



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 13, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Adaptation and Transformation of Services for People Experiencing Homelessness Update 1 (HSC20020(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Brian Kreps (905) 546-2424 Ext. 1782
SUBMITTED BY:	Edward John Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (a) That Council approve:
- (i) The authority of the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department continue to enter into contracts necessary to secure access and purchase of service of the rental of hotel rooms for expanded temporary housing during the Coronavirus pandemic as well as cleaning, food and associated services from vendors and providers satisfactory to the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department;
 - (ii) Conditional grants up to a maximum of \$2.0 M in total to shelter providers for the provision of staffing and additional supports to homeless clients receiving emergency shelter in these hotel rooms;
 - (iii) A conditional grant in the maximum amount of \$550 K to the Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton to renovate 378 Main Street East (the former Cathedral Boys School) into a temporary shelter for 45 men;
 - (iv) A conditional grant in the maximum amount of \$700 K to the Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton to operate 378 Main Street East (the former Cathedral Boys School) as a temporary shelter for 45 men for the period of September 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021;

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- (v) A conditional grant in the maximum amount of \$120 K to Mission Services of Hamilton Inc. to renovate their shelter at 325 James St. N. to allow for appropriate physical distancing and to return the shelter to an occupancy of 58 persons; and,
 - (vi) A conditional grant in the maximum amount of \$930 K to Wesley Urban Ministries Inc. to operate its Isolation Centre for people experiencing homelessness for the period of July 6, 2020 to June 30, 2021;
- (b) That all such purchases and grants outlined in Recommendation (a) that are approved by Council be funded from any available source jointly deemed appropriate by the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department and the General Manager of the Finance and Corporate Services Department including, but not limited to, one or more of the following sources: Reaching Home, Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, any available provincial or federal funding, or any available funds from the general levy;
- (c) That the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department be directed and authorized, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, to enter into, execute and administer all agreements and documents necessary to implement the purchases and grants outlined in Recommendation (a) on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor; and,

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Housing Services created a framework outlining immediate, mid-term and long-term actions to guide a transition from emergency response to a focus on adaption and transformation of the services to prevent transmission of the COVID-19 virus. To improve physical distancing, the shelters serving men reduced occupancy so guests could spread out. The First Ontario Centre (FOC) temporary shelter for men enabled this reduced occupancy. A key part of the framework is to maintain existing shelter capacity while moving toward decommissioning the temporary shelter for men at FOC.

In line with this framework, Housing Services staff have negotiated agreements with three hotels to continue providing hotel rooms for people experiencing homelessness through to June 30, 2021. This includes 25 hotel rooms for families, 20 rooms for men and 20 rooms for women. The City has ensured food is provided for individuals at all hotels. Currently, Good Shepherd Centre Hamilton (Good Shepherd) manages the site for single women and Mission Services of Hamilton Inc. (Mission Services) manages the site for single men.

Good Shepherd has identified that the former Cathedral Boys School, which it owns, could be renovated to provide up to 45 beds of temporary emergency shelter for men.

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These temporary beds would be in a congregate setting, but would incorporate appropriate physical distancing and, where possible, physical barriers. The renovation would be completed by the end of the summer to allow for the temporary shelter at FOC to be decommissioned.

With the investment of capital funding, Mission Services will be able to create partitions between beds in their dorms and create 10 rooms. This will allow them to operate at their original capacity of 58 beds.

Housing Services Division staff have negotiated with Wesley Urban Ministries Inc. (Wesley Urban Ministries) to operate the Isolation Centre for homeless individuals and families who test positive for the COVID-19 virus. Isolation Centre operations moved from Bennetto Recreation Centre to a new location in the downtown core on July 6, 2020. The capacity for individuals was reduced to 10 beds and the capacity for families remains at 5 units.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

The recommendations in Report HSC20020(a) represent new investments in operating expenditures in the shelter system. To date the City has received \$6,880,800 in provincial and \$2,619,966 in federal funding to assist with costs related to serving the homeless population during the pandemic.

Funding for the hotels includes food and damage costs in addition to the regular room charge. Contracts for Good Shepherd and Mission Services include the cost for managing the site, supporting clients, and some food charges. The City is also covering additional charges for security, increased cleaning/sanitation services, and laundry.

The funding for Good Shepherd is to design, renovate and operate the former Cathedral Boys School as a temporary emergency shelter.

The funding for Mission Services is to design and construct partitions, as well as private rooms and other improvements to allow for physical distancing and reduce infection transmission.

As of December 31, 2020, we are projecting COVID costs of \$15.3 M that exceeds current funding by \$5.8 M. Report HSC20020 included costs for 2020 of \$2.3 M, and the recommendations in Report HSC20020(a) included costs of \$4.89 M. The costs in Report HSC20020(a) are offset by the decommissioning of current facilities and revisions included in the projected costs by \$6.15 M for a total deficit in 2020 of \$6.85 M.

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As of June 30, 2021, we project additional COVID costs of \$9.06 M, Report HSC20020 costs of \$1.30 M and Report HSC20020(a) projected costs of \$4.22 M. The costs in Report HSC20020(a) are offset by the decommissioning of current facilities and revisions included in the projected costs by \$4.15 M for a total deficit in 2021 of \$10.43 M. Overall, the cumulative deficit projected is \$17.28 M for 2020 to June 2021.

	Current COVID-19 Response	HSC20020	HSC20020(a)	Total
Prov/Fed Funding	\$-9.5 M	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$-9.5 M
Projected Costs to December 31, 2020	\$15.3 M	\$2.3 M	\$4.9 M	\$22.5 M
Revised Projected Costs to December 31, 2020			\$-6.15	\$-6.15
Deficit December 31, 2020	\$5.8 M	\$2.3 M	\$-1.25 M	\$6.85 M
Projected Costs to June 30 2021	\$9.06 M	\$1.3 M	\$4.22 M	\$14.58 M
Revised Projected Costs to June 30 2021			\$-4.15	\$-4.15
Deficit June 30, 2021	\$14.86 M	\$3.6 M	\$-1.19 M	\$17.28 M

Should no new resources be received from the provincial or federal government, the City of Hamilton would need to explore other financial options to support the on-going homelessness needs addressed in the recommendations above as well as future funding required to support the delivery of homeless services in a COVID-19 environment.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At its June 19 meeting, the Emergency and Community Services (ECS) Committee approved Report HSC20020 which authorized up to \$3.4 M to fund day centres and drop-ins at Living Rock, Mission Services, Wesley Urban Ministries and the YWCA Hamilton. It also authorized up to \$400 K to help Salvation Army Booth Centre create 30 individual rooms.

At the same meeting, the ECS Committee approved Report HSC20022 Canadian Medical Association Foundation COVID-19 Community Response for Vulnerable Populations Fund

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authorizing the acceptance of \$345,000 which will complement Hamilton's Reaching Home base funding.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

N/A

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The Housing Services Division consulted with the sector planning tables including the Women's Housing Planning Collaborative, the Men's Emergency Services Coordination Committee, as well as an ad hoc sector group representing community partners in the health and housing sector. These groups have advised that shelter capacity must be maintained to address current needs and in anticipation of a potential rise in demand when evictions resume. There was also support for continuing and expanding responses that allow for maximizing physical distancing including the adaptation of existing congregate space to single rooms.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Housing Services Division has developed a framework to guide its transition from emergency response to adaption and transformation of its services. A key component of the framework is maintaining the appropriate number of emergency beds currently available. Contracting with hotels allows the City to ensure emergency beds are available for families, men, women and couples can be accommodated within existing shelter space. The Housing Services Division has negotiated agreements with three hotels for a total of 65 beds for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 which is the number of rooms regularly used through the pandemic. Given the specific needs of the single men and women staying in the hotels, it is necessary to contract with agencies to manage the sites and provide the supports.

Renovating a portion of the former Cathedral Boys School takes advantage of a site that is owned by a community partner. The estimated renovation costs of \$550 K are an affordable way to quickly create additional spaces for single men allowing Good Shepherd to transfer their temporary shelter operations from FOC to the new site. In order to best support and manage the individuals, the facility would include:

- Meals and snacks for all of those accommodated;
- Lounge space;
- Recreational activities;
- Medical services through a nurse practitioner and the Shelter Health Network;
- Harm reduction supports;
- Case management and housing support services; and,

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- Outreach services provided through other agencies including Ontario Works.

Providing capital funding to Mission Services will allow them to improve infection prevention and increase privacy by building partitions between beds in the dorms and building 10 private/separate rooms and return occupancy to 58.

Maintaining the capacity for people experiencing homelessness to isolate if they test positive for COVID-19 is another key element of the framework. Contracting with Wesley Urban Ministries to operate the isolation centre will allow the facility at Bennetto Recreation Centre to be decommissioned. Wesley will provide isolation service at a site it leases and operates currently with 10 beds to serve men and women and five family townhouse units to serve families. Family capacity will remain the same, but the number of beds for individuals will be reduced from 25 to 10. Given that the system has experienced an average of one positive test per month over the past three months, this is an appropriate capacity level.

The framework for adapting and transforming housing services to respond to the challenges of Covid-19, attached as Appendix “A” to Report HSC20020(a), outlines immediate, mid-term and long-term actions completed (noted with a check mark) or to be undertaken by the Housing Services Division.

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.

Built Environment and Infrastructure

Hamilton is supported by state of the art infrastructure, transportation options, buildings and public spaces that create a dynamic City.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report HSC20020(a): Framework for Adapting and Transforming Services

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