



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the General Committee**

From: **Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner of Community Services**

Meeting Date: **October 15, 2019**

Subject: **Report CSSS19-012
Overflow Shelter Program**

Purpose

A report to provide an update on the Overflow Shelter Program and to seek approval to enter into an agreement for the location and operation of an overflow shelter for up to two years.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSSS19-012 dated October 15, 2019, of the Commissioner of Community Services, as follows:

- a) That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute a licence agreement from Murray Street Baptist Church to the City of part of the premises known municipally as 175 Murray Street on terms acceptable to the Chief Administrative Officer and as outlined in Report CSSS19-012 dated October 15, 2019 of the Commissioner of Community Services;
- b) That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute an agreement between the City and The Brock Street Mission Peterborough on terms acceptable to the Chief Administrative Officer for the provision by The Brock Street Mission Peterborough of an Overflow Shelter Program at the said premises for the term of November 1, 2019 to April 30, 2020, with the option to extend for up to 2 years and as outlined in the Report; and
- c) That the 2020 Draft Operating Budget include a provision to operate the Overflow Shelter Program for the entire calendar year, estimated to be \$248,400, assuming it will be necessary and at the rates negotiated with Murray Street Baptist Church.

- d) That the one-time capital work required, for an amount up to \$80,000, be charged to the Social Services Reserve.

Budget and Financial Implications

The City's Procurement By-law 18-084 Appendix B (Section 3f) outlines that an expenditure categorized as "Hostel Operators" is exempt from the requirements set out in Parts 7 through 14 of the By-law therefore exempting a procurement process. Through the recommendations in this report, the Mayor and Clerk would be authorized to enter into an agreement with Murray Street Baptist Church for the lease of operating space and with Brock Mission for the operation of an Overflow Shelter Program based on evidence-based best practices.

The operation of an Overflow Shelter Program will require the following monthly amounts for an annual estimated total of \$248,400:

- Rent to Murray Street Baptist Church: \$3,000/month
- Custodial: \$1,200/month
- Program operation costs (staffing, supplies): \$16,500/month

Table 1 provides details of anticipated program costs for January to April 2020 and May to December 2020.

The 2019 budget included an amount of \$161,700 for an overflow shelter. While the amount required is significantly higher, the requirements for the new overflow shelter program will assist in moving people to other shelters and housing with a goal of reducing this need in the future.

In addition to the monthly expenses, an initial capital commitment to a maximum of \$80,000 will be required to bring the site into compliance with all necessary code requirements. Such improvements would include proper fire separations, emergency exit doors, hard wired smoke detectors, etc.

The projected expense to operate an Overflow Shelter Program for November and December 2019 is \$41,400. Previous Council approval from July 17, 2019 allows for Homelessness Reserve funding to be used towards overflow shelter needs in 2019. A full accounting of overflow shelter costs incurred in 2019 will be provided in a separate report.

Table 1 – 2020 Financial Impacts (January to December)

Detail	Estimated Amount (\$)
Cost to run Overflow Shelter (January to April) -Rental costs (\$12,000) -Custodial (\$4,800) -Program Operations (\$66,000)	\$82,800
Cost to run Overflow Shelter (May to December) -Rental costs (\$24,000) -Custodial (\$9,600) -Program Operations (\$132,000)	\$165,600
Total Annual Cost	\$248,400

Background

In early June 2019, the City was advised that the lease agreement between Murray Street Baptist Church and the Warming Room Community Ministries for the operation of the Warming Room Program was ending on June 30, 2019. Despite efforts, a new location for the operation of that program could not be found that would meet building, fire code and location requirements. The service agreement for the operation of the Warming Room program was between the City and St. John's Anglican Church. The City advised St. John's Anglican Church on July 19, 2019 that without a space to operate the service agreement was terminated.

During the summer, the City continued to search for a location and began conversations with Murray Street Baptist Church. The Dining Hall space at Murray Street Baptist Church was reviewed by Building and Fire Service officials to determine what changes would be required for the space to be used as an overnight dormitory. An architect's report was provided outlining the necessary changes to meet both Building Code and Life Safety requirements.

During the last five years the need for shelters and homelessness response systems has evolved. This includes the winter overnight response programs. When the Warming Room program started in 2014, the purpose was to ensure people who could not use traditional forms of emergency shelters had a place to come in from outside during the winter months. This need evolved and in 2018 it became a year-round service. This evolution was a result of the increasing need for shelter beds.

The City and community partners joined the Built For Zero campaign with over 30 other communities across Canada in a movement to end chronic homelessness – the first step to end all forms of homelessness. Through this collaboration and increased focus on housing at shelters, the homelessness system response has evolved and must continue to evolve. Through a recent Operational Review of Peterborough's homelessness response system, completed by a third-party consultant, it is also clear that limited resources must be maximized, both financial and human. More detail on this

review will be provided in an upcoming Joint Services Steering Committee report on October 24, 2019.

Recognizing that a shift in the homelessness response was needed, in early September, the City put forward a proposal to Murray Street Baptist Church for consideration of a lease agreement with the City to host an Overflow Shelter Program. This program differs from the Warming Room Program in its purpose and operation. The City recognizes the continued need for overflow beds as the current shelter system does not always have capacity to meet the demand. Through the ongoing shift in shelter services, the shelter system has started to experience significant vacancies. The spring and summer of 2019 was the first since the fall of 2016 that the shelter system has experienced significant vacancies. Shelter usage fluctuates daily.

Requirements of an Overflow Shelter Program include:

- Diversion from shelter services if possible. To prevent further trauma and normalization of homelessness, Overflow Shelter Program staff will first talk to people about other options rather than entering the emergency shelter or overflow shelter;
- When someone comes to the Overflow Shelter Program location, the staff member will check to ensure if a shelter bed is available. If a shelter bed is available, the individual will be directed to that shelter bed. With 24/7 shelter service, people have access to showers, 3 meals/day, laundry services and direct contact with Housing Support Workers to focus on permanent housing solutions;
- For those that have no alternative but to stay in the Overflow Shelter location, an Intake process will start. This includes the completion of the common assessment, necessary consents, entry of information into the shared database system and addition of their name to the By Name Priority List;
- In the morning, if a bed is available in an emergency shelter, the bed will be reserved, and the person will be directed to that emergency shelter;
- Members of the Built for Zero partnership will complete outreach to the Overflow Shelter Program location to ensure housing options are reviewed and an appropriate housing plan is created;
- If situations arise where an individual is not connecting to the shelter system, the Built for Zero partners will continue outreach and will case conference for complex situations that require a multi-partner plan. If for any reason someone is not able to access any of the shelter programs, there must still be a service plan in place.

On September 17, 2019 the City with Built For Zero-Peterborough partners completed a presentation and answered questions for the congregation of Murray Street Baptist

Church. That evening the congregation voted in favour of hosting the program and provided conditions for the operation that include the following:

- Operation from November to April, with consideration in February for an extension to an ongoing program;
- No active substance use on-site;
- Two staff are always to be present;
- Custodial work is required since the space is used during the day and evenings for other programs.

It should be noted that individuals who have complex issues such as substance use or mental health concerns will be served by the Overflow Shelter.

Upon Council approval to proceed, staff will initiate capital improvements to the Murray Street Baptist Church as required. It is likely based on contractor schedules and the ordering of parts that the facility may not open for November 1st. In this case the existing overflow service at the Library will be continued to ensure no gap in service.

Summary

The City continues to experience pressure in homelessness programs, services and funding. The Built For Zero campaign and the recent System Review provide clear direction to the City to end chronic homelessness using evidence-based and trauma-informed practices. The Overflow Shelter Program is intended to be short term, both for those using the service and for the community. As individuals experiencing homelessness continue to be housed using the Coordinated Access System and By Name Priority List, the community is providing housing and supports to the people most in need. This agreement will allow for a two-year period to determine if an overflow shelter is needed as the new homeless system matures.

Submitted by,

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