

Sole Source of Housing Navigator Services

Presented To:	Community Services Committee
Meeting Date:	June 20, 2022
Type:	Managers' Reports
Prepared by:	Gail Spencer Children and Social Services
Recommended by:	General Manager of Community Development

Report Summary

This report provides a recommendation regarding the approval for a sole source agreement with the Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury for continued delivery of Housing Navigator positions.

Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury enters into a sole source agreement with the Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury for the continued delivery of Housing Navigator positions for a two-year term effective January 1, 2023, with two further one-year extension options as outlined in the report entitled "Sole Source of Housing Navigator Services" from the General Manager of Community Development, presented to the Community Services Committee on June 20, 2022.

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 delivering Housing Navigator supports. This report has no relationship to the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as the program is fully funded by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing through the Homelessness Prevention Program.

Background

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) is a service manager pursuant to the Housing Services Act, 2011, and as such is responsible, in accordance with its housing and homelessness plan, to carry out measures to meet the objectives and targets relating to housing needs within the City. The City administers and funds housing and homelessness programs and services, and partners with community service providers, to provide housing first programs and other programs intended to meet the needs of persons who are experiencing homelessness.

In 2017, the City was successful in an application to the Ministry of Housing under the Home for Good Program. Part of this application included funds for housing allowances to provide greater housing affordability for participants of the Housing First program, as well as operating funds for Housing Navigators to administer the housing allowances. The role of the Housing Navigators is to administer the housing allowances in collaboration with City Social Services staff; promote landlord and tenants' rights and responsibilities to participants and create positive relationships with private market landlords. In March 2018, Council approved a request to sole source these positions to Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury as the lead agency of the Homelessness Network, who provides the Housing First program on behalf of the City, and the term ends December 31, 2022.

Housing Navigators work closely with Housing First program to support clients to access housing in the private market with the benefit of a housing allowance. Being able to access a private market unit allows for client choice of where to live in the community and prevents funneling all clients into social housing buildings. The Housing Navigators maintain relationships with private market landlords to encourage positive landlord/tenant relationships. Between February 2019 and May 2022 there were 51 Housing First clients who received an ongoing housing allowance in order to maintain affordability within the private market. With the approval of additional housing allowances in November 2021 under Service Enhancements, there have been an additional nine individuals who have been housed in the private market.

In October 2021, a Request for Proposals was issued for the Coordination and Administration of a Housing First System and Homelessness Prevention Supports, which includes the Housing First program. This agreement was awarded to Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury as lead for the Homelessness Network with a three-year term from January 1, 2022, until December 31, 2024, with an option to extend for two additional one-year terms.

In March 2022, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced they had consolidated three (3) programs, the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), Home for Good (HFG), and the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program (SCRSP) into one flexible Homelessness Prevention Program. Under the investment plan approved by Council, the investment in Home for Good programming would continue under the new Homelessness Prevention program.

In order to align the funding contracts for the Coordination and Administration of a Housing First System and Homelessness Prevention Supports with the Housing Navigators, it is requested that approval be granted for the City to enter into a sole source agreement with Centre de Santé Communautaire du Grand Sudbury for the continued delivery of the Housing Navigator positions for a two-year term effective January 1, 2023, with two further one-year extensions in alignment with the overall Housing First RFP. A sole source purchase is recommended as there is no other service provider operating a housing first program in the community. The annual cost of this program is \$208,000 resulting in a total cost of \$832,000 over four years if the extensions are taken.

Next Steps

With Council approval, a service provider agreement will be completed. Housing Navigators will continue to work closely with private market landlords to build relationships that support positive tenancies for Housing First clients, and regular data updates will be provided to Council on the use of Housing Allowances.

Resources Cited

Ministry of Housing- Home for Good (HFG) Funding

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=7634>

Single Source - Home for Good, March 19, 2018

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=6449>

