

## Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Members, Community and Protective Services Committee Meeting  
**From:** Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development  
**Subject:** Introduction to London's Coordinated Access (CA)  
**Date:** October 5, 2021

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development, that this report Introduction to London's Coordinated Access (CA) BE RECEIVED for information purposes.

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to introduce Coordinated Access (CA) and the Coordinated Access System and provide an update on the program deliverables to date. Coordinated Access is an enterprise-wide approach to address the municipality's housing and homelessness needs. Coordinated Access is a new initiative of The City of London (January 2020) aimed at preventing and diverting Londoners from experiencing homelessness; striving to make the experience of homelessness as short as possible by tailoring housing resources to meet an individual's unique need and achieve housing stability.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

### City of London Strategic Plan

Coordinated Access contributes to the City of London's strategic plan by administering a new, enterprise-wide support encompassing prevention, diversion and housing supports under one umbrella.

### Core Area Action Plan

Coordinated Access contributes to the Core Area Action Plan in supporting Londoners experiencing homelessness and health issues to get help.

### ***Links to Community Recovery***

The City of London is committed to working in partnership with the community to identify solutions that will drive a strong, deep and inclusive community recovery for London as we move out of and beyond the global COVID-19 pandemic. This report, and the items within, are linked to Housing affordability in London and supports recovery efforts by leveraging opportunities in creating partnerships and exploring affordable multi-unit housing spaces to create more affordable living options. This work will help address the homeless crisis facing London and find safe and affordable housing options.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Background Information

#### 1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Municipal Council Approval of The Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024 as Required Under, The Housing Services Act, 2011 (CPSC: December 3, 2019)
- Core Area Action Plan (SPPC: October 28, 2019)
- Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan 2010 – 2024 (CHLC: November 18, 2013)

- Homeless Prevention System for London Three Year Implementation Plan (CPSC: April 22, 2013)

## 2.0 Discussion and Considerations

### 2.1 Built for Zero Canada

Coordinated Access is a part of Built for Zero Canada (BFZ-C) which is an ambitious national change effort helping a core group of leading communities end chronic homelessness and veteran homelessness – a first step on the path to eliminating all homelessness in Canada.

BFZ-C is focused on helping communities adopt proven practices, deploying existing resources more efficiently, and using real-time data, rapid cycle testing and human-centered design to improve performance.

### 2.2 London's Coordinated Access Overview

A Coordinated Access System is the process by which individuals and families who are at risk or currently experiencing homelessness are:

- Directed to access points of service.
- Supported through triage and assessment to access the right community resources
- Supported to access specific housing resources which Coordinated Access manages centrally.

Coordinated Access supports a housing first model in connecting Londoners to housing resources including social housing, supportive housing, transitional housing, housing finders, housing stability workers and rent supplements. By centralizing housing resources, the Coordinated Access System can ensure Londoners are made eligible for a spectrum of housing solutions under one umbrella eliminating pre-existing barriers to accessing housing services.

### 2.3 Coordinated Access List and Prioritization

Due to the demand of housing resources outweighing the supply, Coordinated Access leads a multi-sectoral community prioritization process involving leaders in housing, homelessness, health, corrections, lived experience, child welfare, indigenous, veterans and violence against women's sectors. Prioritization is an internal administrative process that sorts individuals and families into a rank ordered list for each vacancy that becomes available. This prioritization is determined by the local community and serves to identify the order in which vacancies are filled by specific population criteria. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, over 70 local leaders came together to engage in discussion and determine the Coordinated Access Systems Priorities in 2021 outlining the following as priorities for housing services:

- Current youth priorities include Indigenous, Chronic Homelessness, Veterans, Urgent Safety, New to Homelessness, Unsheltered, Tri-morbidity and Ageing into and out of Care (Ages 23 and 24).
- Current family priorities include Indigenous, Chronic Homelessness, Veterans, Unsheltered, Urgent Safety, Tri-Morbidity, Emergency Services and First Time Homelessness.
- Current single adult priorities include Indigenous, Chronic Homelessness, Veterans, Urgent Safety, New to Homelessness, Unsheltered, Chronic Health Condition and Tri-morbidity.

Coordinated Access hosts a yearly discussion with local leaders to re-prioritize and evaluate the issuance of housing resources. The re-evaluation process ensures that the

housing resources administered through Coordinated Access continue to meet the changing needs of Londoners looking to access housing services. Through the efforts of the community prioritization process with matching Londoners to the right level of housing support, the Coordinated Access System has been able to house 311 Londoners who were considered at risk or currently experiencing homelessness in 2021 thus far.

#### 2.4 Coordinated Access Initiative

Coordinated Access was an initiative started by The City of London in January 2020, comprised of 1 staff member with the goal to prevent and divert Londoners from experiencing homelessness while improving the process of making individuals eligible for housing services. Initially Coordinated Access would receive fewer than 5 daily inquiries and maintained a successful 25% prevention and diversion rate in providing supports to either maintain an individual's existing accommodations or connecting them to safe accommodations elsewhere while being made eligible for additional housing services. Since that time Coordinated Access has grown to fielding over 30 inquiries a day and through dedicated staffing resources has been able to achieve a 44% prevention and diversion rate. Coordinated Access is recognized as a leader in bringing housing and homeless services under one umbrella and adopting a multi-sectorial approach to serving an individual's unique needs. Coordinated Access continues to be challenged by the need for housing resources outweighing what is available for Londoners to access through the more than 3,300 inquiries and 535 intakes that were received between January 1st to September 17th, 2021.

#### 2.5 No-Fixed Address Program

Coordinated Access plays a lead role in the No-Fixed Address Program supporting two outreach workers stationed at London Health Science Centre who work to prevent and divert Londoners from being discharged from hospital into homelessness. While many challenges still exist in working in tandem with sectors beyond the municipality, some preliminary experiences indicate that the closer linked the health sector can be to supporting those in precarious housing or risk of homelessness, the more the system benefits in totality through diversion away from emergency medical needs. The City of London Coordinated Access team currently provides services for both in-patient and ambulatory mental health care at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) Victoria Campus and St. Joseph's Health Care at the Parkwood campus.

Since January 2021, 52 intakes were completed, and workers were able to achieve a 30% prevention and diversion rate in either maintaining an individual's housing placement or securing an alternative placement to emergency shelter at the time of discharge. Most of the Coordinated Access Calls are received directly from the participants themselves. The second largest volume of calls received are direct referrals from community partners, Agencies and from the Health Care settings. Participants can connect directly with Homeless Stability Services Coordinate Access for most for triage and assessment in supporting those experiencing homelessness and health issues.

#### 2.6 COVID 19 Response

In collaboration with Middlesex London Health Unit's COVID 19 Response, Coordinated Access supported the homeless sector by triaging all sheltered and unsheltered individuals to emergency response services. Coordinated Access continues to support this initiative referring individuals to emergency response hotel shelters, isolation, and monitoring spaces.

#### 2.7 Coordinated Informed Response

Coordinated Access works in close partnership with the City of London Coordinated Informed Response Team (CIR) ensuring Londoners being supported through street outreach and Resting Spaces are achieving eligibility for housing services. Coordinated Informed Response is one of the primary "front doors" for The Coordinated Access System for Londoners who struggle to connect with services through traditional forums. By partnering with Coordinated Informed Response, the Coordinated Access System has

been able to provide housing resources and supports to individuals who otherwise were unknown to our system.

Coordinated Access supported the municipality's 2020-2021 Winter Response in the triage, assessment, and placement of eligible Londoners into this emergency shelter option.

### **3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations**

#### **3.1 Coordinated Access Funding**

Coordinated Access is 100% funded through provincial and federal funding streams, including Community Homeless Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and Reaching Home.

There are no financial impacts at this time.

### **4.0 Key Issues and Considerations**

#### **4.1 Housing Support Services**

Coordinated Access supports an array of individuals at risk or currently experiencing homelessness. In order for this initiative to have continued success, consideration for a spectrum of housing resources is recommended, as not each Londoner requires the same level of support. For example, a senior on a fixed income who is struggling to make rent payments would benefit greater by a rent supplement in maintaining their accommodations than being relocated to an affordable unit. These themes align with the City of London's Housing Stability Action Plan and ongoing data from CA is used and relayed to community organizations, local Homeless Prevention coalition planning, and Municipal Housing Strategies.

Coordinated Access has recognized the following themes in individuals calling for service:

- Housing Affordability
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of natural supports
- Unable to navigate housing and homeless serving systems

Civic Administration will provide updates regarding Coordinated Access at future meetings.

## **Conclusion**

Civic Administration will continue to use data coming from Coordinated Access work to inform best practices in the community with an array of service providers as well as with internal City priorities. Civic Administration continues to engage with multiple sectors in the community including strengthening the relationships with various Provincial Ministries including Health, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Ministry of the Solicitor General.

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