

## Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

**To:** Chair and Members, Community and Protective Services Committee  
**From:** Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development  
**Subject:** 2022-2023 Winter Response Program Outcome Report  
**Date:** May 24, 2023

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development, the following report “2022-2023 Winter Response Program Outcome Report” **BE RECEIVED** for information purposes.

## Executive Summary

This report provides information on the outcomes and challenges of the 2022-2023 Winter Response Program for Unsheltered Individuals from December 1, 2022 through to March 31, 2023. A final update report will be brought to the standing committee later this year. The supports and services for the 2022-23 winter response were a result of the outcomes from the August 2022 Hunger Strike and subsequent recommendations from the Immediate Action to Support the City’s Most Marginalized Community Action and Accountability Table (Action & Accountability Table) proposal. The proposals included increased basic needs provisions and drop-in spaces for those living unsheltered for the 2022-2023 winter months. Additional operational outcomes and details are identified as attached in Schedule 1.

A number of the services and supports designed and submitted by the Community Action and Accountability Table were approved for periods of up to 4 months to accommodate the winter months with some additional spaces and services to remain open for up to 12 months to assist with addressing the increasing need in community.

The 2022-2023 Winter Response carried a blend of life saving focused programming and housing focused services. The delivery of the winter response was made possible by a number of City funded and non- City funded organizations going above and beyond to create a plan, expand their scope of critical service delivery options, and work to the best of their ability to maximize the use of one-time funding through extended operating hours and staffing capacity building. The funding for this winter response was provided through the remaining one-time and time-limited funding from the Provincial Social Services Relief Funding Phase 5, Reaching Home one-time COVID response funding, a portion of available funding from the remaining previous year’s provincial Homelessness Prevention Program funding, and municipal funding from the Housing Stability Services base budget.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

This report aligns with the strategic areas of focus in the 2023-2027 [City of London Strategic Plan](#).

The City of London is a sustainable city within a thriving region, committed to culture, innovation and providing a safe, affordable, welcoming, and healthy future for today and for the next generation.

### Housing and Homelessness

- The City of London demonstrates leadership and builds partnerships to increase quality, affordable, and supportive housing options.
- London has a robust community system of health, homelessness, housing stability services, policies, procedures and by-laws in place to support individuals and families at risk of or

experiencing homelessness or in precarious housing consistent with Council's recognition of the health and homelessness emergency.

### A Well-Planned and Growing Community

- Develop and enhance planning implementation tools that advance the policies of The London Plan.
- Increase the efficiency and consistency of planning and development processes.
- Direct growth and intensification to strategic locations in a way that maximizes existing assets and resources.
- Protect natural heritage areas and agricultural areas for the needs of Londoners now and into the future.
- Apply the Equity Tool considering the people experiencing mobility poverty, consistent with The London Plan

### Wellbeing and Safety

- London has safe, vibrant, and healthy neighbourhoods and communities.
- London is an affordable and supportive community for individuals and families.
- Londoners have safe access to public spaces, services, and supports that increase wellbeing and quality of life
- Housing in London is affordable and attainable
- Londoners have access to quality, affordable, and timely services
- Londoners have equitable access to key services, community supports, and recreational opportunities that enhance wellbeing and resilience
- Increased access to a range of quality, affordable, and supportive housing options that meet the unique needs of Londoners
- London continues its efforts to promote animal welfare including companion pets and wild animals
- Decreased number of Londoners at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- Improved safety in London's shelters system

### Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London (2019-2024)

London's Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan, Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London (Housing Stability for All Plan), is the approved guiding document for homeless prevention and housing in the City of London and was developed in consultation with Londoners.

### 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 supporting Londoners experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic to attain and retain permanent housing. This work supports recovery efforts through a coordinated COVID-19 Response that will support the transition of homeless individuals and families.

## **Analysis**

### **1.0 Background Information**

#### **1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter**

- 2022-2023 Winter Response and Community Accountability Working Group Funding Reallocation Request (April 12, 2023)
- 2022-2023 Winter Response Program and Action and Accountability Working Group Update (November 29, 2022)

- City of London 2021-2022 Winter Response Program for Unsheltered Individuals (April 12 2022)
- City of London 2020-2021 Winter Response Program for Unsheltered Individuals (November 2, 2021)
- Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response (SSRF Phase 3) – Single Source Procurement - #SS21-29 (June 22, 2021)
- Municipal Council Approval of The Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024 as Required Under the Housing Services Act, 2011 (CPSC: December 3, 2019)

## **2.0 Discussion and Considerations**

### **2.1 Background**

The Winter Response Program was first implemented in 2020 and continued in 2021 as a life saving measure to support Londoners experiencing unsheltered homelessness over the winter months. Services and support provided in conjunction with community partners ensured individuals had a safe place to get warm, rest, have access to basic needs, and connect to housing resources.

Individuals were provided with centrally located daytime drop-in spaces and overnight “Resting Space” drop-in services with access to beverages, snacks, boxed lunches, and meals, as well as access to hygiene services and Amnesty bins for storage of individuals’ personal belongings while accessing the program.

The 2022-2023 Winter Response was a solely community led response as recommended by the Action & Accountability Table. Through this table’s work; London Cares was identified as the lead agency to support the bulk of the services being offered. London Cares as the main Service Provider for this initiative and subcontracted a number of other agencies for additional community and outreach services. Other existing agencies that were directly contracted included the CMHA-Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services London Coffee House program, Atlohsa’s Wiigiwaaminaan Indigenous healing space, Unity Project for relief of homelessness, and the Salvation Army Centre of Hope.

The Action & Accountability Table proposal identified a need for increased basic need supports for those experiencing unsheltered homelessness with a focus on the winter months. Specifically, provision of essentials such as showers, washrooms, laundry and the provision of increased supports for daytime and overnight drop-in space for individual and families experiencing homelessness, along with additional supports for training of agencies and direct service staff.

Elements of the 2022-2023 Winter Response were built on existing resources at the time of the proposal with initial estimates of spaces to be provided for up to 160 day, up to 143 overnight spaces, and up to 56 additional spaces during Middlesex London Health Unit identified cold weather alerts of which there were 4 over this reporting period. As a result of locational and staffing challenges with operationalizing the plan, London Cares, CMHA, Atlohsa and Salvation Army Centre of Hope ended up being contracted to provide up to 155 day spaces, 143 overnight spaces and up to 56 spaces for cold weather alerts.

Continued challenges with finding space and staffing resources resulted in adjustments made for the number of spaces and locations for some of the overnight spaces. This included a shift in location for one of the overnight spaces, as subcontracted by London Cares, to provide three locations of up to 25 beds in each location. Instead, the response ended up being for up to 75 beds in between two locations. Challenges with opening spaces and recruitment and retention of staff played a factor for more than just one organization, resulting in delays finalizing locations and staff onboarding which resulted in an inability to fully provide all approved services from December through to the end of March. One service was only able to open daytime drop in space for the last two weeks of March and have since been able to expand services beyond this reporting period.

A coordinated approach to orientation and training and an overall collaborative approach to ensure unified support through the winter months was applied in accordance with the Action & Accountability Table. Available temporary options included some spaces for couples and for pets, for women and non-binary individuals, and for Indigenous community members.

## 2.2 Program Expectations and Outcomes:

- **Training and Additional Outreach**

- London Cares has been delayed in implementing a coordinated approach to orientation and training and anticipates continuing to implement this training throughout the rest of the year as supported by Whole of Community approach which would ensure unified support of all agencies, including outreach.
- London Cares also supported enhancing and increasing an established outreach program to reach the most marginalized and hard to find individuals living unsheltered.

- **Day Drop-in Space/Shower/Laundry/Washrooms/Basic Needs:**

- London Cares supported the provision of services 12 hours per day, 7 days per week at two locations to offer day services that included:
  - Showers, laundry, washrooms, and basic needs provision, including meals and snacks through 125 rotational drop-in spaces.
- CMHA London Coffee House provided 4 additional service hours per day, 7 days per week. Services included:
  - Laundry, washrooms, basic needs provision through 25 rotational drop-in spaces that served up to 75 people per day.
- London Cares Hub continues to provide services Monday to Friday, 9:30am – 12:30pm and 1:30pm – 4:30pm. Services include:
  - Showers, laundry, washrooms, basic needs provision, connection with housing supports through 25 rotational drop-in spaces for service time period.
- London Cares Resting Spaces operationalized an additional 5 daytime beds plus 2 more beds for cold weather alerts that were provided 7 days per week. Services included:
  - Basic needs provision, showers, washroom access and supports for people with pets.
- London Cares supported the operationalization of day space for women on March 13, 2023 with overnight spaces opening in late April. Services up to March 31 included:
  - Showers, laundry, washrooms, basic needs provision.
- Salvation Army Centre of Hope initially operationalized shower supports 3 days per week and expanded to 5 days per week. (M-F). Services provided include:
  - 2 male and 1 female showers.

Day Spaces provided a warm space for individuals to get in out of the cold, access basic needs, and build a sense of community. It can be difficult to locate individuals when they move locations throughout the day, but these spaces provided a location where housing-focused engagement could take place between individuals and service providers. Agencies were able to work with individuals on paper-readiness, health, and housing, and provide referrals to other supporting social services, health care providers, and shelters. Basic needs provisions included:

- 12,415 cups of coffee and snacks and
- 22,371 meals (lunch and dinner) provided.
- 1,235 showers were provided with over 3,303 loads of laundry.

In addition to the services available at Day Drop-in spaces, the additional Outreach workers provided support and basic needs to those experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

- 936 snack packages, 600 lunches and 6,309 bottles of water
- 165 Hygiene packs, 102 Winter packs, and 9 backpacks
- 2,525 pieces of clothing (coats, gloves, socks, and shoes) and 646 pieces of sleeping materials (pillows, blankets, sleeping mats, tents, and tarps)

The human interaction of any kind was important albeit sometimes difficult to quantify. Organizations had the ability through this winter response to make connections to people, build up trust and relationships, and help individuals get access to medical care, personal care, a variety of treatment options, and improved quality of life and social connection.

- **Night Drop-In Space**

- London Cares operationalized 2 spaces, 7 days per week at two locations to offer overnight services that included up to 70 overnight/drop in spaces.
- London Cares Resting Spaces operationalized an additional 5 overnight beds, 7 days per week, plus 2 additional spaces for cold weather alerts on top of the 10 existing resting space beds provided for a total of 15 resting space beds.
- Salvation Army Centre of Hope operationalized 15 overnight, women only beds, 7 days a week.
- London Cares was unable to operationalize a women's focussed overnight space and only operationalized limited day spaces during this Winter Response reporting timeframe due to location and staffing challenges.
- Unity Project operationalized 8 additional shelter rooms, providing 10 beds for individuals during this reporting period.
- Wiigiwaaminaan Indigenous healing space operationalized 18 spaces for high needs individuals who identify as Indigenous. Due to space constraints, the agency was unable to provide the 10 additional spaces for cold weather alerts.

Overnight Resting Spaces are low barrier spaces for individuals who are sleeping unsheltered to rest, access basic needs and supports, and feel a sense of stability while getting in out of the cold.

### **2.3 Challenges:**

The London community has continued to experience sizable increases in individuals experiencing homelessness since the outset of the pandemic when the number of people on the By-Name List was under 1000 people and now sits just over 2000 individuals at any given time. Challenges also exist when it comes to long term annualized funding to support the increasing demand, the number of organizations available to support this increasing demand, the ability for organizations to scale quickly from a location and staffing perspective to meet this growing demand, and to staff accordingly to support a growing higher acuity and more complex population of vulnerable Londoners. Having places for people to be that are safe, warm, and filled with collaborative supports is something that is being focused on as part of the Whole of Community System Response.

The ability to overcome a number of these challenges and provide an increased level of service speaks to the efforts of the community to come together to support the most marginalized Londoners.

## **3.0 Financial Impact/Considerations**

### **3.1. Funding**

The total amount of approved funding was up to \$5,000,000 through the remaining one-time funding from the Provincial Social Services Relief Funding Phase 5, Reaching Home one-time COVID response funding, any required available funding from remaining provincial Homelessness Prevention Program funding, and municipal funding from the Housing Stability Services base budget. Additional funding and outcome details are provided as attached in Schedule 2.

Funding for this response was available on a one-time basis based on the parameters of the funding sources and the availability of those funds longer term.

## Conclusion

The Winter Response Program for 2022-2023 was created out of community agency discussions and a shared commitment that a more holistic and collaborative service model could be delivered through this different approach. The community in general continues to experience a significant increase in individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness and demand continues to grow for specialized services. The Winter Response Program did produce many tangible and intangible results that provided several positive interactions and supports for the individuals who accessed the program at a time of year where individuals are at a greater risk due to inclement weather.

As the winter response oversight has shown to date, opportunities for reallocating unspent funds to meet the needs of vulnerable Londoners have been and could continue to be brought forward. The work of the Whole of Community System Response aims to make significant strides in reducing the need to create one-off temporary measures like the winter response in future years through the creation of highly supportive housing units and 24/7 health and homelessness hubs.

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**Recommended by:** Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development

## SCHEDULE 1: Operational Results

Service	Expected Result	Actual Result	Variance
Atlohsa Wiigiiwaminaan (2 year shelter) 18 beds	1926 bed nights	1491 bed nights occupied  (77.4% occupancy)	Program was not able to open until December 15 with full staffing not onboarded and trained until January 15.  This resulted in less occupied beds than expected from December 15 through January 15.
Atlohsa Wiigiiwaminaan 10 Cold Alert Beds	40 bed nights	0 bed nights	Location was not able to accommodate additional spaces for cold weather alerts.
CMHA Coffee House 4 month Drop in, 4 hours per day up to 75 spaces	9075 individuals	6546 individuals served	As this was a timed drop in space, the usage is the actual uptake for this service.  Space was contracted to be open 8 hours per day, 7 days per week, but as the space operationalized within budget approval, services are being offered 4 hours per day, 7 days a week. City teams are aware of this discrepancy in service contract and are reviewing the Q1 financials to determine any monetary discrepancies and next steps.
London Cares Additional outreach up to 1 year	Provision of additional basic needs	11,819 service interactions provided	No significant variance as this program met expectations.
Shower Access operationalized by London Cares	12 hours per day, 7 days per week	1082 showers provided	As this was a timed service, the usage is the actual uptake for this service.
Day drop-in services for up to 4 months serving 25 individuals at a time operationalized by London Cares	Provision of Basic needs, meals and clothing	14,771 interactions providing Basic needs, meals and clothing	No significant variance as this program met expectations.
Day drop-in services for up to 4 months serving 50 individuals at a time operationalized by London Cares.	Provision of Basic needs, meals and clothing	22,157 interactions providing Basic needs, meals and clothing	No significant variance as this program met expectations.
40 Overnight spaces for up to 4 months operationalized by London Cares	4620 bed nights	4499 bed nights occupied  (97% occupancy)	No significant variance as this program met expectations.
30 overnight spaces for up to 4 months operationalized by London Cares	2460 bed nights	2411 bed nights occupied  (98% occupancy)	Variance is the provision of 30 beds versus the expected 35 because of location change and staffing challenges. This program met expectations.
25 cold weather alert beds operationalized by London Cares (4 cold weather alerts)	100 bed nights	33 bed nights occupied  (33% occupancy)	Usage of cold weather beds were below anticipated uptake, and any future operationalization of cold weather beds will need to support a system response for increased uptake.
Day drop-in services for up to 1 year	3025 individuals	3597 individuals supported with	Space was contracted to be open 12 hours per day, 7 days per week, but as

<p>serving up to 25 individuals at a time provided by London Cares at 602 Queens Ave.</p>		<p>meals, showers and laundry</p>	<p>the space operationalized, services are being offered 6 hours per day, 5 days a week. City teams are aware of this discrepancy in service and are reviewing the Q1 financials to determine any monetary discrepancies and next steps.</p>
<p>5 additional day resting space beds for up to 1 year provided by London Cares</p>	<p>605 bed days</p>	<p>500 bed days occupied  (82.6% occupancy)</p>	<p>Variance was due to a challenge with staff hiring in December and January as well as a number of staff shortages which reduced capacity.</p>
<p>5 additional overnight resting space beds for up to 1 year provided by London Cares</p>	<p>605 bed nights</p>	<p>446 Bed nights occupied  (73.7% occupied)</p>	<p>Variance was due to a challenge with staff hiring in December and January as well as a number of staff shortages which reduced capacity.</p>
<p>2 additional resting spaces for cold weather alerts</p>	<p>8 bed days 8 bed nights</p>	<p>13 Beds occupied</p>	<p>No significant variance as this program met expectations.</p>
<p>20 overnight spaces for up to 1 year operationalized by London Cares</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Due to location and staffing challenges, space was not operational during this reporting period.</p>
<p>20 daytime spaces for up to 1 year operationalized by London Cares</p>	<p>350 individuals</p>	<p>313 individuals served.</p>	<p>Due to location and staffing challenges, space was only operational for 2 weeks during this reporting period.</p>
<p>Shower provision for up to 4 months by Salvation Army Centre of Hope located at 281 Wellington Street</p>	<p>Showers provided 3 days a week to start and expanded to 5 days a week.</p>	<p>70 individuals served for showers</p>	<p>As this was a timed service, the usage is the actual uptake for this service.</p>
<p>15 overnight shelter beds for women only for up to 1 year by Salvation Army Centre of Hope located at 281 Wellington Street</p>	<p>1755 bed nights</p>	<p>1755 bed nights occupied  (100% occupancy)</p>	<p>No variance as this program met expectations.</p>
<p>8 room, 10 bed shelter increase for up to 4 months by Unity Project located at 636 York St.</p>	<p>968 room nights</p>	<p>948 room nights occupied  (98% occupancy)</p>	<p>No significant variance as this program met expectations.</p>
<p>Training</p>	<p>Training for agencies to support system</p>	<p>Training has yet to be implemented</p>	<p>Training expected to be implemented throughout the year and not a concern at this time</p>



**SCHEDULE 2: Financial Results**

Agency	Allocation	Budget	Actuals (Dec 1/22- March 31/23)	Forecast (Apr 1- June 30)	Forecast (July 1- Sept 30)	Forecast (Oct 1- Dec 1)	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Variance
Atlohsa Year 1	700,000	700,000	186,740	171,087	171,087	171,087	0	0.0%
Atlohsa Year 2	610,400	610,400	0	0	0	610,400	0	0.0%
CMHA Coffee House 4-month	68,550	68,550	68,550	0	0	0	0	0.0%
London Cares Training 1 Year	65,175	65,175	0	21,725	21,725	21,725	0	0.0%
London Cares Outreach 1 year	140,100	130,081	29,458	32,741	36,135	29,770	1,977	1.4%
London Cares Showers 4 months	125,900	125,888	111,806	0	0	0	14,081	11.2%
London Cares Dundas Drop-in 4 months	144,230	144,227	93,558	0	0	0	50,669	35.1%
London Cares Richmond Drop in 4 months	315,500	315,497	303,864	0	0	0	11,633	3.7%
London Cares Overnight Space 4 months	804,425	804,425	686,820	0	0	0	117,605	14.6%
London Cares Hub 1 year	312,300	312,289	74,122	84,350	84,350	69,466	1	0.0%
London Cares Resting Spaces 1 year	458,125	458,125	82,695	133,825	133,825	107,776	4	0.0%
London Cares Day & Overnight Spaces 1 year	650,000	545,712	86,456	149,688	171,600	103,955	34,013	5.2%
London Cares Admin	116,420	116,420	30,368	28,684	28,684	28,684	0	0.0%
TSACOH Showers 4 months	52,800	52,800	7,283	17,150	14,300	14,066	0	0.0%
TSACOH Shelter Beds 1 year	345,925	345,925	66,977	94,847	91,847	92,254	0	0.0%
Unity Project	90,150	90,150	90,150	0	0	0	0	0.0%

Shelter Beds 4 Months								
<b>Budget Totals</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>	<b>4,885,664</b>	<b>1,907,107</b>	<b>738,010</b>	<b>757,467</b>	<b>1,253,096</b>		
Budgeted Surplus							229,983	
Unallocated Amount							114,336	
Total Surplus							344,320	
Reallocated							302,000	
Remaining Surplus							<b>42,320</b>	

Variations noted above 10% are a result of location and staff savings.