

Homelessness Consultation Update

Presented To:	City Council
Meeting Date:	May 25, 2020
Type:	Correspondence for Information Only
Prepared by:	Christina Leader Children and Social Services
Recommended by:	General Manager of Community Development

Report Summary

This report provides information regarding a summary of results in response to a request by Council at the meeting of November 24, 2020, for staff to produce a community engagement strategy inclusive of the general public, local businesses, grassroots agencies, service providers and those with lived experience of homelessness.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP)

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan in the area of Quality of Life and Place as it aligns with the Population Health Priorities of Indigenous Youth, Mental Health, Housing, and Healthy Streets, by reporting on persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This report has no relationship to the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

Executive Summary

In response to Council's direction on November 24, 2020, staff developed an engagement strategy to obtain feedback from the community concerning homelessness to identify gaps in services, safety concerns, local needs, and potential solutions. The strategy was inclusive of the general public, local businesses, grassroots agencies, service providers, and individuals with lived experience of homelessness. This report summarizes the results of the community consultation.

Background

A report to Council at the December 15, 2020, Council Meeting, outlined a plan for community consultation on homelessness due to increased community concerns around mental health, addictions, homelessness, and marginalized persons due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of the pandemic, additional services have been put in place to meet the needs of the vulnerable population. However, gaps in the system remain to meet the basic needs of the population and provide safe shelter space.

The purpose of the community consultation was to provide Council with a better understanding of homelessness in the community and to identify service gaps, barriers, and actions that can be taken by various stakeholders, as well as short and long-term solutions.

Engagement Strategy

To gather feedback from the community, staff prepared and carried out a community engagement strategy using the following tactics:

1. **Survey** – made publicly available (online/printed) to allow participants the opportunity to submit ideas and share stories.
2. **Public Input Meeting on Homelessness** – to provide opportunities for agencies and community members to speak directly to council about gaps in services, local needs, and provide testimonials to their lived experience with homelessness (if applicable).
3. **Email** - Community members were invited to provide their feedback by emailing homelessness@greatersudbury.ca or directly through Community Development staff.

A complete outline of the community engagement strategy can be found in the Council report dated December 9, 2020. The Engagement tactics and copies of consultation documents can be found in Appendix A: Homelessness Consultation - Methods.

Results

In total, 476 people participated in the consultation process (some participants contributed to multiple engagement platforms).

There were 433 participants who utilized the Over to You platform, with 470 responses. The majority of responses on the *Over to You* platform were from residents (multiple categories could be selected).

There were 40 participants in the Public Input Meetings; 30 of which were from agencies and 10 from people with lived experience of homelessness. Agencies participating in the Public Input Meetings included, but were not limited to, N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre, Canadian Mental Health Association – Sudbury/Manitoulin, Rapid Mobilization Table (RMT), the Homelessness Network, Sudbury Action Centre for Youth (SACY), Children's Aid Society of The Districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin, and Public Health Sudbury & Districts.

Three participants provided feedback by email.

The results from the consultation were compiled into a matrix and distributed among stakeholders to confirm understanding and completeness.

Community Recommendations and Suggestions

The complete roll up of the results of the consultation is contained in Appendix B: Homelessness Consultation – Community Recommendations.

Community recommendations from the consultation process were organized into six main themes:

- Housing
- Provision of Food, Shelter, and Support Services
- Priority Populations
- Addiction and Mental Health
- Enforcement

- Leadership
- Communication and Collaboration

Key gaps that were identified through the consultation process, suggestions for how these gaps could be addressed, and community initiatives currently underway that may assist to address these gaps, have been listed under each theme. The majority of recommendations fell under the Housing category, which include but are not limited to, gaps to address lack of affordable housing, long waitlists for housing, lack of transitional and supportive housing, and insufficient social assistance income.

CGS Initiatives Implemented/Underway

There are a number of ongoing initiatives through the City and community partners to address some of the gaps identified. Homelessness initiatives continue to be a priority for staff. Below are a number of projects that are underway to address gaps in the sector that were also identified through the consultation process:

Initiative	Outcomes	Cost
Housing/Addictions and Mental Health: Transitional Housing business case approved by Council to support people experiencing homelessness with mental health and addictions	Individuals with addictions are housed with appropriate supports Reduction in overall homelessness	\$2.2 Million (Provincial and Municipal Funding)
Housing: Peace Tower project- 38 affordable housing units	Reduction in overall homelessness Increase in affordable housing units	\$5.7 Million (Provincial funding)
Mental Health and Addictions: Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (partnership between Greater Sudbury Police Services and Health Sciences North)	Improved outcomes for individuals with mental illness	\$428,000 (Provincial funding) Note: Short term Mental Health and Addictions funding has allowed for pilot project; to be reviewed
Priority Populations (Youth): Sudbury Action Centre for Youth Emergency Shelter program and warming centre extended to April 30, 2022	Youth experiencing homelessness are provided with basic needs and support	\$380,000 annually (Provincial funding) Note: Long term planning is underway for a permanent solution
Priority Populations (Indigenous) Increased indigenous lead cultural education and training including cultural sensitive policy development, service delivery practices, visible art and structures etc.	Increased culturally appropriate services Increased inclusion of indigenous partners Reduced stigma for indigenous people	\$200,000 (Provincial or Federal funding) Note: CGS Strategic Plan 2019-2027: “Strengthen Indigenous Relations Towards Reconciliation”

Priority Populations (Indigenous): Shkagamik-Kwe B.E.A.R (Belonging, Equity, Access and Respect) Team outreach and harm reduction supports	Improved outcomes for persons who are experiencing homelessness and identify as indigenous	\$208,000 (Provincial funding) Note: Short term Mental Health and Addictions funding has allowed for pilot project; to be reviewed
Communication and Collaboration: Billboards posted at downtown transit terminal, shelter programs and libraries with services available for people experiencing homelessness	Individuals experiencing homelessness have greater access to service information	No additional funding required
Communication and Collaboration: CGS Homelessness Initiatives webpage continues to be updated to showcase homelessness services available	Community members have greater access to information about homelessness and housing services	No additional funding required
Food/Shelter and Support Services: Implementation of a Coordinated Access System and Homelessness Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS 4.0) database within the homelessness sector	Improved coordination and efficiency between homelessness services Improved support service for individuals experiencing homelessness Improved access to community wide data Improved access to appropriate housing with supports Reduction in chronic homelessness	\$87,000 (Federal funding) Note: Previously approved as part of Shelter Review recommendations

Future Recommendations- Priorities 2022/2023

Initiative	Outcomes	Approximate Cost
Housing: Increased housing allowances and rent supplements	Reduction in overall homelessness Increase in housing stability	Dependent on number- i.e. 50 ho allowances at \$500 per month = \$300,000 annually (Provincial or Municipal funding)
Addictions and Mental Health: Supervised Consumption Site	Reduced deaths from opioid use	To be determined
Priority Populations (Youth): Acquire a building to provide Youth homeless shelter and transitional housing	Reduction in youth homelessness Increased access to support for at risk youth	\$1M (Provincial or Federal funding)
Food/Shelter and Support Services: create a one stop location for housing help services	Increased access to housing support and information	\$400,000 annually (Provincial or Federal funding)

Food/Shelter and Support Services: Create permanent storage solutions for belongings	Increased access to shelters	\$50,000 startup plus \$20,000 annually (Provincial or Municipal funding)
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Next Steps

Staff are seeking support from Council to continue pursuing federal and provincial funding, and community partnerships, to achieve the other priorities identified by the community. If desired by Council, staff will take direction on additional priorities preferred by Council and report back on the associated cost and resources required to implement.

Resources Cited

Appendix A: Homelessness Consultation – Methods

Appendix B: Homelessness Consultation – Community Recommendations.

Special City Council Meeting January 27, 2021:

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=9FD4193F-D154-4ED0-9271-8E1C39F35B5E&Agenda=Agenda&lang=English>

(External link)

Special City Council Meeting January 28, 2021:

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=2601&lang=en>

(External Link)

Homelessness Consultation Report presented to City Council on December 15, 2020:

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=38421>

Reaching Home: Federal Homelessness Funding Report presented to the Community Services Committee on March 18, 2019;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=3847>

Emergency Shelter Review and Recommendation Report presented to the Community Services Committee on March 18, 2019;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=3833>

Emergency Shelter Review Update Report presented to the Community Services Committee on May 13, 2019;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=3293>

Emergency Shelter Transition Interim Report presented to the Community Services Committee on September 16, 2019;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=2222>

Emergency Shelter Review Update Report presented to the Community Services Committee on June 15, 2020;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=479>

City of Greater Sudbury Ten-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – 2013 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on November 18, 2013;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=17451>

City of Greater Sudbury Housing & Homelessness Plan Update - 2019 to 2023 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on November 18, 2019;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=1703>

Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update – 2020 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on August 10, 2020;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=39416>

Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update – 2019 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on July 8, 2019;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=2683>

Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update - 2018 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on July 9, 2018;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=5147>

Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update – 2017 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on July 17, 2017;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=8243>

Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update – 2016 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on July 11, 2016;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=10836>

Housing and Homelessness Plan Annual Update – 2015 Report presented to the Community Services Committee on August 10, 2015;

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=13530>