

Report HDR-SS-03-16

To: Chair Burley and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Housing
Barb Fedy, Director of Social Services
Meeting Date: February 25, 2016
Subject: Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Investment Plan
Status: Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution SSC23-16; Endorsed by County Council April 5, 2016 per Resolution CC44-16;

Recommendations

WHEREAS the County of Grey has entered into an agreement with The Province to administer the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI);

AND WHEREAS the County of Grey received an allocation of funding in the amount of \$1,673,100 for April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report HDR-SS-03-16 be received;

AND THAT Council approves the Investment Plan (IP) for the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative as outlined in Report HDR-SS-03-16 and required in the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Agreement;

AND THAT the allocation for 2015-2016 CHPI funding in the amount of \$1,673,100 be approved to be expensed by March 31, 2017.

Background

CHPI aims to prevent, address and reduce homelessness by improving access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing.

Under the CHPI, Service Managers have the flexibility to use funding under four service categories to meet local needs and priorities. The following programs are proposed to meet local needs over the next year.

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Emergency Shelter Solutions: | \$ 44,000 |
| Housing with Related Supports | \$580,000 |
| Services and Supports | \$231,250 |
| Homelessness Prevention | \$650,540 |
| Program Administration | \$167,310 |
| | Total \$1,673,100 |

Emergency Shelter Solutions

Under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), emergency shelter solutions refers to services and supports that provide relief or protect households/people who are homeless or are at imminent risk of homelessness.

Since 2008, Grey County has partnered with the Family Y Owen Sound Grey Bruce for the provision of emergency shelter services. The Y identifies and establishes suitable accommodations to house those who find themselves without shelter for the night. The Y also partners with other community services, such as Safe n' Sound and the Victorious Living Centre for the delivery of this service.

Housing with Related Supports

Under CHPI, housing with related supports includes operating funding for long-term and transitional housing. Housing subsidized under the former Domiciliary Hostel program is included in this category. CHPI funds of \$580,000 are allocated to domiciliary hostel operations.

The County of Grey is continuing to subsidize Ayton Residential Lodge, Kent Residential Homes, Riverside Residence, Inglewood Villa, and Second Avenue Lodge. The Domiciliary Hostel operators continue to invoice Grey County monthly for the number of subsidized beds provided. These invoices are reviewed by an Ontario Works caseworker and approved by an Ontario Works manager. The eligibility criteria and application process for new residents established under the former Domiciliary Hostel program remains in place. Hostel inspections and resident income verification will continue annually.

Services and Supports

Services and Supports under CHPI refers to the services and supports which are provided to assist vulnerable or at risk clients with immediate relief or support in obtaining housing (e.g. street and housing outreach, case management, securing and retaining housing/shelter, food banks, etc.).

The County of Grey has continued their partnership with Y Housing to provide services and supports to vulnerable or at risk clients with immediate housing needs. The Y Housing street and housing outreach programs include ongoing case management and assistance with securing and retaining housing.

New this year is a pilot project that is in the works with a mental health agency to prevent homelessness for residents of Grey County that require mental health supports in order to maintain tenancy. This one year pilot project aims to provide in house one on one assistance for individuals to ensure they remain housed, provide education sessions to staff of Grey County Housing and other nonprofit housing providers on mental health and housing and to provide intensive services when needed. This project will run from April 2016 to March 2017 with monthly evaluations and reporting.

Homelessness Prevention

CHPI funds support local nonprofit initiatives to provide services for those at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness through the Community Enhancement Funds. As Grey County has a large geographic area accessing programs in centralized areas is sometimes difficult for individuals and often these individuals rely on local organizations such as churches, nonprofits and volunteer groups. Examples are meals, transportation, good food box, heating funds, furnishings and other creative and local initiatives. These funds will be used to strengthen local initiatives.

Under CHPI, homelessness prevention includes emergency financial assistance to retain housing and assistance to secure housing. CHPI funds of \$630,540 are allocated to the County of Grey's Sustainable Housing Benefit (SHB).

The Sustainable Housing Benefit (SHB) provides assistance to individuals at risk of homelessness or currently homeless with needs related to obtaining or sustaining affordable housing. Accommodation costs must be considered sustainable to qualify for this benefit. The following costs are covered by SHB.

| <u>Allowable Costs to Obtain Housing</u> | <u>Allowable Cost to Remain Housed</u> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Month's Rent • Moving Costs • Energy Deposits • Treatment for Bed Bugs • Fridge and Stove | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility Arrears (Risk of Disconnection) • Rental Arrears (Risk of Eviction) • Treatment for Bed Bugs |

Program Administration

There is \$167,310 in administration funding set aside for CHPI

Links to 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan

The CHPI funding assists Grey County in providing services to fulfill goals of the Grey County 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The plan identifies four key strategic areas:

- Sustain and Create Affordable Housing
- Homelessness Prevention
- Transitional Housing
- Service Coordination and Collaboration

Related goals include:

- Initiate a system to identify individuals experiencing homelessness and focus on supports for those individuals with long term homelessness
- Work with community partners to enhance existing support services through case management and focused collaboration
- Subsidies to maintain and access sustainable housing
- Enhance and support supportive housing
- Promote eviction diversion practices with landlords

2016-2017 Funding

\$1,673,100 in funding has been allocated to Grey County for the 2016-17 year.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

\$1,673,100 in provincial funding provided to the County of Grey for the fiscal year of April 2016 to March 2017. This program will have a neutral impact on the County as no levy funds will be required. There is the ability to move funds between the four funding categories to ensure maximum usage.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

The CHPI program will assist in the implementation of a homelessness and housing strategy for Grey County.

Program will assist in the creation and sustainability of affordable housing units.

Respectfully submitted by,

Anne Marie Shaw
Director of Housing

Barb Fedy
Director of Social Services