



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	October 23, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Home for Good (CES17042) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SUBMITTED BY:	Vicki Woodcox Acting General Manager Community & Emergency Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Not applicable

Information:

In March 2017, the Province introduced a new, separate provincially-funded program named *Home for Good* (HFG).

HFG is a homelessness-focused program delivered through Service Managers (municipalities) that supports the Province's goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025. The Province recognizes that achieving this goal requires both the housing of people who are currently homeless and also the prevention of additional people becoming chronically homeless.

HFG will provide housing assistance and support services to people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness within the provincial priority homelessness areas:

- chronic homelessness;
- youth homelessness;
- Indigenous homelessness; and,
- homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded institutions.

Across the province, approximately \$25 million and \$50 million will be available in 2017-18 and 2018-19, respectively, for housing assistance and supports. In addition, funding will be available for approximately 400 new capital units in each year province-wide.

HFG Program Guidelines indicate that the funding is intended to be for ending a person's homelessness through housing assistance and supports. HFG funding is not

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intended to replace funding for current commitments or to address one time organizational pressures of individual agencies. There are a series of outcomes related to housing assistance and support services that must be reported back to the Province on a quarterly basis.

Hamilton's HFG Expression of Interest (EOI) Application

In May 2017, Housing Services submitted an EOI application for \$4,136,755 for homelessness support services and \$15,000,000 for capital funding.

Housing Services based the program funding request on previously-identified community priorities and validated the proposed direction with the Housing and Homelessness Planning Group and the Homelessness Funding Implementation Group (HFIG), the two tables comprising the Community Advisory Board for homelessness funding initiatives. While the HFIG provides advice on funding recommendations, the Housing and Homelessness Planning Group provides high level policy and process advice including input into the community priorities.

The EOI application sought support for:

- Enhanced resources to ensure that homelessness is a brief and non-recurring experience in people's lives.
- Enhanced resources to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness with the most complex, co-occurring issues that are likely to impact overall housing stability, including increased resources for housing allowances and program supports.
- Solutions to offset community pressures in effectively supporting individuals approaching homelessness.

While the EOI application highlighted existing community partnerships and stakeholders for housing and homelessness programs, it did not recommend specific funding allocation to organizations.

Hamilton's HFG Funding Allocation

The Province advised the Mayor on September 11, 2017, that Hamilton will be awarded \$2,827,351 in program funds over 3 years, beginning with \$827,351 in fiscal year 2017/18. This represents 68% of the amount requested in the EOI. Capital funding was not allocated.

The City as Service Manager is tasked with the distribution and reconciliation of funding over the three-year period, as follows:

	Notional Funding Allocation		
	Year 1 (2017-18)	Year 2 (2018-19)	Year 3 (2019-20)
Homelessness Support Services	\$827,351	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Capital	\$0	\$0	\$0

The Homelessness Support Services Component of the notional funding allocation will continue to be ongoing annual funding beyond the first three years, subject to annual take-up, annual provincial budget approvals, and fulfilment of accountability requirements. The funding is also contingent on the City of Hamilton entering into a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province.

The City of Hamilton will be permitted to use up to 10% of the allocated operating funds to cover administration costs and the balance of the funding will be awarded to community agencies.

In order to operationalize the program, the Province requires a signed Transfer Payment Agreement to be submitted by October 31, 2017. The Province also requires the Take-Up Plan for Fiscal Years 2017/18 and 2018/19 to be submitted by October 31, 2017.

Approach to allocating HFG funds to the community:

The October 31 deadline for the submission of the Take-Up Plan, together with the fact that the City of Hamilton did not receive the full funding amount requested in the EOI application, limits the ability of Housing Services Division to complete a Call For Applications process and launch new programs in the time allotted without significant risk of underspending and returning funds.

To fulfill Provincial requirements, for Fiscal Years 2017/18 and 2018/19, the City must prioritize the initiatives in the EOI application that align directly with the expected outcomes of HFG that can be delivered through enhancements to existing programs for which there are agreements already in place.

The City of Hamilton engaged in extensive multi-year community consultation to arrive at the strategies outlined in the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and the priorities for the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) 2014-2019 Community Plan. From 2012 to 2015, an extensive community consultation and planning process on homelessness funding was conducted.

The City of Hamilton regularly seeks community input relevant to these strategies and priorities through ongoing consultation with numerous planning tables including, but not limited to, the Housing and Homelessness Planning Table, the Homelessness Funding

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Implementation Group, Housing First Check in Table, Men's Emergency Services Committee, Women's Housing and Homelessness Planning Collaborative and the Street Youth Planning Collaborative.

At the same time, the Housing Services Division is currently leading the participatory development of a Coordinated Homelessness Serving System for Hamilton's homelessness serving sector together with an extended project team that includes community experts. Current system gaps that impact the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan strategies and priorities of the 2014-2019 HPS Community Plan are highlighted through this process by management, staff and clients of service agencies throughout the sector.

Staff will develop options for the HFG Year 1 and 2 Take Up Plan in accordance with the EOI submission and in alignment with the priorities highlighted through the mechanisms above. Staff will present the implementation options to the HFIG for their consideration and recommendation.

It is important to note that the Housing Services Division is also planning for the 2019 provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and the federal HPS funding cycle. For the 2019 Fiscal year it is important that HFG align with these two funding streams to achieve the goals of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.

Homelessness program dollars are awarded to community partnering organizations through a community consultation process that involves the HFIG. The HFIG is the advisory group of the Community Advisory Board for homelessness funding that provides funding recommendations, ongoing advice and a review of project outcomes. The HFIG includes individuals with lived experience of homelessness, persons with system-level perspective, landlords, and representatives of the health system, criminal justice system and the Urban Indigenous Community.

The General Manager of Community and Emergency Services will determine funding allocations for Hamilton's HFG allocation based on the input of the HFIG and provide an update to Council.

Next Steps

To determine implementation options, Staff will consult with planning tables comprising organizations serving individuals experiencing chronic homelessness (including youth, women, men, and individuals who identify as Indigenous).

Staff will develop a draft implementation plan for Fiscal Year 17/18 that prioritizes HFG outcomes that can be delivered by enhancing existing programs.

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In order to meet the tight timeline for this requirement, the General Manager of Community and Emergency Services will: exercise her delegated authority to enter into the agreement and approve funding for the initiatives submitted in the EOI application; and, will enter into and execute agreements with the agency(s) responsible for the delivery of the initiatives.

The signed Transfer Payment Agreement and Take-Up Plan are to be submitted to the Province by October 31, 2017.

Staff will update Council on the results of the HFG funding allocations to the community.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

None