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Delegation information
Committee: Executive Policy Committee
Committee - council: N/A
Committee - other: N/A
Agenda item (number and title): Item # 12 - Proposed Grant Intake and Review Process

Service inquiry: Submit Comments in writing
Participation preference: N/A
Comments in writing: Dear Mayor and City Councillors,

Our inner city youth are in crisis. The 2024 Winnipeg City Police report tells us the growth in violent youth crime rate is alarming. Winnipeg Police Service Supt. Dave Dalal is recently quoted saying, "We can't arrest our way out of this problem, we need other solutions that are addressing the root causes."

Young people's physical and mental health is harmed by incarceration and often exposes them to abuse which leads to poor health in adulthood. Detention impedes their education and career success, lowering employment and earnings in the future. Additionally, confinement is plagued by racial and ethnic disparities. Young people exposed to the correctional system have a much higher rate of recidivism and many are later arrested, convicted and incarcerated as adults. A reduction of 62% to the annual community grant program is a false savings.

Community Service Programs are the solution and the most cost effective tool we have to combat the twin crisis of vulnerable children in distress and rising crime rate.

The City of Winnipeg's inner city children are underserved and are suffering the consequences. To reverse this, the current government's COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ACTION PLAN 2023 - 2026 already identifies several actions for strategic focus and investment.

Item 1.4 ACTION: Expand access to existing facilities and programming for recreation, library, community gathering, and 24/7 safe spaces, especially downtown.?OUTCOME: Improve access to safe community spaces

Item 3.2 ACTION: Co-create a city-wide community safety, well-being, and crime prevention action plan in collaboration with community-level partner agencies and stakeholders. OUTCOME: Increase safety and wellbeing

Item 3.6 ACTION: Increase funding to implement the Winnipeg Recreation?Strategy. OUTCOME: Improve access to library and recreation services and facilities

Additionally, cancel the proposed changes to the Community Grants Program and

1) Maintain the existing grant review process ?
2) Maintain the $3.4m fund ?
3) Expand the reach of the program by adding additional funds to it. ?

Investing in Youth Programming is a win-win for the youth and for the safety and security of our city. Youth who have access to programming that provides activities, food security and a safe space to thrive have a place to be other than out on our streets. Community Programs provide our children with an alternative to addiction, homelessness, hunger and boredom. These vital programs provide our city's troubled and forgotten youth with a chance for a better tomorrow.

The cuts and the new review process threaten the stability and effectiveness of organizations that are essential to building a safer, healthier, and more compassionate Winnipeg.

Sincerely,
Ken Harasym
Communications Coordinator
Council of Canadians Winnipeg Chapter