

Report SSR-SS-04-14

To: Chair Burley and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Barb Fedy, Director of Social Services and Rod Wyatt, Director of Housing
Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2014
Subject: **Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Special Project Funding**
Status: Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution SSC28-14 March 12, 2014; Endorsed by County Council April 1, 2014 per Resolution CC47-14;

Recommendation(s)

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report SSR-SS-04-14 regarding the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Special Project Funding allocation be received for information.

Background

The County of Grey Housing and Homelessness Plan approved by Grey County Council and launched January 1, 2014 contains recommendations for addressing gaps and barriers for enhancing already existing services to improve affordable housing for residents in Grey County.

Funding from the province provides for program expenditures and in addition, funds were received in 2013 through a one-time funding provision. Although there have been demands on the program and it has been a challenge to manage all of the needs for eligible residents within the municipality, there is an opportunity within the guidelines to allow for further funding allocations to existing service providers whose services are meeting the mandates of the program. Recently notice was provided to community providers that under the Grey County Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative Program (CHPI) one time funds are available up to a maximum of \$5000.00 to apply for initiatives that prevent homelessness. Proposals for the Community Funds have been received that include service provision to the county's most vulnerable citizens for such needs as homelessness or at risk of homelessness, and other services that directly support people who are experiencing these barriers. The service providers were

notified that these funds were limited and would not support requests for assistance with capital needs, administration or salary costs.

CHPI Community Funds Applicants

Staff have received and reviewed seven applications in total from agencies and organizations that provide services for homeless or those at risk of homelessness. All seven applications meet the criteria for the funding and will be awarded the funding to assist with various services to meet the needs of vulnerable residents of Grey County.

Applicants include Beaver Valley Outreach, Y Housing Program, Victorious Living Centre, OSHARE (Owen Sound Hunger and Relief Effort), Meal on the Hill (Durham and surrounding area), United Way of Bruce and Grey, as well as Hope Grey Bruce: Community Connections Program.

Services include but are not limited to food for food bank, cooking apparatus items, chairs, food vouchers, transportation costs, emergency rental costs, utility arrears and costs, clothing and other supplies, good food box, breakfast club and other emergency requests.

Providing the additional funds for these needs will ensure that the one-time funds are not going to be returned to the province, and further will help to bridge the gap to meet the additional unmet needs for the partner agencies that support at risk residents throughout the county. Through this early initiative Grey County Housing and Social Services staff have begun work to implement the strategies within the Housing and Homelessness Plan and although there is a lot of work ahead to ensure the limited funding is used most effectively and efficiently, the Community Funds initiative will have an immediate impact to those most in need. Staff will be moving forward in the near future to establish an oversight committee to monitor the Housing and Homelessness Plan, which will include local elected officials, municipal staff, community agency staff as well as people with lived experience who will inform, implement, evaluate and report in order to support achievements each year through the 10 year implementation.

Financial / Staffing / Legal / Information Technology

Considerations

Funding for this special project community fund initiative is available through CHPI one-time funding and will total up to a maximum of \$35,000.00, given that seven organizations are eligible for up to \$5,000.00 each. However, should further surpluses be available, consideration will be given for additional funds to community agencies to ensure Grey County's allocation of funds are maximized locally and not returned to the province. Payments can be made directly to the organizations or to utility providers and vendors directly in cases where it may be necessary to expedite these supports.

Link to Strategic Goals / Priorities

Providing the additional funding to service providers and agencies who work with residents throughout Grey County supports the corporation's goal of listening and working together. Collaboration with other stakeholders leads to improved county services and these innovative partnerships are helping to meet gaps in services for at risk individuals and families.

Attachments

None

Respectfully submitted by,

Barb Fedy
Director, Social Services

Rod Wyatt
Director, Housing

Director Sign Off: *Barb Fedy, Director of Social Services and Rod Wyatt, Director of Housing*