



## INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	December 10, 2020
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Women's Emergency Shelter Request for Proposals (RFP) 2020 (HSC20062) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Yolisa de Jager (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3863 Rob Mastroianni (905) 546-2424 Ext. 8035 Nadia Zelisko (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2548
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Edward John Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

### COUNCIL DIRECTION

Not Applicable

### INFORMATION

This Report is to provide an update on the Women's Emergency Shelter Request for Proposals (RFP) 2020 and the successful project. The Request for Proposals occurred from November 4 -15, 2020 and sought proposals to deliver a minimum of 15 emergency shelter beds for women, trans-feminine, trans-masculine and non-binary adults with an annual budget of \$520,000 provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) funding.

Three proposals were received, with two proposals deemed viable: Good Shepherd Centre and Mission Services. The evaluation committee recommended the Good Shepherd Centre proposal proceed as it was the highest scoring project. On November 27, 2020, the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department approved the project for funding.

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## Project Details

Good Shepherd Centre's shelter proposal is linked to two additional proposals:

- one with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) fund for the purchase of the shelter building; and,
- a funding request with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) to expand Violence Against Women (VAW) beds in Hamilton.

In its entirety, the emergency shelter proposal would result in a total of up to 40 emergency shelter beds for women and gender diverse adults, up to 25 additional VAW beds for women experiencing gender-based violence, and a minimum of 65 Single Room Occupancy housing units. A total of up to 50 net new emergency shelter beds would be created across the global women's sheltering system, both city and provincially funded shelters.

Pending the success of the RHI proposal, the Good Shepherd Centre would merge existing Mary's Place operations (25 beds) with the proposed additional 40 beds at the new location. Pending MCCSS funding, the vacated shelter space would be available for VAW shelter bed expansion for up to 25 beds. The emergency shelter proposal as described would have an annual operation budget shortfall of up to \$950,000.

Concurrent to the Request for Proposals process, the Expanding Housing and Support Services for Women, Non-Binary and Transgender Community Sub-Committee directed staff to report back with options and alternatives related to additional capital and operating funds related to additional emergency shelter beds. On December 4, 2020, Report HSC20061 Women's Shelter and Support Investment Options was presented, recommending:

- (a) That annual funding up to \$950,000 from the Net Levy to support the operating costs of the Good Shepherd Centre's Emergency Shelter proposal and increase the investment in a Municipally-funded Portable Housing Benefit Program for women, trans-feminine, trans-masculine and non-binary adults from Hamilton's By-Name List, be approved to be referred to the 2021 Operating Budget for consideration; and,
- (b) That, in the event the proposed Good Shepherd Emergency Shelter project does not proceed, annual funding of up to \$950,000 from the Net Levy to support the operating costs of Mission Services' Emergency Shelter proposal and increase the investment in the Municipally-funded Portable Housing Benefit Program for women, trans-feminine, trans-masculine and non-binary adults from Hamilton's

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**SUBJECT: Women's Emergency Shelter Request for Proposals (RFP) 2020  
(HSC20062) (City Wide) - Page 3 of 4**

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By-Name List, be approved to be referred to the 2021 Operating Budget for consideration.

Currently funding apportioned to shelter operations are provided wholly from the provincial CHPI budget which represents approximately \$9 M dollars annually. On this basis, given that the commitments already made under this funding stream make it impossible to enhance funding for any additional shelter beds without ceasing funding to an existing service, staff recommended the consideration of net levy dollars through the budget process. The recommendations approved by the Sub-Committee therefore, if approved, would represent an unprecedented commitment from the net levy for the emergency shelter system.

If the interdependent proposals that are linked to the Good Shepherd Centre's proposal are not successful, and the project is unable to proceed, staff will seek the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department approval to fund Mission Services' emergency shelter proposal. The Mission Services project, as proposed, would operate 15 emergency shelter beds, requiring Net Levy support for annual operating costs up to \$225,000 and initial start-up costs of \$413,700.

## **BACKGROUND**

On September 10, 2020, Report HSC20037 Emergency Shelter Services for Single Homeless Women was presented to Council outlining the closure of 15 shelter beds at Mountainview, Native Women's Centre, and the requirement to initiate a Request for Proposal process to replace and enhance gender-specific emergency shelter beds.

On October 9, 2020, the Housing Services Division initiated a Request for Information process, seeking specific information from the public on shelter service design. Areas of interest include:

- Gender-specific services for women, trans-feminine, trans-masculine, and non-binary homeless adults
- Low-barrier services
- Service Restrictions
- Harm Reduction
- Housing-Focused sheltering
- Role and Coordination within Hamilton's homeless-serving system
- Improved connection to housing/ shelter bed turnover

From November 4 to 15, 2020, the RFP was open. The evaluation committee met on November 20 and 24, achieving consensus on evaluation scores and recommendations for the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department.

### Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

Homelessness is a gendered experience, impacting single women, trans-feminine, trans-masculine and non-binary individuals differently than men or families. Through an analysis of Women's Emergency Shelter data up to and including January - October 2020, a total of 25 beds was recommended to address shelter occupancy pressures: 15 beds to replace the beds lost due to the Mountainview Shelter closure, and an additional 10 net new beds. Given limitations in the allotted CHPI funding, the request for proposals sought a minimum of 15 beds to ensure no further loss of shelter beds occurred.

The Request for Information submissions were considered and integrated into the Request for Proposals process and application. Proponents were required to describe how an equity, diversity and inclusion analysis was applied to the design and operations of the proposed programs. Proponents were evaluated on their ability and experience of delivering inclusive, trauma-informed, gender-based emergency shelter services to women, trans-feminine, trans-masculine and non-binary adults experiencing homelessness.

Through consultation with the Coalition of Hamilton Indigenous Leaders (CHIL), as Hamilton's Indigenous Community Entity for federal homelessness funding, the RFP sought information on formal organizational commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons. Proponents were required to share how the proposed projects would provide, support and accommodate services for First Nation, Métis and Inuit clients.

Accessibility considerations for emergency shelters were informed by the Request for Information submissions and integrated within the application. Proposals were evaluated on their location and accessible infrastructure, such as access to public transit and ability to accommodate mobility devices. Proponents were required to outline how service delivery and operations would be free from discrimination and promote low-barrier access to shelter and services, including the integration of harm reduction approaches and materials for individuals with active substance use.

### **APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

None