

Background and Previous Council Direction

The Council Innovation Fund (CIF) was established to encourage innovations/pilot projects that either support or contribute to Council priorities or have the potential to change City-wide policies and procedures. Applications for CIF funds require sponsorship from a member of Council, who is responsible for presenting a case for the project to Council. Successful applicants are required to report back to Council on how the funds were spent and the overall outcomes of the project.

Any Council member can apply to the Priorities and Finance Committee for review and consideration and ultimately for Council consideration and approval. The proposal for funding must demonstrate credibility, fiscal responsibility and good management which will be important considerations in the evaluation of applications. Councillor Sutherland was the sponsor for the Calgary Community Court Pilot Readiness project.

Context

In 2015, a multi-disciplinary group of leaders from the justice, health, and social services sectors came together to explore the opportunity and feasibility of further advancing community justice models in Calgary. Together, they formed the Community Justice Collaborative: Calgary (CJCC), to research and understand:

1. The revolving door of vulnerable Calgarians charged with social disorder offences whose criminal activity is related to issues of marginalization, addiction, mental health and/or homelessness.
2. The efficacy of community justice models as alternatives to incarceration.
3. The possibility of establishing an intervening mechanism, possibly a community court.

In 2017 April, CJCC engaged the New York City Center for Court Innovation to guide efforts toward the planning of alternatives to incarceration and community justice programming aimed at re-engaging members of Calgary's population experiencing vulnerabilities and/or homelessness. This work led to the development of the Calgary Community Court concept paper; the first foundational document used to support the application for the CIF.

Previous Council Direction

On 2018 July 17, Council approved the Calgary Community Court: Pilot Readiness project application to receive \$250,000 from the CIF (PFC2018-0925).

Bylaws, Regulations, Council Policies

None