DATE: November 1, 2021

FILE: 1700-02/2021/451

TO: Chair and Directors
Committee of the Whole

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: **Strengthening Communities Services Grant Budget Amendment Function No. 451 (Homelessness Supports Service)**

Purpose

To recommend an amendment to the 2021-2025 financial plan and capital expenditure program for the Homelessness Supports Service (HSS), function 451, to include a $1,093,173.60 provincial grant to provide urgent and temporary support to unsheltered homeless populations and address related community impacts.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the 2021-2025 financial plan and capital expenditure program for the Homelessness Supports Service, function 451, be amended by including in the 2021 budget year provincial conditional grant revenue of $1,093,173.60 to be offset by an increase in expenses for conditional grants to local agencies totalling the same amount;

AND FURTHER THAT these funds will provide urgent and temporary support to unsheltered homeless populations and will aim to address other related community impacts.

Executive Summary

- In April 2021, the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board and each member municipality endorsed an application to the Union of BC Municipalities under the provincial and federal Strengthening Communities Services program to provide urgent and temporary support to unsheltered homeless populations and address related community impacts. In July 2021, the CVRD was notified it was successful in its application and was awarded $1,093,173.60 to undertake a number of eligible activities to increase vulnerable populations supports in the community.
- This grant funding will help to address the urgent and immediate needs of our community's unsheltered homeless population and the related community health and safety challenges that we continue to face during the pandemic. These key priority actions include:
  - Creating additional emergency overnight space (led by Comox Valley Transition Society (CVTS) and the Coalition to End Homelessness).
  - Increasing capacity of Connect (a day program that provides a safe, welcoming space for individuals experiencing homelessness) (led by CVTS and the Coalition to End Homelessness).
  - Hiring additional community outreach workers (led by CVTS).
  - Undertaking public engagement and community outreach to educate and increase awareness on homelessness (led by the Coalition to End Homelessness, the CVRD will be working on an anti-stigma campaign in 2022 as part of implementing Poverty Reduction Strategy game change No. 10).

- o Building capacity and providing training for local government staff who provide services in bylaw enforcement, public works, recreation, etc. (led by the CVRD and the Coalition to End Homelessness).
- The CVRD is the primary applicant and fiscal host, supporting the Coalition to End Homelessness and other key partners such as the City of Courtenay and CVTS to deliver the key activities. Using the Homelessness Support Service (function No. 451), the CVRD will administer the grant funds for the community partners to carry out the activities. Project completion is scheduled for July 2022.
- The project aligns with the CVRD Board's 2019-2022 strategic drivers, community partnerships and fiscal responsibility, and advances some of the recommendations from the Homelessness Supports Service review (January 2021).

Prepared by: Concurrence:

R. Holme   *A. Mullaly*

Robyn Holme, RPP, MCIP   Alana Mullaly, RPP, MCIP
Long Range Planner   General Manager of Planning and
                                                 Development Services

Government Partners and Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

K'ómoks First Nation	✔
Village of Cumberland	✔
City of Courtenay	✔
Town of Comox	✔
Islands Trust (as FYI)	✔
Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness (as FYI)	✔