to homelessness. These expenses have been incurred for initiatives related to homelessness prevention, services to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, Bylaw enforcement, clean up and repairs with a nexus to homelessness, emergency services and the grants to community organizations. In addition, the RCMP's Vulnerable Persons Unit provides support to individuals experiencing homelessness. The costs outlined are those considered to have a direct link to homelessness or primarily support or involve individuals experiencing homelessness.

While expenses incurred by the City in 2025 for homelessness-related services or with a nexus to homelessness are outlined in this report, a companion report "Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2025 Update," on the same agenda, specifically outlines significant highlights and provides a summary of the accomplishments that the City, in partnership with the community, have made in the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy over the past year. Together, these reports provide a comprehensive overview of the City's role and actions related to homelessness in Richmond in 2025.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.

6.4 Support vulnerable populations through collaborative and sustainable programs and services.

This report supports the City of Richmond's Building Our Future Together: Social Development Strategy's (2025–2035) Strategic Direction #1 Improve Access to Basic Needs and Strategic Direction and Strategic Direction #2 Enhance Inclusion and Belonging:

1.8 Create evidence-informed strategies to prevent and respond to homelessness in the region by fostering coordination and collaboration across sectors and jurisdictions.

2.3 Support increased awareness and understanding of mental health and addictions in an effort to reduce stigma and discrimination, while fostering greater inclusion and well-being in the community.

Analysis

Background

Since 2024, additional Council-approved resources have been secured that have increased the capacity of the City and its partners to support individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness and to respond to situations in the community with a nexus to homelessness. These have been funded through a combination of ongoing additions to the City's operating budget, as one-time expenses during the budget process or as unique instances at the direction of Council.

A Homelessness Outreach Team was hired to ensure proactive and timely outreach to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in order to build relationships, provide referrals and connect people to services in the community. The Team mitigates risk and reduces the need for more complex intervention from law enforcement or first responders. Additional Bylaws staff have been hired to identify, monitor and enforce bylaw violations that have a nexus to homelessness or social disorder often related to contraventions of the City's Traffic and Parks and School Grounds Bylaws. Proactive and complaint-based calls for services are addressed via regular patrols of public property, dykes and trails, hotspot locations and when needed on publicly accessible crown lands. The City has also provided funding for the operation of a Drop-in Centre, contributed to the cost of operating Temporary Winter Shelters and provided Health, Social and Safety Grants to support community and faith-based organizations in their homelessness-related work. Additional City funding has been required to clean up sites that have been used for camping and to respond to vandalism or damage to City property with a direct or, on occasion, indirect or inconclusive connection to homelessness.

There are other programs or activities delivered by or in partnership with the City that also support individuals experiencing homelessness such as the Community Services Pop Ups and the Community Connectors initiative, however, the costs related to these are not included in this report. The City, at times, also provides one-time funding and City-owned land related to development projects in partnership with senior levels of government that help support individuals experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. These costs can vary from year to year due to development opportunities. For the purpose of this report, the development costs for these projects have not been included.

In relation to the abovementioned, BC Housing provides operating funding related to homelessness in Richmond, including for Richmond House Emergency Shelter, Alderbridge and Aster Place Supportive Housing, Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS) and Extreme Weather Response Shelters. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (MEMCR) provides funding for the activation of Warming Centres and Cooling/Clean Air Centres when the community weather threshold is met for these services. Any funding provided by BC Housing or MEMCR has not been included in this report.

There are a number of areas related to homelessness where jurisdiction for funding and provision of programs and services rests with the Provincial and Federal governments. Due to the evolving nature and complexity of social issues and the lack of funding and support from senior levels of government, many municipalities, including Richmond, have had to assume greater responsibility for issues and costs that are outside municipal jurisdiction. Little public comparative information is available from other municipalities regarding financial investments being made in relation to homelessness in general and

specifically in response to the lack of senior government support. Additional information on this is outlined later in this report.

Homelessness-Related Expenses 2025

The calculation of costs incurred for 2025, as outlined below, are those considered to have a direct link to homelessness or primarily support or involve individuals experiencing homelessness. As these expenses are tracked individually by each department and have been independently assessed for their connection to homelessness some degree of variability is expected. Every effort has been made to capture costs related to homelessness in a meaningful way.

Initiatives to Support Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in Richmond

There are a number of initiatives directed at preventing homelessness or supporting individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond. These include staffing, resource development, staff training and contracted services. These costs in 2025 are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Homelessness-Related Expenses 2025 – Prevention and Service Delivery

Item	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	Amount	Notes
Homelessness Outreach Team Operations and Oversight	Yes	No	\$483,852	Staff directly related to direct services delivery and collaboration with community partners and government services working directly with people experiencing homelessness and manager oversight of the homelessness portfolio
Resource Development and Community Events	Yes	No	\$6,300	Includes development and upkeep of resource materials, website content, printing and distribution and oversight of the Homeless Connect event.
Homelessness Outreach Team Supplies	Yes	No	\$33,999	Includes vehicle operating costs, client supplies, client meals, transportation, equipment, snacks, drinking water, first aid equipment and clothing and seasonal comfort kits.
Drop-in Centre Core Operations	Yes	Yes	\$377,686	Core hours are Monday to Friday 8:00am–4:00pm January to March and 9:00am–4:00pm April to December.
Drop-in Centre Extension	No	Yes	\$27,894	Additional expanded hours Monday to Friday from 4:00–8:00pm and 8:00am–8:00pm Saturday and Sunday, January to April 15, 2025.
Temporary Winter Shelter	No	Yes	\$148,294	The City's contribution to the Temporary Winter Shelter at Brighthouse Pavilion for the period January 1 to April 15, 2025. Balance funded by BC Housing.
Total – 2025 Prevention and Service Delivery			\$1,078,025	

Enforcement, Clean Up and Repairs with a Nexus to Homelessness

Further to the provision of direct services for individuals experiencing homelessness, the City engages in proactive and responsive activities with a direct or, on occasion, indirect or inconclusive connection to homelessness. This includes monitoring and enforcement of City Bylaws, removal of accumulated chattel, clean up of sites where individuals have been sheltering outdoors and repairs to City facilities that may or may not have a direct connection to homelessness. For this exercise, a connection to homelessness has been assumed or concluded based on the nature of the situation and the context in which the work took place. These are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Homelessness-Related Expenses 2025 – Enforcement, Clean Up and Repairs

Item	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	Amount	Notes
Bylaws Homelessness Team, Administration and Oversight	Yes	No	\$502,706	Staff directly performing homelessness-related work, including the RV and Public Space Teams, administrative staff and dispatch and manager oversight.
Facilities Administration and Oversight	Yes	No	\$59,565	Staff associated with supervision of work by contracted service providers, coordination of maintenance and repairs and after-hours call-outs.
Public Works and Recycling and Waste Recovery	Yes	No	\$21,500	Staff doing clean up related to homelessness, administration of third-party contractor and manager oversight.
Joint Operations Team Activities	Yes	No	\$1,500	Outreach hours for staff not already included in other areas, material costs related to joint inspections.
Bylaws Training	No	Yes	\$5,110	De-escalation, situational awareness and use of force training for Bylaws staff. Cohort of 12 staff.
Bylaws Vehicles	Yes	Yes	\$101,265	Two new vehicles for the Homelessness-related Bylaws teams – Includes purchase, outfitting costs and insurance.
Bylaws Materials and Supplies	Yes	No	\$35,819	Consumable supplies, Kevlar vests, Oleoresin Capsicum spray/batons, storage container, removal notices and City radios.
Bylaws Other Costs	No	Yes	\$19,631	Abandoned live-aboard boat removal and recycling, RV removal and recycling.
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Audit	No	Yes	\$4,000	CPTED audit and report for Brighthouse Park.
Brighthouse Park and Pavillion Repair, Maintenance and Landscaping	Yes	Yes	\$122,376	General repairs, washroom maintenance, graffiti removal, window repair, security, pest control and proactive landscaping.
Public Works Vehicles and Equipment	Yes	No	\$6,586	Portion of vehicle costs for homelessness-related activity and rental of a crane truck for site cleanup.
City-wide Repairs	Yes	Yes	\$21,091	Facility repairs across the City that have been directly or indirectly associated with homelessness.
Contracts	Yes	No	\$4,681	Security contractor costs to obtain and review security camera footage related to Bylaws or RCMP requests.
Contracts	Yes	No	\$35,934	Third party contractor to conduct cleanup of homelessness related sites.
Total – 2025 Enforcement, Clean Up and Repairs			\$941,764	

Emergency Services

Emergency services including Richmond Fire Rescue (RFR) and RCMP respond to a range of calls for service that relate either directly or indirectly to situations involving individuals experiencing homelessness or locations where individuals experiencing homelessness are known to spend time. In addition to emergency response functions, the RCMP Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU) and RFR also engage in proactive relationship building, fire prevention and life-safety support and educational outreach and responses in relation to homelessness. The direct costs related to proactive, prevention or monitoring and attendance by either RCMP General Duty Officers or Richmond Fire Rescue attendance at calls with a nexus to homelessness are outlined in Table 3.

Due to the complex nature of Richmond Fire Rescue attendance as first responders to medical calls and the complexity involved in identifying these as attributable to homelessness, the cost of RFR response to medical calls has not been included. The costs attributable to BC Ambulance Services, which is overseen and funded by British Columbia Health Services and the Provincial Health Services Authority, have not been included in these calculations as they are not funded by the City of Richmond.

In addition to the dedicated VPU staff who are engaged in relationship building and proactive response, the VPU oversees the Yankee-30 and Car-67 (formerly FOX-80) programs, which pair police officers with youth probation officers, social workers or mental health professionals to respond to youth and adults who may be experiencing unique issues or a mental health crisis. As these programs respond to a wide-range of situations including broader representation of the Richmond population, the costs of the Yankee-30 and Car-67 programs have not been included below (Table 3).

Table 3: 2025 City-funded Emergency Services

Item	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	Amount	Notes
RCMP Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU)	Yes	No	\$985,714	VPU annual operating cost for 5 sworn officers.
RCMP General Duty Officers	Yes	No	\$48,126	Attendance at calls documented as having a connection to homelessness (617 in 2025).
Richmond Fire-Rescue – Fire Prevention	Yes	No	\$17,316	Costs related to RFR fire prevention engagement and enforcement involving homelessness sites/persons.
Richmond Fire-Rescue – Fire Response	Yes	No	\$175,715	Costs related to RFR response to fires involving homelessness sites/persons.
Total – 2025 Emergency Services			\$1,226,871	

City Grants

The City provides grants to non-profit and faith-based organizations through the Health, Social and Safety Grant Program. In some cases, these organizations are undertaking initiatives that directly or indirectly support individuals who are at risk of experiencing homelessness, are currently without housing or who have experienced homelessness in the past. These initiatives may also support people who are precariously housed or have housing but may experience food insecurity and access to community food programs. Table 4 outlines the funding requested through the 2025 Health, Social and Safety (HSS) Grant Program and additional one-time funding provided by City Council towards applications that could not be fully funded through the grant program.

Table 4: 2025 Health, Social and Safety Grants and One-time Funding

Item	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	Amount	Notes
Health, Social and Safety Grants	No	Yes	\$35,000	Funding for grants related to homelessness - direct connection – Refuge Church, Mission Possible.
Health, Social and Safety Grants	No	Yes	\$83,584	Funding for grants that may relate to homelessness - indirect connection for Food Security.
Grant top up – Refuge Church	No	Yes	\$85,000	One-time funding provided by Council to top up the amount awarded through the HSS Grant Program.
Grant top up – Parish of St. Alban’s	No	Yes	\$26,416	One-time funding provided by Council to top up the amount awarded through the HSS Grant Program.
One-time allocation – The Salvation Army	No	Yes	\$20,000	One-time funding provided by Council for its mobile feeding program.
Total – 2025 Health, Social and Safety Grants and One-time Funding			\$250,000	

Summary of 2025 Homelessness-Related Investment

The City continues to make a significant investment related to preventing homelessness, supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and responding to situations with a nexus to homelessness. The total City investment for 2025 that pertains to this report is summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Total City Investment with a Nexus to Homelessness for 2025

Item	Ongoing Cost	One-time Cost	Amount	Notes
Prevention and Service Delivery	Yes	No	\$1,078,025	This includes primarily ongoing costs.
Enforcement, Clean Up and Repairs	Yes	Yes	\$941,764	This includes a combination of ongoing and one-time costs.
Emergency Services	Yes	No	\$1,226,871	These are ongoing costs.
Health, Social and Safety Grants and One-time Funding	No	Yes	\$250,000	These are one-time costs.
Total			\$3,496,660	

In addition to the costs incurred in 2025, the City has provided City-owned land for the provision of dedicated homelessness-related services. This also represents a significant investment by the City.

Other Municipalities’ Investments Related to Homelessness

A scan of publicly available information on municipal investments in homelessness was completed in an effort to determine the level of funding that other municipalities are spending related to homelessness in their communities. Minimal amounts of information are publicly available. Investments that could be specifically identified supported a range of services for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, grant programs, encampment response and clean up and

investments in affordable or supportive housing. No comprehensive overall municipal investment had been quantified for any of the municipalities identified.

It is also evident that many individual municipalities are engaged in advocacy to the Provincial government in relation to the downloading of costs onto communities and local government. Collaborative advocacy through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) has also been initiated. Details of the current work in this area are outlined below.

2025 UBCM Resolution

The following resolution, which asked for coordination and funding from the Provincial government was brought forth and endorsed at the 2025 UBCM convention:

Regional Approach to Homelessness – 2025

Whereas homelessness is a complex and multi-faceted challenge that affects communities across BC, rural and urban, and there is a lack of a coordinated regional strategy and insufficient resources worsen this issue, leaving vulnerable populations without adequate housing, and shelter; And whereas concentration of shelter beds and supportive housing can create unsustainable pressure on local resources and services in some communities while leaving other communities underserved: Therefore it be resolved that UBCM advocate that the provincial government coordinate a regional response to homelessness by increasing funding and resources for supportive housing and shelter initiatives across the province, and foster collaboration and coordination among local government, provincial agencies, First Nation governments, Indigenous organizations, nonprofits, housing authorities, and community members.

At the 2025 convention, it was endorsed that resolutions that reaffirm existing policy are addressed as follows:

The Committee proposes that any resolution that aligns with resolutions already endorsed or not endorsed by the membership should be received rather than put forward for further consideration by the membership. The current intent of the Resolutions Committee is that a 5 year window would be adopted to establish existing policy under this lens.

At this time, there is no response to the 2025 resolution from the Province however, the first round of responses to UBCM resolutions usually occurs in April or May and the second round usually occurs in June. Staff will provide an update to Council once a response is received.

Next Steps

Continued advocacy to senior levels of government for additional funding to expand housing options, and mental health and substance use supports in Richmond remains critically important. Ultimately, these areas are primarily the responsibility of senior levels of government; however, municipalities, including the City of Richmond, continue to direct significant resources to respond to the impacts of these underfunded areas.

In addition to increased funding for housing and related supports, substantially greater engagement from Provincial ministries responsible for land stewardship and the management of Crown lands and transportation corridors is required. A more coordinated and active role from these ministries in working with the City would support more effective responses to issues occurring on lands under provincial jurisdiction.

Further supports needed for the community include additional shelter and supportive housing options, expanded outreach from other government entities, and increased access to mental health and substance use supports, including detox and treatment services. In order to continue to manage the City's effective response to homelessness, the following additional actions for Council's consideration include:

- Requesting that the Province of British Columbia measurably increase coordination and operational collaboration with the City of Richmond in addressing issues occurring on Crown lands and transportation corridors within the city; and
- Distributing this report to local Members of Parliament and local Members of the Legislative Assembly, including the Premier, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs and the Minister of Transportation and Transit.

Financial Impact

None at this time. However, further review of trends and existing service level impacts may identify the need for future one-time or ongoing operating budget requests. Should this occur, any such considerations will be brought forward for Council's consideration.

Conclusion

An integrated, City cross-departmental response to addressing the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond is being implemented through dedicated staffing resources, existing operating budgets and, on occasions, additional one-time funding. The quantifiable direct and indirect City investment related to homelessness prevention, service delivery, enforcement, clean up and repairs in 2025, as outlined above, totalled \$3,496,660.

Further advocacy to senior levels of government, which are primarily responsible for the areas of homelessness, housing, and mental health and substance use, continues to be critically important to support the City's significant investment towards these areas to ensure the livability of the city for all residents.



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