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<b>TO:</b>	Committee of the Whole	<b>MEETING:</b>	February 11, 2020
<b>FROM:</b>	Courtney Simpson Senior Planner	<b>FILE:</b>	5080-01 Social Planning
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Regional Grant Application to UBCM Poverty Reduction & Action Program for Social Needs Assessment and Strategy			

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## RECOMMENDATION

That the Regional District of Nanaimo apply to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action grant program for a Social Needs Assessment and Strategy and that it act as grant manager for a regional application to include partnering local governments within the Regional District of Nanaimo.

## SUMMARY

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Strategic Plan 2019-2022 directs the preparation of a “Social Needs Assessment Study to identify the broad range of social service providers at the local level and include a strategy that identifies the RDN role”. The overall purpose of a social needs assessment and strategy is to improve the wellbeing of citizens.

The Social Needs Assessment and Strategy is eligible for a Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Poverty Reduction Planning & Action grant. This grant program is available to local governments and funds up to \$25,000 for a single applicant and up to \$150,000 for regional projects with council/board resolutions from partnering local governments. The grant application deadline is February 28, 2020.

Should the grant application be successful, a regional partnership will enable the Social Needs Assessment and Strategy to increase its impact by expanding from a focus of identifying the RDN role in addressing social needs to also identifying the role of Electoral Areas, member municipalities and the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee (LTC).

## BACKGROUND

The Social Needs Assessment and Strategy will address social needs throughout the region, including electoral areas and municipalities. By making a “regional” grant application under the definition in the grant program, the scope of the assessment would not change, but the accompanying strategy would enable a partnership with participating member municipalities (and the Gabriola Island LTC within Electoral Area B).

Prior to the grant application deadline, all four RDN municipalities and the Gabriola Island LTC will be considering a partnership in this grant application at their respective council and LTC meetings. A regional application can proceed with as few as one partnering local government.

To date, the Gabriola Island LTC and the District of Lantzville have passed resolutions of support, so a regional application may proceed if approved by the RDN Board. A staff working group would then be created to coordinate development of the assessment and strategy.

The overall purpose of a Social Needs Assessment and Strategy is to improve the wellbeing of all citizens, not only those living in poverty. The project will meet the requirements of the grant program through its focus on social supports for a range of age groups and family types, two of the six focus areas eligible for the grant.

To be eligible for the grant, projects must focus on one or more of the following action areas. The social needs assessment will include a focus on the first two in bold:

- 1. Families, Youth and Children**
- 2. Social Supports**
3. Housing
4. Education and Training
5. Employment
6. Income Supports

The grant recipients will be advised within 60 days of the grant deadline (before April 28, 2020) and projects must be completed within one year from the date of grant approval (approximately April 28, 2021).

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. That the Regional District of Nanaimo apply to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action grant program for a Social Needs Assessment and Strategy and that it act as grant manager for a regional application to include partnering local governments within the Regional District of Nanaimo.
2. That alternate direction be provided.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The 2020 budget allocates \$60,000 to the Social Needs Assessment and Strategy for consulting fees and public engagement. The grant application will be for the maximum amount between \$25,000 and \$150,000 depending on the number of partners. Each partner in the grant application increases the maximum by \$25,000, so if all five member local governments support the grant application, the full amount of \$150,000 will be made.

Funds granted through the UBCM program will be allocated to additional public engagement and broadening the accompanying strategy focus on not only potential RDN actions, but also those of participating member municipalities and the Gabriola Island LTC.

The grant fund does not require matching contributions from applicants.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

Social Wellbeing - Prepare a Social Needs Assessment study, which identifies the broad range of social service providers at the local level, and develop a strategy to identify the RDN's role where appropriate.



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January 29, 2020

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