

TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2020 May 26

FROM: DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES **FILE:** 2400-04
DIRECTOR FINANCE

**SUBJECT: TEMPORARY REDUCTION IN COUNCIL INDEMNITY FOR CITY'S
VULNERABLE POPULATION PROGRAM**

PURPOSE: To seek Council's approval to reallocate budget equivalent to the temporary reduction in Council Indemnity to a City program for the vulnerable population in Burnaby.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council authorize staff to reallocate the budget equivalent to the temporary reduction in Council Indemnity to a City program for the vulnerable population in Burnaby.

REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the Open Council meeting on 2020 April 27, Council approved a temporary, voluntary 10% reduction in their indemnity for a six month period effective immediately to show solidarity with City employees that are subject to the layoff instigated by the financial impact to the City due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, Council approved that the amount withdrawn be directed to Burnaby's Food Security for the distribution of meals to the needy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.0 POLICY SECTION

Goal

- An Inclusive Community
 - Create a sense of community –
Provide opportunities that encourage and welcome all community members and create a sense of belonging

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- A Healthy Community
 - Healthy life –
Encourages opportunities for healthy living and well-being
 - Healthy environment –
Enhance our environmental health, resilience and sustainability

3.0 COUNCIL MEMBER INDEMNITY REDUCTION

The World Health Organization has proclaimed a world pandemic known as COVID-19, or coronavirus, which is impacting the respiratory health and economies of most nations worldwide. Canadian and British Columbian Public Health officials have issued orders requiring citizens and employers to practice social distancing in the workplace and/or to restrict operations to those services essential to permit citizens to stay home and practice social distancing.

The reduction of services mandated by these Federal and Provincial orders have resulted in the closure of most City of Burnaby services, most notably, City Hall, recreation centres, arenas, swimming pools, golf courses and libraries. These closures have resulted in unprecedented monthly revenue reductions to the City exceeding \$5.0M per month in lost services and fees. Senior governments and Public Health officials are unable to offer a reliable date as to when the City can expect to return its service levels to a normal level.

Arising from this unprecedented loss, the City of Burnaby has given layoff notice to 1,523 CUPE employees. Although health orders are lifting in certain sectors, the re-opening of facilities will be slow and gradual to ensure the safety of citizens and staff.

As a result, Burnaby City Council members have voluntarily resolved to temporarily reduce their indemnity for a 6 month period effective immediately by 10% to be in solidarity with City employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The reduction in pay for a six month period commenced on 2020 April 27 and will conclude on 2020 October 25. The reduction will amount to approximately \$37,000 collectively.

4.0 REALLOCATION OF BUDGET TO CITY PROGRAM FOR THE VULNERABLE POPULATION IN BURNABY

The City's Citizen Support Services with assistance from over 200 volunteers provides a number of programs that help support our community in health and independent living. One of the many programs includes 'Shop by Phone (Grocery)' where housebound seniors are able to place their grocery orders over the phone with assistance from a volunteer and have the groceries delivered to their homes.

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Given the impact of COVID-19 on seniors and other vulnerable populations in the City, staff reached out to clients within the existing program and identified over 80 additional seniors who cannot pay for meals and would benefit from being provided with meals during the pandemic period. The City had 5,600 frozen meals in place and with the approval of the Emergency Operations Centre for COVID-19, staff from various departments in the City, in collaboration with the Citizen Support Services Department and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services – Food Services Division, initiated the delivery of the food to the 80 additional seniors each week. Staff anticipate providing frozen meals for a 10 week period for identified seniors.

The Council recommendation, if approved, will allow for the reallocation of approximately \$37,000 from the Council budget to the Citizen Support Services Department budget to continue to provide food to the vulnerable people identified through City's existing program beyond the 10 week period.

Many letters of appreciation have been received from the respective seniors to date to relay appreciation and gratitude to Council for this City initiative.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

Council has authorized staff to temporarily reduce their indemnity by 10% for a six month period. This reduction will be effective 2020 April 27. As well, in order to direct the amount withdrawn to a City's Program for the vulnerable population in Burnaby, it is recommended that Council authorize staff to reallocate the amount equivalent to the reduction in Council Indemnity from the Council budget to the City's Citizen Support Services budget to allow for the continuity of meals to the vulnerable people identified through City's existing program.



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DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES



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cc: Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Director Planning and Building