

Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

To: Chair and Members
Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

From: Kelly Scherr, Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure
Scott Mathers, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development
Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development

Subject: Diversion Pilot Project - Single Source Contract Award, SS-2022-210

Date: July 27, 2022

Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure, the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development, the Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development and concurrence of the Manager, Purchasing & Supply, that the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to the Diversion Pilot Program's Outreach Services;

- a) The quote submitted by London Cares Homeless Response Services for the delivery of Diversion Pilot Project Outreach Services for the period of July 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, **BE ACCEPTED** at a total estimated cost of \$71,150 (excluding HST); it being noted that funding to be sourced from the Operating Budget Contingency Reserve;
- b) The single source contract with London Cares Homeless Response Services for the delivery of Diversion Pilot Project Outreach Services including an option to renew for four (4) additional six-month periods contingent on funding availability, **BE APPROVED**; it being noted that the contract award is in accordance with the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Section 14.4 d and e;
- c) that Civic Administration **BE AUTHORIZED** to undertake all administrative acts which are necessary in relation to this project;
- d) that the approval given herein **BE CONDITIONAL** upon the Corporation entering into a Purchase of Service Agreements with each program.

Executive Summary

In 2019, the health of the Core Area was recognized as vital to London's prosperity as a whole and, as such, the City of London set out to develop the Core Area Action Plan (CAAP). The CAAP was received by Council in late 2019 and funding to deliver 68 of 71 actions were either approved through the 2020-2023 Multi-Year Budget process or available in existing programs. The CAAP is part of a larger suite of programs and projects focusing on the success of the Core area and ranging from the strategic to the operational.

On June 14, 2022, Council approved enhancements to the Core Area Action Plan which included the continuation of the Diversion Pilot programming.

The purpose of this report is to award a single source contract to London Cares Homeless Response Services (London Cares) to enable the continuation of outreach services for the Diversion Pilot project.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Council and staff continue to recognize the importance of actions to support the Core Area, in the development of its 2019-2023 - Strategic Plan for the City of London. The proposed agreement with London Cares Homeless Response Services supports the CAAP. Specifically, the pilot addresses:

Strengthening Our Community

- Londoners have access to the supports they need to be successful.
- Londoners have access to the services and supports that promote well-being, health, and safety in their neighbourhoods and across the city.

Safe City for Women and Girls

- London has enhanced the potential for women and girls to live safe lives.

Growing our Economy

- London creates a supportive environment where entrepreneurs, businesses, and talent can thrive.

Leading in Public Service

- The City of London is a leader in public service as an employer, a steward of public funds, and an innovator of service.

Links to Community Recovery

The City of London is committed to eliminating systemic racism and oppression in the community. Marginalized and vulnerable communities have faced disproportionate impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, adding to the historic and systemic barriers that exist in our community. The City of London will undertake deliberate intersectional approaches in the course of implementing initiatives such as the Diversion Pilot Project described in this report.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- June 7, 2022 – Core Area Action Plan: 2022 One-Time Program Enhancements
- March 8, 2022 - Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee - Core Area Action Plan 2021 Review
- November 30, 2021 - Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee - Strategy to Reduce Core Area Vacancy

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to recommend approval to enter into an agreement with London Cares Homeless Response Services to continue the delivery of Diversion Pilot Project Outreach Services for an estimated cost of \$71,150 (excluding HST) for the period of July 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022.

2.2 Background

The Core Area Diversion pilot project is a partnership between the London Police Service and the City of London's Social and Health Development team. The project is supported by Housing Stability Services through Coordinated Informed Response and Life Stabilization through the Ontario Works teams. The pilot aims to reduce the number of individual interactions between individuals experiencing homelessness with LPS and the justice system. Peer Outreach Workers with lived experience support the Core Area

Diversion Pilot by connecting individuals experiencing homelessness to services and supports that meet their needs and goals. The team provides 40 hours of outreach services in the Core each week. Peer Outreach Workers act as an inflow program to the Housing Stability System, supporting individuals to move towards housing stability and focusing on those with frequent interactions with the justice system provided by LPS.

The program actively works with individuals to:

- Build trust and increase engagement with support programs like Ontario Works
- Work on paper readiness; VI-SPDAT assessments, identification, and income
- Reduce interactions with the criminal justice system through diversion
- Connect to supports and services that meet individual needs and goals
- Participate in the City of London Homeless Prevention housing stability system, including Coordinated Access, to serve individuals meeting prioritization criteria as determined by the system

In addition, the following measures are being tracked and will be used to evaluate the success of the pilot:

- Number of people who attain social supports such as Ontario Works
- Number of people who attain identification, complete a VI-SPDAT and registered on London's Coordinated Access housing list
- Number of connections to services (health, addiction, mental health, etc.) and resulting outcomes; identifying any barriers to engagement with these services
- Number of interactions with London Police Service
- Number of people experiencing homelessness who obtain or retain housing

The Core Area Diversion pilot project launched in 2021 and aims to reduce interactions between individuals experiencing homelessness with the justice system. The program team reports that for the initial cohort there has been a significant reduction in interactions between individuals involved in the Diversion Pilot Project and LPS, in addition to a significant decrease in target crimes in the Core.

In June 2022, the project commenced a second phase of the diversion partnership project with London Cares in support of approximately 20 newly identified individuals using additional metrics provided by London Police Services. The extension of this project will provide time to assess the outcomes achieved with the secondary list of participants.

2.3 Procurement Process

London Cares utilizes a Peer Support model which is most appropriate for this project. In January 2022, when a change in service provider was required, London Cares was secured on an emergency basis to ensure the continuity of service to the populations targeted as part of this pilot. In doing so, London Cares was able to maintain the Peer Support model that had worked so well up until that point. London Cares staff have familiarity with the project, its output and outcomes, received specialized training and have developed key relationships with LPS and City staff. This City of London funded agency is able to meet project requirements with existing staff with required lived experience, expertise and skillsets.

The contract award is in accordance with the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, Section 14.4 d and e:

14.4 d. 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); and

14.4 e. 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

On June 14, 2022, Council approved \$75,000 for the continuation of Diversion Pilot Project and related programs and services as part of the temporary enhancements to the CAAP. One-time funding for these enhancements are to be drawn from the City's Operating Budget Contingency Reserve.

Conclusion

Significant efforts have been directed to the Core by the City of London, the London Police Service and other agencies and organizations since the approval of the Core Area Action Plan. The challenges facing London's Core area related to homelessness and mental health, safety and security, fostering a thriving environment for businesses, attracting people to the Core, and commercial vacancies are occurring across Canada. While the CAAP and other programs and plans are working to address these concerns, there will be an ongoing need to resource these efforts and understand how they may need to be adjusted to support a post-pandemic London. These additional measures will build on the previous important work achieved by the CAAP as our core moves toward recovery.

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Submitted by: Shirley Glover, Director of Life Stabilization Social and Health Development

Recommended by: Kelly Scherr, Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure
Scott Mathers, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development
Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development

Concurrence by: John Freeman, Manager, Purchasing & Supply

cc:

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