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TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY and PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2015
FROM:	LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN AND FIRE SERVICES
SUBJECT:	LONDON'S HOMELESS PREVENTION SYSTEM PROGRESS REPORT AND UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, London's Homeless Prevention System Progress Report and Update **BE RECEIVED** for information.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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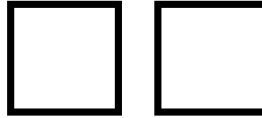
- London's Homeless Prevention System: Presentation (CPSC: January 20, 2015)
- London's Homeless Prevention System Housing Stability Fund (CPSC: June 16, 2014)
- Contract Award 13-48 London CAREs (CPSC: January 6, 2014)
- London CAREs – Transitioning to the London Homeless Prevention System (CPSC: October 7, 2013)
- Homeless Prevention System for London Three Year Implementation Plan (CPSC: April 22, 2013)
- Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CSPC: December 17, 2012)
- Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Funding Allocation for January 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014 (CSC: October 22, 2012)
- Elimination of Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSC: October 22, 2012)
- Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Homelessness Social Assistance Regulation Amendments (CSC: September 10, 2012)
- London Community Plan on Homelessness (CPSC: November 8, 2010)
- City of London Community Housing Strategy (CPSC: June 21, 2010)

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide Community and Protective Services Committee an update and highlight progress on the programs and services related to London's Homeless Prevention System Implementation Plan approved by Council April 30, 2013.

The City of London's Homeless Prevention System Implementation Plan is a coordinated and integrated individual and family centred Housing First approach that is outcome focused and designed to address, reduce and prevent homelessness in London. These efforts directly contribute to Council's 2015 - 2019 Strategic Plan for the City of London. Preventing homelessness in London will have a positive effect in all four strategic areas of focus identified in the Strategic Plan. In particular, our London Homeless Prevention System contributes to how we will work together to achieve caring and compassionate services. Both Plans have a primary focus to reduce and prevent homelessness. Our collaborative efforts with community agencies, through a Housing First response, help tenants to keep their existing housing and avoid homelessness, and find solutions regarding poverty, mental illness, addictions and trauma.

A Housing First approach assists individuals and families by seeking out and supporting the right housing, at the right place, with the right level of support to develop lasting housing stability. It is a housing and service intervention that provides immediate access to permanent



housing and support services and is based on a philosophy of participant choice. London's Homeless Prevention System is based on this evidence based model and our plans, projects and outcomes are helping individuals find their way home.

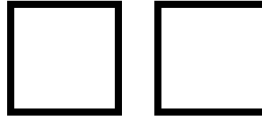
The two primary outcomes of individuals and families experiencing homelessness are to obtain and retain housing and those at risk of homelessness to remain housed.

London's Homeless Prevention System concentrates on delivering actionable and measurable solutions in purposeful and strategic ways with community-level results, consistent service delivery and information management. The actions are organized into five areas of focus: Securing Housing, Housing with Support, Housing Stability, Shelter Diversion, and Strategy, Competency and Capacity.

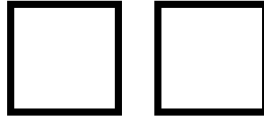
London’s Homeless Prevention System Update of Achievements

The chart below provides an overview of the actions outlined in London’s Homeless Prevention System Implementation Plan and how we are achieving results. Following this chart, details are provided on selected initiatives, services and programs.

Area of Focus	Action	Update/Achievement
Securing Housing	Introduce Neighbourhood Housing Support Centres as hubs of service.	Housing Selection Workers are funded with several agencies to support rapid access to housing. Neighbourhood Centres are under review.
	Initiate a “Jail to Home” and Court Diversion program through a collaborative response with courts, EMDC, police and services.	Judicial Interim Release Order to Reside (O2R) launched November 2014 aimed at diversion from emergency shelter to housing stability.
	Initiate a “Hospital to Home” program through a collaborative response with local hospitals and London funded agencies.	Active relationships with the South West Local Health Integration Network (SWLHIN), HealthLinks, the Community Health Collaborative, and hospital emergency departments have led to improved discharge planning and community case conferences.
	Establish a last month’s rent program by enhancing the rent bank.	First and last month’s rent program offered through the Housing Stability Bank operated by The Salvation Army Centre of Hope.
	Establish a moving service.	Moving services were piloted in 2013-2014 through the Housing Stability Bank program. Based on the evaluation, this program is no longer provided under the Housing Stability Bank.
	Establish a “new’ furniture bank.	This is currently under review.
	Strengthen outreach efforts to focus on Housing First with street involved individuals.	London CAREs now operates 24/7, 365 days of the year providing street outreach and housing stability services.
Housing with Support	Introduce an integrated homeless information and case management system.	Targeted for implementation in 2016.
	Strengthen housing with support programs through collaboration.	A collaboration between London CAREs, emergency shelters and London Middlesex Housing Corporation - won a 2014 Pillar Award. Street Level Women at Risk Prevention Program launched. Continue to support specialized housing programs operated by the John Gordon Home, Mission Services of London - Men’s Mission. Small projects funded to transition services to a Housing First approach. Service collaboration formed to consider a Managed Alcohol Program in London.
	Strengthen crisis response once housed.	A strong diversion response is in place from emergency services including London Police Service, local hospitals and emergency shelters through the 24/7 service of London CAREs.



Area of Focus	Action	Update/Achievement
Housing Stability	Link the emergency utility program and rent bank program to Neighbourhood Housing Support Centres.	Six Housing Stability Bank sites operate in partnership with the London Public Library.
	Introduce peer support and mentoring programs.	This is under consideration. A Peer Manual was produced under A Canadian Model for Housing and Support of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness.
Shelter Diversion	Focus on reducing pressures on emergency shelter use.	Special projects underway including family shelter and chronic male shelter users, The Salvation Army Centre of Hope, Emergency Shelter Data Review (2011-2013), Order to Reside, enhanced policies and criteria for intake and housing plans. Voluntary reduction in emergency shelter beds from 360 to 320.
	Establish a coordinated intake for individuals and families.	Centralized intake for emergency shelters underway for launch in 2016.
	Explore shelter specialization in London.	Review of Housing First shelters for youth. LGBT2Q report on emergency shelter released.
Strategy, Capacity and Competency	Establish an Implementation Team.	Newly expanded community leadership team meets six times a year.
	Anchor a consistent Housing First response (philosophy and intervention).	Multiple community-based projects launched and anchored in a Housing First philosophy and intervention including: O2R, London CARES Partnership Project, A Canadian Model for Housing and Support of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness, emergency shelters. Working with municipalities in Southwest Ontario on a shared Housing First training program.
	Enhance system capacity through training, case management, program monitoring and clinical expertise.	21 community training events included: Housing First, acuity assessment (SPDAT), emergency shelter staff training events, program monitoring and conferences.
	Undertake a community plan on youth, London Aboriginal individuals/families and street involved sex workers.	Completed a Community Plan Regarding Street Level Survival Sex Workers. Commenced planning on homeless youth and a prevention plan for youth and emergency shelter response. Funded <i>Best Practice Guideline for Ending Women's and Girls Homelessness</i> . The London Aboriginal plan will commence at the request of our aboriginal services and the London Homeless Coalition.
	Introduce standards of service and measures.	Monthly and quarterly reports submitted by funded agencies - improving standardized reporting.
	Work with other funders to align strategies, leverage opportunities, performance monitoring and reporting.	All orders of government approved London's Homeless Prevention System Implementation Plan. Meet regularly with funders and work together on joint projects.
Strengthen the response to persistent and chronic homelessness.	London's Housing First response prioritizes this unique population.	



The following section provides details regarding key projects and programs that highlight how a Housing First approach can be applied to move towards achieving the outcomes. Other initiatives highlight the impact of changing trends and the opportunity to profile our efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness through public events.

London CARES

London CARES is a voluntary service collaboration providing Housing First services aimed at improving the health and housing outcomes of individuals experiencing homelessness. London CARES was the recipient of a 2014 Pillar Non-Profit Award for the category Community Collaboration. Services of London CARES include:

- Housing Stability services provide intensive in-home and community based case management support. In-home support is provided to nearly 100 individuals identified as persistently homeless and chronic users of emergency services, maintaining a successful housing retention rate of 87%. Housing stock offered includes units from: the private sector with no supplement (40), private sector with City of London supplement (26), and Rent-Geared to Income Housing (28).
- Street Outreach services operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Focusing on London's core areas (Downtown, Old East Village, SOHO), Street Outreach Workers engage with street involved individuals and support them to move into a home.
- A partnered response with London Police Service, London CARES provides an effective and supportive diversion response to individuals experiencing homelessness identified as the highest users of emergency services. In 2014, 92 calls from London Police Service resulted in a supportive diversion response assisting with relieving pressure on emergency services.

Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters provide an important role in the continuum of services available to individuals and families experiencing homelessness in London. An emergency shelter is intended to provide immediate short-term accommodation and basic needs for individuals and families.

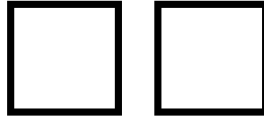
Mission Services of London, The Salvation Army Centre of Hope and Unity Project for the Relief of Homelessness receive funding through the City of London to operate emergency shelter beds. Operational funding is through a per diem at a rate of \$47.75 per person per day or an average total of \$1,452 per month for each person, including children.

In 2013, there were 360 emergency shelter beds offered by three emergency shelters. Today, there has been a voluntary reduction in total beds to 320 resulting in no variance in overall emergency shelter occupancy, for a total cost in 2014 of \$5.2M. Going forward, any reductions in the funding to emergency shelters will result in diverting much needed resources to Housing First initiatives such as our community collaboration regarding street involved sex workers.

London's Emergency Shelters Progress Report: 2011-2013 explores the use of London's emergency shelters by individuals and families. Information from the report demonstrates that approximately one third of emergency shelter residents stayed less than five nights in shelter, and two-thirds stayed less than 30 days. The remaining one third show a pattern of chronic shelter use by individuals representing the highest cost per shelter stays. The largest number of individuals, by age, is between 19 and 29 years of age, and overall the number of younger emergency shelter residents increased during this three year period.

These results reflect the need to reframe the role of emergency shelters in London including diversion from entering shelter, effective rapid housing, prioritization of persistent and chronic use of shelters by individuals, and emergency shelter specialization including a youth emergency shelter with a Housing First focus. The primary objective is to reduce the pressure on emergency shelters through both diversions from entering shelter and rapid housing from shelter.

Civic Administration and the emergency shelter operators are working cooperatively to implement focused solutions and programs including centralized intake, an integrated homeless information and case management system, and shelter specialization.



Judicial Interim Release Order to Reside

Launched in November 2014, the Judicial Interim Release Order to Reside Pilot Project (O2R) focuses on individuals experiencing homelessness who are released to an emergency shelter to await the outcome of their court proceedings. The goal of the Court Order to Reside Pilot Project is to reduce pressure on the emergency shelters by rapidly moving individuals into housing with support.

This voluntary service collaboration includes St. Leonard’s Community Services, The Salvation Army Centre of Hope and Justice Services, Mission Services of London, and Unity Project for the Relief of Homelessness. O2R is an example of a Housing First initiative that assists in understanding how historic assumptions and practices have been used to solve one problem and create new ones. While the court is seeking an immediate alternative to keeping an individual out of a detention centre while waiting for a court date, it adds pressure and cost to emergency shelters.

On average, it takes approximately 120-160 days for court proceedings to be resolved and the court assumes that when ordered to reside at an emergency shelter, the individual will adhere to the terms of their recognizance of bail. The evaluation underway helps us to understand what the expectation has been by the courts and what is occurring, including such things as the costs to emergency shelters, the high recidivism rate, and poor overall outcomes. As high as 70% of individuals ordered to reside at The Salvation Army Centre of Hope never arrive there. Individuals who do stay rarely remain for the full period of time and often move back and forth through the shelters with no follow up or case planning. As many as 25 individuals historically resided at The Salvation Army Centre of Hope at any given time. Since the project commenced individuals are most often rapidly housed within 14 days of entering shelter and are provided with in-home support. The project is expected to lead to an improved court and public response.

Housing Stability Bank

The Housing Stability Bank, operated by The Salvation Army Centre of Hope, offers a limited grant program and interest-free loans to assist Londoners with low income in securing and retaining their housing and for those at risk of homelessness to remain housed. Certain eligibility criteria are applied as part of the approval of an application including such things as meeting the income test, having a demonstrated regular source of income, and being a resident of London.

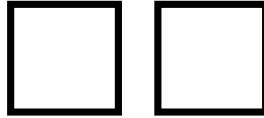
Use of the Housing Stability Bank remains high. Between April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014, 4,607 households used either one or both of the rental assistance or emergency utility assistance programs for a total cost of \$3.7M. Between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015, 5,079 households used either one or both of the rental assistance or emergency utility assistance programs for a total cost of \$3.7M. The City of London Homeless Prevention Service Area contributed \$2.7M in 2014/2015. Reserve funds at The Salvation Army Centre of Hope contributed to a reduction in overall costs for this reporting period.

Efforts over the past two years have focused on improving the financial literacy skills of households accessing the Housing Stability Bank and developing an improved loan recovery program aimed at household stability and to cover the cost of the administrative costs to operate the Housing Stability Bank. While the overall need of the Housing Stability Bank remains high, the efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness are showing positive results, allowing the fiscal subsidy to be reduced.

London’s Community Plan Regarding Street Involved Sex Workers

In 2014, an extensive community consultation was undertaken regarding street involved sex workers which included interviews and surveys with women with lived experience, meetings with organizations from multiple systems, conducting an international literature review and reviewing housing models in other communities that work with street involved women.

The Community Plan Regarding Street Level Women at Risk, titled *Hard to Stop, Harder to Stay Stopped*, has been endorsed by 23 organizations who are working collaboratively to implement the prevention plan. The community response to women and homelessness includes a rapid response with a focus on housing with support, exit strategies, and health and well-being outcomes.



Community Plan Regarding Street Involved Youth

Youth experiencing homelessness and/or who are street involved require an urgent prevention response aimed at rapid diversion from street involvement to housing with individualized plans focused on health, education and independent living. A literature review has been completed compiling current research, community plans, and project models with a specific focus on emergency shelters for youth who operate from a Housing First framework. We are proceeding with a broader consultation to help coordinate efforts regarding youth in London who are either experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

National Research and Evaluation Project: A Canadian Model for Housing and Support of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

Led by the City of London, and in partnership with Western University, Lawson Health Research Institute, the Canadian Model for Housing and Support of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness was a two-year evaluation project operating from May 2012 to June 2014 funded through the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) with in-kind support from Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and the four housing with support sites located across Canada. This participatory action research project developed and evaluated a Housing First model of housing and individualized programming to best meet the unique needs of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans experiencing homelessness. The four housing sites across Canada successfully housed and supported 78 Veterans, who on average were homeless for 5.8 years prior to enrollment. London CARES was one of the sites and now has a dedicated continuing response to London Veterans.

Associated Initiatives

Street Drug Trends - Syringe Recovery – Stationary Needle Collection Bins

Like many municipalities, London continues to experience growing and changing drug trends including the increased use of synthetic street drugs such as crystal methamphetamine and crack cocaine along with the illegal diversion of prescribed synthetic opiates such as Fentanyl and Oxycodone. The City of London is a part of the community efforts underway regarding such things as the safe distribution and recovery of drug using equipment.

A Sharp Smart Committee has been formed bringing together City representatives, Middlesex London Health Unit, Downtown London, community services and individuals with lived experience to develop cooperative responses. In addition, the Middlesex London Health Unit is undertaking a municipal drug strategy in active partnership with the City and a number of services as part of a larger response.

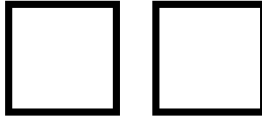
The City contracts with London CARES to maintain stationary needle collection bins in identified areas to assist with overall syringe recovery and public health and safety. Total number of syringes collected from the 17 stationary needle collection bins:

- 2014 – 381,970
- 2013 – 268,311
- 2012 – 186,000

Crash Beds

Operated by Mission Services of London, crash beds offer overnight accommodation for individuals who are experiencing homelessness and are likely living with mental health and/or addiction challenges and typically cannot access emergency shelters beds. The 21 crash beds (11 beds for men, 10 beds for women) are intended to provide a safe respite for unsheltered individuals and provide showers and nourishment.

A report completed in 2015 by Mission Services of London for the purpose of evaluating the program provided recommendations for consideration by the organization. Recommendations include addressing space, layout, safety, accessibility, staff training and closing the women's beds. This community conversation will be led by Mission Services and is expected to have an impact on how services to women experiencing homelessness are delivered in London. Currently, the City of London provides funding for a portion of operating costs. Other funders include the South West Local Health Integration Network (SWLHIN) and private donations.



Moving Forward

Key initiatives to be implemented in 2016 are underway aimed at strengthening London's coordinated response to solving homelessness in London. Efforts continue to anchor funding and services to a Housing First approach. The priorities for 2016 include centralized intake for London's emergency shelters, implementing an integrated homeless information system and collaborative case management, and leading key public awareness events related to homelessness in London. These are summarized below. Other initiatives include coordinating housing selection, a managed alcohol program, community training aimed at developing consistent core competencies, and continued collaboration between all orders of government, services and funding groups.

Centralized Intake

Centralized intake to emergency shelter is intended to ensure that every Londoner has a safe place to stay for the night by coordinating timely and effective referrals to the most appropriate housing solutions and interventions such as emergency shelter. Transitioning the process to enter an emergency shelter is a significant system change. A centralized intake system is expected to lead to a reduction in the number of new and recurring individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Our emergency shelters are actively engaged in moving forward and planning includes community meetings, policies and training linked to the integrated homeless information system.

Integrated Homeless Information System

An integrated homeless information system is designed to support homeless serving organizations exchanging relevant participant information through common consents and assessment tools. A common data base improves the tracking and reporting of common indicators and outcomes of an individual, family and system response.

Public Events

Four public events are taking place in London in late 2015 and 2016 anchored to "*Solving Homelessness Together in London*". Each event provides opportunities for community and civic leaders to participate.

- World Homeless Action Day - October 8, 2015
Led by the London Homeless Coalition, GenNext, London CARES and other community organizations, and supported by the City of London, this day-long event features separate events intended to raise awareness about homelessness in London including: Soup & Bread, guided tours and a memorial service for lives lost in London as a result of homelessness.
- Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness - 20,000 Homes Registry Week - October 19 - 23, 2015
During the week of October 19 – 23, 2015, volunteers and staff will be out on London streets and parks, in shelters and drop-in centres interviewing individuals and families experiencing homelessness to help create a registry of need with a priority for attainable housing.

London is participating in the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) campaign which aims to identify and house 20,000 individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness in communities across Canada by July 1, 2018.

- Homelessness Partnering Strategy – Point in Time Count – early 2016
A Point in Time (PiT) Count registers individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness in shelters and unsheltered on the street within a 24 hour period. Volunteers and staff will visit all emergency shelters, drop-in locations and identified parks and other areas during the Count and gather basic demographic information about individuals and families.

Non-identifying information will be uploaded to the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and is intended to create a national snapshot of homelessness in Canada.



- Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness 2016 National Conference – November 1 - 4, 2016

The City of London, Tourism London and the Convention Centre, in partnership with Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, have submitted a bid to host the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) National Conference in November 2016. This conference will bring close to 1,000 community leaders, services providers, academics, policy makers and individuals with lived experience together for an exceptional conference aimed at learning together how to end homelessness in Canada. In addition to welcoming visitors, the host city will organize receptions, tours, leisure activities and special events during the conference.

If selected, London will develop an invitation video which will be shared at the final reception at the 2015 Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Conference held in Montreal.

CONCLUSION

Civic Administration will continue to work on informing and engaging Londoners in a collaborative manner to support the implementation of London’s Homeless Prevention System and its actions to achieve our collective vision of strengthening our community through caring and compassionate services to address, reduce and prevent homelessness in London.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with this report. At this time funding remains constant from the federal and provincial governments with no changes anticipated in 2015. To achieve the outcomes identified in London's Homeless Prevention System Implementation Plan funds from all orders of government are applied to the strategic direction.

Financial Overview 2014 (\$ rounded)

Source of Funding

Federal Homelessness Partnership Strategy	513,000
Provincial CHPI Funding	9,594,000
City Contribution to Homeless Prevention	1,350,000
Total Funding	<u>11,457,000</u>

Allocations

Emergency Shelters	5,200,000
Housing Stability Bank	2,712,000
Housing with Support/Outreach/Drop-In	2,546,000
Strategy/Capacity/Administration	999,000
Total Allocations	<u>11,457,000</u>

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