



**RCSAC** | **Richmond Community Services  
Advisory Committee**

June 23, 2017

To Mayor Brodie and Councillors, City of Richmond:

Over the last number of years the City of Richmond has experienced significant growth and building development. In the City Centre, many small, older buildings have been replaced with large, primarily residential, buildings. Although this growth and development has many benefits for the City, the impact on non-profit societies delivering essential social services in the community is increasingly problematic.

Many non-profit societies, with limited resources, lease space in these older buildings. As these buildings are demolished and replaced by new and more expensive buildings, increasingly non-profit societies are being displaced. Furthermore, in new areas, limited consideration has been given to the need for space for social services in these new, densely populated areas (e.g. area near the Oval). A thriving and healthy community must have a strong foundation of social services. These social services must be available and distributed throughout a community.

*The Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (RCSAC)* has recognized the need to address the growing space needs issue for non-profit societies in Richmond for some time. To this end, RCSAC has endeavoured to gather information regarding the space needs of non-profits in Richmond through a number of online surveys. Although the RCSAC has made a valiant attempt in this regard, members lack the expertise and resources to develop, conduct and analyze the data. Consequently, the results of these surveys have not allowed the RCSAC or the City of Richmond staff to truly explore and understand the space needs of all non-profit societies in the City.

In 2016 a task group was created to explore the space needs issue. This committee was successful in obtaining a \$2500 grant from the *Richmond Community Foundation* to retain a consultant to develop the framework for a comprehensive review of the space needs issues for non-profit societies in Richmond. In January 2017 the *Richmond Non-Profit Space Review Phase #1: Summary of Current Status and Proposal for Next Steps (attached)* was completed and released. This first document reviewed the reports and work completed to date on this issue by the City of Richmond and the RCSAC and made the following recommendations:

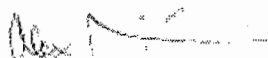
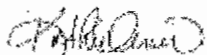
- Develop and administer an **updated, straightforward, “easy to fill out” survey that can both stand alone and be comparable across years, and that establishes agency-specific space needs** as well as the significance of the services these agencies provide the community.
- **Research and recommend alternative responses to address the non-profit organization space needs issue in the City of Richmond.**

In order to complete the recommended work, the consultant developed a work plan and budget. The complete cost of the second phase is \$23,000. The Task Group has been successful in obtaining a second grant for \$10,000 from the *Richmond Community Foundation* to help complete the work plan. The Task Group has worked hard to obtain funds and develop a framework and plan for this important work.

We are now requesting the City of Richmond to fund the remaining balance required to complete this important work. We know the City of Richmond's Mayor, Councillors and staff value the essential work of non-profit societies in our community. However, it is now time that the City of Richmond consider the implications of the rapid development in our City on the foundation of social services in Richmond. The completion of this important work will allow the City of Richmond to make strategic and fulsome decisions to support the preservation of a strong foundation of community and social services in our community. Furthermore, the work plan involves the development of a comprehensive survey of NPO's space needs which can be replicated each year. This will allow the City of Richmond, in partnership with the RCSAC, to track, monitor and analyze the space needs of NPO's in the City over time. This is essential work that has not been done to date.

Lastly, the City of Richmond has recently completed a review and analysis of their Affordable Housing Strategy. It is an ideal time, in association with the affordable housing consultancy work, to explore opportunities and cross-over between the City of Richmond's approach to Affordable Housing and their support for the space needs and sustainability of community social services.

Sincerely,



Chairs, Kathie Chiu and Alex Nixon, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (RCSAC)

cc. Cathy Carlile, Kim Somerville & Lesley Sherlock