

## 2016 ENOUGH FOR ALL ANNUAL UPDATE

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC) is responsible for leading the implementation of *Enough for All*, Calgary's Poverty Reduction Strategy, in partnership with The City, the United Way of Calgary and Area and Momentum Community Economic Development Society. As part of the partnership agreement, VCC is required to report annually on the accomplishments and activities of *Enough for All*.

In 2016, VCC collaborated with a range of community partners to implement key initiatives that advance the goals of the strategy. As seen in the Attachment *Enough for All Report to Community - 2016: Movements of Change*, the strategy saw significant successes through a range of initiatives: the Financial Empowerment Collaborative supported 4500 Calgarians to file tax returns resulting in \$3.48 million in refunds; more than 50,000 Calgarians were approved for City program subsidies through the City's Fair Entry program; and successful advocacy to the provincial government for the implementation of the Alberta Child Benefit, meant over 1200 families received \$1.35 million in refunds. Additionally, reconciliation and healing events created opportunities for increased understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous community members. Broad scale community engagement and collaboration demonstrate commitment to the strategy's vision to reduce poverty in Calgary by 50 per cent by 2023. The City's contributions to the strategy in 2016 include (but are not limited to) Fair Entry, leadership of the Payday Lending and Financial Inclusion Task Force, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) investments in Indigenous programming and programs aimed at increasing individuals' economic self-sufficiency, and the Community Hubs Initiative (also supported by the United Way) as well as operating support for VCC.

### ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services receive this report and Attachment 1, "*Enough for All Report to Community - 2016: Movements of Change*", for information.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2016 May 16, Council approved SPC on Community and Protective Services recommendation to receive CPS2016-0266 2015 Enough for All Annual Update for information.

On 2014 November 03, Council approved PFC2014-0615 Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative Update Report –In-Camera. Council directed that this report, recommendations and attachments remain confidential pursuant to Sections 24(1)(a)(b) and (c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, until a Memorandum of Agreement is fully executed.

On 2014 April 14, Council approved PFC2014-0166 Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative: Governance Model –In Camera. Council directed that this report, recommendations and attachments remain confidential pursuant to Sections 24(1)(a)(b) and (c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, until a Memorandum of Agreement is fully executed.

On 2013 July 29, Council approved PFC2013-0478 Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative-Transition Funding for Implementation, in the amount of \$125,000. The implementation plan included the establishment of a governance framework, benchmarks, a "stewardship board" and a detailed budget.

On 2013 May 27, Council approved PFC2013-0430 Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative-Final Report. Approval included the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative Strategy and expectation that for a detailed implementation plan and budget be brought to Council's 2014 Budget Adjustment Process.

## BACKGROUND

The development of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative (CPRI) began in 2011 as a co-funded and –led project between The City and the United Way. In 2015 January, leadership of CPRI (renamed *Enough for All*) formally transferred from The City to VCC. A Memorandum of Agreement covering 2015-2018 was signed by The City, the United Way, VCC and Momentum, outlining a commitment to work collectively “towards a long-term community-based strategy to significantly reduce poverty and vulnerability in Calgary in the short term, and to strive towards ending poverty in the long term.” Equal annual funding contributions of \$500,000 by The City and the United Way were established, with VCC leading the implementation of the strategy. Progress towards the reduction of poverty in Calgary is grounded in VCC's stewardship and engagement of community stakeholders in the vision of *Enough for All*.

The four goals of the strategy are:

1. Everyone in Calgary has the income and assets needed to thrive.
2. All Aboriginal people are equal participants in Calgary's prosperous future.
3. All Calgary communities are strong, supportive and inclusive.
4. Everyone in Calgary can easily access the right supports, services and resources.

## INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

VCC coordinates all activities outlined in the Ideas to Action Implementation Plan for *Enough for All*, developed in 2015 April. The implementation plan builds on the original CPRI Strategy approved by Council and details key strategies and focus areas to advance the four goals of *Enough for All* through a collective impact approach. Collective impact is the commitment of a group of community stakeholders from different sectors to work towards a common agenda to solve complex social problems. Progress towards the goals of the strategy is demonstrated through key initiatives outlined in the Attachment.

Highlights of 2016 accomplishments include:

- **Financial Empowerment Collaborative:** Six key partners lead the work to deliver financial literacy programs and services that assist Calgarians to reduce debt, grow savings and build assets. In 2016, this collaborative work supported 4500 Calgarians living on low incomes to file their tax returns resulting in \$3.48 million in refunds.
- **Alberta Child Benefit:** Of the 4500 tax returns referenced above, 1228 were filed by families eligible for the new Alberta Tax Benefit. Their filings resulted in an additional \$1.35 million in refunds to help support children.
- **Fair Entry program:** More than 50,000 low income Calgarians were approved through Fair Entry for access to subsidized City services, allowing them to save money while still accessing services that improve their quality of life.

The City has made significant contributions to poverty reduction in 2016 with programs and services from multiple business units aligning efforts with *Enough for All* goals. In addition to the Fair Entry program, policy changes achieved through the Payday Lending and Financial Inclusion Task Force contributed to increased consumer protection through new municipal and provincial regulations. Investments in preventive social programs through FCSS demonstrated

significant positive impact for participants of these services. The City collaborated with the United Way in the Community Hubs Initiative, an innovative approach to poverty reduction that engages residents to co-create gathering spaces that will meet their unique vision for community building and service delivery. In addition, Administration supports VCC with strategic consultation on research, evaluation, communication and organizational planning as well as operational funding.

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

In 2016, VCC partnered with over 160 community agencies, including business leaders, funders and academia to leverage resources and strengthen initiatives that contribute to poverty reduction. Engaging people with the lived experience of poverty is also a priority for VCC. Quarterly community conversations enabled public input and consultation to VCC on poverty reduction. These events were successful in engaging Calgarians in the strategy and identifying issues and relevant responses to the community's current social and financial environment.

### **Strategic Alignment**

*Enough for All* aligns with:

- Council priority: *A Prosperous City: (P): 7.1.1* The City will work in partnership with the community to implement the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative.
- Fair Calgary Policy: The policy supports and strengthens The City's commitment to the social infrastructure ensuring that all Calgarians have fair access to programs, services, facilities and public space operated by The City.
- Economic Strategy for Calgary, specifically the "People Energy" strategy – invest in equal opportunity and prosperity for all Calgarians.

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

One in 10 Calgarians lives in poverty and the economic downturn has exacerbated this issue. Increased demand for support services, as evidenced by increased food bank usage indicates strategies and actions that reduce poverty must be strengthened to improve the quality of life for all Calgarians. *Enough for All*, under the leadership of VCC and using a collective impact approach, is designed to address these needs by developing opportunities to leverage resources and increase engagement and collaboration among community stakeholders.

### **Financial Capacity**

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

There are no operating budget implications as a result of this report. The Memorandum of Agreement, signed in 2015, provides for \$500 000 in City funding annually from 2015-2018 to VCC to steward and implement the *Enough For All* strategy.

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

There are no capital budgeting implications as a result of this report.

### **Risk Assessment**

Using an Integrated Risk Management approach when reviewing the implementation of the *Enough for All* Strategy, two risks, along with a number of mitigation strategies, have been identified.

1. Complexity of Implementing a Collective Impact Approach

The Collective Impact approach of *Enough for All* requires the long-term commitment of time and resources of multiple stakeholders. It can be challenging for community partners to engage in the strategy while at the same time working to fulfill their own agency mandates. Inability to implement a successful Collective Impact approach will reduce the likelihood of achieving the goals of the strategy to their full potential, but the mitigation strategies used to overcome this challenge include:

- Engagement and partnership development through joint initiatives led and coordinated by VCC;
- Monthly and quarterly updates on the implementation to all partners;
- Oversight by the VCC Board of Directors;
- Opportunities to engage community partners and maintain relevancy of the strategy through quarterly community conversations; and
- Annual evaluations.

## 2. Scope of Municipal Influence in Provincial and Federal Policies and Systems

Poverty reduction requires the engagement of all orders of government to address jurisdictional responsibilities and challenges related to social policy. Municipal strategies can be limited in their impact, as they do not in isolation address the services and policies that are the greatest levers for poverty reduction - health, education, employment and social services.

In order to mitigate these jurisdictional risks, VCC has developed strategies that broker communication, build relationship and advocate to all orders of government. These mitigation strategies include:

- Participating in the Social Policy Collaborative that brings diverse stakeholders including representatives from the provincial government, together to address social issues including poverty reduction;
- Participating in province-wide initiatives such as the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Alberta Poverty Reduction Network;
- Being an active member in Vibrant Communities Canada, a network of cities that are creating comprehensive poverty reduction strategies; and
- Participating in national consultations on the Government of Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

There appears to be increased political will to respond to the issue of poverty across all orders of government, as evidenced by the provincial and federal governments' intent to develop poverty reduction strategies. The development and timing of these strategies may foster new opportunities and motivation for collaboration across orders of government and with community organizations to tackle poverty.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

*The Enough for All Report to Community - 2016: Movements of Change*, included as an Attachment, provides information on key accomplishments towards poverty reduction in Calgary, as led by VCC and supported various partners in the community, including The City. The report provides an opportunity for VCC to update SPC on Community & Protective Services on the collective impact of *Enough for All*.

### **ATTACHMENT**

*Enough for All Report to Community – 2016: Movements of Change*