



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 10, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Municipal Affairs and Housing Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (HSC20036) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Rob Mastroianni (905) 546-2424 Ext. 8035
SUBMITTED BY:	Edward John Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department, or his designate, be authorized and directed to enter into and execute an Agreement with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to administer the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 to a maximum amount of \$11,323,812 and any agreements with Community Services Provider(s), as well as any ancillary agreements, contracts, extensions and documents required to give effect thereto in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 2, 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) announced that the City of Hamilton is eligible to receive additional funding to support challenges brought on by COVID-19 through the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (SSRF Phase 2) through the submission of a business case detailing local need (attached as Appendix "A" to Report HSC20036). Under SSRF Phase 2, the City of Hamilton will be eligible to receive \$11,323,812 in 2020-21, where the business case supports these expenditures.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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These funds are intended to complement an initial allocation provided through the MMAH Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) as part of the provincial government's COVID-19 response plan. The City of Hamilton received \$6,880,800 through SSRF.

Hamilton has coordinated closely with critical community partners in health and social services to plan for the risk of infection, spread or outbreak of COVID-19, with success to date reflected in only three individuals testing positive for COVID-19 and requiring access to the isolation shelter to recover and no outbreaks declared in emergency shelters.

The funding will further Hamilton's ability to continue with containment practices that have proven successful thus far, such as efforts to enhance permanent housing interventions, reduce shelter crowding, provide isolation services, COVID-19 screening and testing protocols in all funded shelters and drop-in programs, and securing personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, and other equipment. Consideration and implementation of a number of rent protection and stability options will also be adopted including, but not limited to, increasing access and flexibility with the existing Housing Stability Benefit and potential enhancements to rent bank programming.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As of March 31, 2021, projected COVID costs total \$20.06 M. Housing Services will be completing a business case for the Ministry by September 11, 2020 to demonstrate the use of \$11.3 M in SSRF Phase 2 funding by March 31, 2021, in accordance with the guidelines. Costs beyond March 31, 2021 will need to be addressed by subsequent CHPI SSRF funding given that all funds provided to date must be utilized by March 31, 2021.

As of June 30, 2021, projected COVID costs of \$3.3 M do not have a confirmed funding source. Housing Services will continue to advocate for additional funding to address the shortfall.

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<i>Projected and Committed COVID costs</i>	Fiscal 20/21			Fiscal 21/22	
	Dec-20	Mar-21	April to March TOTAL	April to June Jun-21	TOTAL
Existing Funding (RH, CMA & SSRF 1)		(9.50)	(9.50)		0.00
RH		(0.38)	(0.38)		0.00
CHPI SSRF 2		(11.32)	(11.32)		0.00
<i>Funding Subtotal</i>	0.00	(21.20)	(21.20)	0.00	0.00
Est Monthly COVID Costs	8.56	0.35	8.91	1.75	1.75
HSC20020	2.70	0.90	3.60		0.00
HSC20020(a)	5.80	1.75	7.55	1.55	1.55
<i>Covid Cost Subtotal</i>	17.06	3.00	20.06	3.30	3.30
Total	17.06	(18.20)	(1.14)	3.30	3.30

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS – N/A

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The City of Hamilton received a base funding amount of \$19,455,174 from the Provincial Governments Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The CHPI is a 100% provincially funded outcomes-based program that aims to prevent and end homelessness by improving access to adequate, suitable, and affordable housing and homelessness services for people experiencing homelessness and for people at-risk of homelessness. Housing Services Division brokers many of these services through community partners.

On April 1, 2020, the City of Hamilton received a funding allocation in the amount of \$6,880,800 under the provincial Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) for 2020-2021 to support the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities, including people who are homeless or at-risk of becoming, during the COVID-19 crisis. The additional funding is intended to complement Hamilton’s CHPI base funding.

On July 2, 2020, the province announced that the City of Hamilton is eligible to receive additional funding to support ongoing challenges brought on by COVID-19 through the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (SSRF Phase 2). Under SSRF Phase 2, the City of Hamilton will be eligible to receive \$11,323,812 in 2020-21.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

None

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Quick distribution of COVID-19 emergency response funding is critical to protect those experiencing homelessness or housing instability and the workers supporting them. On March 27, 2020, Housing Services received endorsement from the Community Advisory Board for the investment of Federal and Provincial COVID-19 funds in accordance with the coordination provided by the City of Hamilton's Emergency Operations Committee and information provided by the Indigenous Community and community partners. Housing Services committed to reporting back to the Community Advisory Board with details on the details of investments made.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The SSRF Phase 2 will support provincial CHPI investments in Hamilton to connect individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing with supports and to keep individuals and staff in the homelessness sector safe during COVID-19.

The objectives of SSRF Phase 2 are to: mitigate ongoing risk for vulnerable people, especially in congregate care settings; encourage longer-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post-COVID-19; and to enhance rent assistance provided to households in rent arrears due to COVID-19.

Eligible operating expenses under SSRF Phase 2 include but are not limited to:

- administration costs;
- operating costs (including building homeless shelter capacity; use of motels or hotels as isolation centres or to support social distancing; rental assistance such as funding for rent arrears and short-term housing allowances; transportation costs; food and supplies; enhanced cleaning services; non-medical staffing requirements; rent bank and emergency energy funds; etc.); and
- capital costs (including major retrofits and upgrades to an existing Service Manager-administered emergency shelter, over-flow shelter, and/or congregate living space to help ensure shelter spaces adhere to public health directives; purchase of a hotel, motel or other facility that would be converted/upgraded to provide longer-term housing solutions; and retrofit of existing Service Manager-administered transitional or supportive housing facility, and/or creating new innovative models of transitional and supportive housing).

This funding investment may be used to offset eligible costs incurred on or after July 2, 2020 and all eligible operating expenses must be spent by March 31, 2021.

Authorization of the General Manager of Healthy and Safe Communities, or his designate, to enter into and execute an Agreement with the MMAH for SSRF Phase 2 is recommended to facilitate the acceptance and quick distribution of funding from the

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MMAH, which is critical to Hamilton's COVID-19 response related to housing and shelter services.

SSRF Phase 2 funding will offset costs to committed programs, such as: additional shelter capacity within hotel overflow; capital repairs enabling shelters to return to pre-pandemic occupancy; expansion of drop-in services; personal protective equipment; etc.

Given that SSRF Phase 2 will largely address the existing commitments made to date up until March 31, 2021, other potential items under review, such as supports to highly acute individuals, supportive housing, and rent supports to individuals impacted by the pandemic will also be presented through the business case process; recognizing that additional funds beyond the allocation may be considered. These additional requests above and beyond the allocation will be determined on the quality of the business case submissions and availability of funds within the system.

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

Appendix "A" to Report HSC20036: MMAH SSRF Phase 2 Allocation Letter