

**CITY OF HAMILTON**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**Housing and Homelessness**

<b>TO:</b> Chair and Members of Emergency and Community Services Committee	<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b> CITY WIDE
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b> March 2, 2011	
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b> Renewal of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Agreement (CS11016) (City Wide)	
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b> Joe-Anne Priel Community Services Department	<b>PREPARED BY:</b> Amanda DiFalco 905-546-2424 Ext 3132 Brian Kreps 905-546-2424 Ext 4288 Gillian Hendry 905-546-2424 Ext 4818
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the General Manager of Community Services be authorized to enter into and execute an Agreement with Service Canada to:
  - (i) become the Community Entity for the facilitation and administration of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Program and
  - (ii) execute any further documents or agreements as may be required to give effect to the foregoing, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
  
- (b) That the General Manager of Community Services be authorized:
  - (i) To approve funding for those projects that have been selected through either the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Program Call for Applications or as identified within the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Plan;
  - (ii) To enter into and execute Agreements with the agency(s) responsible for the delivery of those projects and;
  - (iii) To execute any further documents or agreements, as may be required, to give effect to the foregoing, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
  
- (c) That the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Agreement between the City of Hamilton and Service Canada be effective April 1, 2011 until March 31, 2014

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Service Canada announced in October, 2010 that the City of Hamilton will receive \$12,684,762 in Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding. The funding is for three years, from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2014 and is to be used for the prevention and reduction of homelessness in Hamilton. Federal homelessness funding has created a considerable legacy of innovative projects in the City and increased the community's capacity to provide a coordinated response to homelessness.

Since 1999, Hamilton has received \$42 million to support local projects to address homelessness. In consultation with a range of community stakeholders and with the advice of a Community Advisory Board, the City has defined priorities and allocated funds to support 174 different projects in the community.

Service Canada requires that a Community Entity administer the program at the local level. The City has served as the Community Entity for the federal homelessness funding since it began. Administration of the program requires the following activities:

- Consultation with a Community Advisory Board (CAB);
- Development of community funding priorities;
- Conducting the Call for Application based on the funding priorities;
- Developing agreements for projects funded through HPS; and,
- Monitoring projects to ensure that milestones are achieved.

It is recommended that the City continue in the role of the Community Entity for the HPS funding. An agreement between the City and Service Canada must be signed before the funding may flow to the community on April 1, 2011.

New community priorities must be developed to guide local funding decisions. These new priorities will be developed based on:

- A comprehensive overview of the impact of federal homelessness funding since 1999;
- An asset inventory and needs analysis; and,
- Consultation with the Housing and Homelessness Planning Group and the broader community.

Housing and Homelessness Division has retained Paul Dowling Consulting to carry out research into the housing and homelessness system in Hamilton and to make recommendations for future directions.

Funding for projects that are currently funded through HPS will be extended until March 31, 2012. This will eliminate a disruption in services funded through HPS and provide time for the new community priorities to be developed.

### **FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Financial Implications:**

The City will receive \$12,684,762 in HPS funding for the three-year period. A flat rate of 13% has been negotiated with Service Canada to cover administration costs. The balance of the funding is awarded to community agencies through a Call for Applications process. HPS is a contribution program, not a grant program which means projects are reimbursed for actual expenses based on monthly claims. In turn, The City will submit monthly claims to Service Canada for the expenses incurred in the delivery of HPS.

#### **Staffing Implications:**

The administrative funding from HPS covers the cost of 5.5 FTE's to fulfill administrative functions as outlined by Service Canada including:

- Community planning for HPS funding
- Research and reports on homelessness
- Development and implementation of the Call For Applications
- Development of contracts with the funded agencies
- Monitoring and reporting on project implementation
- Reviewing and paying claims from the agencies
- Preparing claims to Service Canada
- Ensuring that the City meets all contractual obligations.

The 5.5 FTE's are currently part of the complement of Housing and Homelessness Division from prior federal homelessness funded programs.

#### **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications for Report CS11016

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)**

HPS is the federal government's primary program to address homelessness in Canada. Hamilton is one of 61 designated communities across Canada and the recipient of the third highest amount of federal homelessness funding in Ontario.

The federal government began to fund local homelessness projects in 1999, through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). The program has been renewed in two and three year cycles since 1999 and is now called Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The last period of funding was to end March 31, 2011.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no policy implications associated with Report CS11016.

### **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

At the request of Service Canada, the Community Advisory Board from the last term of Council confirmed their support for the City to continue as the Community Entity for the administration of the HPS funding. The Community Advisory Board also provided some suggestions for the future including improved data collection from funded agencies, clearer definition of the Community Advisory Board's role, more integrated planning and increased communication with the agencies who are delivering the HPS projects and the community.

Housing and Homelessness Division staff worked with the City of Hamilton Corporate Legal Services to write the recommendations contained in this report.

### **ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Service Canada's goals and structure for the HPS Program has remained largely unchanged from the last period of funding. The goal is to prevent and reduce homelessness across Canada through:

- Investments in transitional and supportive housing through a Housing First approach;
- Supports to community-based efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness;
- Partnerships between the federal government, provinces, and territories; and,
- Collaboration with other federal departments and agencies.

The Housing First approach supports the idea that individuals are better able to pursue their personal goals towards employment, treatment, health and well being when they are directly placed in stable housing. It supports a holistic approach to addressing the needs of the homeless including supports and services that support a homeless person or someone at risk of becoming homeless to become self sufficient, where possible.

The renewed HPS Program will have an increased focus on labour market integration by facilitating linkages with existing employment programs. There is also an increased interest in creating interconnections with Provincial and Territorial homelessness programs.

There are some administrative changes to the program:

- Capital projects must be retained for intended use for 15 years rather than 5 years.
- Community Entity will be required to provide a plan for monitoring capital projects for this time period.
- Community Entity may negotiate a flat fee for administration up to 15%. In the past, line item budgets were required.
- Community Entity is allowed to extend funding to existing projects for up to one year to allow sufficient time for the development of new community priorities.

### **City as Community Entity**

If the City continues in the role of Community Entity, it will continue to strengthen the City's role as Service System Manager for housing and homelessness programs. The City has established strong partnership with both Service Canada and service providers through participation in planning tables and advisory groups. These relationships facilitate collaborative approaches to homelessness and reduce duplication. Continuation of the City's role will ensure a smooth transition to the successful implementation of the new HPS term of funding.

### **New agreement between the City of Hamilton and Service Canada**

The City has submitted an application to Service Canada to continue as the Community Entity and for the HPS funding.

The critical next step is the signing of a new Agreement between the City of Hamilton and Service Canada. The current agreement expires on March 31, 2011. In order for the additional funding to flow April 1, 2011, the new agreement must be signed. Council approval of the recommendations in Report CS11016 is necessary for this to proceed in a timely manner.

### **Formation of a new Community Advisory Board**

A new Community Advisory Board must be formed because its term is tied to that of Council. The Community Advisory Board function will now be performed by two groups:

- The Housing and Homelessness Planning Group was formed to develop a new Housing and Homelessness Action Plan for the City. It will provide high level

policy advice including input into the local HPS priorities and the transition into the next iteration of HPS funding.

- An HPS Proposal Review Team will be established to review funding requests which will be received through the Call for Applications for HPS Funding.

### **Extension of funding for existing projects**

Funding for existing service projects will be extended for 12 months so that there is no lapse in important local services while new priorities are developed and a Call for Applications is issued. The approximate cost of the 12-month extension is \$3.7 million. This will also allow for more time to work with the Housing and Homelessness Planning Group to ensure that HPS priorities align with the broader community plan.

### **Development of HPS local priorities**

Service Canada requires the development of local priorities for HPS funding. An assessment of the impact of federal homelessness funding was completed in January 2011 by Paul Dowling Consulting. The assessment involved extensive document and data review, focus groups with key stakeholders and an online survey. The findings of this assessment along with the findings of a service inventory will be reviewed with the Housing and Homelessness Planning Group and the broader community in February and March 2011. Based on this consultation, local priorities will be submitted to Service Canada for approval in May 2011.

### **Call for Applications**

A Call for Applications must be conducted to award funding under the new community priorities. It is anticipated that a new Call for Applications will be conducted in August 2011 with funding decisions completed by the end of October 2011. New contracts will be developed with the successful applicants. Some projects that are currently receiving funding from HPS may not be successful in the upcoming Call for Applications. Unsuccessful applicants will have more than three months notice so they can search for alternative funding sources or plan to reduce service and staff levels. While this is unfortunate, HPS has limited funding and is clearly identified as project funding rather than a source of sustainable and ongoing program funding.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

There are no alternatives for consideration.

**CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)**

Focus Areas: 1. Skilled, Innovative and Respectful Organization, 2. Financial Sustainability, 3. Intergovernmental Relationships, 4. Growing Our Economy, 5. Social Development, 6. Environmental Stewardship, 7. Healthy Community

***Social Development***

- ◆ Everyone has a home they can afford that is well maintained and safe
- ◆ Residents in need have access to adequate support services

***Healthy Community***

- ◆ Adequate access to food, water, shelter and income, safety, work, recreation and support for all (Human Services)

**APPENDICES / SCHEDULES**

None.