



Report to Council

From the Office of Councillor Amy Lubik

Date: July 13, 2020

Subject: Application for Community Connectedness grant to support cultural sharing through food security

Purpose

To present for Council's consideration an opportunity to apply for funding offered by Plan H to support community connectedness and anti-racism work through food sharing "The Tri-Cities Food & Diversity Stories Project."

Recommendation

THAT staff be directed to apply for funding for a Community Connectedness grant through Plan H, as recommended in the report dated July 13, 2020 from Cllr. Amy Lubik - regarding Application for Community Connectedness grant to support cultural sharing through food security.

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Background

In September 2020, the Province of British Columbia released details regarding poverty reduction funding available to municipalities (which the City of Port Moody had requested through UBCM). Because the Tri-Cities are highly entwined in food security because of the overlapping nature of organizations, roundtables, and activities regarding housing, poverty, and food security, and because we are currently establishing a food security working group out of the Healthy Communities Partnership, a regional grant to assess and plan for food security and sovereignty activities and policies makes logical sense, which was applied for and received, work to begin soon.

The Tri-Cities Food Security working group is continually working to understand food security and understand the very important part that food plays in human connection. As we try to understand the needs of our diverse community, it became very clear we need representation from all our community members and to incorporate the meaning of food and food security of all cultures that make up the Tri-Cities, including Indigenous traditional knowledge and food systems. In essents, we want to make sure we include [racial justice](#) with [food justice](#).

At the same time, our partners at the Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership are doing inspiring work on understanding racism in our communities, which has escalated during COVID-19 and been brought to light by recent events in the US and Canada. Representatives from the Tri-Cities Food Security Working group and The Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership have come together to put in a grant to further both causes through the [Plan H Community Connectedness Grants](#).

The background on this grant is as follows:

This stream is focused on supporting people to feel connected to one another. Social connectedness is the personal or subjective experience of feeling close to other people and having a sense of belonging within a community. It is an essential human need, but loneliness, isolation and alienation are on the rise. Canadians with a strong sense of belonging to community are over twice as likely to report good health compared to those who have a weak or very weak sense of community. A connected community is a place where people know their neighbours, build relationships with others and contribute to the creation of social networks that last over time. This requires spaces and events for people to gather, create connections and get involved, even during public health emergencies calling for folks to be physically apart. Connected communities support strong citizen engagement. Local governments play a role in fostering social connectedness by creating strong social environments that help all community members thrive.

Examples of potential projects addressing social connectedness include:

- *Supporting design standards and policy for new developments to include spaces for public use and social interaction;*
- *Including social connectedness as a part of the goals, objectives, and strategies in an Official Community Plan;*
- *Developing community-level projects that incorporate training on culturally appropriate gatherings to talk about mental health, addiction and well-being;*
- *Convening recreation and transportation providers to drive newcomer attendance to programs;*
- *Articulating partnership agreements between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities that foster respect and mutual understanding.*
- *Addressing the mental, social and emotional dimensions of community resilience in the wake of public health emergencies such as COVID-19*

One of the mental, social and emotional aspects that works against community resilience is racism and further cultural divisions, which has been worsened during this time. At the same time, nothing brings people together and helps us understand each other better than food. This is the impetus of this application. We are asking Port Moody to be the grant holder, as it must be a community, understanding that community members would do most of the work for this grant

(which is in itself small). Applying for this grant is entirely inline with the objectives of the grant, which is to further partnerships and support community organizations doing the important on the ground work. In a time when there is less understanding our communities, it is an opportunity to defend diversity, at the same time as understanding and deepening the multicultural collaboration that must be a part of building a resilient community.

Discussion

The objectives of this project marry well with Port Moody's goals of a healthy city, and this project would help us further projects toward supporting social connectedness and defending diversity, as well as embracing food and racial justice.

Details of the application are as follows:

PROJECT OVERVIEW & PROJECT PLAN

This section is about your goals for the project and the activities you intend to carry out during the grant period. We are also interested in learning more about the changes you expect to see, and how you will know if you are on the right track in reaching your outcomes.

9) What is the name or proposed title of your project?

The Tri-Cities Food & Diversity Stories Project

10) What is the broad goal or vision of your project? Please describe the impact you hope your project will make. If there is a target population(s) for this project, please explain who that is and why this decision was made.

The Tri-Cities Food & Diversity Stories Project aims to:

- Enhance community connectedness and build welcoming neighbourhoods by promoting inclusivity, diversity and equity through storytelling and using the universal language of food
- Raise awareness, generate knowledge and celebrate the diverse cultures and stories of Tri-City residents to foster social environments of belonging and inclusion
- Generate social connectedness and healthy behaviours across diverse populations by promoting the healthy habit of eating together and increasing food literacy on culturally diverse meals.
- Foster a healthier community where leaders recognize equity, inclusion and social connectedness as important determinants of health and where residents of all backgrounds feel connected, welcome and engaged

Impact:

- A stronger sense of community connectedness and ownership where people see themselves as creators and contributors within their community, feeling connected to one another, and experiencing a sense of closeness to themselves, their community and society by in large
- Cultivation of new partnerships between community partners that fosters deeper understanding, respect and mutual benefits that promote health and wellness
- Improve awareness and understanding of anti-racism, diversity & inclusion, reconciliation and cultural safety amongst members within the Tri-Cities.
- Increased community co

Target Population:

All citizens who reside in the Tri-Cities (including Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody), Village of Anmore and Belcara with particular interest engaging populations from diverse cultural and lived experiences: Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) community, recent immigrants, refugees, seniors, people living with disabilities and LGBTQ+ groups.

11) What will you do? Please describe the activities you plan to complete with this grant and how these will increase social connectedness in your community. Please be as specific as possible.

For more information on social connectedness, refer to the [grant application guide](#).

The Tri-Cities Food & Diversity Stories project will enhance community connectedness by using culturally diverse foods to engage the broader community around inclusion, belonging and equity.

The City of Port Moody, the Tri-Cities Food Security Council, the Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership, Fraser Health and the Public Health Association of B.C. will collaborate to host a series of engagement opportunities where Tri-City residents from culturally diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to share recipes, food and personal stories with the broader community. Representatives from these organizations will establish a Steering Committee and hire a Project Coordinator to plan, implement and evaluate a series of 4-6 dialogue and storytelling events centered around food, culture, inclusion and wellbeing.

The Steering Committee will empower local residents with diverse cultural backgrounds and lived experiences to share personal stories, recipes and samples of their cultural foods at local community events, notably the 2021 Port Moody and Coquitlam Farmers Markets. Using storytelling through food, local residents will have the opportunity to take on a leadership role in raising empathy, compassion and sense of belonging across the broader community. Community members will have the opportunity to engage in dialogue around these issues and learn how social connectedness, equity and inclusion can contribute to their health and wellbeing and to the wellbeing of the community. The recipes and accompanying stories will be made available on partner websites and through social media platforms. Messages and information on the importance of anti-racism, inclusion and diversity will also be shared to raise awareness on the importance of creating welcoming communities.

Following these events, the Steering Committee will engage project participants to learn about their experiences with storytelling through food and identify opportunities for the community to continue to engage in dialogue around connectedness, equity and inclusion. Key learnings, reflections and insights from the project will be shared in a presentation to Port Moody City Council, as well as to the Tri-Cities Food Security Council and Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership. Through dialogue with these community partners, learnings from the Project will inform future community efforts in anti-racism, inclusion, equity and social connectedness and the role they play in fostering healthy, resilient communities.

12) How will you foster (encourage) community involvement and inclusivity in your project?

Community involvement and inclusivity are central factors in the Tri-Cities Food & Diversity Stories project. In using existing structures, such as the Immigrant Advisory Table of the Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership, Steering Committee members will engage local residents from culturally diverse backgrounds who are more likely to experience lower levels of social connectedness. This project will foster inclusivity by encouraging representation from all community members and to incorporate the meaning of food and food security of all cultures that make up the Tri-Cities, including Indigenous traditional knowledge and food systems. By leveraging existing platforms with broad community reach, such as the Port Moody and Coquitlam Farmers Markets, this project will reach a broad range of local residents.

The deadline for the grant is July 15th and the application has been written by representatives from the Tri-Cities LIP, Food Security Working group, and has letters of support from the TCLIP, The Public Health Association of BC, and Fraser Health Authority, with a TCLIP completing one this evening.

Other Option(s)

That the report regarding Application for a Community dated July 13, 2020 be received for information.

Financial Implications

Some staff time for administration if the grant is received.

Communications and Civic Engagement Initiatives

Provide information for external communication and civic engagement.

Council Strategic Plan Objectives

Healthy City: Ensure plans and programs take into account the diverse needs of residents and factors related to age and other demographics such as income, languages, housing types, and abilities

Environment: Broaden the City's sustainability programs

Resilience: we respond to challenges, adapt to change, and help others.

Compassion: we believe in kindness, caring, and helping others

Service: Strengthen relationships with other levels of government, First Nations, community groups, and partners

Attachment(s)