

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: July 15, 2025
To: Social Services Sub-committee
From: John Ritz, Supervisor of Homelessness and Housing Stability
Report Number: SOC25-009
Attachments: None

Title: Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund approval

Objective: To update the Mayor and Council on the recently obtained funding from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness as part of their Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund.

Background: As part of Government of Canada's Budget 2024 commitment, \$45 million was approved for Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) to implement the Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund (HRIF), which provides communities with one-time funding grants to test, implement, document, and share innovative, system-level interventions that achieve measurable reductions in community-level homelessness.

In response to this announcement, the Social Services Department and their community advisor from Build for Zero, met to review the local data and begin determining what type of funding would best support our community in permanently housing individuals from our local By-Name List. It was determined that a proposal focused on the affordability challenges within our community would provide future insight and evidence to invest more money into permanent housing solutions and away from short-term emergency responses.

The City of Stratford was recently notified by our partners at the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness that we were successful with our HRIF application. The project will run over the course of the next 12 months and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness will contribute up to \$120,000 for the City to design, implement, and evaluate the project. For this project, the target population is individuals experiencing homelessness who require a moderate or low level of support to achieve housing stability. Assistance with rent affordability will be provided through housing subsidies and moving individuals into permanent housing. Over the course of the next 12 months, this program will be thoroughly evaluated to ensure it is meeting targets, with a

management report to Council at the completion of the program highlighting the impact this funding opportunity will have had on the community.

Analysis: With this funding initiative, the aim is to reduce chronic homeless households by 18% off our local By-Name List. Through the tracking of local data, market trends, and housing retention efforts, this project will provide valuable information in directing future funding and how our homelessness response programs work in collaboration with new and bold initiatives to address an ongoing and complex issue.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

This report should have no financial implications on the current year operational budget as additional funds have become available and will create an opportunity to expand service.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Build Housing Stability

This report aligns with this priority as it will build available housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness who may have otherwise been unable to afford a unit in a private market rental.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Equity and Local Economy

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Staff Recommendation: THAT Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk on behalf of The Corporation for the City of Stratford to enter into an agreement with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness for the Homelessness Reduction Innovation Fund and to sign any additional documentation required.

Prepared by:

John Ritz, Supervisor of Homelessness and Housing Stability

Recommended by:

Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services

Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer