



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 17-312**

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**To: Mayor and Members of Council**  
**From: Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services**  
**Resource Staff: Sheldon Laidman, Director, Housing & Social Services**  
**Date of Meeting: November 21, 2017**  
**Subject: Housing & Homelessness Services System Update & Recommendations**

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**Executive Summary:**

Following a Request for Proposal (RFP) in 2014, the city (Service Manager) entered into three year contracts with six (6) service providers to deliver homeless services to align with the Housing First service delivery model, as outlined in the approved 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan for the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac.

Three years into the implementation of the homeless services, to evaluate the operations and effectiveness of the current Housing & Homelessness Services System (HHSS), the city contracted an independent consulting firm (OrgCode Consulting) to assist with a comprehensive Operational Review which began in August 2017.

While the Operational Reviews generally indicate a satisfaction with the stability of the system, it does recognize that a service re-orientation needs to occur for some of the services delivered through the HHSS due to funding constraints and organizational challenges. City staff will be taking a full overview of the results of the Operational Reviews to the December 14<sup>th</sup> Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee for their review and recommendation.

The current service agreements with homeless service provider agencies expire on December 31, 2017. Each of the funded agencies has been advised that their existing contracts are being extended on an interim basis, until such time as the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee can review and respond to any recommendations identified in the Operational Reviews. Should any service re-orientation be recommended, staff will work with the homeless service providers to develop a transition plan to ensure minimal disruption to clients and staff.

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Through Report Number [15-244](#), Council approved funding allocations to various categories in the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve which was established in March 2013. The Reserve was established to recognize unforeseen expenditures in the implementation of the plan and allow flexibility to respond to pressures in the new HHSS in a timely manner. Some items that the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve has funded to date include: The Gathering Place, Ryandale Shelter and a Damage Fund for rent supplement to landlords participating in the Housing First program.

There is currently a balance of \$934,521.63 in the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve. Through Report Number [17-052](#), staff committed to report back to Council should any revisions to the allocations of funding categories in the Homelessness Plan Implementation Reserve be recommended as a result of the operational reviews which were planned for later in 2017. Three years into the implementation of the homelessness system, staff are recommending that the categories within the Homeless Implementation Plan Reserve be broadened so that pressures within the system are addressed. Additionally, the amounts allocated to each category in Report Number [15-244](#) are not necessarily still valid and staff are requesting the flexibility to allocate funds from the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve, as required, within the recommended categories without designating specific funding allocations by category.

Exhibit A to Report Number 17-312 provides details on the expenditures to date under each of the approved categories under the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve.

**Recommendation:**

**That** Council approve the categories for expenditures assigned under the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve as outlined in Exhibit A to Report Number 17-312; and

**That** Council approve funding of up to \$500,000 from the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve for necessary expenditures within the categories outlined in Exhibit A to Report Number 17-312 to ensure the proper functioning of the Housing and Homelessness Services System.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

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**Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	√
Denis Leger, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
Mark Van Buren, Acting Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	Not required

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**Options/Discussion:****Background**

In 2014, the City of Kingston issued an RFP for service providers to submit proposals to deliver homeless services to align with the Housing First service delivery model as outlined in the approved 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan. As a result of the RFP, the City of Kingston entered into three year contracts with six (6) service providers and as of December 31, 2017, the current contracts for homeless services between the city and service providers will expire.

In August of 2017, the City of Kingston's Housing Division, as the Service Manager, began an operational review of the current HHSS to evaluate the system's programs and services. An independent third-party consulting firm (OrgCode Consulting) was contracted to assist the city with this undertaking and to use this as an opportunity to further support service providers and enhance service orientation through the consultant's field expertise.

An essential component of the operational review process included onsite visits with each service provider which took place between August 21 and 25, 2017. These visits provided an opportunity for the team to interview senior management, attend team file review meetings with program staff, perform file reviews, job shadow as well as conduct a review of financial records.

In addition to the onsite visits, service providers were also provided with both a Leadership Survey and a Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) Survey. HIFIS is a homeless management information system that is used locally by all service providers and the city to track activity and outcomes across the HHSS.

While the results of the Operational Reviews indicated a general satisfaction with the overall stability of the HHSS and the quality of the service provided by all service providers, it was determined that a service re-orientation is necessary for two large components of the HHSS.

City staff have been informed by Elizabeth Fry Kingston that it is no longer feasible for the agency to operate the city's 8 bed women's shelter due to the challenges of the shared facility and the organization's capacity to deliver the service under the current funding model. The agency intends to re-orient services to serve this client group through drop in programs and community supports as opposed to emergency shelter services. To ensure continuation of emergency shelter service for this, Elizabeth Fry Kingston has agreed to deliver the program until April 30, 2018. The Housing Division will be issuing a Request for Interest (RFI) seeking organizations interested in operating the city's women's shelter with the capacity to be operational by May 2018. The RFI will be issued in the near term and this item will be included in a report to the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee.

A portion of the City's Housing First/Rapid Re-Housing (HF/RRH) services for adult clients are delivered by Addiction & Mental Health Services - Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington (AMHS-KFLA). During the operational review process, the service provider conveyed to the city a funding shortfall of \$139K for 2018, representing a 26% budget increase for AMHS-KFLA. When service agreements were negotiated with service providers as a result of the RFP

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process, a consistent amount of funding based on staffing requirements was provided to all agencies delivering the same service. It will be necessary to seek HF/RRH services using the existing funding formula. This item will also be included in a report to the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee at the December meeting.

With the anticipated service re-orientation for women's shelter beds and the HF/RRH program, staff have been working closely with the existing service providers to ensure a seamless transition and to ensure that disruption to clients and staff is at a minimum.

### **The Gathering Place**

In 2006, The Salvation Army was successful in its bid under the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program (CHPP) to obtain \$115,000 annually to operate a meal program and drop in centre on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, known as The Gathering Place. In 2014, the City of Kingston issued a RFP to fund only the Priority Programs under the HHSS which would be required to shift the system from one of "managing homelessness" to ending "chronic homelessness".

While meal programs were not funded under the HHSS, through a Council resolution, funding for The Gathering Place was extended for 2015, 2016 and 2017. Annual funding for The Gathering Place services has been taken from various sources including the Local Services Realignment fund (LSR) and by re-allocating Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) surplus funds to offset municipal funding and re-directing the municipal funding to pay for these services.

Like other service providers' contracts, the contract for The Gathering Place will be extended on an interim basis as well. This extension will be funded from the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve. City staff will report back with next steps on a community food access plan in early 2018.

### **Municipal Homelessness Plan Implementation Reserve**

Through Report Number [15-244](#), Council approved funding allocations to various categories in the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve to allow flexibility to respond to pressures in the recently established HHSS in a timely manner. There is currently a balance of \$934,521.63 in the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve. Through Report Number [17-052](#), staff committed to report back to Council should any revisions to the allocations of funding categories in the Reserve be recommended as a result of the program and operational reviews being conducted in 2017.

Some items that the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve has funded to date include: The Gathering Place, Ryandale Shelter and the Damage Fund for rent supplement to landlords participating in the Housing First program.

Three years into the implementation of the homelessness system, staff are recommending that the categories within the Homeless Implementation Plan Reserve be broadened so that pressures within the system are addressed and by removing specific allocations to each category, funds from the Reserve can be allocated from approved categories as required.

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Exhibit A provides details on the expenditures to date under each of the approved categories under the Reserve and designates categories from which expenditures can be made. Through Report Number [17-052](#), Council approved that the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve be replenished through any annual surpluses in city homeless programs.

### **Discretionary Residency Benefit**

Through Report Number 12-244, City Council approved a new municipal Discretionary Residency Benefit (DRB) for social assistance recipients residing in Kingston and Frontenac to replace the previous OW/ODSP Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB). The DRB is funded through the provincial CHPI and provides funding to clients for allowable expenses to prevent homelessness such as rent and utility arrears. Since the DRB was introduced in 2013, there has been a surplus in the fund ranging from \$134K to \$319K each year. The DRB surplus was addressed through Report Number [17-052](#) and represents the majority of the contribution towards the Homeless Reserve annually.

Considering the trending of a DRB surplus, staff will be reviewing the funding allocation and funding limits under the DRB program for social assistance recipients and will make adjustments to it as appropriate to ensure that the DRB supports clients' needs. Insufficient funding limits may be restricting client access and may no longer be appropriate as rental and utility costs continue to increase annually. Funding allocations may need to be adjusted considering that there has been a surplus in the DRB fund each year. City staff will make the necessary adjustments for 2018 and will continue to monitor to ensure the maximum benefit of the DRB is attained. Changes will be reported back to Council for information.

### **Next Steps**

The full overview of recommended changes to the HHSS will be shared with the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee at their December meeting, followed by the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee (ARCP) and City Council in early 2018.

Existing HHSS contracts expire on December 31, 2017. Each of the funded agencies has been advised that their existing contracts are being extended on an interim basis, until such time as the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee can review and respond to recommendations identified in the Operational Reviews.

All service providers will be well informed of any key findings and resulting changes going forward. For instance, city staff will be preparing service provider-specific reports to share directly with each service provider. These reports will include feedback on such items as the financial review, HIFIS, file reviews as well as individual service provider feedback in response to issues identified in the operational review's Leadership Surveys and one-on-one meetings with senior staff.

### **Existing Policy/By-Law:**

10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan

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**Notice Provisions:**

Not applicable

**Accessibility Considerations:**

Not applicable

**Financial Considerations:**

For the Provincial fiscal year 2018/2019, the city has \$4,157,622 in CHPI funds and will contribute \$824,800 in municipal funds for homeless services for 2018. Some contract extensions will be funded by the Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve which still has an outstanding balance \$934,521.

**Contacts:**

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Sheldon Laidman, Director, Housing & Social Services 613-546-2695 extension 4957

**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

Lee Campbell, Manager, Housing and Childcare Programs, Housing & Social Services

Richard Webster, Housing Programs Administrator, Housing & Social Services

**Exhibits Attached:**

Exhibit A Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve Categories and Expenditures

## Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve

### Proposed Categories for Expenditures

1. Homeless Management Information System (HIFIS)
2. Professional Development
3. Damage Fund – Housing First Rent Programs
4. Program Expenses/Enhancements
5. Contingency Fund

### Expenses from Homeless Plan Implementation Reserve (2014 – 2017) by Proposed Expenditure Category

1. Homeless Information System (HIFIS)	\$503.71
2. Professional Development	\$7,000.00
3. Damage Fund	\$38,087.48
4. Enhanced Services	\$117,430.96
5. Contingency Fund	
Capital Funding (shelters)	\$64,030.27
Ryandale (Emergency Shelter)	\$282,541.51
Salvation Army (Gathering Place)	<u>\$132,503.40</u>
Total Expenses	\$642,097.33
<b>Ending Reserve Balance:</b>	<b>\$934,521.63</b>