

CITY OF HAMILTON MOTION

Council: April 22, 2026

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. FRANCIS.....

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR

Jurisdictional Scan on Emergency Shelter Access and Inter-Municipal Coordination

WHEREAS, municipalities across Ontario, including the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, the Region of Peel, Halton Region, Niagara Region, Haldimand County, and Wellington County have implemented practices that prioritize access to emergency shelter services for local residents or those with demonstrated community connections;

WHEREAS, these approaches often include diversion supports and coordination to connect individuals to services in their municipality of origin where appropriate supports may exist;

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton does not currently have a clearly defined or consistently applied approach respecting residency, community connection, or coordinated diversion; and,

WHEREAS, any approach must remain compassionate and include protections for vulnerable individuals, including those fleeing unsafe situations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That staff BE DIRECTED to report back to the General Issues Committee by the end of Q2 2026 with a jurisdictional scan of emergency shelter access policies across Ontario municipalities, including eligibility criteria, residency or community connection requirements, intake practices, diversion or return-to-origin supports, funding implications, and available service outcome data;
- (b) That staff BE DIRECTED to report back on current City of Hamilton practices, including how residency or origin is tracked, system pressures related to non-resident access, and analysis of residency data collected through HIFIS, including current proportions of non-resident shelter users and any available

historical trends, and how these compare to other municipalities where data is available; and,

- (c) That staff BE DIRECTED to report back with policy recommendations on emergency shelter access, including residency, community connection, and inter-municipal coordination and diversion practices, based on the findings of the jurisdictional scan, with clear exemptions for individuals fleeing intimate partner violence or human trafficking.