Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – February 16, 2022

REPORTS

Item No. 12 Mobile Outreach Support Services: Main Street Project and St. Boniface Street Links

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and received the report as information.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in.

Yea:	Bowman, Allard, Browaty, Gillingham, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins	7
Nay:		0

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On October 20, 2021, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service, that Main Street Project and St. Boniface Street Links be required to report back, through the Winnipeg Public Service, to the Executive Policy Committee in time for its February 2022 meeting with a written report that includes, but is not limited to, information on the nature, frequency, time and location of support provided to vulnerable residents by their mobile outreach support service for the period from September 1, 2021 to December 3, 2021.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Mobile Outreach Support Services: Main Street Project and St. Boniface Street Links

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Brens	C. Fernandes	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 20, 2021, Executive Policy Committee (EPC) directed Main Street Project (MSP) and St. Boniface Street Links (SBSL) to report back, through the Public Service, to EPC at the February 2022 meeting with a written status report that includes the nature, frequency, time and location of support provided to vulnerable residents by the mobile outreach service, for the period from August 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

This report provides the second of two updates to EPC on the outcomes of this service. As noted above, this report focuses on reporting for the period of August 1 to December 31, 2021. To do so, the body of this report is divided into three sections. The first section provides background information related to the development and implementation of this grant program. The second section presents and reviews activity data collected by MSP and SBSL, and highlights key outcomes during the reporting period. The third section provides information on next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On October 20, 2021, EPC directed that MSP and SBSL be required to report back, through the Winnipeg Public Service, to EPC in time for its February 2022 meeting with a written report that includes, but is not limited to, information on the nature, frequency, time and location of support provided to vulnerable residents by their mobile outreach support service for the period from August 1, 2021 to December 3, 2021.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications to receiving this report as information.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Background and Context

On June 24, 2021, Council directed the Public Service to enter into, execute and deliver grant agreements with Main Street Project (MSP) and St. Boniface Street Links (SBSL) to provide mobile outreach support services in 2021. As part of this disposition, Council also requested that MSP and SBSL, through the Winnipeg Public service, report back to Executive Policy Committee (EPC) in time for its October, 2021 meeting with a written report that includes the nature, frequency, time and location of support provided to vulnerable residents by the mobile outreach service. In October 2021, EPC again directed MSP and SBSL to report back with the same information in time for its February, 2022, meeting for the reporting period from August 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

As identified by the Public Service in its October 2021 report to EPC entitled: Mobile Outreach Support – Main Street Project and St. Boniface Street Links, representatives from the Community Development Division, in the Department of Community Services, worked with MSP and SBSL to identify and confirm operational aspects of this grant program including the identification of service areas, overall program objectives, implementation dates, connections with other City services, and other components of service planning. Finalized grant agreements were executed with both agencies in early September 2021. The October report completed by the Public Service also outlines the development of data collection requirements and performance indicators that were included as a requirement of funding. The Public Service worked with SBSL and MSP to develop a new reporting template and process, as well as key performance indicators that were tracked during the duration of this initiative.

The following section of the report reviews key highlights from the data collected for the period of August 1 to December 31, 2021. It is important to note that, prior to September 2021, SBSL was not incorporated into the City's 311 Non-Emergent Encampment Support Process (see Attachment 3), although MSP was. SBSL was formally added to this process on September 1, 2021. The information and data outlined in this report reflects this change. More information on the City's Non-Emergent Encampment Support Process is detailed in the October 2021 report to EPC.

Activity Reporting

In January 2022, both SBSL and MSP submitted their activity reporting to the Public Service utilizing the designated reporting tool. The tool allows for the inclusion of both qualitative and quantitative information. The quantitative data includes information on time of day, location, location type, basic demographic information, resources and services provided, and the call-out referral source. To capture qualitative data, the tool also includes a free text area to outline successes or challenges experienced during the reporting period. The report submitted by MSP is included as Attachment 1, while the report submitted by SBSL is included as Attachment 2. For the purposes of this report, only the quantitative information submitted by both agencies are included as part of the appendices.

Highlights: September – December 2021

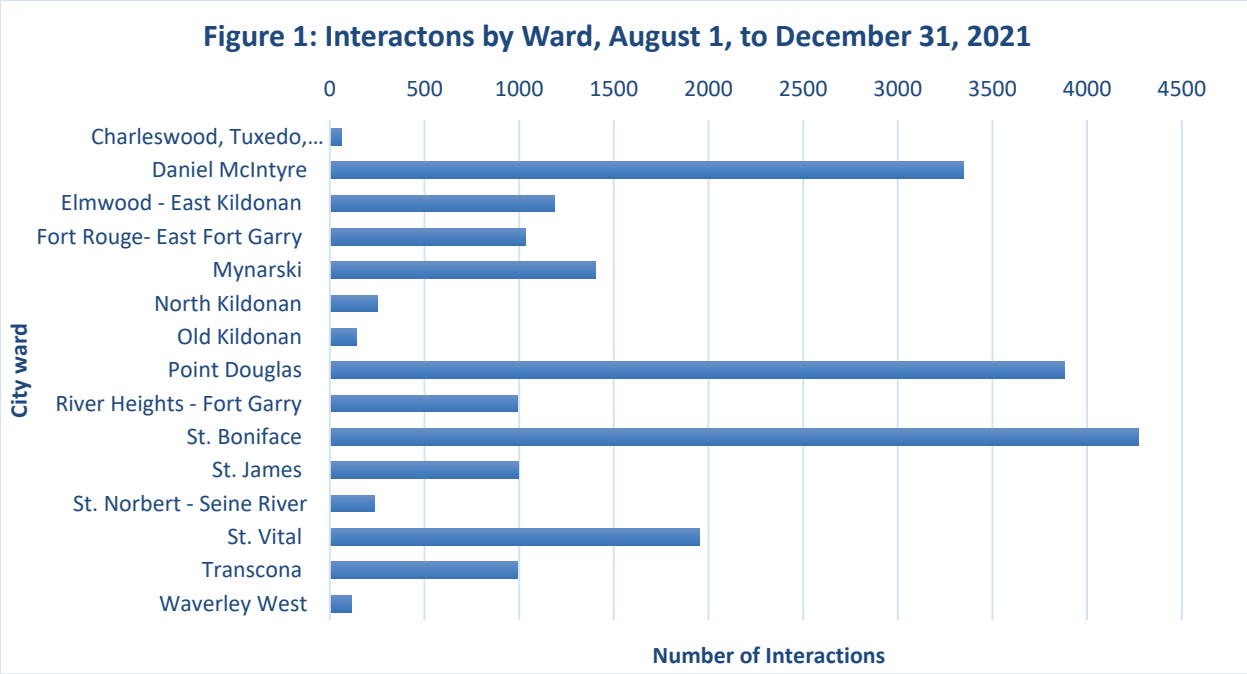
Quantitative Data

Prior to discussing the outcomes identified in the reporting tool, it is important to highlight the limitations of the data collection model. Due to the timelines required to create the reporting

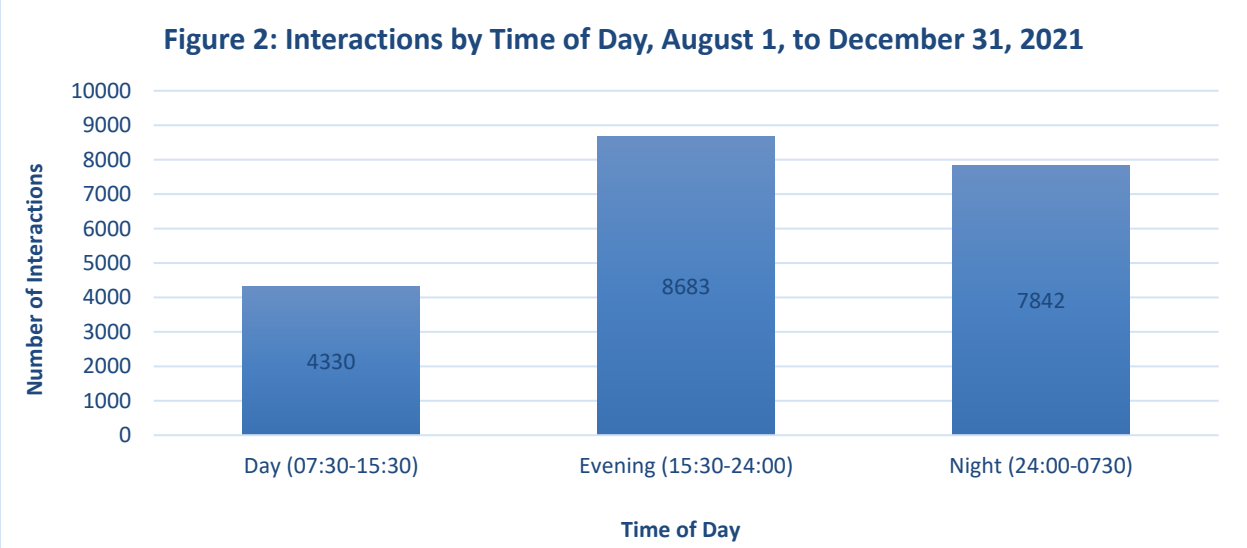
process in early 2021, available technology to record information, and the need to capture comparable information across two separate agencies, the data provided here is not intended to represent a comprehensive analysis of every service provided by both agencies, and it does not capture the total number of people experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. Instead, this reporting identifies information recorded by front-line staff during their interactions with the individuals that they serve. In this way, the information is subjective, and is intended to provide insight into the volume, location, and types of services provided in the community.

As outlined in Attachments 1 and 2, both agencies were successful in capturing quantitative data related to their operations for the period of August 1 to December 31, 2021. Between August and December, MSP and SBSL collectively reported 20,855 interactions with individuals requiring outreach support services. Of these, 63.8% were identified as male while 36.2% were identified as female. Although only SBSL was able to identify the age of the individual being served, out of those individuals that SBSL outreach staff recorded an age for, the majority (72%) were adults between the ages of 30 and 55. In terms of resources provided during each interaction, harm reduction supplies, water, and food and were identified as the top three resources provided. With regard to overall services provided, both agencies identified wellness checks as the primary service type, with transportation to shelter and referral to mental health and addictions supports as the second and third most frequent service types. Of those locations recorded during interactions, 37% were identified as encampments, 62% were identified as transit shelters, and less than 1% of interactions were recorded as taking place outside of either an encampment or a transit shelter. This is a significant change from the first reporting period, where nearly half of all interactions took place outside of either an encampment or transit shelter. During the reporting period, 25% of all calls to outreach services came from 311, 35% of calls originated with the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service (WFPS), 2% from the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS), and the remaining 38% of calls originated from other sources.

In terms of information related to location and time of day, both agencies were able to capture this information for the second reporting period. As outlined in Figure 1 below, the St. Boniface, Point Douglas, and Daniel McIntyre wards represent the top five areas of service. Collectively these wards accounted for 55% of all interactions.



As outlined in Figure 2, the interactions with outreach services occurred throughout the day, with the majority taking place in the afternoon and late evening. Of these, 42% occurred between 3:30 PM and midnight, 38% between midnight at 7:30 am, and 20% between 7:30 am and 3:30 pm.



Qualitative Data

Saint Boniface Street Links

Throughout the reporting period, SBSL maintained a focus on transitioning individuals from homelessness to housing. SBSL was successful in transitioning 77 individuals who were previously unsheltered to transitional or more permanent housing. This was achieved through a three-step process. First, SBSL outreach workers visit individuals experiencing unsheltered

homelessness and work to build relationships between individuals and agency staff. SBSL outreach staff then support a transition for interested individuals to transitional living. During the reporting period, SBSL developed a partnership with the La Salle Hotel in St. Boniface. Individuals working with SBSL would move to the La Salle Hotel, and while there, SBSL staff would work to secure required supports such as Employment Income Assistance (EIA) as well as addictions supports through a Rapid Access Addictions Medical Clinic (RAAM) or detox program. The average length of stay at the hotel was between 2 and 8 weeks. Once additional supports were secured, SBSL staff would discuss a plan for housing with each individual. Housing was secured and residents were transferred from the hotel to housing. This transition also included support with initial supplies such as food, household items, and furniture. After each client was housed, SBSL would then adapt their outreach services to meet the individuals in their homes. Home visits generally occur 3 times weekly, for the first 6 months, and then decrease thereafter to once per month. Ongoing support provided by SBSL includes transportation, connections with external services such as health care, foodbanks and legal services, as well as long-term and short-term case planning related to an individual's goals, with a focus of long-term sustainable housing.

As outlined in their first report to EPC, SBSL again identified partnerships as a critical component of program success. During the reporting period key partnerships included working with Ghost Garbage, the La Salle Hotel, BIZ groups and local business, as well as housing providers and local property owners. In addition, SBSL noted a strong partnership built between the agency and the East District of the Winnipeg Police Service.

Throughout the reporting period, SBSL also identified some challenges. Most notably this included: the risk of fire at encampment sites, particularly during dry conditions in the late summer and early spring; challenges with supporting clients in accessing RAAM, due to significant demand at RAAM sites; and capacity challenges in maintaining both outreach services to individuals in encampments while still supporting those who had transitioned to housing due to the increasing demand for these services.

Main Street Project

Throughout the reporting period, the MSP outreach team provided a wide range of supports and services while also further developing its capacity and partnerships. During the summer and fall of 2021 this included working with Aboriginal Health and Wellness to lead a vaccine outreach initiative administering over 2000 first and second doses of the COVID19 vaccine to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This initiative not only decreased barriers in accessing the vaccine, but also enabled individuals to access other supports and services that may not have been open to them due to vaccination status requirements. In addition to supporting the rollout of the vaccine, MSP also developed and led a naloxone distribution plan through the outreach team aimed at decreasing opioid overdoses and deaths. Through this plan, outreach staff received training on the use of naloxone and were provided with naloxone kits to be allocated to individuals living unsheltered. In some cases, this initiative provided real time lifesaving support.

Similar to the challenges identified by SBSL, extreme weather also played a significant role in the work of the MSP outreach team. Due to increases in the frequency of extreme heat in the summer, and extreme cold in the winter, outreach staff were often called to complete wellbeing checks, provide transportation to shelter and support individuals dealing with heat or cold related illness. In the summer and early fall, the increased risk of fire in encampments due to dry conditions led to an initiative between MSP and the WFPS to help build relationships with

individuals living unsheltered, where WFPS staff would provide fire safety training, and in some cases, fire extinguishers were distributed to several camps.

Throughout the reporting period, MSP continued to grow and develop its outreach team. This included additional case work staff as well as added capacity for peer advocates. As a result, the outreach service is now able to support up to two caseworkers each day as well as have peer advocates available during each shift. In addition, the agency added dedicated management staff to the outreach service enabling enhanced coordination, training, and oversight of day to day operations.

Due to the added staff capacity, MSP is now able to support two vans from Monday to Friday each week. One focused on supply distribution, wellness checks, and responding to calls from 311, the WFPS, and the public, while a second van focuses on individual participant care and intensive case work. The additional casework support has also enabled the MSP outreach team to focus specifically on supporting individuals transitioning from unsheltered homelessness to housing. For example, throughout the reporting period agency staff were able to provide referrals and support to roughly 45 individuals to access transitional housing or other housing opportunities. Moving forward, the team is continuing work to develop integrated plans with other agencies and services including local hospitals, the Winnipeg Regional Health Network, the City, and other community-based services to offer coordinated wrap-around supports linking individuals to housing, income assistance, primary care and other health services.

Partnerships also continued to be a focus area for MSP during the reporting period. This included further developing partnerships with the Down Town Community Safety Partnership and other 24/7 outreach services providers in Winnipeg, including the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre. Through these efforts the MSP team is working to enhance the coverage and coordination of mobile outreach services in the City and between service providers.

Next Steps and Discussion

In review of the reporting from both agencies, it is clear there is an ongoing need for mobile outreach services in Winnipeg. This is particularly true when reviewing some of the significant challenges related to poverty and homelessness in the City. Data collected from the 2016 Federal Census and from the 2018 Winnipeg Street Census, shows that:

- 13% of Winnipeg residents live in poverty (over 90,000 people), with 1 in 4 Indigenous (28%) and Newcomer (27%) residents experiencing poverty.
- Winnipeg has double the national average of child poverty, with poverty affecting over 1/3 of all Indigenous and Newcomer children.
- The 2018 Street Census reached 1,519 individuals experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg, and due to the pandemic, it is expected that this number has increased.
- 66% of people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous.

In response to this need, and as part of the City of Winnipeg's 2022 budget update, City Council has approved 1.1 million dollars to support the continuation of mobile outreach services for the next two years. This includes $550,000 in 2022, and $550,000 in 2023. It is important to note, and as directed in Volume 2 of the Council-approved Operating and Capital budgets, this includes dedicated grant funding of $100,000 to MSP to continue its mobile outreach support service up to March 31, 2022.

For the continuation of services beyond March 31, 2022, the Public Service is currently developing an Expression of Interest (EOI) that will be used to select the successful agency or

agencies who will be awarded the above-noted grant funding for 2022 and 2023. It is anticipated that the EOI will be released in mid February, with the successful grant recipient(s) selected no later than March 31, 2022.

With the need for mobile outreach services expected to remain, and likely increase in the coming years, this new granting program will be critical to meeting the basic needs of thousands of Winnipeggers. However, mobile outreach services are only one management tool that can be used to support individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness and poverty. Long-term solutions such as those outlined in the recommendations of the 2020 Kíkininaw Óma Strategy to Support Unsheltered Winnipeggers, and the recommendations outlined in the City's 10-Year Poverty Reduction Strategy, represent practical and concrete steps that can be taken to actively address the root causes of unsheltered homelessness and poverty in Winnipeg.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** January 20, 2022

Project Name:

Mobile Outreach Support Services: Main Street Project and St. Boniface Street Links

COMMENTS:

There is no financial implication resulting from the recommendation to receive the report as information.

Original signed by K. Lemoine

Kelly Lemoine, CPA, CA
Manager, Finance and Administrative Services
Community Services Department

CONSULTATION

n/a

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

- Theme 3-1 - Opportunity:
  - Direction 3: Work with community partners to foster an inclusive and equitable community.
  - Direction 4: Work within municipal service areas as a collaborator on poverty reduction.

- Theme 01-2a - Collaborate to Make Safe Communities -
  - Direction 6: Take a broad-scaled, complete and collaborative approach to crime prevention.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

n/a

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Goal 4: Community Well-Being Supports for those in Greatest Need are increased

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Community Services
Division: Community Development
Prepared by: Chris Brens, Karen Glugosh
Date: January 20, 2022
File No: CMS-2022-1

Attachments:
Attachment 1: MSP Mobile Outreach Activity Report August – December 2021

Attachment 2: SBSL Mobile Outreach Activity Report August – December 2021

Attachment 3: 311 Non-Emergent Encampment Support Process