

Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

To: Chair and Members, Community and Protective Services Committee Meeting
From: Kevin Dickins, Acting Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home
Subject: Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response April to June Extension – Single Source Procurement (#SS21-15)
Date: March 30, 2021

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:

- 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 \$685,000 (excluding HST) for a period between April 15, 2021 to June 30, 2021, with two (2) one (1) month options to extend subject to funding, in accordance with section 14.4d) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy;
- That single source procurements with Impact London, Canadian Mental Health Association Elgin-Middlesex, Atlohsa Family Healing Services, and Mission Services of London **BE APPROVED** for isolation space, monitoring space and social distancing space staffing support with a total estimated cost of \$550,000 (for a period between April 15, 2021 to June 30, 2021, with two (2) one (1) month options to extend subject to funding, in accordance with section 14.4e) of the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy;
- That single source procurement **BE APPROVED** for The Salvation Army to provide meals to various hotels and motels within the City of London with a total estimated cost of \$82,500 (for the period between April 15, 2021 to June 30, 2021, with two (2) one (1) month options to extend subject to funding, in accordance with section 14.4 e) of the Procurement of Goods and Service Policy; and
- That 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, monitoring Space and social distancing space, and continuing staffing support by Impact London, Canadian Mental Health Association Elgin-Middlesex, Atlohsa Family Healing Services, and Mission Services of London until June 30, 2021.

Executive Summary

Homeless Prevention is recommending extending all hotels/motels, staffing support and support services from April 15, 2021 to June 30, 2021, as part of the Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response.

Approval for the use of local motels and hotels as temporary housing and staffing support, for the period of November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 was provided by City Council in October, 2020. Hotels and staffing support were then extended for a two-week period from April 1-15, 2021 through the City of London Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Section 14.2 Procurement in Emergencies.

The Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response is being extended as a result of continuing need for isolation space, monitoring space, and social distancing space for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in London.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- 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)
- Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response (CPSC: October 6, 2020)

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Purpose

Homeless Prevention is recommending extending all hotel/motels, staffing support and support services from April 15, 2021 to June 30, 2021, as necessary, in response to COVID-19. Council approval was provided in October, 2020 for the extension of all hotels and motels and staffing support for the period of November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

2.2 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 positive individuals. Maximum occupancy is 26 individuals.
2. **Testing and Monitoring Space** for individuals who have screened positive for COVID-19, and individuals deemed close contact to a positive COVID-19 case who are required to isolate. Maximum occupancy is 24 individuals.
3. **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, and families. Physical distancing space is also being provided for women fleeing violence, as well as Indigenous culturally appropriate space. The maximum occupancy is 132 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 in a wind down phase between April 15, 2021 and June 30, 2021, by actively engaging individuals and ensuring they are paper and document ready to secure permanent housing. However, the cost projected below is based on the current number of rooms being utilized, assuming these remain utilized and 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, outbreak in shelter).

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 organizations 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.”

2.3 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 June 30, 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.

3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations

3.1 Funding

The estimated total cost of the Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response from April 15, 2021 to June 30, 2021 is estimated at \$1,401,000 as outlined below:

Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response Expense	Cost Estimate (April 15, 2021 – June 30, 2021)
Hotels/Motels	\$685,000
Staffing Support (to support individuals and families in hotels)	\$550,000
Client Meals (Salvation Army)	\$82,500
Other Services (cleaning & laundry, transportation, damages, food, security, pest control, supplies, etc.)	\$83,500
Total	\$1,401,000

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 April 15, 2021 to June 30, 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).

Homeless Prevention will continue to monitor the need for such spaces, following this identified extension and subject to vaccination roll-out in London’s emergency shelter system, and under the recommendation from the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU).

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Recommended by: Kevin Dickins, Acting Director Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home
Concurred by: Ian Collins, Director Financial Services