



Submission to the City of Hamilton
 Wednesday, December 11, 2024

YMCA Hamilton|Burlington|Brantford Request for the 2025 City of Hamilton Budget

The YMCA Men's Residence currently provides housing for 129 men within its 174 available units. It operates under the Housing First Model, prioritizing stable housing as the foundation for addressing complex challenges such as mental health and addiction. The residents, with an average age of 52, often face significant barriers:

- 90% lack access to primary care.
- 75% live with mental health or addiction challenges.
- 78% face psychosocial or physical disabilities.
- Nearly 70% rely on Ontario Works or ODSP.

With a monthly waitlist of 220 individuals, the need for expanded support is urgent. Tragically, 36 residents have passed away since 2020, underscoring the life-and-death importance of sustained funding.

Following the devastating fire at the YMCA Men's Residence on July 22, significant recovery strides have been made. Residents have either been returned to their rooms or transitioned to permanent housing. Restoration efforts have reopened key floors, while the third floor remains vacant and under repair, with progress dependent on insurance and funding. Collaborative efforts with community partners are underway to explore program models such as transitional housing, aligning with both YMCA's strategic goals and the City's priorities.

Request for Funding

The YMCA Residence provides a space to live in dignity. With an investment in wraparound supports, this solution can have an impact at a significantly lower cost than other outcomes of homelessness. Housing with supports provides vulnerable individuals and families with the daily supports necessary to live in a stable and independent environment. Our goal is to provide our residents with a comprehensive support network that will create a bridge to a more stable and improved quality of life. With additional funding, we can deliver this network practically and efficiently.

We are committed to supporting the City of Hamilton in demonstrating change for this marginalized group. The overall program and operational costs is approximately \$1.8 million. This request is to add critical and necessary enhanced services such as food security, capital improvements, and mental health/addiction services.

To sustain critical services and support the City's vision to end chronic homelessness, the YMCA is requesting **\$350,000 in annual funding**. This funding will support staffing for mental health and addiction services, address food security and personal amenities for residents, and cover essential capital repairs and operational needs.

The breakdown of the funds is as follows:

- **Staffing and Security:** \$150,000
- **Mental Health and Addiction Specialist:** \$100,000
- **Food Security (non-perishables):** \$50,000
- **Capital Repairs:** \$50,000
- **Total:** \$350,000

As the YMCA explores the restoration of the third floor post-fire in 2025, this space could serve up to 200 men annually and alleviate strain on hospitals, shelters, and public resources. We are open to exploring program options with the City of Hamilton to maximize the impact of this collaborative approach. Without this support, residents face significant risks, including homelessness and compromised health outcomes.

Impact and Alignment with City Goals

The YMCA's Men's Residence aligns with Hamilton's priorities for public safety, crime prevention, and affordable housing. The requested funding will ensure that the YMCA can:

- Provide wraparound services critical for residents' recovery and stability.
- Reduce the strain on public systems by addressing homelessness at its root.
- Build a healthier, more equitable community.

Together, with the City's support, we can transform lives and expand Hamilton's supportive housing ecosystem. This request for \$350,000 in annual funding is not just an investment in the YMCA; it is an investment in the health, safety, and future of Hamilton.

We thank you for your consideration.

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