




Hamilton

CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 11, 2019
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Co-ordinated Access System for Social Housing (CES14052(e)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Joshua Van Kampen (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4592
SUBMITTED BY:	Edward John Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (a) That the Capital Project ID 6731841101 (Co-ordinated Access System) budget be increased by \$370 K from \$1.1 M to \$1.47 M through the following funding streams;
 - i) That \$199 K be funded using the residual balance in Reserve #112248, Social Housing Capital Reserve Fund plus any applicable interest;
 - ii) That \$171 K be funded through administration dollars from provincial and federal government programs; and,
- (b) That Reserve #112248 be closed once the residual balance remaining is moved to Capital Project ID 6731841101 (Co-ordinated Access System).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hamilton, as Service Manager for social housing, is responsible for meeting provincial requirements under the *Housing Service Act, 2011* (HSA) for the establishment and administration of an application and wait list system for social housing. In Hamilton, the current co-ordinated social housing wait list system is called Access to Housing (ATH). ATH serves as a central point for the application and initial

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eligibility screening for the social housing units operated by Hamilton's 43 social housing providers.

The City is in the process of renovating additional office space at 350 King St. E. (First Place Building), adjacent to the current Housing Services Division's offices, to properly accommodate the permanent delivery of the waitlist service.

Preliminary capital cost estimates for the renovations and fit-ups were \$1.1 M. Following further analysis, a revised cost estimate for the renovations and fit-ups was formulated resulting in an increase of additional costs in the amount of \$370 K which will be funded through the recommended streams.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The increased costs of \$370 K for Capital Project ID 6731841101 will be funded through the residual balance of \$199 K in Reserve #112248 plus any applicable interest.

The additional costs of \$171 K of the \$370 K will be funded from existing and new administrative dollars from provincial and federal funding programs, such as SHAIP, SHIP, and SIF-IAH Funding. Funding for such projects are permitted as administration costs for each of the funding programs.

Staffing: There are no staffing implications with Report CES14052(e).

Legal: There are no legal implications with Report CES14052(e).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA), (and the preceding legislation the *Social Housing Reform Act, 2000* (SHRA)) mandates the responsibility for Service Managers to have a system for administering a wait list for social housing. The wait list is a local system of referring applicants seeking subsidized housing to social housing providers. Access to Housing (ATH) was adopted as the working name for the wait list system for the City of Hamilton.

On September 22, 2014, the Emergency and Community Services Committee received Report CES14052 describing a proposed enhanced service for the ATH system that could better meet the needs of applicants for social housing, which included:

- Ensuring individuals have accurate information to make informed decisions and choices regarding their housing options;
- Referrals to community resources;
- Revised and updated forms, letters and building inventory information;
- Upgraded technology with potential for submission of on-line applications;
- Increased supports to help people when they apply, during their time on the wait list and as they prepare to move into RGI subsidized housing; and,
- Supports to help people maintain housing.

On August 26, 2014, the RFP was issued to secure a qualified service provider to deliver the enhanced ATH Service. Three proponents submitted proposals which were reviewed and scored based on criteria set out in the RFP. One proponent did not meet the minimum score in the evaluation criteria. After reviewing the two remaining proposals, it was determined that the City should instead explore the option of delivering the service in-house where there is the opportunity to better integrate existing services and infrastructure and the RFP was cancelled.

On June 24, 2015, Council approved Report CES14052(a) which approved, in principle, the transfer of the ATH social housing wait list service, including enhancements, from a third-party delivery agent to direct delivery by the Housing Services Division.

In March 2016, Council approved a one-year extension of DMS' contract until March 31, 2017 (Report CES14052(b)). An additional extension was necessary due to the complexity of planning for the potential transition from third-party to in-house service delivery and the substantial due diligence required to ensure that the core service continued in an uninterrupted manner that met the City's legislated requirements.

In February 2017, Council approved Report CES14052(c), which approved a Procurement Policy #11 for a single source contract with Del Management Systems (DMS) for the administration of the centralized waitlist for social housing applicants effective to March 31, 2018 and that an agreement between the City of Hamilton and DMS continue to operate Access to Housing until March 31, 2018.

In January 2018, Council approved that the Access to Housing system of co-ordinated social housing access be effective April 1, 2019 through the Housing Services Division and that the renewal of DMS contract will not be renewed to coordinate and administer the wait list through Report CES14052(d). Staffing was also addressed with the addition of three (3) Housing Administration Clerks, one (1) Housing Support Worker, and one (1) Supervisor, Housing Access and Supports were established.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The *Housing Services Act, 2011* requires the City of Hamilton, as Service Manager for social housing, to maintain and administer a coordinated system of access to social housing.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Corporate Services, Finance and Administration has been consulted with respect to financial details and have provided comment on this report.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

During the development of the enhanced service delivery model for the social housing wait list, several site requirements were identified, including:

- Fully accessible multi-function front service counter with public waiting area and room for public resources (literature, phone, computer) to accommodate annual walk-in traffic of approximately 16 K visitors;
- Private interview rooms;
- Available transit (B-line) and parking;
- Staff and manager work stations that support job requirements;
- Accessible washrooms for public and staff;
- Secure file storage area;
- Printer/fax/mail area;
- Emergency system lighting and signage; and,
- Video surveillance and panic buttons where needed.

The original preferred site was vacant commercial space adjacent to the current Housing Services Division offices at First Place (350 King Street East), which is owned by CityHousing Hamilton. Housing Services Division staff worked with staff from the Facilities Management and Capital Programs section (Public Works Department, Corporate Assets and Strategic Planning Division) and the Real Estate section (Planning & Economic Development Department, Economic Development Division) to complete a detailed assessment of the capital costs associated with the preferred space.

The updated estimated capital costs required to renovate and “fit up” the space after receiving the original high-level estimate has landed at \$1.47 M, which has increased an additional \$370 K from the previous cost estimated.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

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APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None