



CITY OF HAMILTON
HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
Hamilton Fire Department

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	December 5, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Red Cross Agreement (HSC19046(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Connie Verhaeghe (905) 546-2424 Ext. 6038
SUBMITTED BY:	David Cunliffe Chief, Hamilton Fire Department Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the Fire Chief, or their designate, be authorized to negotiate and enter into a three-year Agreement commencing January 1, 2025 on behalf of the City of Hamilton with the Canadian Red Cross for the provision of Emergency Social Services at a cost of \$64,429.80 for the first year, with an annual increase in accordance with the Consumer Price Index as published by Statistics Canada, to be charged to the Hamilton Fire Department budget provided it is in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canadian Red Cross works collaboratively with all levels of government and community leadership to help people affected by emergencies and disasters. Over the past several years, the Canadian Red Cross has played a significant role in assisting individuals and households, not-for-profits, small businesses, and communities impacted by emergency incidents, including the City of Hamilton.

In 2021, the City of Hamilton entered into its first agreement with the Canadian Red Cross for the provision of Emergency Social Services for an initial period of two years. That Agreement was extended for two additional one-year term and expires on December 31, 2024. This report is recommending that the City of Hamilton enter into a new three-year agreement with the Canadian Red Cross to maintain access to Canadian Red Cross Emergency Social Services resources during an emergency.

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.

The Canadian Red Cross has existing agreements, and is entering into new agreements, with many surrounding municipalities to provide emergency social services which offers guaranteed support over municipalities that have not signed an agreement. A formalized agreement with the Canadian Red Cross increases the availability of priority response support during an emergency over other municipalities with no signed agreement.

Alternatives for Consideration – None

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The fee to the Canadian Red Cross will be \$64,429.80 CDN including all applicable taxes and charges to be charged to Hamilton Fire Department budget for 2025. The fee will increase annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index as published by Statistics Canada.

Following a response, as is usual practice there may be additional costs associated with the lodging, feeding, travel and transportation services of the Red Cross volunteers and other ancillary associated costs. These costs cannot be determined in advance but will be identified and mutually agreed upon before services are implemented.

Staffing: None

Legal: Legal Services will assist with the Services Agreement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As per Ontario's *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, an emergency is defined as "a situation or impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise". Some emergencies may require people within communities to evacuate to safety.

In such cases, emergency social services are delivered to meet the basic human needs of evacuees and assist in their recovery. Emergency social services is composed of five basic services: 1) Registration and Inquiry, 2) Emergency Feeding, 3) Emergency Lodging, 4) Emergency Clothing and 5) Personal Services such as providing hygiene kits. Emergency social services needs are coordinated through the City of Hamilton's Emergency Social Services Control Group.

In 2021, the City of Hamilton entered into its first agreement with the Canadian Red Cross for 2 years. That Agreement was extended for two additional one-year terms and expires on December 31, 2024.

In the event of an emergency involving 25 residents or less, the Canadian Red Cross will respond and provide the coordination and delivery of emergency social services including emergency shelter for 72 hours through its national Personal Disaster Assistance Response program. In 2023 the Canadian Red Cross responded to 36 such events in the City of Hamilton. Historical data of the Canadian Red Cross Personal Disaster Assistance events in Hamilton since 2020 is below:

	TOTAL Calendar Year 2020	TOTAL Calendar Year 2021	TOTAL Calendar Year 2022	TOTAL Calendar Year 2023
# of Responses	28	37	30	36

In an event involving more than 25 residents, a comprehensive strategy is required to meet the emergency social service needs of evacuees. This type of incident requires additional resources and services beyond those available within the City of Hamilton. In 2024, the City of Hamilton required assistance from the Canadian Red Cross for 1 event involving more than 25 residents.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The City of Hamilton as a municipality is delegated under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Action, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.9* and as stated in 2.1 (1) *Every municipality shall develop and implement an emergency management program that includes response to emergencies.*

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The City Emergency Management Coordinators have consulted with other municipalities who have signed agreements with the Canadian Red Cross. This includes Peel Region, City of Toronto, Waterloo Region, Halton Region and York Region.

Consultation regarding this agreement with the Canadian Red Cross has also been done with the following city department:

Corporate Services: Legal

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

A formalized agreement with the Canadian Red Cross will provide assurance of access to resources needed to respond to the social services needs of evacuees. The Canadian Red Cross specializes in these services and are considered the lead organization in responding to the needs of evacuees.

The assurance provided through a formal agreement with the Canadian Red Cross includes a commitment to train and recruit local volunteers. This will provide the City of Hamilton with access to local volunteers who are familiar with resources within the City. This also means a greater coordination of emergency social services during an emergency.

The Canadian Red Cross are also key external partners with other non-governmental agencies who play significant roles in assisting evacuees during an emergency. Their experience and expertise in responding to emergencies will support the city in responding to emergencies and will increase the City's resiliency in response to large-scale emergencies.

The continued increase in scale and scope of emergencies heightened by climate change further demonstrates the catastrophic impact of disasters on communities. The growing severity and frequency of these disasters require greater preparedness to mitigate and respond to such events. The Canadian Red Cross is an invaluable community resource that provides vital humanitarian assistance during times of crisis. The past years have reinforced the need for a collaborative partnership with the City Hamilton to enhance capacity in response to emergency events. The agreement will ensure the Canadian Red Cross, as a local and scalable agency, will meet the immediate, short-term needs of Hamilton residents affected by an emergency.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None