



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner, Community Services

Meeting Date: July 11, 2022

Subject: Overflow Shelter Services Extension and Pre-commitment
of the 2023 Budget, Report CSSS22-019

Purpose

A report to request approval for the extension of 24/7 Overflow Shelter services to March 31, 2023.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSSS22-019, dated July 11, 2022 of the Commissioner of Community Services as follows:

- a) That Council approve an extension of 24/7 overflow shelter services to March 31, 2023; and,
- b) That Council pre commit an initial 2023 budget for the overflow shelter to include the full cost of service from January 1st to March 31st, 2023, in the amount of \$267,000.

Budget and Financial Implications

Council has approved the 24/7 operation of the overflow shelter program at 210 Wolfe St until October 2022. Funding for the cost of the 24/7 overflow shelter operation has been covered by the COVID Social Services Relief Funding for 2021 and all of 2022. Social Services Relief Funding expires December 31, 2022.

Funding will be required for the cost of a 24/7 operation for January 1 to March 31, 2023 at \$267,000. The Social Services budget for overflow shelter services is currently

\$250,000 per year, based on the original overnight funding model. An additional \$17,000 will be required for this recommendation.

A report with recommendations for Overflow shelter services past March 31, 2023, will be brought to Council in December 2022 for consideration as part of the 2023 budget deliberations. Staff have not yet undertaken a recent financial analysis of various options such as 24/7 service, overnight only, or other variations. The cost of a full year 24/7 overflow shelter would be approximately \$800,000 which would be a \$550,000 increase to the Social Services budget in 2023.

Background

At its meeting of October 15, 2019, Council approved Report CSSS19-012 for the operation of an overnight overflow shelter program operating out of Murray Street Baptist Church and operated by Brock Mission staff. The approved budget was \$248,400. The program included up to 30 shelter beds with Brock Mission staffing from 8:30 pm to 8:30 am. This was approved by the Murray Street Baptist Church congregation with extensions up to and including April 2021. The program was intended to be an “overflow” program where shelter beds would be in use only when the other shelter program beds were full. The program operated 12 hours overnight and was not open during the day. A rental fee was paid directly to Murray Street Baptist Church with a total program cost of \$248,400 per year. This amount remains in the Social Services budget for overflow shelter services.

In March 2020, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, shelter services in the homelessness system had to adjust capacity and services to meet social distancing requirements, complete COVID-19 screening and monitoring, and ensure the health and safety of residents and staff. Initially the overflow shelter program was moved to the Peterborough Sport and Wellness Centre with the Brock Mission men’s shelter program. In July 2020, with the re-opening of the Peterborough Sport and Wellness Centre, shelter services returned to their original locations, including the overflow shelter program returning to Murray Street Baptist Church with overnight operations only and with a reduced capacity of a maximum of 17 beds. At the same time, staff explored several options for an alternative 24/7 location for the overflow shelter program while the pandemic continued. Given increases in marginalization and complexity of need, a 24/7 service was necessary as no other programs or services were available during the day in the initial part of the pandemic.

On October 19, 2020, Report CSSS20-013 was approved with a new location for the temporary overflow shelter at 210 Wolfe Street to operate 24/7 for a period of up to two years using provincial Social Services Relief Funding and to use Social Services General Assistance reserve to fund any shortfall that the provincial funding could not cover. The overflow shelter program at 210 Wolfe St has 32 shelter beds.

On October 4, 2021, through Report CSSS21-009 Council approved the continuation of 24/7 services at the overflow shelter.

The overflow shelter program has continued to operate 24/7 at 210 Wolfe St. based on Report CSSS20-013 with a scheduled expiration of October 2022. The recommendation in this report is to extend the 24/7 service to March 31, 2023 and to provide recommendations/options for overflow shelter operations beyond March 31, 2023 through the municipal budget process. Adequate provincial funding exists for the remainder of 2022 and adequate municipal funding in the overflow shelter program budget exists to allow operations to continue for the first quarter of 2023. This will permit the overflow shelter to continue to provide services overnight and during the day for the winter period. Appendix A provides information on the usage and occupancy of the overflow shelter. Monthly occupancy over the past year has remained high between 76% and 98% indicating a continued high demand for the service.

The previous Council approval for the extension of the overflow shelter had requested that expansion of other shelter sites be considered, and use of rent supplements be pursued. Brock Mission has been operating at its designed occupancy of 32 beds. Expansion of Brock Mission is not a reasonable possibility based upon its design layout. Both YES and Cameron House are back operating at their pre-COVID occupancy numbers of 12 and 30 beds respectively.

Staff are continuing to pursue making available rent supplement unit funding to those on the By Name Priority List where possible. As rent supplement agreements expired it is pursued with the landlord whether they would be able to repurpose the rent supplements to be used for homeless persons. Staff are also pursuing making a portion of units in new developments available to the By Name List. This is a slow process and is certainly an aspect of an overall plan but at this time the number of rent supplement units available to the By Name List and the number of rent supplements available in general cannot replace the demand experienced at the overflow shelter.

Allowing for a discussion of the future of the overflow shelter during the 2023 budget process will ensure a detailed analysis of the program can be provided to Council while options and their social and budgetary implications can be considered within the context of the entire municipal operational budget.

Submitted by,

Sheldon Laidman
Commissioner of Community Services

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Attachments

Attachment A: Chart of overflow shelter service occupancy from January 2020 to May 2022

Chart of overflow shelter service occupancy from January 2020 to May 2022

Year	Month	Bed Nights	Avg Stays Per Night	Unique Clients	Average Occupancy
2020	January	556	18	108	60%
2020	February	530	19	80	63%
2020	March	272	9	66	39%
2020	*April	0	0	0	0%
2020	*May	0	0	0	0%
2020	*June	0	0	0	0%
2020	July	90	3	38	59%
2020	August	242	8	70	46%
2020	September	321	11	76	63%
2020	October	313	10	74	59%
2020	November	336	11	66	66%
2020	December	225	7	49	43%
2021	January	271	9	51	51%
2021	February	262	9	58	51%
2021	March	396	13	57	75%
2021	April	785	26	87	82%
2021	May	808	26	88	81%
2021	June	878	29	84	91%
2021	July	933	30	87	94%
2021	August	903	29	91	91%
2021	September	934	31	86	97%
2021	October	910	29	97	92%
2021	November	948	32	83	99%
2021	December	960	31	86	97%
2022	January	743	24	61	75%
2022	February	874	31	63	98%
2022	March	975	31	87	98%
2022	April	883	29	96	92%
2022	May	751	24	85	76%

***Overflow and Brock Emergency services located at Peterborough Sports and Wellness Centre as part of COVID response**