



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Finance Committee

From: Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner, Community Services

Meeting Date: January 16, 2023

Subject: Homelessness Budget Recommendations, Report CSSS23-002

Purpose

A report to support the homelessness services items in the draft 2023 budget and recommend a request to the County for items that were not able to be included in the draft 2023 budget, all of which is to be considered during the January budget deliberations.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSSS23-002 dated January 16, 2022, of the Commissioner of Community Services as follows:

- a) That the Overflow shelter program be approved to operate on an annual basis at the municipally owned building located at 210 Wolfe St as follows, at an increased cost of \$103,500 above what is proposed in the 2023 draft budget:
 - i. 24 hours per day, 7 days per week from November 1st to March 31st; and
 - ii. 12 hours overnight from April 1st to October 31st.
- b) That the Emergency Shelter Operations budget be increased by \$100,000 to be used towards the provision of emergency motel rooms to increase the capacity of the shelter system when needed;
- c) That the Shelter and Homelessness Diversion (Rapid Rehousing Program) funding be increased by \$117,000 above what is proposed in the 2023 draft budget to continue the Rapid Rehousing Initiative;

d) That the County of Peterborough be requested to fund the additional \$320,500 required to support recommendations (a), (b), and (c); and

e) That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute such documents as are necessary to give effect to the foregoing on terms satisfactory to the Commissioner of Community Services and in forms acceptable to the City Solicitor.

Budget and Financial Implications

Table 1 - Provides a breakdown of the main Homelessness programs and its funding source as currently provided in the 2023 draft budget.

Service	Provincial Funding	City Funding	County Funding	City Funded Reserve	Total
Emergency Shelter Solutions (3 emergency shelters 24/7/365)	\$1,164,176	\$535,440	\$208,250	\$0	\$1,907,866
Supportive Housing—housing with supports such as specialized staff and rent supplements	\$1,401,127	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,401,127
Outreach and Support Services (trustees, prevention, diversion)	\$262,997	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$262,997
Housing Assistance (Housing Stability Fund, rent supplements plus new units on Bonaccord St. -PHC)	\$2,336,000	\$0	\$0	\$359,000	\$2,695,000
Overflow Shelter Services	\$0	\$667,500	\$0	\$0	\$667,500
TOTAL	\$5,164,300	\$1,202,940	\$208,250	\$359,000	\$6,934,490

There are two items recommended to be funded from the City funded reserves. A draw on the Social Services reserve in the amount of \$159,000 is required to support the increase to the Housing Stability Fund in the draft budget while a draw on the Housing Choice Rent Supplement Program reserve in the amount of \$200,000 is required to support additional rent supplement units for homeless persons at the new Peterborough Housing Corporation project. The Social Services Reserve has a current uncommitted balance of \$2,493,899 and the Housing Choice Rent Supplement Program reserve has a current estimated uncommitted balance of \$248,234. While the Social Services Reserve does have a healthy reserve it is important to maintain a reserve in Social Services as it is often necessary to rely upon this reserve for to allow significant projects to proceed. Some recent examples include bridge loan funding to allow the PHC Bonnacord project to proceed (\$5,000,000), acquisition of seven housing units at All Saints church (\$1,200,000), and Covid emergency responses while awaiting provincial emergency funding.

The original Council approval for the 2023 budget for the overflow shelter at Wolfe Street was \$267,000, which would have allowed the shelter to operate 24/7 only until March 31, 2023. The draft 2023 budget for the overflow shelter was adjusted by raising the request by an additional \$400,500 to support continued operation of the Wolfe St. Shelter on a 24 hours per day 7 days per week basis from January 1, 2023, to March 31, 2023, and then on a 12-hour overnight basis from April 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. This was done to ensure the draft budget included a base amount for the Overflow Shelter and this report would provide Council with options to expand or contract this service. The Overflow Shelter and many other programs related to the pandemic response to homelessness were funded by five rounds of Social Service Relief Funding from the Province totalling \$8,801,710. This funding is no longer available to the City for 2023 and therefore if these programs and services are to continue, they must be funded by the municipality. Table 2 provides a comparison of the costs associated with the various service options found in this Report and implications to the budget for 2023 and 2024.

Additional 2023 Budget Request

The draft 2023 Housing and Homelessness budget includes a \$328,286 net increase from 2022 which correlates to a 5.7% increase. The increase is almost entirely related to the loss of provincial funding for homelessness programming and the need to now fund homeless programs begun during the pandemic from the municipal tax base. City staff were still not able to include all of the items that would keep the status quo to the level of service that has been delivered during the pandemic. While there are other needs and ideas in the community for further services, the City's priority is not to lose the services we do provide that are still needed. Table 2 is a list of all of the staff recommendations.

Table 2 Chart of Staff Recommendations

Recommendation – Incl or Not Incl in 2023 Budget	Cost	2022 Budget	2023 Funding	2024 Budget Impact
Overflow Shelter— 5 months 24/7; 7 months overnight – Included (only at 3 months 24/7)	\$771,000	Social Services Relief Funding	\$667,500 2023 Recommended Budget Increase of \$103,500 to Base Budget	No impact if increase approved in 2023
Overflow motel rooms – Not included	\$100,000	Social Services Relief Funding	Increase of \$100,000 to Base Budget	No impact if increase approved in 2023
Shelter and Homelessness Diversion – Not included	\$117,000	Social Services Relief Funding	Increase of \$117,000 to Base Budget	No impact if increase approved in 2023
Increase of \$159,000 for Housing Stability Fund – Included	\$159,000	Social Services Relief Funding	Reserves of \$159,000	Increase of \$159,000 to Base Budget
Increase of \$200,000 for municipal rent supplements - Included	\$200,000	Housing Choice Rent Supplement Reserve	HCRS Reserve of \$200,000	Increase of \$200,000 to Base Budget
Enhanced staffing to support system pressures – Not included	\$103,553	No cost	No cost - reallocation of funding	No cost - funding reallocated in 2023

The County has great concern about the homelessness situation in the region and has expressed a desire to assist. This report outlines some additional items that are needed

and suggests a one-time request to the County to fund those items. This has been discussed with the CAO and Warden of the County. If the recommendations of this report are approved in January and the request to the County for funding is not supported, the 2023 Housing and Homelessness draft operating budget request would increase by a further \$320,500 to support recommendations (a), (b), and (c).

Background

The housing and homelessness crisis in Ontario was serious and widespread before COVID-19. The pandemic has intensified homelessness in most communities while highlighting flaws in homelessness response systems, the lack of resources to effectively address the issue, and the need for all levels of government to act and fund responses. Homelessness has never been as visible as it is currently and there are some promising approaches to sheltering, diverting people from homelessness, and permanently housing people that are recommended for funding.

Homelessness Funding and Operations

The City of Peterborough is the Province's Service System Manager (SSM) for Housing and Homelessness, recognizing that local communities know where the greatest need is and where investments can make the most impact on preventing, addressing, and reducing homelessness. As the SSM, the City is responsible for planning, funding, and providing service options in collaboration with community partners.

On July 27, 2020, in Report CSSS20-008 Council reviewed and approved the City's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan that was developed in collaboration with feedback from local service agencies, members of the public and people with lived experience.

The City receives Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) funding from the Province to provide affordable housing and support services for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Accountability mechanisms with both federal and provincial homelessness funding include the requirement to operate with a Co-ordinated Access System (CAS) using a By-Name Priority List (BNPL) to match individuals and families with housing opportunities that meet their needs. Community outcome measurements are also required. The City has the flexibility to use allocated funding for certain eligible services which must be provided in an investment plan and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

Outcome categories for the HPP funding are:

1. Preventing and Diverting Homelessness
2. Addressing Homelessness
3. Reducing Homelessness

Appendix A shows the HPP funding and allocations by program category, the amount of funding from each level of government, and the current programs and services funded by each.

History of Local Overflow Shelter Services

At its meeting of October 15, 2019, Council approved Report CSSS19-012 for the operation of an overnight overflow shelter program 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. 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.

In March 2020, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, homelessness shelter services had to adjust capacity to meet social distancing requirements, ensure infection protection, and control measures were in place. Initially the overflow shelter program was combined with the Brock Mission program and moved to the Peterborough Sport and Wellness Centre. When the Peterborough Sport and Wellness Centre re-opened, 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 during the initial phase of the pandemic.

On October 19, 2020, Report CSSS20-013 was approved with a new location for the overflow shelter at 210 Wolfe Street to operate 24/7 for a period of up to two years using provincial Social Services Relief Funding (SSRF) 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.

On July 26, 2022 through Report CSSS22-019 Council approved an extension of 24/7 overflow shelter services at 210 Wolfe St for the period of January 2023 to March 2023 pending further decisions made during the 2023 budget deliberations. This approval included a budget precommitment of \$267,000 to provide the services while staff prepared a budget options report with recommendations around further homelessness service strategies.

Appendix B provides statistics on the usage and occupancy of the shelter system over the past year which indicates high usage and continued demand for the service as well as details on increasing levels of complexity of individuals experiencing homelessness who are using shelter services. Based upon the usage of the Overflow Shelter and the increasing complexity of clients who require supports to be housed, the Overflow

Shelter remains necessary and is a critical part of the City's homeless system of services.

Overflow Shelter Operation – Recommendation (a)

Staff are recommending that the overflow shelter program operate ongoing for 24/7 from November 1st to March 31st yearly and overnight through the remaining seven months. Under this model, the six-month period would be available to community partners as a service hub during the day. Interested community partners could work with people to attach them to services that fit their needs.

The following provides the recommended overflow shelter option and alternative overflow shelter options for Council's consideration:

- **Recommended Option**

The overflow shelter program would operate 24/7 for the five winter months and for 12 hours overnight for the seven non-winter months. The total annualized cost for this service is \$771,000. The draft budget already includes \$667,500 and this recommendation would add \$103,500 to the draft budget.

- **Alternative Option 1 – 24/7/365 Operation**

This option would have the overflow shelter program operate 24/7/365 on an ongoing basis as it has through the COVID pandemic. The additional cost to the 2023 budget would be: \$370,500 and the annualized budget for 2024 would be: \$1,038,000.

- **Alternative Option 2 – Overnight Only**

This option would have the overflow shelter program operate only as an overnight shelter 12 months of the year. The annualized cost for this option would be \$504,000 which would result in a reduction to the draft 2023 budget of \$163,500

- **Alternative Option 3 – Draft Budget Status Quo**

This option would fund the Overflow Shelter as currently included in the draft 2023 budget which is 24/7 from January 1st to March 31st and then 12 hours per day for the remaining 9 months. There would be no further impact to the draft budget.

- **Alternative Option 4 – Recommended Hours plus more services**

This option recognizes that one of the critiques of the current shelter system is that shelter staff are stretched and must focus on providing only the basic service and are not able to provide additional services to clients. Increasing the funding to the Brock Mission and the Overflow Shelter would allow for a third worker to provide better referrals to services and assist with housing searches, develop more of a harm-reduction focus, address service restrictions differently, and other functions. It would also allow for the shelters to better support people with

increasing levels of acuity. The estimated impact to the budget would be to add \$200,000 if offered for both Brock Mission and the Overflow Shelter.

Motel Costs - Recommendation (b)

During the pandemic, the City entered into formal contracts with local motels to ensure isolation units were available for persons in the shelter system who were exposed to COVID. Blocks of rooms were secured with security services and meals provided. These motel rooms are no longer needed for isolation purposes but are used for additional overflow capacity for the shelter system or if persons are not able to use the shelter system. Annual costs for this service in 2021 and 2022 were close to \$800,000 and were entirely funded by the provincial Social Service Relief Fund. The opportunity for shelter system providers to use a motel room to expand capacity or serve an individual client need is still an important and necessary element of the shelter system. There are no funds included in the draft 2023 budget for motel rooms. Staff are recommending that \$100,000 be added to the Shelter System Operations budget for motel rooms. This amount would no longer allow staff to prebook blocks of rooms and would not allow for security but would give flexibility for intermittent use.

Continuation of the Rapid Rehousing Initiative - Recommendation (c)

In 2022 the City funded a pilot Rapid Rehousing Initiative which included shelter diversion and housing-focused activities at the shelters which has been successful in matching low acuity shelter stayers to housing at an additional cost of \$117,000 per year. This was funded through provincial Social Services Relief Funding and the service was contracted to Brock Mission. This allowed people with limited shelter stays to be diverted quickly away from the shelter system and rehoused to avoid lengthy stays in shelter which can lead to chronic homelessness. The program was able to connect 46 persons to housing in only a five-month period in 2022. Moving persons from the shelter system into housing as quickly as possible is a key aspect of preventing chronic homelessness and ensuring enough available shelter system space.

Homelessness Program Funding Increases Already in the Draft 2023 Budget

The following budgetary items are ones that are already included in the Draft 2023 budget but are included in this report to ensure Council is aware of their presence in the draft budget and its affect on future budgets if they are to continue into 2024.

Housing Stability Fund Increase

Another program that helps divert or prevent people from entering homelessness is the Housing Stability Fund (HSF). HSF is available to people who are in arrears in their shelter costs—housing and utilities. Given the limited affordable rental options it is important to invest in keeping people housed as the costs of alternatives are more expensive and create instability in people's lives. Social Services has been actively reviewing the HSF policies and training staff to look at the policy with a lens to prevent homelessness or end homelessness. The result has been a marked increase in the

number of issuances and the amounts being issued. In 2022 staff have issued approximately \$1,500,000 with 1,502 issuances to households in the City and County of Peterborough by mid-November. This is an extremely important preventative tool used by the City's caseworkers to prevent homelessness and staff wish to ensure it is properly funded to meet the full demand for the funds. A \$159,000 increase is proposed to be paid for from the Social Services Reserve.

Rent Supplement Funding Increase

Construction continues on 85 units at PHC's 555 Bonaccord Street project with an expected occupancy date of February 2023. Of the 85 units, 50 units will have support services provided by the VON. 20 of the 50 VON-supported units are dedicated to patients who are deemed "Alternate Level of Care" (ALC) at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC). From the remaining 35 units, 15 are specifically dedicated to the By-Name Priority List. City and PHC staff are also working with PHC, PRHC and VON to determine the overlap between their patients and those who are on the By-Name Priority List. The requested \$200,000 additional amount for Rent Supplements in the draft budget will support these 15 units. The \$200,000 is proposed to be funded from the Housing Choice Rent Supplement Reserve. It is important to note that offering a rent supplement means it must be offered ongoing so this funding will need to be included in future budgets as an operating cost funded from the municipal levy.

The City extended substantial financing for this project, which has also received Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative funding. The use of rent supplements is a municipal tool that allows service providers to house individuals who are experiencing homelessness and receiving Social Assistance to obtain and maintain housing. Without additional support for rental costs most individuals receiving Ontario Works would not be able to pay rent above \$400/monthly. With these units targeted at the By Name Priority List, there must be rent supplements available. While the City has reprofiled rent supplements and been able to add new rent supplements into the system over the past number of years, any new builds or opportunities to provide permanent housing will likely require rent supplements as long as rents remain unattainable. Keeping people housed also means that the rent supplements need to be permanent funding.

Support to pay for meal plan costs and other social supports needed to house people have been budgeted by Social Services using new provincial funding and from the United Way of Peterborough and District. Additional support service funding for the units dedicated to the By-Name Priority List is being pursued from Ontario Health East.

As of October 2022, the City supports 618 households with rent supplements totaling \$2,920,000 annually (379 through Social Services and 239 through Peterborough Housing Corporation). In addition, Social Services assisted 173 households to obtain the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit in 2022 which brought in over \$870,000 into the community to support low-income families. The average rent supplement amount is currently \$447.69 per month or \$5,372 per year; however, this figure is expected to rise substantially this year and in future years due to increasing rental costs. This figure is an average cost and serving homeless persons with a rent supplement is generally

more costly as their only income is typically Ontario Works or Ontario Disability shelter allowance.

City Staff Reorientation

The City currently has only three staff dedicated to the Homelessness Program. They are the Program Manager, the Data Administrator, and the Program Integrity Officer. An addition of a second Program Integrity Officer would help to strengthen responses to emerging crises; ensure program fidelity of funded services; that the expected outcomes of service agreements are met; and work collaboratively with community partners to address system gaps through improvement projects. This can be done without additional funding or a budgetary increase by shifting a staff position from the Ontario Works Program to build capacity within the Homelessness Program. Council should be aware that this is not a traditional approach to use a provincially funded Ontario Works administrative position to work in the Homelessness Program but due to the shifting nature of the Ontario Works program to a Life Stabilization focus staff feel this is justified.

Request for Additional County Contribution

Table 1 provides a breakdown on the current funding of each government towards homelessness. The Province provides \$5,164,000, the City provides \$1,202,940 and the County \$208,500. If the staff recommendations are approved it would add an additional \$320,500 to the overall homelessness budget with an additional \$359,000 from Reserves on top of the draft homeless budget increase of 5.7%. The City and County have a Shared Services Management agreement which caps the County contribution for Homelessness at \$208,500. However, for funding Social Housing the County's contribution is determined by weighted assessment meaning for the 2023 budget the County contribution is 55.7% and the City 44.3%. On June 28, 2022, County Council passed a Notice of Motion identifying homelessness as a dire situation and a crisis that needs solutions and interventions. See Appendix C for the full text. Homelessness, just like the need for social housing, childcare, or paramedic services does not recognize borders and is a shared responsibility with the County. Staff are recommending that Council request that the County provide the funding in the amount of \$320,500 towards these additional items. This additional funding would not reflect the same cost share as used for Social Housing, however, it would assist in ensuring these programs can operate without additional impact to the City's already increased homelessness budget. It also recognizes that these are items coming out of COVID that need transitional funding while the system transitions to permanent solutions. City staff have met with senior County staff to have initial discussions on whether the County would be able to consider funding some additional items in the Homelessness budget.

Additional Homeless Responses Not Included in this Report:

This report and its recommendations have dealt with services and programs initiated by the City and its partners during the pandemic (e.g. Overflow shelter, rapid rehousing

program, motel usage, etc.) and their continuation needs to be considered as part of the 2023 budget. Staff are certainly aware of additional service ideas to address homelessness that could be considered and funded but which would require significant additional funding, significant additional research, and consideration before being considered or reviewed by Council. Many would require significant research to determine appropriate and available locations, how they would be operated, what agency may be able to operate the service, what services would be included, outcomes expected, and the funding necessary. The following are some items that could be considered in future reports to Council for additional medium and long term solutions:

- Winter Drop in Centre
- Sleeping Cabin community
- Amendment to the City Parks Bylaw to authorize location specific tenting
- Additional Homeless Shelter(s)
- Reorientation of Social Housing Stock towards homeless persons
- Construction of New Affordable Housing Stock

Housing and Homelessness in Ontario

Homelessness is a complicated and layered issue involving multiple levels of government with many causes and affects. The following sections are provided as additional background information for Council.

Ontario is the only province in Canada where municipal levels of government hold responsibility for human services such as social assistance, childcare, and housing. This is a strength of this system as it presents opportunities to prioritize local issues, create innovative solutions to local problems, and build strong partnerships. A weakness to this approach is that some of the funding for these large and complex programs is dependent on the municipal tax base which represents only 9% of the share of all tax dollars in Canada.

Decisions at the federal and provincial level can create significant cost implications for local governments. When the provincial government makes program or policy decision across health, justice, youth, or social systems the impact can be felt locally. Individuals and families experiencing homelessness can often need help from multiple service systems which are not naturally connected at the local level. Additional resources from other levels of government are needed to ensure that those who require vital social services can access them quickly within their home community and there is an adequate supply of housing to address growing needs and waiting lists.

Since 2001 funding for housing solutions in Ontario has been directed to the municipality through federal/provincial mechanisms, but without coordination, consultation, or targeted approaches. Little funding has been offered that would produce sustainable strategies that meet the highest need in the community based on data.

Approximately 50% of people experiencing homelessness in Peterborough require permanent supportive housing with a range of 24/7/365 supports.

Homelessness in the City and County

While the City of Peterborough is the Service Manager and funder for many local homelessness responses, the United Way of Peterborough receives the federal Reaching Home funding for homelessness services. While the Reaching Home funding was increased during the pandemic, it amounts to \$267,000 per year.

The City works collaboratively with community health and social service providers on short-term interventions and longer-term strategies to support ending homelessness. Work also continues with both provincial partners and local planning boards to examine system level interventions that adapt and respond to social and health equity issues.

Significant challenges exist in the community that make success difficult such as:

- Significant increase in the level of client acuity in the shelter and homeless system
- Lack of discharge planning with the health and judicial systems put continuing pressures on the least resourced system—homelessness responses
- Increased levels of violence in systems
- No 24/7 health funding for highest community need —permanent supportive housing
- Concern for encampments with increasing numbers of clients staying outside and fear for client safety during winter.
- Social Assistance rates not in line with the cost of living
- Limited rental options especially those that are affordable
- Challenges recruiting and retaining staff across social agencies

Local Planning for Homelessness Responses

On July 25, 2022 City Council endorsed the Community Safety and Well-being Plan. This Plan creates a human services roadmap for the shared responsibility. It also intentionally aligns with existing municipal plans and work being done by local agencies to avoid duplication, share best practices, and realizing efficiencies.

At the heart of the Plan is the desire to create the conditions under which everyone can access safe, affordable, and appropriate housing, and have access to income, food security, and the health and mental health supports they need to feel safe and well. The Plan also acknowledges that community safety and well-being extend beyond the capacity of policing and emergency services to address complex social issues that often contribute to crime, unsafe situations, and poor health. The Plan offers a meaningful roadmap to getting the right services, to the right people, at the right time, in a cost-effective manner.

Several of the priority areas identified are linked to local homelessness responses:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Poverty & Income Security
- Health & Mental Health
- Substance Use & Addictions

Over the past five years City staff have worked with partners to address issues of homelessness, poverty, mental health, and addictions. Those collaborations have resulted in new partnerships with community agencies to create new housing opportunities, new, purpose-built dedicated units, redesigned HSF and Rent Supplement Programs with fewer barriers and increased connections to the most marginalized.

Recognizing the magnitude and complexity of the issues facing the community, Social Services staff are working towards additional responses that are within Social Services' operational authority and are in addition to those being recommended in this report. These responses include the following:

- Working with shelter programs and Peterborough Public Health to return them to pre-pandemic numbers; working toward more harm reduction practices in the shelter system; reviewing the shelter system with an equity lens
- Working with landlords and existing social housing stock to determine if individuals can be housed together to share units, house more people, or create innovative housing opportunities
- Matching individuals and families with recently finished eight single units and five family units and providing individualized supports to ensure successful tenancies; working with Peterborough Housing Corporation (PHC) to match people from the By Name Priority List (BNPL) to new housing opportunities in early 2023
- Working closely with the Housing Resource Centre and Housing Location services
- Ensuring each person in the homeless system is assessed and has a housing plan
- Surveying and connecting with people living outside the shelter system
- Working closely with health providers to attach a variety of health responses to marginalized individuals and support them where they are located
- Embedding Social Services Caseworkers at the library to better serve clients and assist the Library in working with marginalized clients
- Reorienting Social Services staff to have additional outreach focused workers to serve the downtown and other areas of high need

Summary

This report identifies that the shelter system usage and occupancy statistics support the continued and ongoing operation of the overflow shelter at Wolfe St, the provision of community and outreach supports, provision of housing support assistance, and staffing for program administration. Staff are recommending enhancements to the 2023 operating budget to provide the supports necessary to meaningfully administer the housing and homelessness support system.

Submitted by,

Sheldon Laidman
Commissioner of Community Services

Contact Name:

Jocelyn Blazey
Interim Homelessness Program Manager
Phone: 705-876-8830 Ext. 3662
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755
E-Mail: jblazey@peterborough.ca

Attachments:

Appendix A: Current Homelessness Funding and Resources
Appendix B: Current Homelessness Data
Appendix C: Notice of Motion, County Council June 28, 2022

Current Homelessness Funding and Resources

Service Category:

Supportive Housing:

A combination of housing assistance with individualized, flexible, and ongoing support services (for example, mental health and addictions supports, assistance with daily living, and other services). For the purposes of Homeless Prevention Program (HPP), this category includes transitional housing and residential services homes.

Examples:

Through the Coordinated Access System (CAS) there are 60 housing units and 50 supportive housing units that are connected to the By Name Priority List (BNPL). These units are funded to partners through various ministries through the provincial government, Reaching Home, or directly by the City. Some of the units are transitional such as the 15 units at Brock Mission and some are permanent. Different service providers work together to support people with varying levels of acuity, and they are matched through the CAS.

In early 2023 there will be five new permanent family apartments at the Mount dedicated to the BNPL. Additionally, there will be 40 new permanent units at Peterborough Housing Corporation (PHC) dedicated to the BNPL including 20 that are dedicated to Alternative Level of Care (ALC) beds in partnership with Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC), PHC, VON and the City.

Funding Source: Provincial Funding \$1,401,127

Service Category:

Community Outreach and Support Services:

Services and supports, such as community outreach and food security programs, as well as case management and referrals for people on BNPL's. It also includes ongoing supports and services (such as counselling, medical care, or assistance with daily living) for people not receiving long-term housing assistance.

Examples:

Over 2021 and early 2022, homelessness real time data clearly demonstrated that people experiencing homelessness were experiencing homelessness for longer periods of time.

The City and Brock Mission staff prototyped a program at the two largest shelters – Brock Mission and the Overflow shelter program. The intention of the program was to rapidly rehouse people from the shelter system by dedicating resources to ensure that

CSSS22-030 Appendix A: Current Homelessness Funding and Resources

individuals did not age into chronic homelessness. Two Housing Support Workers dedicated time in each shelter to connect with residents, make connections to housing providers and create a housing plan and all necessary assessments. Early outcomes show promising results since 46 households moved directly from shelter to housing from May 26 to October 24, 2022.

Continued investments to prevent people from entering homelessness or ensuring the experience of homelessness is brief is an important activity in a well-functioning homelessness response system. By connecting people to other supports and services we aim to reduce the number of people that are staying in homelessness for longer periods of time.

The City funds the Housing Resource Centre to provide outreach supports and connections to housing opportunities. They also work with people facing eviction to negotiate with property owners and/or utility companies to ensure they can continue to maintain housing.

Various community providers including the City participate in street outreach programs offering access and attachment to supports and services.

Funding: Provincial Funding \$262,997

Service Category:

Housing Assistance:

Short-term/emergency assistance, non-financial housing assistance, and long-term housing assistance (such as rent supplements and housing allowances) for people not receiving ongoing support services.

Examples:

The City uses the following tools to help divert or prevent people from experiencing homelessness:

Housing Stability Fund (HSF) was reviewed and changes to eligibility and rates of assistance to address escalating housing costs effective January 1, 2022. HSF is one of the largest prevention and diversion programs that assists households with eviction prevention, rent arrears, hydro arrears and household set up assistance.

Funding: Provincial Funding \$2,495,000

Service Category:

Emergency Shelter Solutions:

Expenses related to operating and staffing emergency shelters.

CSSS22-030 Appendix A: Current Homelessness Funding and Resources

Examples:

The City funds four shelters—Brock, Cameron House, the Youth Emergency Shelter for youth and families, and the Wolfe St. Overflow.

Funding: Total funding is \$1,907,866 Provincial \$1,005,176 City \$694,440 County \$208,250

Service Category:

Overflow Shelter Services

Examples:

Staff recommend this coverage annually which would cover 24/7 services from November to April each year, and 12 hours overnight from May to October each year. During the warmer months, staff would recommend engaging community partners to offer wrap-around services out of the Wolfe St location.

Funding: City \$637,500 (budgeted) \$103,500 additional recommended

CSSS23-002 Appendix B – Homelessness Statistics

Shelter Occupancy

Year	Average System Occupancy	Total Bed Nights	Average Monthly Shelter Users	Average Nightly Shelter Users
2022 (Jan–Nov24)	85%	28,153	173	86
2021	84%	27,340	169	75
2020	82%	13,909	174	62
2019	91%	26,713	211	118

- The City funds 106 shelter beds.
- Number of shifts from homelessness to housed in 2022 is 296
- Between Jan and mid November \$1,490,000 was issued in Housing Stability Funds
- As of October 2022, the City supports 618 households with rent supplements totalling \$2,920,000 annually (379 through Social Services and 239 through Peterborough Housing Corporation)
- Social Services assisted 173 households to obtain the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) in 2022; this brings \$870,00 annualized new funding into the Peterborough area this year
- Average rent supplement amount \$447.69 per month, \$5,372 per year
- Total number of RGI units – 1569 + 215 Market units
- Total number of affordable units that Social Services has supported is 780

By-Name Priority List (BNPL)

- There are currently 354 persons on the By Name Priority List experiencing homelessness (by definition this includes persons in emergency shelters, sleeping outside, and persons who are precariously housed and consider themselves homeless)
- 174 individuals are considered chronically homeless on the BNPL
- 55% of individuals on the BNPL have very high or high acuity on our SPDAT assessments

CSSS22-030 Appendix B – Homelessness Statistics

- Between January -October 2022, there were 119 shifts to housing by individuals who were experiencing chronic homelessness, which is 40% of the total shifts made.

Month (2022)	Number of Chronic Homelessness Shifts in 2022	Number of Non-Chronic Homelessness Shifts in 2022
January	10	18
February	7	17
March	25	17
April	16	19
May	17	16
June	14	28
July	15	20
August	6	18
September	5	14
October	4	10

- 296 shifts from homelessness to housing were recorded January to October in 2022

Month (2022)	Number of People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in 2022	Number of People Experiencing Non-Chronic Homelessness in 2022
January	139	146
February	156	144
March	142	152
April	153	158
May	143	169
June	143	160
July	148	145
August	160	151
September	163	159
October	161	165

CSSS22-030 Appendix B – Homelessness Statistics

- On average there are 306 people experiencing homelessness each month in the community

Level of Acuity	Number of Individuals on the BNPL
Very High/High	193
Moderate	72
Low	18
No Assessment	71

New Affordable Housing

There are over 150 new affordable housing units in development or newly occupied in the City and County of Peterborough.

Since 2019, 73 housing units have been specifically dedicated to the By-Name Priority List which is a coordinated list of homeless persons in the region. 50 units with supports are available – primarily in private market units.

Habitat for Humanity Leahy's Lane

41 homeownership condominium units are fully occupied by Habitat for Humanity partner families as of April, 2022. The City provided Development Charge rebates to Habitat as well as Homeownership Assistance to eligible households.

137 Rubidge Street

Eight one-bedroom units at 137 Rubidge Street are fully occupied with individuals and couples from the By-Name Priority List of people experiencing homelessness. These units were funded through the Social Services Relief Fund and municipal incentives. Tenants are supported through FourCAST and City staff and receive rent supplements.

The Mount Community Centre

Five units at the Mount Community Centre are in construction and due to open in early 2023. These units will be dedicated to families transitioning out of homelessness from the By-Name Priority List for people experiencing homelessness. Funding was provided from the Social Services Relief Fund, the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative, and municipal incentives. Rent supplements will also be provided to ensure further affordability.

CSSS22-030 Appendix B – Homelessness Statistics

555 Bonaccord Street

Construction continues on 85 units at PHC's 555 Bonaccord Street project. As of mid-June, the building had completed substantial completion of the structural components.

Of the 85 units, 50 units will have support services provided by the VON. 20 of the 50 VON-supported units are dedicated to patients who are deemed "Alternate Level of Care" (ALC) at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC). From the remaining 35 units, 15 are specifically dedicated to the By-Name Priority List. City and PHC staff are also working with PHC, PRHC and VON to determine the overlap between their patients and those who are on the By-Name Priority List.

The City extended substantial financing for this project, which has also received Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative funding. Rent supplement funding, and support to pay meal plan costs have been secured from the City and the United Way of Peterborough and District. Support service funding for the units dedicated to the By-Name Priority List is being pursued from Ontario Health East.

681 Monaghan Road

The City was successful in securing \$40,000 in funding from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) SEED funding program. This funding will support feasibility studies for redevelopment for affordable housing. The City and PHC are working together to determine the best funding programs and to work through full development costing to determine a future City investment needed to ensure the project is viable.

Housing Supports

Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit

- Since June, 173 low-income households have been enrolled in the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) through the Social Services Division. COHB is a portable benefit that helps them to bridge the difference between 30% of their income and the cost of their rent. These benefits total \$770,400 support in the community annually.

Rent Supplements

- The City administers 379 rent supplements which is an investment of \$1,543,777 annually.
- The City also funds 239 rent supplements through PHC investing \$1,580,000 annually.

CSSS22-030 Appendix B – Homelessness Statistics

Connections to Health Supports

Brock Mission Clinic

On June 15th, the new Brock Mission Clinic officially opened its doors. The Clinic provides low or no-barrier access to primary care for people experiencing homelessness. Nurse Practitioner Lee-Anne Quinn and Dr. Janet Kelly co-founded the clinic to serve the needs of vulnerable individuals. It is available to anyone experiencing homelessness, but they do not need to be staying at the shelter to access services. This collaboration was initiated and facilitated by City staff.

Safer Supply Project

Brock Mission, Peterborough Public Health, the VON 360 Degree Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic (360NPLC) and City outreach staff are working to support harm-reduction practices at the shelters. This includes connecting people staying in shelters to the Safer Supply project led by the 360NPLC.

Collaborations between the Shelters and PRHC

Shelter staff, city homelessness outreach staff, PRHC emergency social work, and patient relations staff are collaborating to map patient and client flow between the hospital and shelter systems. The goal is to determine what services and supports are available in both systems and how they might be better connected.

Preventing Chronic Homelessness Pilot

One of the key areas of improvement that the Built For Zero team has identified for Peterborough is the number of people who are “aging into chronic homelessness.” This means that, from the time that they became homeless, they have not resolved their homelessness before spending over 6 months without housing. A pilot project is funding two Shelter Housing Workers who are working with clients on getting full assessments of their needs and supporting housing readiness. They have housed 46 people between May and October 24, 2022.

Policies and Strategies to Preserve Affordable Housing Stock

Peterborough Housing Corporation (PHC) has developed a new Disposition Policy that prioritizes keeping units as affordable housing stock. The new Disposition Policy states that before a surplus property is offered on the open market, that the City will have first right of refusal, next, it would be offered to non-profit or housing organizations for affordable housing, and finally, for sale to PHC tenants.

The City signed a five-year renewal on an agreement with Kinsmen Garden Court to continue providing low-income rental housing as part of the Community Housing portfolio for the City and County. The City provides a tax subsidy to Kinsmen Garden Court, who provide 66 units of housing for low-income seniors who pay approximately 60% of Average Market Rent. The City also purchased 7 units at the All-Saints Church

CSSS22-030 Appendix B – Homelessness Statistics

property on Sherbrooke Street to ensure that they remained in the affordable housing portfolio of the City.

The following Notice of Motion was passed at the June 28, 2022, Peterborough County Council meeting:

Resolution No. 269-2022
Moved by Councillor McFadden
Seconded by Councillor Senis

Whereas Peterborough County prides itself as being a caring and compassionate community that continually strives to be a place where people want to live, work and play; and

Whereas providing access to safe, adequate and affordable housing for everyone is fundamental to achieving that goal; and

Whereas Peterborough County acknowledges that those that are homeless are in crisis and those living in shelters are also part of the crisis and not the solution; and

Whereas Peterborough has experienced one of the highest per capita rates of opioid overdoses and deaths in the nation; and

Whereas Peterborough County acknowledges that mental health, mental illness, addiction and homelessness, while important issues, are not homogenous, interchangeable or consistently interconnected, and doing so may oversimplify exceptionally complex issues that require targeted policy solutions and intervention; and

Whereas identifying actionable deliverables that address the exceptionally complex issues first requires meaningful local discussions amongst all of the affected front line organizations, appropriate provincial and federal ministries and community leaders; and

Whereas the expectation for the outcome of those discussions would formulate an informed action plan to effectively and efficiently address the crisis of mental health, homelessness and addictions in Peterborough;

Therefore be it resolved that staff be directed to bring back a report providing options to County Council as to how to best recognize and address the dire situation of mental health, homelessness, and addictions in the County of Peterborough; and

Furthermore that those options be brought back to the next Council meeting for

consideration and a discussion of options including whether to Declare of a State of Emergency on mental health, homelessness and addictions in the County of Peterborough; and

Furthermore that a letter be sent to the Council of the City of Peterborough requesting that their Council also pass a motion recognizing the dire local situation of mental health, homelessness, and addictions in the City; and

Furthermore that once a date has been determined for these discussions to commence based on a maximum number of available participants with the list as indicated below, that invitations be sent to all of the following:

- CAO Sheridan Graham, Peterborough County
- Peterborough County Council
- CAO Sandra Clancy, City of Peterborough
- City of Peterborough Council
- Chief Laurie Carr, Hiawatha First Nation
- Chief Keith Knott, Curve Lake First Nation
- Medical Officer of Health Dr. Thomas Piggott, Peterborough Public Health
- MP Jamie Schmale
- MP Philip Lawrence
- MP Michelle Ferreri
- Minister David Piccini
- MPP Laurie Scott
- MPP David Smith
- Acting Chief Tim Farquharson, Peterborough Police Service
- Detachment Commander Chris Galeazza, Peterborough County OPP
- Chief Randy Mellow, Peterborough County/City Paramedics
- Chief Chris Snetsinger, Peterborough Fire Services
- Jim Russell, United Way
- Mark Graham, CMHA Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge
- Rebecca Morgan Quin, Manager, Housing Services Peterborough
- Ashlee Aitken, General Manager Kawartha Foodshare
- David Fisher, FRIENDS Peterborough
- Donna Rogers, Executive Director FourCAST; and

Furthermore that Brock Mission, Cameron House, YES Shelter for Youth and Families, and the Overflow shelter have appropriate representation; and

Furthermore that a letter be sent to the:

- Federal Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Carolyn Bennett
- Federal Minister of Health Jean-Yves Duclos
- Federal Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion Ahmed Hussen
- Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Steve Clark

- Ontario Minister of Health Sylvia Jones
- Ontario Minister of Children, Community and Social Services Merrilee Fullerton
- Ontario Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Michael Tibollo

requesting that their respective ministry provide a representative to participate in the upcoming discussions; and

Furthermore that County CAO, Sheridan Graham, be provided the flexibility to expend resources and amend the list of individuals invited to participate in these discussions in the way she feels best; and

Furthermore that the discussions be setup as a virtual meeting to ensure that a maximum number of invitees and the public are able to attend; and

That if a quorum of County or City Councillors is confirmed for participation in these discussions, that appropriate Special Meeting(s) will be called by the Warden for these discussions.

Ayes: Whelan, Jones, Mitchell, Bonneau, Burt, Clark, Graham, Martin, McFadden, Moher, Senis, and Taylor

Carried 15-0 on a recorded vote