

## **SOCIAL INNOVATION CALGARY UPDATE**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Council Innovation Fund provided a \$75,000 grant to Social Innovation Calgary to explore the creation of a co-workspace for Calgary's social innovators. The envisioned co-workspace was created, with the help of the grant, and operated from 2013 March to 2013 December. This report provides the results of that pilot as well as an update on the current status of Social Innovation Calgary.

### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Priorities and Finance Committee recommend that Council receive this report for information.

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

On 2012 March 19, Council approved \$75,000 from Council's innovation fund to support the operational costs related to starting a social good accelerator in Calgary. An interim report scheduled for 2012 September 04, Priorities and Finance Committee was deferred to the 2012 November 06 Priorities and Finance Committee meeting (PFC2012-13).

On 2012 November 06, Priorities and Finance Committee received for information the interim report of the Social Innovation Calgary's "Social Good Accelerator" social innovation space grant (PFC2012-0774).

On 2013 April 02 Council received for information the final report of Social Innovation Calgary's development of the Community Innovation Hub titled "EPIC" and directed that the results be shared back to the Priorities and Finance Committee not later than 2013 December (PFC2013-0358).

On 2013 May 27 Council approved the Calgary Poverty Reduction Strategy (PFC2013-0430).

### **BACKGROUND**

Social Innovation Calgary brings together existing resources in efficient and innovative ways by connecting for profit and non-profit/charitable entrepreneurs and innovators who are seeking socially responsible business opportunities, or who are using a mix of business and mission-driven organizational approaches to accomplish significant social goals. Core outcomes include a focus on healthier natural environments, better community designs and interaction, improved civic engagement, and enhanced business opportunities.

Council approved a grant of \$75,000 from Council's Innovation Fund to allow Social Innovation Calgary to explore the creation of a co-workspace for Calgary's social innovators. The funds were provided in instalments. As part of the grant agreement, a final report was presented to Council on 2013 April 02, triggering the release of the final 10 per cent of funding.

The grant was used for a pilot project to secure and develop a co-workspace for social entrepreneurs called "EPIC". A 2,500 sq. ft. space was secured in the Global Business Centre on 8 Avenue SW that operated from 2013 March 15 to 2013 December 20.

## **SOCIAL INNOVATION CALGARY UPDATE**

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### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

The EPIC space supported 17 social enterprises that employed 27 social entrepreneurs. While initially at or near capacity, the lack of long-term demand for physical space meant EPIC was not financially sustainable. As a result of this, and other learnings from the pilot, Social Innovation Calgary has decided to shift its focus to online activities, rather than physical space, to support social entrepreneurs. This online model will go live in the spring of 2014. A project update from Social Innovation Calgary's President is included in Attachment 1.

Along with continued support to social entrepreneurs, Social Innovation Calgary is well positioned to assist in the advancement of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative's (CPRI) priorities for action as outlined in CPRI's Council-approved strategic plan to reduce poverty in Calgary over the next decade. The CPRI identifies community economic development as an effective way to address poverty and meet local needs by creating wealth and realized economic opportunity. One key strategy to foster Community Economic Development being pursued by the CPRI is the establishment of a "Social Business Centre" to provide technical assistance and mentorship to support the development of social enterprises and cooperatives. Social Innovation Calgary is participating as a stakeholder in the development of a vision and plan for this centre.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

The City of Calgary worked with Social Innovation Calgary on the development of the grant application. Social Innovation Calgary has gained the support of many partners in the Calgary community such as Calgary Economic Development, the Suncor Energy Foundation, Nexen and the Alberta Real Estate Foundation. In addition the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative is collaborating with Social Innovation Calgary as a stakeholder on the development of a "Social Business Centre".

### **Strategic Alignment**

The development of social enterprises and social entrepreneurship in Calgary supports strong and resilient communities and aligns with Calgary 2020 Sustainability Targets including, "By 2020 Calgary communities are increasingly able to resolve community based problems".

Through connecting and empowering social entrepreneurs and innovators in Calgary, Social Innovation Calgary aligns with the goals of the Council-approved Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative.

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

Social Innovation Calgary supports the development of for-profit and non-profit or charitable innovators with specific outcomes that support the goals of the Triple Bottom Line framework including healthier natural environments, better community designs and interaction, improved civic engagement, and enhanced business opportunities.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### **Current and Future Operating Budget:**

The Social Innovation Calgary working group brought together talented innovators and entrepreneurs from a range of sectors and industries through the development of the EPIC

## **SOCIAL INNOVATION CALGARY UPDATE**

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space for Calgary. The Council Innovation Fund provided a \$75,000 grant that was used to support operational expenses including a) project officer support (\$50,000) and b) rent supplement (\$25,000).

### **Current and Future Capital Budget:**

Not applicable to this report.

### **Risk Assessment**

Not applicable to this report.

<b>REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):</b>
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This report provides an update on the status of Social Innovation Calgary
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### **ATTACHMENT**

Social Innovation Calgary Operations Update to City of Calgary Priorities and Finance Committee