



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 4, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Municipal Affairs and Housing Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 Holdback (HSC20036(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Rob Mastroianni (905) 546-2424 Ext. 8035 Nadia Zelisko (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2548
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 (MMAH) to administer the additional Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (SSRF2) allocation to a maximum amount of \$6,395,900 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 December 15, 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced that the City of Hamilton is eligible to receive additional Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 funding to support challenges brought on by COVID-19 through the submission of an investment plan for funding. Under SSRF2, the City of Hamilton will receive an additional \$6,395,900 in 2020-21 (attached as Appendix "A" to Report HSC20036(a)).

These funds are intended to complement initial allocations provided through the MMAH SSRF and SSRF2 as part of the provincial government's COVID-19 response plan.

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.

SUBJECT: Municipal Affairs and Housing Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (HSC20036) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 5

The City of Hamilton received \$6,880,800 through the SSRF in April 2020 and \$11,323,812 in July 2020 through the SSRF2.

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.

The funding will further Hamilton's ability to continue with containment practices while providing longer-term housing solutions and permanent housing interventions.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As of March 31, 2021, projected COVID costs will total \$28.02 M. Housing Services Division will be completing a business case for the Ministry to demonstrate the use of \$6.4 M in SSRF2 additional funding by the utilization deadlines of March 31, 2021 for operating and December 31, 2021 for capital expenses, in accordance with the guidelines. Operating costs beyond March 31, 2021 will need to be addressed by subsequent CHPI SSRF funding. As \$6.4 M cannot be spent on operating by March 31, 2021, staff propose to use a significant portion of the funds for projects creating critical new supportive units that will utilize the funds by December 31, 2021. RH Phase 2 eligible COVID costs have not been included in the table below.

	Fiscal 20/21			Fiscal 21/22	
	Dec-20	Mar-21	April to March TOTAL	June-21	April to June TOTAL
Existing Funding (RH, CMA & SSFF)		(21.20)	(21.20)		0.00
RHI Phase 2		(5.30)	(5.30)		0.00
CHPI SSRF2 Holdback		(6.40)	(6.40)		0.00
Financial Subtotal	0.00	(32.90)	(32.90)	0.00	0.00
Est. Monthly COVID Costs	9.83	0.64	10.47	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
CHPI SSRF2 Holdback Planned Expenditures		6.40	6.40		
COVID Cost Subtotal	18.33	9.69	28.02	3.30	3.30
Total	18.33	(23.21)	(4.88)	3.30	3.30

As of June 30, 2021, projected COVID costs of \$3.3 M are funded by the Municipal Safe Restart funding allocation. Housing Services Division will continue to advocate for additional funding for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

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 Government's Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. 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 homeless, during the COVID-19 crisis. The additional funding is intended to complement Hamilton's CHPI base funding.

On July 2, 2020, the province announced an additional allocation of \$11,323,812 in 2020-21 for the City of Hamilton to support ongoing challenges brought on by COVID-19 through the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (SSRF2). The province communicated that a portion of the total SSRF2 funds would be held back to help communities disproportionately impacted by the effects of COVID-19.

On December 15, 2020, the City of Hamilton received an additional \$6,395,900 in SSRF2 funding in 2020-21. The Ministry held back these funds from SSRF2 and they now must be utilized by March 31, 2021 for operating expenses and December 31, 2021 for capital expenses. As Hamilton has capital projects ready to go, the Housing Services Division has been able to secure this funding that might otherwise be unused.

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, the Housing Services Division 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

SUBJECT: Municipal Affairs and Housing Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (HSC20036) (City Wide) - Page 4 of 5

Operations Committee and information provided by the Indigenous Community and community partners. The Housing Services Division committed to reporting back to the Community Advisory Board with details on the details of investments made.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The SSRF2 supports 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 SSRF2 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 and capital expenses under SSRF2 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. Capital funds must be spent by December 31, 2021.

Authorization of the General Manager of the Healthy and Safe Communities Department, or his designate, to enter into and execute an Agreement with the MMAH for SSRF2 is recommended to facilitate the acceptance and quick distribution of funding from the MMAH, which is critical to Hamilton's COVID-19 response related to housing and shelter services.

SSRF2 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;

SUBJECT: Municipal Affairs and Housing Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 (HSC20036) (City Wide) - Page 5 of 5

new permanent supportive housing, etc. Potential permanent supportive housing projects include the second building in Indwell's Phase 1 Royal Oaks development which was approved for funding through Request for Proposals C5-19-19, and additional funds needed by projects approved for and seeking funding through the Rapid Housing Initiative. These projects can meet the SSRF2 requirement to spend the funds before December 31, 2021.

Significant pressure on the housing system throughout the pandemic has been the result of flow through the system slowing due to the lack of permanent supportive housing for high need individuals. The capital projects noted above will help alleviate this issue.

Given that SSRF2 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