



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	November 19, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Federal Reaching Home Funding Allocation (HSC20053) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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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 their designate, be authorized and directed to enter into and execute an Agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada to administer Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness to a maximum amount of \$7,958,350 and any agreements with Community Services Provider(s) delivered in alignment with Reaching Home Directives, 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 September 21, 2020, the Federal Government announced an additional investment of \$236.7 M through Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy to extend and expand emergency responses to the COVID-19 outbreak across Canada. The City of Hamilton's new incremental funding allocation under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness is \$5,306,800. Since April 1, 2020, Hamilton also received an additional \$2,651,550 through this Response Plan. This new Agreement is an inclusive amendment to the

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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previously received funding under the Response Plan with a cumulative total of \$7,958,350.

These additional funds are intended to complement current Reaching Home funding, with a focus on extending emergency measures that have been successful in reducing the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks among people experiencing homelessness, as well as providing communities with flexibility to deliver affordable housing solutions.

The additional funding through Reaching Home will allow Hamilton to continue with containment practices that have proven successful to date, including 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. With the goal of creating lasting solutions for people experiencing homelessness, effective and evidence-based strategies and approaches will continue to be implemented in the local context to ensure ongoing effectiveness and accountability.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

The following chart outlines projected and committed costs related to COVID-19 specific homelessness funding, including federal Reaching Home – Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness Phase 1 (RH1) and Phase 2 (RH2), CMA Foundation COVID-19 Community Response Fund for Vulnerable Populations (CMA), and provincial Social Services Relief Fund Phase 1 (SSRF1) and Phase 2 (SSRF2):

	Dec-20	Mar-21	Fiscal 20/21 April to March TOTAL	June-21	Fiscal 21/22 April to June TOTAL
Existing Funding (RH1, CMA & SSRF1)		(9.88)	(9.88)		
SSRF2		(11.32)	(11.32)		
RH2		(5.30)	(5.30)		
Projected 2020 Surplus Utilization	(1.90)		(1.90)		
Funding Subtotal	(1.90)	(26.50)	(28.40)	0.00	0.00
Estimated COVID costs	10.54	1.35	11.89	3.90	3.90
HSC20020	2.70	0.90	3.60		0.00
HSC20020(a)	5.80	1.75	7.55	1.55	1.55
COVID Cost Subtotal	19.04	4.00	23.04	5.45	5.45
Total	17.14	(22.50)	(5.36)	5.45	5.45

As of March 31, 2021, projected COVID costs total \$23.04 M. Costs beyond March 31, 2021 will need to be addressed by subsequent funding from Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness and provincial Social Services Relief funding given that all funds provided to date must be utilized by March 31, 2021.

As of June 30, 2021, projected COVID costs of \$5.45 M do not have a confirmed funding source. Housing Services will continue to advocate for additional funding to address the shortfall.

Staffing – N/A

Legal – N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy 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. A total of \$29,985,493 in Reaching Home base funding will be allocated in Hamilton over a 5-year period from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024

The City of Hamilton dedicates 20% of Federal homelessness program dollars to Indigenous-specific homelessness services, with the Indigenous Community Entity and Indigenous Community Advisory Board providing funding recommendations to the General Manager of Healthy and Safe Communities.

Through Reaching Home, Designated Communities are required to work toward the following mandatory community-level outcomes: chronic homelessness in the community is reduced; homelessness in the community is reduced overall and for specific populations; new inflows into homelessness are reduced; and returns to homelessness are reduced.

On March 30, 2020, the City of Hamilton received a funding allocation in the amount of \$2,274,966 under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness for 2020-2021 to support to support people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 outbreak.

After submitting a request for additional funding under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness, on July 14, 2020 the City of Hamilton received an additional funding allocation of \$376,584.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

As of April 3, 2020, the City of Hamilton entered into a Service Agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada. This Service Agreement applies to all Reaching Home funding, including emergency COVID-19 response, and will require the City of Hamilton to adhere to the requirements and directives prescribed through Reaching Home.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

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 investments made.

On an ongoing basis through the pandemic, the City has continued to consult regularly 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 on issues relating to shelter capacity, permanent housing interventions, eviction prevention, and responses that allow for maximizing physical distancing including the adaptation of existing congregate spaces.

The City has also maintained direct contact with Indigenous partners through the Indigenous Community Entity, ensuring that our response is in alignment with the unique needs present within Hamilton's Urban Indigenous population.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Additional funding under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness will continue to support Reaching Home objectives and deliverables, allowing Hamilton to further connect those experiencing homelessness to permanent housing with supports and to keep individuals and staff in the homelessness sector safe during COVID-19. Quick distribution of COVID-19 emergency response funding is critical to protect those experiencing homelessness or housing instability and the workers supporting them.

Building on existing Reaching Home program directives, additional funding under Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness will have flexibility in how it is administered based on updated guidelines provided by the Federal government. This funding investment and all eligible

operating expenses must be spent by March 31, 2021. As of June 30, 2021, projected COVID costs of \$5.45 M do not have a confirmed funding source. Housing Services will continue to advocate for additional funding to address the shortfall.

Authorization of the General Manager of Healthy and Safe Communities, or their designate, to enter into and execute an Agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada to administer Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan to Support People Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness is recommended to facilitate the acceptance and quick distribution of funding, which is critical to Hamilton's ongoing COVID-19 response related to housing and shelter services.

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

None