




CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 2, 2019
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy (HSC19008(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Jessica Reinhart (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2548 Amanda DiFalco (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3132
SUBMITTED BY:	Edward John Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the General Manager of Healthy and Safe Communities, or his designate, be authorized and directed to enter into and execute an Agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada to administer the Reaching Home Program as of April 1, 2019 and any ancillary agreements required to give effect thereto in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor;
- (b) That the current temporary Social Policy Analyst position (1 FTE) be converted to a permanent position, to meet the additional Federal obligations, in the amount of \$97,178 funded through the Reaching Home administrative funding allocation, with no net levy impact, be approved; and
- (c) That the current temporary Senior Project Manager position (1 FTE) be converted to a permanent position, to meet the additional Federal obligations, in the amount of \$115,180 funded through the Reaching Home administrative funding allocation, with no net levy impact, be approved.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 11, 2018, the Federal Government announced the redesign of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, entitled "Reaching Home: Canada's Housing Homelessness Strategy" (Reaching Home). Reaching Home is part of the National Housing Strategy, and aims to assist local communities in adopting an outcome based coordinated system response that supports the National goal of reducing chronic homelessness by 50% on or before March 31, 2028.

This new program is built on the Federal Government's increased expectations for Municipalities to play a stronger leadership role in planning and managing local homeless service management systems. The City of Hamilton has embraced this increased leadership role by engaging community partners to plan for a more coordinated approach to reducing and ending homelessness in Hamilton. A coordinated system planning document called "Coming Together to End Homelessness – A System Planning Framework," will be completed by the end of June 2019. The plan aims to coordinate resources, inform funding allocations, and ensure that community level results align with Federal, Provincial and local goals of reducing and ending homelessness.

As of April 1, 2019, the City of Hamilton is responsible for ensuring that we meet the new requirements, set out by Employment and Social Development Canada. Moreover, by 2020-2021, the City of Hamilton will be required to have service system management responsibilities for the homelessness sector, with the creation of a coordinated access system, an integrated information management system, and performance targets. With the new program funding, and service management responsibilities, there is also an increased level of accountability, reporting and expectation in developing and managing a locally coordinated access system of services to address people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The requested staff conversions will be fully funded through assigned administrative dollars attached to the new funding envelope. The investment is required to ensure that Hamilton will be able to meet Reaching Home requirements and continues to support the priorities identified in Hamilton's Housing and Homelessness Action Plan.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

A total of \$29.4 million in Reaching Home funding will be allocated over a 5-year period from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024, which is a \$5.1 million (21%) increase from the previous 5-year funding envelope through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. Housing Services will issue a Call for Applications in the summer of 2019 to broker

services through community partners. Funding allocations will align with the new requirements and expectations.

The Reaching Home financial requirement is that, at a minimum, each dollar is matched by \$1 from Provincial or Municipal sources. Current Provincial and Municipal contributions fulfil this requirement.

Staffing:

Employment and Social Development Canada permits a flat rate of 15% of the Reaching Home funding allocation be used for administrative purposes. Housing Services has identified the need to convert two existing temporary positions into two permanent FTE positions to support the additional obligations, enhancements and requirements of Reaching Home. These positions are conditional on the Reaching Home funding allocation and will not have any impact on the levy.

Legal:

The 2019-2024 Reaching Home Service Agreement has been received from Employment and Social Development Canada. It has been reviewed and approved by the Legal Services Department.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The new Reaching Home program represents the most significant change in Federal homelessness programming since the introduction of the National Homelessness Initiative in 1999. Reaching Home introduces major innovations in the delivery of homelessness, and social policy in Canada, as a data driven, performance-based homelessness serving system. The redesign is based on research and proven practices across North America, Europe, and Australia to ensure communities get the most out of limited resources, and to rapidly and effectively prevent and end homelessness for those with the greatest need.

The City of Hamilton is one of 61 Designated Communities across Canada and is the recipient of the third highest amount of Federal homelessness funding in Ontario. Also, the City of Hamilton is considered one of the largest Designated Communities in Canada under the Reaching Home program.

The Federal Government began to fund local homelessness projects in 1999 through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). The program has been renewed in 2-5 years funding cycles since 1999 and is now called Reaching Home. The current previous program called Homelessness Partnering Strategy ended on March 31, 2019. The new Reaching Home iteration (2019-2024) allows for a transition year from 2019-2020, to continue the current funded projects for up to 1 year to avoid any disruption in

services for people experiencing homelessness, while the new program is implemented. The new program requirements are expected to be implemented by April 1, 2020. Since the beginning of the Federal homelessness funding program in 1999, the City of Hamilton has received over \$71 million to support local projects in the effort to reduce and end homelessness.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

As of April 1, 2019, the City of Hamilton entered into a Service Agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada. This Service Agreement will require the City of Hamilton to adhere to the requirements and directives prescribed through Reaching Home.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

At the request of Employment and Social Development Canada, the Community Advisory Board (also known as the Housing and Homelessness Planning Group) confirmed their support for the City of Hamilton, to continue as the Service System Manager for the administration of the Reaching Home program. In 2018, Housing Services staff initiated consultation processes with internal and external stakeholders, where the results will be used to inform the development of the Coming Together to End Homelessness – System Planning Framework to be completed in June 2019.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The 2019-2024 Reaching Home funding allocation will be based on Employment and Social Development Canada, Service Management directive and guidelines, as well as the prescribed funding allocations as shown below:

2019-2020	\$5,614,508
2020-2021	\$5,614,508
2021-2022	\$6,077,879
2022-2023	\$6,077,879
2023-2024	\$6,077,789
Total	\$29,462,653

There are several changes through Reaching Home, where the 2.0 FTE staff positions continue to be required to support future implementation. These changes include:

- A data driven, performance-based program with community level chronic homelessness reduction targets. Local communities are accountable to achieve a 50% reduction in chronic homelessness, and to publicly report on progress towards the implementation of a coordinated access system, annual performance

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metrics, and community wide outcomes as prescribed through the Reaching Home program.

- Real-time person specific data through the implementation of a By-Name List. Real-time data will allow communities to better understand people at risk of or experiencing homelessness needs, how people are entering into homelessness or how effectively communities are moving people out of homelessness.
- Standardized intake and assessment processes to match people to the appropriate housing and supports based on their needs and preferences.
- Communities will be required to implement the Homelessness Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). This is an integrated information management system that all funded programs will be required to use in their service delivery and reporting.

It is important to highlight that the Housing Services Division is also planning for Provincial funding allocation for homelessness, through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). Both Reaching Home and CHPI funding streams are aligned to achieve the goals of the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan. Funding must be used, or it will be returned to the appropriate levels of government.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Economic Prosperity and Growth

Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

Healthy and Safe Communities

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

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None