




CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Housing Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	January 19, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters Site Options and Considerations (HSC22015(b)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Michelle Baird (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4860
SUBMITTED BY:	Angela Burden General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- (a) That staff be directed to review City-owned lands, including parks, based on the considerations identified in Appendix "A" to Report HSC22015(b), and identify a list of candidate properties for a Tiny Shelter development, and provide the candidate properties to HATS for their review and prioritization;
- (b) That staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee (ECS) with respect to the top three most appropriate City-owned lands that generally address the considerations in Appendix "A" to Report HSC22015(b) and that have been identified as suitable by HATS;
- (c) That staff include in the report back the approach proposed by HATS for a HATS-led community engagement process with respect to any identified sites; and,
- (d) That should HATS identify any new privately-owned lands that have been not previously considered but are available for a Tiny Shelter development, that staff review them against the same considerations identified in Appendix "A" to Report HSC22015(b), and report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee under the same process identified in (a), (b) and (c).

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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff from Planning and Economic Development Department and Housing Services Division have developed a list of considerations, outlined in Appendix “A” to Report HSC22015(b), in order to better assist in identifying location options for a potential Tiny Shelter site. These considerations may apply to both private and publicly-owned sites, and it is expected that prospective sites will address these considerations to varying degrees.

With it being unlikely that a “perfect” site is achievable for such an intervention, it is recommended that sites that best address the various considerations would be identified as the most appropriate, as opposed to a “pass/fail” approach, or a “weighted evaluation criteria” approach. As the immediate next step, it is recommended staff undertake a review of City-owned lands, including parks, based on the outlined considerations, to identify a narrowed-down list of candidate properties for a Tiny Shelter development. This list of candidate properties would then be provided to HATS for their review, and subsequently brought back to Emergency and Community Services Committee with recommendations for a preferred site or sites following a community engagement process with respect to any identified sites. This process will take a period of time and is not expected to result in identified sites for this winter. Should Council wish to fund a tiny shelters solution immediately as part of a response this winter, Council could direct staff to work with HATS to support them in implementing a tiny shelter on a specific site from among the list of sites that HATS has identified as preferred.

Alternatives for Consideration – See page 4

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At its meeting of December 1, 2022, the Emergency and Community Services Committee had before it Report HSC22015(a) entitled “Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters Proposal.” Consideration of the report was deferred “until such time that staff can report back to the Emergency and Community Services Community meeting of January 19, 2023 on location options publicly, institutionally or community-owned that are not limited to radial separation as a barrier, including Sir John A MacDonald High

School site, Scout House, golf courses and other City owned green spaces that are under-utilized as active parks, that aim to best meet preferences outlined by the Hamilton Alliance for Tiny Shelters.”

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

N/A

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

N/A

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

In order to identify location options for a Tiny Shelters site, staff have developed a list of considerations, which are outlined in Appendix “A” to Report HSC22015(b). While these considerations could apply to both private and publicly-owned sites, it is important to note that the location of a Tiny Shelters development on a privately-owned site would be subject only to the normal planning and development requirements for a private development. However, if the Tiny Shelters development is seeking City support or City funding, the same considerations could be applied as conditions of City financial support.

The considerations outlined in Appendix “A” are based on staff’s understanding of the proposed use as outlined by HATS in their presentation to ECS Committee on December 1, 2022, and which was attached as Appendix “A” to Report HSC22015(a). With the limited time available since the December meeting, staff have reviewed the site location criteria provided by HATS, as well as staff’s own considerations from a land use and operational lens. With respect to the expressed needs and preferences of the prospective residents of the Tiny Shelter site, staff are relying on the information provided by HATS from their survey.

Based on this review, staff have identified several considerations for an appropriate site, as outlined in Appendix “A” to Report HSC22015(b). These are presented as considerations, as opposed to criteria, because it is expected that prospective sites will address these considerations to varying degrees. It is unlikely that a “perfect” site is achievable, and therefore it would be staff’s recommendation that sites that best address the various considerations would be the most appropriate, as opposed to a “pass/fail” approach, or a “weighted evaluation criteria” approach.

The considerations are broken down into the following categories:

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- Planning and Development Considerations – these relate to applicable land use policies, such as zoning, as well as other matters that would typically be addressed as part of a planning or development application for a new development;
- Location Considerations – these relate to surrounding context and adjacent uses;
- Operational Considerations – these relate to optimizing the operation of the proposed use and supporting the future residents; and,
- HATS Identified Considerations – these are additional considerations or criteria identified by the HATS group that are important from the standpoint of the viability of the proposed use. As this is a community led initiative, any site to be considered for implementation would require the support of HATS.

Since early 2022, City of Hamilton staff have worked with HATS in reviewing sites they have identified as potential sites. HATS has recently put forward five sites to City Staff for consideration as a site they would like to operationalize this winter: Sir John A. MacDonald School, Scout House, City-owned lands at Gage Avenue North / Lloyd Street area, Tiffany Barton lands and Cathedral Park (new).

At this time and since council's December direction to review Sir John A. MacDonald School and Scout House among the options, staff have deemed Scout House not suitable as an immediate option in its current state due to the lack of sidewalks around the site which poses a safety concern. There are additional requirements that would need to be met on Sir John A MacDonald School site and the location would not be available for sufficient time to make it an appropriate long-term solution. Additionally, it does not meet the needs of HATS given its proximity to other shelters in the area and the identified risk of encouraging other encampments in the area.

The three remaining sites identified by HATS as preferred would be Cathedral Park and City-owned lands at Gage Avenue North / Lloyd Street area, and Tiffany Barton lands.

The focus of this report is to provide an update on site locations and recommended next steps with respect to identifying a potential site for tiny homes initiative. Detailed information related to the opportunities and challenges related to this initiative overall are outlined in Report HSC22015(a) from the December 1, 2022 Emergency and Community Services meeting.

Next Steps

Staff are recommending that the considerations identified in Appendix "A" to Report HSC22015(b) be used as the basis for exploring and evaluating potential publicly or privately-owned sites for the purposes of accommodating the Tiny Shelter program.

Staff are recommending that, as the immediate next step, staff undertake a review of City-owned lands, including parks, based on these considerations, and identify a

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shortlist of candidate properties for a Tiny Shelter development. This list of candidate properties would then be provided to HATS for their review.

Should HATS identify any of the candidate sites as a suitable site, staff will report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee identifying the top three proposed site(s) and outlining a proposed HATS-led community engagement process with respect to the proposed site(s).

Following community engagement, staff would report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee with recommendations for a preferred site or sites.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Should Council wish to support a more immediate implementation, Council could direct that staff work with HATS to implement a site at one of the three remaining preferred sites meeting the needs of HATS; Cathedral Park, Tiffany Barton lands or the Lloyd Street location.

Should Council wish to invest in Hamilton's homelessness serving system in other ways, alternative interventions for a similar annual investment of \$100 K as noted in Report HSC22015(a) could include one of:

- housing loss prevention and housing placement support, including: first or last month's rent, rental or utility arrears for approximately 90 singles, 55 families or 25 couples at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, including Indigenous community members supported directly by Indigenous service providers. These households may otherwise need emergency shelter;
- portable housing allowances of \$350/month for approximately 23 households to secure permanent housing, with support from existing Intensive Case Management and Rapid Re-housing programs to maintain their tenancy; or,
- continued funding to support access to health, mental health or addictions support essential to maintain housing for a minimum of 15-20 clients of Intensive Case Management and Rapid Re-housing programs.

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 HSC22015(b): Summary of Site-Based Consideration for HATS