



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** November 8, 2019
From: Kim Somerville **File:** 08-4057-11-01/2019-Vol
 Director, Community Social Development 01
Re: Homelessness Service Provision – Community Collaboration Tables

Staff Recommendation

1. That the Terms of Reference for the Richmond Community Homelessness Table as outlined in the report titled “Homelessness Service Provision – Community Collaboration Tables,” dated November 8, 2019 from the Director, Community Social Development, be endorsed; and
2. That the Terms of Reference for the Richmond Lived Experience Group be endorsed.

Kim Somerville
 Director, Community Social Development
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Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO	

Staff Report

Origin

On September 9, 2019, City Council approved the Richmond Homelessness Strategy 2019-2029, which defines a range of actions designed to prevent and address homelessness in Richmond. At the Council meeting, staff were asked to bring forth further information regarding multiple priority actions described in the Strategy, including:

- Coordinating a Front-Line Service Provider Working Group (Action 2.2);
- Developing a Community Homelessness Table to guide collaboration among local service providers (Action 4.2); and
- Engaging with residents with lived experience (Action 4.3).

The purpose of this report is to present the proposed plans for these initiatives, and to seek Council's endorsement of the draft Terms of Reference for the Richmond Community Homelessness Table and the Richmond Lived Experience Group. Pending Council endorsement, the initiatives will be launched in Quarter 1 of 2020.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategic Focus Area #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 supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategic Focus Area #8 An Engaged and Informed Community:

Ensure that the citizenry of Richmond is well-informed and engaged about City business and decision-making.

8.1 Increased opportunities for public engagement.

This report also aligns with the Council adopted Homelessness Strategy 2019-2029, including the following actions:

2.2 Coordinate a Front Line Service Provider Working Group to focus on coordination of supports for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness;

4.2 Develop a Community Homelessness Table for collaboration among agencies working to prevent or address homelessness; and

4.3 Engage with residents with lived experience when designing and implementing significant policies or programs related to addressing homelessness in Richmond.

Analysis

Homelessness is a complex issue and cannot be solved by any single organization or level of government. Many stakeholders, including federal and provincial governments, non-profit housing and service providers, community organizations, and the faith community, have important roles to play in addressing the needs of Richmond residents experiencing homelessness. Within this context, the City is committed to playing a proactive leadership role to build partnerships and enable collaboration between key community stakeholders.

Proposed Initiatives

To enable effective collaboration between key stakeholders involved in addressing homelessness, City staff propose to develop two new committees: The Richmond Community Homelessness Table and the Richmond Lived Experience Group. The Richmond RCMP is also working with the Province of BC to explore the creation of a situation table, a forum for front line staff to share information and collaborate to meet the needs of vulnerable residents. The situation table would meet the requirements of action 2.2 in the Homelessness Strategy, which directs the City to coordinate a Front Line Service Provider Working Group.

1. Richmond Community Homelessness Table

City staff propose that a Community Homelessness Table be created to monitor and guide the implementation of the Richmond Homelessness Strategy. Membership will be comprised of leaders from local organizations that deliver support services and housing programs to individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond, as well as government agencies that directly support these programs.

Specific activities will include:

- Providing input regarding the design of new actions, particularly those identified in the Homelessness Strategy;
- Identifying specific opportunities for collaboration between key stakeholders;
- Identifying emerging issues, gaps in services, and best practices relevant to homelessness in Richmond; and
- Hosting presentations from other groups in the community to learn about other initiatives and perspectives that relate to homelessness in Richmond.

Membership for the Table will be confirmed in early 2020, and will consist of approximately 10 organizations. A draft Terms of Reference has been developed for the Richmond Community Homelessness Table for Council's endorsement (Attachment 1).

2. Richmond Lived Experience Group

There are various models used to involve individuals with lived experiences of homelessness in policy and planning initiatives. Based on a review of best practices from across Canada, City staff propose the development of a Richmond Lived Experience Group.

City staff propose that the Richmond Lived Experience Group be comprised of approximately 5-10 individuals who have experienced homelessness in Richmond and will provide an opportunity for these individuals to share their stories and expertise. Information resulting from these discussions may help the City and other community stakeholders when designing new policies, programs and initiatives that respond to homelessness in the community. The Lived Experience Group will also be designed to provide members with skill development opportunities. For example, members of the Lived Experience Group will gain experience related to committee participation and governance.

Specific activities will include:

- Sharing personal experiences related to homelessness and poverty;
- Identifying specific issues and gaps in services that require attention from the City or service providers;
- Providing input regarding the design of new community initiatives; and
- Helping to organize the Annual Community Homelessness Forum.

As much as possible, members will be selected to represent the diversity of individuals experiencing homelessness in the community, including adults, youth, seniors, women, and men. Meetings will be facilitated by a co-chair from the Community Homelessness Table, with assistance from City staff. On an ongoing basis, key themes that emerge from the Group will be shared with the Community Homelessness Table. A draft Terms of Reference has been developed for the Richmond Lived Experience Group for Council's endorsement (Attachment 2).

3. *Richmond Situation Table*

In collaboration with Community Social Development staff, Richmond RCMP are currently in discussion with the provincial government regarding the potential of creating a situation table in Richmond. Implemented in a number of municipalities across Canada, situation tables provide a forum for front line staff from public safety, health, and social service sectors to share information about vulnerable individuals in the community who are experiencing a crisis, including but not limited to homelessness. Once a vulnerable client is identified, table members collaborate to create a case management plan to provide necessary supports to the clients.

Situation tables can achieve a number of benefits, including improved community safety and more efficient use of community resources; however, the primary focus is to improve the personal well-being of vulnerable people, including individuals experiencing homelessness or others experiencing concurrent substance use and mental health disorders, who come into frequent contact with the RCMP.

The situation table would satisfy the requirements of action 2.2 in the Homelessness Strategy, which directs the City to create a working group for front line workers. A decision regarding the situation table will be made by Spring 2020. Should the situation table not proceed, City staff will update City Council and bring forward a report, which will outline the Terms of Reference for a Front Line Service Provider Working Group as identified in the Homelessness Strategy.

Next Steps

Should City Council endorse the Terms of Reference for the Richmond Community Homelessness Table and the Richmond Lived Experience Group, City staff will work with key stakeholders to initiate first meetings for both committees in Quarter 1, 2020. Moving forward, staff will update City Council about major milestones or achievements associated with the two committees. An overview of the various activities will also be summarized in the first Homelessness Strategy Annual Update, which will be presented to City Council in Quarter 1 of 2021.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The City of Richmond is committed to enabling effective collaboration between a range of stakeholders involved in addressing homelessness in Richmond. By establishing the Community Homelessness Table, Lived Experience Group and Situation Table, the City can facilitate purposeful discussions, access a diversity of perspectives, and leverage skills and resources from a wide range of local stakeholders. With involvement from a variety of stakeholders, Richmond residents experiencing homelessness can receive the supports and housing options necessary to achieve stability in their lives.



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Attachment 1: Richmond Community Homelessness Table - Draft Terms of Reference
Attachment 2: Richmond Lived Experience Group – Draft Terms of Reference

Richmond Community Homelessness Table - Draft Terms of Reference

Mandate

The purpose of the Community Homelessness Table is to monitor and guide the implementation of the Richmond Homelessness Strategy.

Activities

The responsibility of the Richmond Community Homelessness Table is to:

- Provide information and input to support and monitor the progress of the Richmond Homelessness Strategy 2019-2029;
- Identify emerging issues, trends and best practices regarding homelessness and discuss potential application to Richmond;
- Identify support service and housing gaps, and provide advice regarding the design of new initiatives that meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond;
- Discuss relevant funding programs delivered by seniors levels of government and other funding agencies and discuss plans for funding applications;
- Support the development of key messages to guide community-wide advocacy initiatives that target the provincial and federal governments and discuss advocacy strategies;
- Provide input and event planning assistance to support the organization of an annual Community Homelessness Action Forum; and
- Organize and host presentations from other groups in the community, including representation from people with lived experience, faith-based organizations, and advocacy groups to learn more about experiences of homelessness in Richmond.

Membership

The membership of the Richmond Community Homelessness Table is comprised of local non-profit organizations that directly deliver support services and/or housing services to people experiencing homelessness in Richmond, and government agencies that directly support these programs. Committee members are intended to be Executive Directors or a similar role.

Membership will be confirmed in Quarter 1, 2020.

Governance and Administration

City of Richmond staff will support the administration of the Richmond Community Homelessness Table. Table meetings will be facilitated by two Co-Chairs that will be selected from the Table membership on an annual basis. The specific role of the Co-Chairs is to facilitate meetings, prepare meeting agendas with input from City staff, ensure that all Table members act in a respectful manner, and other related duties as needed. Meetings will also be supported by a minute taker.

Meeting Frequency

The Richmond Community Homelessness Table will meet monthly.

Code of Conduct

Participating Committee members are expected to:

- Act in accordance with the City’s Respectful Workplace Policy (Policy 6800), including being respectful towards other Committee members and external groups involved in homelessness service provision;
- Devote the necessary time and effort to prepare and attend meetings and provide feedback consistent with the Committee’s mandate;
- Act in the best interest of individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond; and
- Not disclose confidential information discussed at Committee meetings—for example, personal information about individuals experiencing homelessness or confidential business matters pertaining to the Committee or any of the member organizations.

Richmond Lived Experience Group - Draft Terms of Reference

Mandate

The purpose of the Richmond Lived Experience Group is to create a space for people with lived experience of homelessness to share their stories and expertise. Discussions held by the Group will be used by the City and other community stakeholders when designing new policies, programs and initiatives that respond to homelessness in the community. The Lived Experience Group is also intended to support capacity-building for group members. For example, members of the group will gain skills and experience related to committee participation and governance.

Activities

The key activities of the Richmond Lived Experience Group include:

- Sharing personal stories and experiences related to homelessness and poverty;
- Identifying specific issues that require attention from the City or service providers;
- Providing input regarding the design of new City initiatives related to homelessness and other relevant topics; and
- Helping to organize the Annual Community Homelessness Forum.

Membership

The Group will consist of approximately 5-10 individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness or have previously experienced homelessness in Richmond. The Lived Experience Group is intended to be diverse and inclusive, and to reflect the diversity of homelessness in Richmond.

Meeting Frequency

The Lived Experience Group will meet on a quarterly basis.

Governance and Administration

The Lived Experience Group will be facilitated by a Co-Chair from the Richmond Community Homelessness Table. City staff will support the administration of the committee, including recording and circulating minutes.