

CITY OF BURNABY

HOUSING COMMITTEE*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: INVITATION FROM FRASER HEALTH AUTHORITY TO
CO-CHAIR A TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS IN
BURNABY**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council authorize the Housing Committee to forward a letter to the Fraser Health Authority, which expresses appreciation to the Authority for agreeing to fund a temporary outreach worker position for Burnaby.
2. **THAT** Council authorize the Housing Committee to advise the Fraser Health Authority in the same letter of the decision to decline the invitation to co-chair a task force on homelessness, at least until the results of the local homeless count has been completed and more definitive information on the homeless situation in Burnaby becomes available.

REPORT

The Housing Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2005 January 25, received a letter from the Fraser Health Authority responding to Council's request that the Health Authority provide funding for a street outreach position in Burnaby. In its response, the FHA requested that the City of Burnaby co-chair a task force to review the homelessness situation in Burnaby.

Staff advised the Committee that, since the letter was submitted, the Health Authority had committed to funding a street outreach worker for Burnaby on a temporary basis. The Committee was encouraged by this news, but concluded that it would be premature at this time to accept an invitation to co-chair a task force on homelessness. The Committee noted that the GVRD established a Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness in 2000. The Steering Committee, which includes representation from City staff, has been examining regional approaches for addressing homelessness and has assisted with decisions regarding the allocation of Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) funding within the region. Also, a count of homeless people throughout the GVRD (including Burnaby) is being planned for 2005 March 15, which will yield

additional statistical information on the homeless population in Burnaby and the region. Further, the Housing Committee has received several reports and presentations concerning homelessness in recent years. A key priority for the Committee involves developing planning guidelines that can be used to assist with the future location and approval of homeless facilities in the city.

Given these and other initiatives, the Housing Committee believes that the immediate priority for homelessness in Burnaby is action, not further study. Therefore, as previously noted, the Committee and Council requested that the FHA fund a street outreach worker position to address homelessness concerns in Burnaby. It is believed that a letter of appreciation should be sent to the Health Authority for funding such a position on a temporary basis. It is proposed that the letter also indicate that, while the Housing Committee does not consider it necessary to establish or participate in the Burnaby homelessness task force at this time, the Committee would be pleased to provide the Fraser Health Authority with any support required in clarifying the mandate of the temporary street outreach worker position. Also, if it is determined that a homelessness task force is warranted at some point in the future (e.g., based on the results of the homelessness count or further Regional Steering Committee work), the Committee would be pleased to revisit the matter at that time.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor C. Redman
Chair

Councillor D. Johnston
Vice Chair

Councillor C. Jordan
Member

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| Copy: City Manager Director Planning and Building |
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