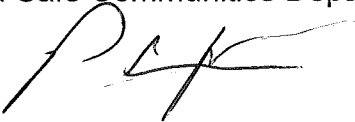




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 11, 2019
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Wesley Day Centre (HSC19040) (Ward 2)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Ward 2
PREPARED BY:	Simon Granat (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5917
SUBMITTED BY:	Edward John Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not applicable

INFORMATION

The Wesley Day Centre, operated by Wesley Urban Ministries (Wesley) at 195 Ferguson Ave. N. is an integrated service and low barrier community drop-in for low income and vulnerable clients.

Prior to 2009, the Wesley Centre operated as a men's emergency shelter. In 2009, Wesley closed the overnight portion of the Wesley Centre and continued to offer day programming. The Wesley Day Centre drop-in day program offers integrated services that include: free meals, food cupboard, harm reduction groups, therapeutic groups, recreational therapy, laundry, hygienic facilities, mail services, housing support, addictions counselling, access to needle exchange services, recreation, Public Health clinical services, access to primary care services, pre-employment support, internet access, and tax clinics for precarious and low-income clients. The Wesley Day Centre does not receive annual operating funding from the City of Hamilton.

In late 2018, the City of Hamilton entered into a six-month, \$100,000 contract with Wesley for the Day Centre, funded through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. As a part of the agreement, the Day Centre provided service use data to the City of

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Hamilton. Analysis of the data identified 90% of clients were accessing other services within the community such as emergency shelters and Housing First programs.

In May 2019, the City was notified by Wesley that the Day Centre would close due to lease and funding related issues, with August 23, 2019 being the last day of service. The Day Centre meal program is planned to transition to Vanier Towers and provide meal programming for tenants at that location. Since being informed about the closure, the Healthy and Safe Communities Department staff have been working with Wesley to connect clients to alternative services throughout Hamilton to minimize the impact to clients. People experiencing homelessness and accessing the Day Centre are being connected to housing programs and Ontario Works case managers. Individuals accessing emergency shelters can stay at the shelter, access meals, and connect to various supports throughout the day.

The landlord, Wesley Community Homes, Inc., a social housing provider, has indicated to Wesley that they will not renew the Wesley Day Centre's lease, due to expire March 2020, as a result and to avoid a winter closure, the service will close with August 23, 2019 being the last day.

Housing Services staff met with Wesley Community Homes Inc. to review options on July 3, 2019. It is understood that the decision not to renew the current lease centred on the decision by Wesley Community Homes Inc. to convert the second-floor to social housing units (approximately 11 units) and to use the ground floor for ancillary residential uses such as a caretaker's office and laundry facilities. The second floor has been vacant for approximately 7 years despite being marketed for office use.

The Wesley Day Centre program costs approximately \$558,000 per year to operate. This cost estimate was provided by Wesley to the City of Hamilton in recent correspondence and represents the current suite of services.

As a follow-up to the discussion that occurred at the June 20, 2019 Emergency and Community Services Committee staff suggest there are three main options available to respond to the concerns raised at the meeting.

OPTION 1:

Staff would continue their current work with Wesley to transition those individuals accessing the services into various alternative existing community supports with the understanding that the integrated provision of services at one location would no longer be available. Data provided by the Wesley Day Centre to Housing Services Division indicates that 90% of Wesley Day Centre clients are accessing other supports such as emergency shelters and Housing First programs. Recognizing the loss of the integrated drop-in model, staff would continue to co-ordinate with other service providers to connect clients to service alternatives available in the community to minimize client impact. This option would require no additional funding.

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OPTION 2:

Alternatively, the City of Hamilton could explore combining many of the services offered by the Wesley Day Centre into the Public Health Services (PHS) application for a Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) site. Day supports provided within a CTS site would need to reflect the requirements for a CTS as outlined by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care which has recently been renamed the Ministry of Health (MOH), and subsequently may be scaled down to meet CTS requirements. This option is unlikely to be implemented until January 2020 at the earliest.

This option would be dependent upon approval of a CTS site by the MOH. In which case, interim funding from the City could be provided to Wesley for the Wesley Day Centre to remain at the current location until the lease expires. Housing Services Division has met with the landlord, Wesley Community Homes Inc. to review options in this regard. Housing Services Division would work with Wesley Community Homes Inc. on the lease until expiry in March 2020 with a possibility of extending the lease on a month-to-month basis to add additional time, if required. This option requires providing month-to-month funding for the Wesley Day Centre to remain at the current location until March 2020. Healthy and Safe Communities Department and Corporate Services staff would be required to identify an estimated \$325,000 in funding to continue the service until March 31, 2020.

PHS is currently working towards submission of a CTS application for a second site in Hamilton to address the harms associated with substance misuse. The Board of Health (BOH) approved PHS to submit a CTS application at the March 18, 2019 BOH meeting (Report BOH19017).

CTS is the Ontario government's model for supervised consumption under the MOH. CTS sites are a legally sanctioned location where people can bring pre-obtained substances for injection, ingestion and/or inhalation. In addition to the provision of supervised consumption services, a CTS site must also provide wrap-around services to support people who use substances. The wrap-around supports provided within a CTS include access to health services, social supports (including access to housing, outreach workers, and employment supports), addictions counselling, and linking clients to treatment services.

Funding provided by the MOH for a CTS site only supports the provision of supervised consumption services. This includes full-time equivalent employees and supplies directly associated with the consumption services, post consumption space, referrals and/or addressing community concerns. CTS funding provided by the MOH does not cover the provision of wrap-around services. With this option, the City of Hamilton would identify the estimated cost of day support services in this regard and be required to identify alternative sources of funding to support the provision of day support services within a CTS site.

OPTION 3:

The City could provide sustainable and on-going funding of approximately \$558,000 annually to Wesley and assist in securing a new location. This option would directly respond to the formal request provided by Wesley to the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department and the Director of Housing Services following the June 20, 2019 Emergency and Community Services Committee meeting. This option would require Healthy & Safe Communities department staff to work with Corporate Services to identify a sustainable funding source as Wesley has communicated that they do not have operating funds to continue to fund the Day Centre. Staff would also be required to assist in identifying a new permanent location.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None