

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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August 16, 2021

Fred Eisenberger
Mayor, City of Hamilton
City Hall 71 Main Street West, 2nd Floor
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Fred Eisenberger:

I am pleased to be writing to you today with important details regarding an additional investment of \$307 million we are making available through the fourth and final phase of the province's Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) and through the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI).

As you know, protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians has always been our government's number one priority throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We have made several difficult decisions to safeguard Ontarians, including public health and workplace safety measures made in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other healthcare experts.

As well, we have announced multiple investments totalling \$765 million to support Ontario's Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators through three iterations of the province's SSRF, and other provincial investments to support those suffering from mental health and addictions issues and to support isolation centre capacity in select municipalities. We know that this funding has been effective in supporting Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to respond quickly, adapt services, and address the housing and economic impacts of COVID-19 in their communities.

Building on these investments, our government is pleased to announce an additional **\$307 million** to Ontario's municipal and Indigenous partners.

Under the fourth and final phase of the SSRF, **\$286.4 million** will be provided in additional one-time operating and capital funding, bringing the government's total SSRF investment to just over \$1 billion. This final phase of SSRF funding will enable Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators to continue to support the vital services that were established to address the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable

Ontarians, while ensuring an orderly winddown of provincial supports as the SSRF comes to an end.

Under the "SSRF Phase 4", I am pleased to confirm that the City of Hamilton will receive an additional **\$13,823,000** in provincial funding for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Under the COCHI program, our government has also approved the release of up to an additional **\$21 million**. This funding will support community housing providers across Ontario, including the state of repair of the legacy social housing stock.

Under COCHI, I am pleased to also announce an additional funding allocation in the amount of **\$1,028,000** to the City of Hamilton for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Program Details – Social Services Relief Fund Phase 4

This funding supports operating and capital expenses to mitigate the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the homelessness sector. Funding is to be used by Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators for eligible expenses (in accordance with the enclosed Social Services Relief Fund Phase 4 Program Guidelines) beginning April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

The objectives for SSRF Phase 4 are as follows:

1. **Mitigate ongoing risk for vulnerable people, especially in congregate care settings:**
 - Where appropriate, support changes to the physical design of congregate spaces, permit physical distancing and other modifications based on public health guidance; and
 - Provide ongoing services and supports to address immediate pandemic needs of vulnerable people.
2. **Encourage longer-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post-COVID-19:**
 - Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators are encouraged to use funding in ways that create longer-term housing solutions, move towards client service models that are innovative, and support client and organizational readiness for potential future outbreaks or emergencies.
3. **Enhance rent assistance provided to households in rent arrears due to COVID-19:**
 - Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators are encouraged to consider using funding to support renter households who may be in rental arrears and at a high risk of becoming homeless.
4. **Ensure an orderly wind-down of SSRF-funded supports prior to program expiry on March 31, 2022:**

- Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators must outline a plan for the winddown of SSRF-funded supports and services as part of their SSRF Phase 4 Investment and Winddown Plan.

Of the additional funding, Service Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators may also use up to three per cent of their allocation for program administration costs, consistent with the approach under the SSRF Phase 2 and 3.

This amendment forms part of your Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) Service Manager Service Agreement effective January 1, 2013 with Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing ("Service Agreement") and any breach of any of the terms of the amendment shall constitute an Event of Default under the Service Agreement. All other provisions, including Section 17 – Audits and Reviews, of the Service Agreement remain in full force and effect.

Reporting Requirements – SSRF Phase 4

Reporting requirements for the fourth and final phase of the SSRF will be consistent with the current high-level CHPI reporting. However, these requirements will be augmented with monthly reporting to the Ministry. As well, Service Managers will be required to provide specific examples on the use of SSRF Phase 4 funding from time-to-time to demonstrate effectiveness of the investment.

To receive these additional SSRF Phase 4 funds, you are required to complete and submit the sign-back section of this letter and the enclosed Investment and Winddown Plan to demonstrate how your funding allocations would be used to achieve the objectives of the program and to support the winddown of SSRF-funded supports and services. Please return this back to the Ministry by **September 15, 2021**.

You may submit your signed confirmation and Investment and Winddown Plan via e-mail to your respective Team Lead, Regional Housing Services.

Upon receipt of the sign-back and Investment and Winddown Plan, the Ministry will confirm and communicate its approval of your SSRF Phase 4 allocation, and will proceed to initiate your first operating payment based on your cash flow requirements as outlined in your Investment and Winddown Plan.

The Ministry requires that all information set out in this letter regarding SSRF Phase 4 be held confidential until publicly announced by the province. The province will have sole responsibility for the initial public communication regarding the SSRF Phase 4 funding described in this letter.

After the initial public communication by the province, as with all provincial housing programs that provide funding, Service Managers must acknowledge support of the province in a form and manner as directed by the Ministry. While

we understand these exciting funding opportunities are often met with anticipation by residents and community agencies, these communication protocols have been agreed to by Service Managers. If you wish to make an announcement of funding, I would like to remind you that you are required to notify your municipal services office well in advance for consideration by the province.

Program Details – Additional 2021-22 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative Funding

To help sustain, repair and grow the community housing sector, our government introduced the Community Housing Renewal Strategy in 2019. Under this strategy and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we allocated almost \$1.8 billion to the sector in 2020-21, and project to invest up to \$1.3 billion in 2021-22.

Despite these investments, we recognize there are continued challenges faced by community housing providers across Ontario, including the state of repair of the legacy social housing stock.

A key program to support our community housing providers has been the COCHI program. As noted above, I am pleased to announce an additional funding allocation of **\$1,028,000** under COCHI for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

This funding is in addition to the 2021-22 COCHI allocation of \$2,784,784 that was communicated to you through the Ministry's letter dated May 6, 2021, bringing your total 2021-22 funding for COCHI to **\$3,812,784**.

All conditions of funding as communicated through the COCHI/OPHI Program Guidelines and our above referred letter remain the same, including the requirement to report municipal social housing expenditures that match the total annual COCHI allocation provided.

To receive these additional COCHI funds, you are required to complete and submit the enclosed Investment Plan (Appendix "D") that should reflect a sound financial plan and forecast of expenditures by program component. Please refer to the Ministry's COCHI/OPHI Program Guidelines for details about eligible program expenses, program administration fees, and key dates.

Also enclosed is an amendment to the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement for the COCHI/OPHI programs signed with the City of Hamilton to include the additional funding allocation. You are required to sign the enclosed amending agreement and return it to the Ministry to confirm your agreement to the terms and conditions of the additional COCHI funding.

Please return your signed amending agreement and Investment Plan via e-mail to your respective Team Lead, Regional Housing Services by **September 15, 2021**.

The Ministry requires that this additional COCHI funding be held confidential until publicly announced by the province.

Again, protecting the health and well-being of all Ontarians continues to be the government's number one priority. We sincerely appreciate your efforts to assist vulnerable people in your communities and I look forward to continuing to work together as we move forward with recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours truly,



The Honourable Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Enclosures

- c. Janette Smith, Chief Administrative Officer
Edward John, Director of Housing Services
Ian Russell, Team Lead, Municipal Services Office

The undersigned agrees to the terms of the above letter and to comply with the **Social Services Relief Fund Phase 4 Program Guidelines**.

Service Manager: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date:

I/We have authority to bind the organization.

Appendix "A"

Program Guidelines – Social Services Relief Fund Phase 4

Please see attached.

Appendix "B"

SSRF Phase 4 Investment and Winddown Plan

Please see attached.

Appendix "C"

**Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Amending Agreement for
Additional 2021-22 Funding**

Please see attached.

Appendix "D"

**2021-22 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Additional
Funding Investment Plan**

Please see attached.