



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** Members of the Joint Services Steering Committee

**From:** Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

**Meeting Date:** June 8, 2017

**Subject:** Report CSSSJSSC17-005  
Homelessness Enumeration and Delegation of Authority

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## **Purpose**

A report to provide an update on homelessness enumeration requirements and seek delegation of authority for provincial reporting.

## **Recommendations**

That the Joint Services Steering Committee endorse the recommendations outlined in Report CSSSJSSC16-005 dated June 8, 2017, of the Director of Community Services, as follows:

- a) That the report be received for information;
- b) That the City as Service Manager conduct an enumeration of homelessness people in March 2018 in partnerships with the United Way Peterborough, community agencies and volunteers over a period of 1 week at various locations in the City and County; and
- c) That delegation of authority be provided to the CAO to approve any provincially funded or provincially directed homelessness programs or initiatives and the necessary associated plans or reports that must be submitted to the Province.

## Budget and Financial Implications

Homelessness enumeration will be conducted in 2018 in conjunction with the United Way, the Community Entity for the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding. Peterborough is a designated community for federal homelessness funding and \$32,000 in federal funding will be provided to the United Way of Peterborough and District for the completion of enumeration in 2018.

It is anticipated that this amount will cover the cost of enumeration, however if there is a funding shortfall for this project, the shortfall will be covered through the homelessness reserve. The City of Peterborough Social Services Division will provide in-kind contributions related to data analysis and graphic design.

## Background

The United Way and the City of Peterborough (with several community partners and volunteers), completed the first ever homelessness Point in Time Count in Peterborough on March 22, 2016. This count provided the City with some indicators of homelessness in our community including:

- 120 people were experiencing homelessness in Peterborough on March 22, 2016;
- 54% of those surveyed had spent 6 months or more homeless in the year prior;
- 23% of participants identified as aboriginal;
- 64% experienced homelessness before the age of 26 years old; and
- The top 3 reasons for homelessness in order were: family breakdown, addiction/mental health and unsafe housing.

The Point in Time Count method used in March 2016 has its limitations. By focusing on a single night, the count does not include people that cycle in and out of homelessness. Also, this method counts the visibly homeless and does not capture those experiencing hidden homelessness (people at risk of losing their housing, living temporarily with others and those living in overcrowded or substandard conditions). For these reasons, a Point in Time Count should be considered a minimum number; therefore the 2016 count is likely an underrepresentation of homelessness in Peterborough.

In 2017, the province put into legislation the requirement for Service Managers to conduct enumeration every two years starting in 2018. The City of Peterborough will conduct enumeration in March 2018 in partnership with the United Way of Peterborough and District, community partners (including indigenous partners) and volunteers. Enumeration will include people experiencing homelessness on the streets, in shelters and in other community-identified spaces frequented by people experiencing homelessness. The 2018 enumeration plan will include some of the same key activities

as the first one including community engagement, volunteer recruitment and training, communication plan and media engagement.

The approach will differ in some key ways including:

- Conducting the count over a series of days, not a 24 hour period;
- The count will include both City and County locations; and
- The survey that will be used will provide a more comprehensive understanding of homelessness in the City and County of Peterborough, and will help further develop coordinated plans for people experiencing homelessness, starting with providing supports to the most vulnerable.

It may be impossible to capture everyone who is experiencing homelessness in a community; however, the approach above may provide a clearer understanding of homelessness in the City and the County to build on the information obtained in the 2016 count.

### **Provincial Context**

In 2015, the Province's Expert Panel on Homelessness released the *A Place to Call Home* report in which the Province committed to a number of short and long-term actions. These include:

- Committing to an end to chronic homelessness by 2025;
- Adopting four provincial priorities to guide action: chronic homelessness (households experiencing homelessness for 6 months or more in the last year), youth, Indigenous homelessness and homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded service systems; and
- Planning to require local enumeration to gather data about homelessness.

Changes to the **Housing Services Act** mean that local enumeration is a requirement starting in 2018.

In late March 2017, the Ministry of Housing released an Expression of Interest to all 47 Service Managers for a new supportive housing program called *Home For Good*. This program is intended to support the goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025 and targets the four provincial priorities identified above (youth, chronic homeless, etc). The program will provide ongoing funding for housing assistance and support services.

Service Managers were able to submit a proposal to the Expression of Interest for consideration for program funding in 2017-18 and 2018-19. Depending on the results of the first two years, the province may consider expanding the program to additional communities in the third year. Peterborough Social Services worked closely with community partners to submit a proposal in May 2017 and expect to hear in the summer if the submission was successful.

Each time the Ministry releases a new program or funding stream, the Service Manager is required to submit a plan, ongoing quarterly reporting (both financial and program data) and a year-end report. Examples include:

- Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative – funding from the Ministry of Housing that started in 2013 that fully or partially funds the existing homelessness programs and services. Each year the Service Manager is required to submit an Investment Plan, Quarterly reports and a Year-End report.
- The enumeration requirement mandates the Service Manager to submit an enumeration plan to the Ministry six months prior to conducting the enumeration and a final report within six months of completion of the enumeration.
- The Home For Good program will require the submission of an Uptake Plan, quarterly reports (financial and program data) and a Year-End Report.

It is recommended that delegation of authority be provided to the City's C.A.O. for the approval of any housing and homeless programs, plans and reports to the province as required. This will allow the City as Service Manager to maximize access to a variety of funding opportunities which often come with short time lines and to streamline accountability with the various ministries. Delegation of authority will also permit expedited processing of provincial reporting requirements. Council will continue to approve the annual operating budget for Housing and Homelessness, in which these initiatives will be captured. Annually, the Progress Report on the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan will be reported to Council.

## Summary

The City of Peterborough will conduct homelessness enumeration in 2018 as required by the province. The City has recently submitted a proposal in response to the Ministry of Housing *Home for Good* Expression of Interest. The funding would provide much-needed supports for many of the most vulnerable people in the community. Existing community partnerships and collaboration models position Peterborough well for consideration for this funding opportunity. The City in its role as Service Manager will continue to work with community partners and will leverage funding opportunities from other levels of government to enable further progress on the commitments in the 10-Year Housing and Homeless plan.

Submitted by,

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