

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON OCTOBER 6, 2020
FROM:	KEVIN DICKINS ACTING MANAGING DIRECTOR HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME
SUBJECT:	HOMELESS PREVENTION COVID-19 RESPONSE SINGLE SOURCE PROCUREMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Acting Managing Director of Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, with the concurrence of the Director, Financial Services, that the following action be taken:

- a) That single source procurements **BE APPROVED** with existing agreements with various hotels and motels within the City of London at a total estimated cost of \$1,181,396 (excluding HST) for a period between November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, in accordance with section 14.4d) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy;
- b) a single source procurement with Impact London **BE APPROVED** for isolation space staffing support with a total estimated cost of \$275,000 (for a period between November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, in accordance with section 14.4e) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy; and
- c) Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to take all necessary steps to allocate funding to extend the Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response by continuing to fund the operation of the Isolation Space, and social distancing space, and continuing staffing support by Impact London at the Isolation Space until March 31, 2021.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- Procurement in Emergencies Update – COVID-19 (Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee, September 22, 2020)
- Procurement in Emergencies – COVID-19 (Corporate Services Committee, May 25, 2020)
- Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response and Funding Overview (CPSC: April 28, 2020)
- Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Plan Funding Agreement (CPSC: April 28, 2020)
- Municipal Council Approval of the Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024 as Required Under The Housing Services Act, 2011 (CPSC: December 3, 2019)

PURPOSE

Approval for the use of local motels and hotels for temporary housing and staffing support has been provided since March, 2020 through The City of London Procurement Policy 14.2, Procurement in Emergencies, until October 31, 2020. Homeless Prevention is recommending extending all hotel/motels, staffing support and support services from November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, as necessary.

BACKGROUND

City of London, Homeless Prevention Response

The City of London Homeless Prevention team is working with community partners to prevent the spread of COVID-19, in accordance with guidance provided by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and through the Reaching Home Directives provided by Employment and Social Development Canada.

City of London Homeless Prevention has taken the following actions to increase social distancing and reduce the risk of outbreak within emergency shelters by providing safe spaces for individuals and families to self-isolate. Since March 2020, the following spaces have been set-up at various locations throughout London through the use of local motels and hotels.

1. **Isolation Space** for COVID-19 probable and COVID-19 positive individuals. Maximum occupancy is 26 individuals.
2. **Physical Distancing Space** in local motels and hotels for vulnerable participants including those that are high-risk and over fifty-five years of age, those that have a cardiac or respiratory disease, those who are immunocompromised, families. Physical distancing space is also being provided for women fleeing violence, as well as Indigenous culturally appropriate space. The maximum occupancy is 140 rooms.

The City of London Homeless Prevention team has worked closely with community partners to coordinate staffing at each site, as well as provide food, cleaning and laundry, and safe transportation.

The aim of the Homeless Prevention team is to reduce the use of hotel and motel rooms between November 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021, as individuals are housed through the Homeless Prevention Coordinated Access System. However, the cost projected below is based on the current number of rooms being utilized, assuming a “worst case scenario”, in the event that Homeless Prevention is unable to reduce the total number of rooms due to other factors (ex: surge in new COVID-19 cases, cold weather alerts requiring opening of additional beds, outbreak in shelter).

The estimated total cost of the Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response from November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 is estimated at \$1,834,737 excluding HST, as outlined below:

Expense	Cost Estimate (excluding HST)
Hotel/Motel Rooms	\$1,181,396
Services (cleaning, laundry, transportation, food, comfort stations, security, hotel damages, etc.)	\$378,341
Isolation Space staffing support through Impact London	\$275,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$1,834,737</i>

Coordinated Informed Response

The Coordinated Informed Response team has also shifted operations to provide additional support where needed, including:

- Providing increased security in key areas.

- Placement of six comfort stations throughout the core area to supply washrooms and hand sanitizing stations for people who no longer have access to public facilities.
- Providing garbage containers for encampments in certain areas.
- Increased outreach with added provisions including, providing wellness checks and engagements with unsheltered individuals.
- Delivering bagged and boxed meals to unsheltered individuals.
- Providing both verbal and written communication to educate individuals on COVID-19, safe distancing, self-isolating and shelter options.
- Connecting vulnerable unsheltered individuals with local resources, including physical distancing space.
- Continuing to refer individuals to resting spaces.
- Bylaw is continuing to work with outreach teams to locate and support unsheltered individuals.

COVID-19 – Increased Risk for Homeless Individuals and Families

Due to a high risk of a COVID-19 outbreak in emergency shelters, the City of London Homeless Prevention team has been working closely with emergency shelters and homeless serving organization to take immediate action to limit the spread of the virus amongst some of London's most vulnerable populations since March, 2020.

Employment and Social Development Canada identifies a number of factors for individuals and families experiencing homelessness that increase the risk of contracting COVID-19, including:

- People living unsheltered have limited ability to prevent infection. If they become ill, transience makes sustained contact for medical monitoring difficult.
- Many people experiencing homelessness have pre-existing health issues that create compromised immunity, and they may not seek or have access to health care.

The Government of Canada identify the following as COVID-19 Vulnerable Populations:

- Older adults (for London, in consultation with Middlesex London Health unit, this has been determined to be 55+);
- at risk due to underlying medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer); and
- at risk due to a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g. chemotherapy).

The ESDC Canada Reaching Home Directives note the following:

“The public health guidance to mitigate risks of infection, such as self-isolation and social distancing, assumes access to a private home. Inability to follow these guidelines represents a significant risk of community transmission. In addition, overcrowded drop-ins and shelter sites, congregate housing environments, and inadequate resources to maintain proper hygiene and infection control practices exacerbate vulnerability for people who work, volunteer, and reside in these settings. These risk factors underscore the need for communities to take active measures to limit the risk of contracting COVID-19 among people experiencing homelessness, and the staff and volunteers who work with this population.”

Procurement Process

During the initial onset of COVID-19, hotel and motel rooms, along with the staffing support for isolation spaces were procured under section 14.2, Procurement in

Emergencies, of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy. Based on that experience and the anticipation that these services will be required at least until the end of March 2021, Civic Administration is recommending that these procurements be made under section 14.4 Single Source of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy.

For the procurement of hotel and motel rooms, section 14.4d) would be applicable:

“There is a need for compatibility with goods and/or services previously acquired or the required goods and/or services will be additional to similar goods and/or services being supplied under an existing contract (i.e. contract extension or renewal).”

For the procurement of isolation space staffing, section 14.4 e) would be applicable:

“The required goods and/or services are to be supplied by a particular supplier(s) having special knowledge, skills, expertise, or experience.”

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response has been 100% funded by the Government of Canada COVID-19 Economic Response Plan Funding Agreement and Government of Ontario Social Services Relief Fund since March, 2020.

Continuation of the Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response from November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 will be 100% funded by the Government of Canada COVID-19 Economic Response Plan Funding Agreement, and the Government of Ontario Community Homeless Prevention Initiative, and Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF), subject to approval of the Social Services Relief Fund Phase Two Business Case submitted to The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on September 11, 2020. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing notes that the SSRF Phase Two Business Case will be reviewed in October, 2020.

PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
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CONCURRED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
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