



CITY OF HAMILTON
COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	January 22, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Notre Dame Community Resource Centre (CES18005) (Ward 2)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 2
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SUBMITTED BY:	Vicki Woodcox Acting Director, Housing Services Division Community and Emergency Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Notre Dame House Community Resource Centre (CRC) provided through Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton receive annualized funding in the amount of \$200,000 through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), effective April 1, 2018 until March 31, 2019; and,
- (b) That, for the purposes of CHPI contractual funding, the Notre Dame House CRC be considered as part of the Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Notre Dame House CRC provided through Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton serves at-risk youth and youth experiencing homelessness aged 16 to 21 years of age. These services include meals, case management services, drop-in programming and referrals to housing supports. The CRC is co-located with the Good Shepherd Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter.

The City has provided various iterations of one-time funding since 2004 for CRC services. CRC services were initially funded as part of the shelter, but were separated into a different program after 2010 to maintain access to alternative funding streams as the true cost of the services provided through shelter were not covered by provincial funding at the time. Before 2014, shelters were operating under a per diem funding model that limited funding for services beyond a bed and three meals a day.

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Hamilton's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan emphasizes the importance of providing individualized supports that help people obtain and maintain housing, reducing reliance on emergency shelters. In order to do so, case management is needed at shelters to direct individuals to the appropriate housing and related supports. Similarly, Hamilton's Blueprint for Emergency Shelter Services emphasizes the role of shelters in providing services beyond basic needs and supports the provision of case management services for individuals not staying overnight in shelter.

Staff completed a program review of the CRC in 2017 to provide policy and funding recommendations related to how the CRC fits into the continuum of youth services in Hamilton and the role of shelters in service provision beyond basic needs. Staff learned that the provision of CRC services separate from shelter operations is unique to the youth sector.

Now operating under a block funding model, men's and women's emergency shelters in Hamilton provide these services as part of shelter operations. As such, the CRC should be considered part of Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter.

Staff also learned that the CRC is an integral program for at-risk youth and youth experiencing homelessness in Hamilton, and should therefore receive annualized funding until the end of this iteration of homelessness funding in March of 2019. Homelessness programs and services will be re-assessed as part of the next Call for Applications process for federal and provincial homelessness funding expected in 2019.

Funding for CRC services, previously provided through various iterations of one-time funding, should continue to be provided to Notre Dame House as CRC services are considered to be a part of shelter operations. Removing this funding would leave a service gap for youth in the community.

The Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter is the only 24 hour shelter dedicated to youth in Hamilton. As the CRC is located at the shelter, the two programs form a hub for youth to receive a wide range of services, from basic needs to case management and housing supports.

The program review also noted that Notre Dame House should continue to participate in City activities related to coordinated access and systems integration as directed by the Housing Services Division and should continue to align program practices with emerging research on shelter service provision and youth homelessness. Under coordinated access, emergency shelters are not seen as end destinations for individuals experiencing homelessness, but as main entry points for them to be connected to housing and supports throughout the community. Each program must work together to ensure appropriate resources are directed to the most vulnerable individuals and families.

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Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) is a provincial homelessness program funded by the Ministry of Housing (MOH). Hamilton receives annualized CHPI funding from the province, with a total of \$19,455,174 allocated for 2018-19 and \$19,645,911 for 2019-20.

The City currently provides annualized CHPI funding through a block funding agreement for the Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter. One-time funding has been issued to the CRC separately.

Total allocated CHPI funding to CRC for 2016-18 supports more than half of the program's total budget. This includes costs associated with staffing, administration and overhead. The remainder of CRC's funding comes from other sources external to City funds, including donor dollars, federal and other provincial funding programs.

The CHPI budget is a capped budget which means Hamilton receives a fixed annual allocation based on a provincial funding formula. Annualized funding for the CRC will have to be managed within this capped budget.

Staffing: There are no staffing implications associated with Report CES18005.

Legal: Legal Services will review and draft an ancillary agreement, as may be required to deliver the CHPI Program. Legal Services staff will also ensure that the security requirements, as required from the project proponents are fulfilled to protect the interests of the City of Hamilton, in accordance with the service agreement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The services provided through the CRC grew out of community needs identified by Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton and were added as outreach and personal support services to the Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter in the early 2000s.

Until 2001, Good Shepherd Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter received partial funding from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the Province of Ontario and the City's Emergency Shelter program.

In 2001, the Federal Government withdrew approximately \$200,000 as HRSDC stopped funding emergency shelter services. The City allocated provincial one-time funding in 2002 and 2003 in the amount of \$200,000 per year for Notre Dame House to offset the withdrawal of federal funding.

Since 2004, the City has provided between \$100,000 and \$238,000 per year in one-time funding from operating surplus for the outreach and support services provided at Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter now referred to as the Community Resource Centre (CRC).

The 2007 edition of the City of Hamilton's On Any Given Night Report highlighted how shelter funding was insufficient in supporting the provision of services that people need in order to maintain housing.

On April 29, 2009, Council endorsed the Blueprint for Emergency Shelter Services (Report CSO9015) which focused on the four men's emergency shelters in Hamilton. The Blueprint noted that a high number of individuals were experiencing long stays in shelter and were not receiving the services necessary to find and maintain long-term housing. The Blueprint represented a fundamental shift in emergency shelter system service provision. It stressed a need for funding beyond basic needs services and supported the provision of services in-house such as intensive case management and mobile or outreach supports for individuals not staying in shelter.

Before 2014, shelters were operating under a per diem funding model which limited the provision of services beyond basic needs. This funding for emergency shelters was cost shared between the Province and the municipality using the historical 80/20 split. The per diem covered the cost of a shelter bed and three meals a day.

In 2010, a program review of Notre Dame House was completed on the premise that provincial funding did not cover the true cost for the personal support and outreach services provided within the shelter. The CRC was later separated from the Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter to maintain access to alternative funding streams.

On January 19, 2015, Report (CES14005(b)) named the successful proponents of City of Hamilton's 2014 Call for Application (CFA) for Housing First and Homelessness Prevention services as well as identified programs that would no longer receive funding under this iteration. The Notre Dame House Community Resource Centre (CRC) was unsuccessful in this Call for Application. Projects were unsuccessful in the 2014 CFA because they least aligned with funding objectives, direct housing outcomes and housing intervention best practices. However, by way of a program review conducted in fall of 2017, staff have developed a clearer understanding of the integral role of the CRC in providing services for at-risk youth and youth experiencing homelessness in Hamilton and the CRC's alignment with City objectives on housing and homelessness. Council approved one-time funding to the unsuccessful programs as a transition to provide service providers with the opportunity to plan for and wind down services.

On December 8, 2015, staff informed the Emergency & Community Services Committee (Report CES15061) that the City's Service Agreement for the CRC would be extended

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for another year from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, while a full review of the youth homelessness system was conducted. The review intended to highlight the best practices, programs and services for addressing youth homelessness in Hamilton.

In 2016, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was launched and was unsuccessful in finding a suitable proponent to complete the review of youth homelessness services in Hamilton.

In April of 2017, program staff of the Xperience Annex were consulted to learn more about the importance of the services offered through the CRC and its place within the continuum of youth homelessness services in Hamilton.

In June of 2017, Emergency and Community Services Committee approved Report CES17030. The report recommended that the CRC receive an extension of funding in the one-time amount of \$200,000 through CHPI to March 31, 2018, as removing funding would leave a service gap in the community and may risk destabilizing the Notre Dame House youth emergency shelter.

In fall of 2017, City staff completed a program review of the services, staffing and outcomes of the CRC and the City's history of funding the program to provide policy and funding recommendations.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The following parts of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan pertain to this report:

Outcome 3: People have the individualized supports they need to help them obtain and maintain housing.

Target #1: Each emergency shelter (men's, women's, youth and family) identifies and achieves annual targets for shorter stays.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

A program review of the Notre Dame House CRC was conducted by staff from the Housing Services Division in the fall of 2017. This program review included a series of consultations.

Consultation occurred with staff from the Housing Services Division, and senior management and staff from the Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton, Notre Dame House emergency shelter and the CRC. The purpose of this consultation was to gather information on the program and its funding history.

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Discussions were also held with other community organizations that serve individuals experiencing homelessness, which informed this review, including Living Rock Ministries, the Xperience Annex and the Street Youth Planning Collaborative.

Through this consultation, staff learned that the services at Notre Dame House are integral to the system of youth services.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Notre Dame House CRC is located at the Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter and serves as a conduit to in-house and community based supports for homeless and street involved youth aged 16 to 21 years of age. Youth have access to case management and care coordination services; internal referrals to the Notre Dame House School program; daily programming to build life skills, engage with community, build confidence through recreation, and manage and cope with thoughts, feelings and behaviours; assistance in obtaining identification documents; two hot meals per day; clothing and household donations; and laundry, phone and internet services. In addition, all youth accessing services through the CRC or emergency shelter are referred to internal and external supports based on their needs and preferences.

The CRC reported that from April 2016 to June 2017, over 3,000 households at risk of homelessness received services and supports unrelated to the provision of accommodation but contributing to housing loss prevention, retention and re-housing. This data is not tracked uniquely; several services and supports may have been provided to one individual over time, and it is unknown how many youth received supports from both the CRC and shelter.

Staff learned through consultation that unlike the Xperience Annex, the CRC's primary orientation is towards housing and homelessness. The program aims to prevent youth from experiencing homelessness into adulthood, and to provide supports youth need to maintain their housing in the community.

The Notre Dame House Youth Emergency Shelter is the only 24-hour shelter dedicated to youth in Hamilton, with 21 beds available for youth aged 16 to 21. As the CRC is located at the shelter, the two programs form a hub for youth to receive a wide range of services, from basic needs to case management and housing supports.

The role and understanding of emergency shelter service provision has changed in Hamilton over the last decade. Hamilton's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan emphasizes the importance of providing individualized supports that help people obtain and maintain housing, reducing reliance on emergency shelters. In order to do so, case management is needed at shelters to direct individuals to the appropriate housing and related supports.

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The Blueprint for Emergency Shelter Services advocated that shelters are to provide more than a bed and three meals in order to ensure that people's experience of homelessness is rare, brief, and non-reoccurring. The CRC's provision of services to youth aligns with the Blueprint's understanding of shelter services, yet is a separately funded program from the shelter. The separation of additional services from basic needs provision within shelters is unique to the youth sector in Hamilton. The men's and women's emergency shelter systems provide similar services as part of their shelter operations.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None