



Committee Report

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	March 24, 2022
Subject / Report No:	HDR-CW-04-22
Title:	Homelessness Prevention Program Investment Plan 2022-23
Prepared by:	Josh Gibson, Housing Programs Manager
Reviewed by:	Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	County-wide initiative
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW49-22; Endorsed by County Council April 14, 2022 per Resolution CC35-22

Recommendation

1. That Report HDR-CW-04-22 regarding a proposed Investment Plan for Homelessness Prevention Program for 2022-23 be received; and
2. That Grey County Council endorses the Investment Plan for the Homelessness Prevention Program and approves the 2022-23 funding to be expensed by March 31, 2023; and
3. That a By-law be prepared authorizing the Warden and Clerk to execute the Homelessness Prevention Program Transfer Payment Agreement with the Ministry of Housing

Executive Summary

The County received funds from the Province through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) formerly to deliver local homelessness and homelessness prevention programs. Effective April 1, 2022 the Province has redesigned several homelessness prevention programs including CHPI and the resulting program is being introduced as the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). This report provides details on programs and services formerly under CHPI now being funded by the Homelessness Prevention Program for 2022-23.

Background and Discussion

The Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) aims to support households experiencing or at risk of homelessness by improving access to adequate, suitable, and affordable housing. Under HPP, Service Managers have the flexibility to use funding to meet local needs and priorities within the guidelines set by the Province. The allocation for Homelessness Prevention Program totals \$2,045,600 which is an increase of \$157,297 from the 2021-22 Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding Grey County received.

The province has announced that they are conducting a full review of homelessness program funding and we are anticipating additional changes prior to the 2023-24 programs fiscal year.

Due to increased volume in services the full increase will be required to support short term shelter funding listed as emergency shelter in the investment plan.

Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) 2022-23

Program & Description	Annual Funding (\$)
Housing with Related Supports	720,000
Homelessness Prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Housing Benefit • Housing Stability Workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Operate the Short-term shelter program ○ Connect with individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness 	564,473
Emergency Shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motel cost for the short-term shelter program • Increase to budget due to significant increased volume • 2020-22 was support by Social Services Relief Fund with future allocations unknown we are preparing for this to be covered under HPP 	342,677
Services and Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Enhancement funding for small community-based organizations • Giiwe Project with M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Center • Staffing for supporting tenants at risk of homelessness or requiring community supports • Homelessness Response Coordinator to strength the By Name List • Supports for Safe N Sound drop in and supports 	265,030
Administration Costs (7.5% allowance)	153,420
Total Homelessness Prevention Program Funding	\$2,045,600

Housing with Related Supports

Grey County funds five housing with related supports providers; Ayton Residential Lodge, Kent Residential Homes, Inglewood Villa, Meaford Place, and Second Avenue Lodge. This housing provides services such as medication management, laundry services and meals. These supportive housing providers house an average of 72 residents of Grey County per month or over 25,500 nights of accommodation per year. Increased costs impacting the HPP budget due to increase need in the community resulting in higher subsidies required to meet the need.

Sustainable Housing Benefit

The Sustainable Housing Benefit (SHB) provides financial aid to individuals and households at risk of homelessness or currently experiencing homelessness to find or maintain housing. SHB

provided financial assistance in the amount of \$303,250 to 462 households in 2021. Assistance provided is largely last month's rent, utility arrears and rental arrears.

SHB Funding Provided in 2021		
Expense Type	Households Assisted	Amount Issued (\$)
Last Month's Rent	195	152,712
Utility Costs	103	56,655
Beds/Appliances/Moving Expenses	41	14,107
Pest Control/Maintenance	3	1,050
Rental Arrears	102	78,726
Total	462	\$303,250

Grey County Housing Community Relations Worker

Grey County Housing has invested in a second Community Relations Worker to assist tenants in maintaining their housing, providing supports, and making referrals to community agencies. Grey County Housing is seeing a significant increase in the number of tenants that require supports such as aging in place and mental health supports to remain housed.

Y Homelessness Prevention Program and Emergency Housing

Since 2008 Grey County and the YMCA Community Initiative have had a very successful partnership with the YMCA operating the Emergency short-term housing program for Grey County as well as providing Housing Stability Workers to assist people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Their services include helping households get connected to resources including financial assistance programs, finding vacancies, connecting with landlords, as well as educating tenants and landlords about their rights and responsibilities.

The emergency housing program involves providing suitable short-term lodgings for individuals or families experiencing homelessness. This service provided emergency accommodation for 6100 nights of accommodations to over 870 households. This represents an increase of over 16% in need from 2020.

Safe N Sound – The Space and Evening Drop In

Safe N Sound is a non-profit organization operating The Space on 8th Street East in Owen Sound. The Space offer individuals' access to basic needs, support, advocacy, and referrals.

As a continued response to increased need and the lack of warming centers as buildings closed their doors to stop the spread of Covid-19, we were able to provide some additional funding to expand the hours of operation for the Space. These additional operating hours in the evenings allow unsheltered individuals to get out of the cold as well as access supports and referral services including the Grey Bruce Emergency Short Term housing program operated through the YMCA.

Homelessness Response Table

Grey and Bruce Counties have jointly hired through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative a Homelessness Response Coordinator. The Homelessness Response Coordinator is leading the work of the Homelessness Response Table and strengthen the community response through the use of a Grey Bruce By Name List (BNL) and looking towards a coordinated access system.

The BNL and Homelessness Response Table will identify people having repeated episodes of homelessness and work with community partners to provide wrap around services.

The recent approval of Grey County Council to prioritize homelessness for 1 in 10 offers of rent geared to income is an integral part of providing housing to those most in need. This housing relies heavily on the availability of supports which the Homelessness Response Table is working on accessing more of.

Community Enhancement Program

HPP funds support local nonprofit initiatives to provide services for those at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness through the Community Enhancement Funds. Grey County has a large geographic area and accessing programs which are offered only in centralized areas is sometimes difficult for individuals. Often these individuals rely on local organizations such as churches, non-profits, and volunteer groups. Local initiatives supply meals, transportation, good food boxes, heating funds, furnishings, and other needs. These funds strengthen local initiatives such as Beaver Valley Outreach, Safe N Sound, O Share, and other local community groups.

Links to 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan

The HPP funding assists Grey County in providing services to fulfill goals of the Grey County 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan which was reviewed and updated this year. The plan identifies four key strategic areas:

- Create More Affordable Housing
- Preserve Existing Stock
- Reduce Chronic Homelessness
- Increase Supportive Housing

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

Financial and Resource Implications

\$2,045,600 in provincial funding will be provided to the County of Grey for the fiscal year of April 2022 to March 2023. This program has a neutral impact on the County, as no levy funds are required. There is the ability to move funds between programs to ensure maximum usage.

Administration costs covered under the new Homelessness Prevention Program are capped for the 2022-23 fiscal year at 7.5% this is a decrease compared to the former program which allowed for 10% and will have an impact of \$35,000 in administration costs formerly covered by provincial funding.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal: 10 year Housing and Homelessness Plan
- External: Various Agencies supported by these funds.

Appendices and Attachments

[2022-23 Homelessness Prevention Program Allocation Letter](#)

[Grey County - Multi-Program Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement](#)