Extension of Services at Energy Court-Homelessness Response

Presented To:	City Council
Meeting Date:	April 28, 2026
Type:	Managers' Reports
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Recommended by:	General Manager of Community Well-being

Report Summary

This report provides a recommendation regarding the extension of homelessness services provided at Energy Court.

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approve a drop-in program at Energy Court, operated by The Go-Give Project, from May 1, 2026, to September 30, 2026, and approve additional funding for Energy Court maintenance cleanup and washrooms, in an amount up to $774,545 to be funded through the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve offset by any federal or provincial funds received as outlined in the report entitled “Extension of Homelessness Response at Energy Court”, from the General Manager of Community Well-being, presented at the City Council meeting on April 28, 2026.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Climate Action Plans

The report supports the Council’s Strategic Plan around Quality of Life and Place as it aligns with the Population Health Priorities of Indigenous Youth, Mental Health, Housing and Healthy Streets by providing additional services for individuals who are experiencing homelessness in the community. This report has no relationship with the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

Financial Implications

If approved, the costs for operating a drop-in program from May 1, 2026, to September 30, 2026, at Energy Court operated by The Go-Give Project, as well as additional cleanup and supports in an amount up to $774,545 will be funded by the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve offset by any federal or provincial funds received.

Background

As part of the Downtown Transformation Project, service enhancements were implemented as of November 1, 2025, to strengthen low-barrier supports for vulnerable individuals during the winter season.

This included the opening of a warming centre operated by The Go Give Project at Energy Court.

In absence of sufficient pathways into housing for complex mental health and addictions, extending drop-in services beyond April 30th is needed to provide a compassionate response for individuals with complex needs struggling with mental health and addictions challenges. For the May 1 to September 30 period, the proposed hours of operation are 12 hours per day, 7 days per week without any outreach services.

Greater Sudbury Police Services (GSPS) have also advised that their continued efforts to address concerns in the downtown area require a location to direct unsheltered individuals for services during daytime calls. The GSPS crisis team has also partnered with Go-Give and other community outreach partners to locate individuals needing further support.

Service System Gaps

Go-Give staff have reported an increase in support needed for community members who are attending the drop-in and staying at Energy Court. Go-Give staff are trained in life saving measures and can provide a continuum of services to help meet the increased demand and concerns related to the toxic drug supply, including basic needs, first aid, CPR, and Narcan administration. In addition to these life-saving measures, Go-Give staff are also able to provide education and resources for safe use, as well as warm transfers to other service providers.

As noted, there is currently a lack of housing pathways for individuals with complex addiction and mental health needs. The Lotus program (Lorraine Street) has accepted 45 participants since opening its doors; 4 participants were directly transferred from Energy Court into the program. The Lotus program has capacity to support up to 40 individuals, including 2 accessible units. This targeted intervention program continues to take in new clients as space becomes available. Matches to the program are made based on outreach assessments and priority criteria of Coordinated Access and the Community Housing waitlist.

Encampment activity at Energy Court has remained consistent over the winter. On December 1, 2025, there were 39 tents and 70 individuals occupying the encampment site. As of March 31, 2026, there were 36 tents and 42 individuals.

Program Options

Staff considered options, based on the direction from Council, for the Energy Court site which included variations of hours of operation and staffing needs for the drop-in centre and costs related to additional washrooms on site. Staff are not recommending 24/7 unsupervised washroom access given prior experience providing this service. The YMCA washroom site and other portable washroom locations that were used during the pandemic were shut down due to issues surrounding drug use and sanitary conditions.

After further consultation with Go-Give, Staff are recommending that the City extend its contract with The Go-Give Project to deliver the Energy Court drop-in program from May 1, 2026, to September 30, 2026, for a total of 12 hours per day with no outreach services. The total program costs would be slightly lower than the previous report due to the elimination of outreach services. The total costs are outlined in the table below, which includes the following program staffing: 1 centre manager, 1 supervisor per shift, 6 support workers per shift, and 2 resource/service coordinators. The drop-in program will provide essential services, including washrooms, water, snacks, referrals, and space for meetings with community organizations.

This recommendation increases the service level by four hours a day and will also include a washroom trailer on site which is accessible 24/7 but will at least have some oversight during the day while the drop in centre is open. Go-Give has indicated that they will not be actively monitoring the washroom trailer. As noted in the previous report to council, a contractor will be hired to maintain the washrooms; however, they have indicated that they would withdraw services if there were health and safety concerns by their staff related to drug paraphernalia.

As part of the recommendation staff will be repurposing the former washroom trailer that was used at the Market location. Additional costs outlined below include general site cleaning, site connection, and repair for the washroom trailer along with waste removal.

May 1, 2026 - September 30, 2026			
Washroom Trailer and Site Maintenance		**Drop-In Centre 12 Hours**	
Site Connection and Repair	12,000	Staffing	483,894
Other Cleanup	75,000	Operations	105,455
Waste Removal	34,261	Admin	58,935
Streetlight Installation	5,000		
Total	**126,261**	**Total**	**648,284**
Total for Services	**774,545**		

Federal Funding

On April 1, 2026, an announcement was made by the Federal government, extending the federal Unsheltered Homelessness and Encampment Initiative (UHEI). The previous funding provided $766,128 in support of services over the past two years. At the time of writing, the regional representative from Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada has advised that no further information on the distribution of these funds is available at this time. It is anticipated, however, that Greater Sudbury will receive a funding allocation out of the 125 million dollar announcement.

Next Steps

Upon Council approval, staff will enter into an agreement with The Go-Give Project to deliver the drop-in program and associated supports at Energy Court from May 1, 2026, to September 30, 2026. As part of the agreement, Go-Give will work with City Staff and community partners to determine the most efficient hours of operation for the centre.

The increase in drop-in services for those living unsheltered is not intended to be a permanent service enhancement, but a temporary requirement, as staff continue to plan for system changes with new housing units that are coming on stream in 2026. Staff will remain focused on continuing to create more pathways for complex cases as outlined in the Roadmap to End Homelessness.

Resources Cited

Resolutions - March 31, 2026 - Homelessness Response Update - Energy Court

Council Report - March 31, 2026 Homelessness Response Update - Energy Court

Council Report - October 7, 2025 - Downtown Transformation Project

Council Report - October 7, 2025 - Winter Warming Centre 2025

AMO Homelessness Crisis in Ontario Continues to Worsen January 2026

Council Report and Presentation - July 15, 2025 Roadmap to End Homelessness by 2030

Council Report - May 27, 2025 - Community Safety and Well-being Plan

City Council Meeting - May 28, 2024 - Roadmap to End Homelessness by 2030

City of Greater Sudbury Community Encampment Response Plan November 2024