

## **Extension of Safe Harbour House and SACY NEST Emergency Shelter Programs**

Presented To:	Community and Emergency Services Committee
Meeting Date:	April 17, 2023
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 Elizabeth Fry Society Safe Harbour House Emergency Shelter Program for women and the Sudbury Action Centre for Youth NEST Warming Centre and Emergency Shelter Program for youth.

### **Resolution**

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the extension of the Elizabeth Fry Society Safe Harbour House Emergency Shelter Program for women until March 31, 2024;

AND THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the extension of the Sudbury Action Centre for Youth NEST Warming Centre and Emergency Shelter Program for youth until March 31, 2024;

AND THAT the City of Greater Sudbury directs staff to bring forward a business case regarding the funding of both the emergency shelter programs in the fall 2023 for the 2024 budget as outlined in the report entitled "Extension of Safe Harbour House and SACY NEST Emergency Shelter Programs" from the General Manager of Community Development, presented at the Community and Emergency Services Committee on April 17, 2023.

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

This report supports 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 options for services for individuals that are homeless in the community. This report has no relationship to the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

### **Financial Implications**

To continue operating the two programs, a total of \$830,000 will be funded by the additional allocation

provided through the Federal Reaching Home Program for 2023-2024.

## **Background**

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) has a service manager mandate from the Province of Ontario to coordinate and/or deliver programming to reduce or prevent homelessness. Funding is provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing through the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). The City also receives Federal funding under the Reaching Home Program and allocates additional municipal funds to the annualized allocation aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness. The City collaborates with community service providers to provide programs that support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including emergency shelter programs for adults, families, and youth.

During the COVID-19 pandemic individuals and families experiencing homelessness were adversely affected by the closure of in person services, loss of affordable housing and the opioid crisis. Additional funding was provided by both the Provincial and Federal government to ensure services for people experiencing homelessness remained available.

### Sudbury Action Centre for Youth (SACY) NEST Program

At the Finance and Administration meeting held on November 3, 2020, staff were directed to work with existing service providers to expand the availability of warming shelter space to the community's most vulnerable population. One of the services that was opened was a warming centre plus four emergency shelter beds for youth, operated by the Sudbury Action Centre for Youth (SACY) at 95 Pine Street, Sudbury. The NEST program opened in November 2020, operates overnight from 10:00 pm to 10:00 am and provides a safe age-appropriate place for youth aged 16 to 24 years. The program supports homeless youth to be added to the City's By-Name List to be connected to housing and supports that meet their needs.

The current funding agreement ends on May 31, 2023. A funding allocation of approximately \$290,000 is required to extend the program to March 31, 2024.

### Safe Harbour House- low barrier women's shelter

During the COVID-19 pandemic the number of people living outdoors in the downtown core increased. As a result, the Greater Sudbury Encampment Response Guide was brought to Council on October 12, 2021. In response to recommendations within the guide, staff brought a report to Council on November 23, 2021, with options for service enhancements for persons experiencing homelessness. One of the options that was approved was the opening of an additional emergency shelter program for women.

Safe Harbour House is operated by the Elizabeth Fry Society of Northeastern Ontario and is in a building leased from the Canadian Mental Health Association - Sudbury/Manitoulin (CMHA). The low barrier program opened in January 2022, operates overnight from 9:00 pm to 8:00 am and provides ten beds for women and persons who identify as non-binary. The shelter supports individuals to be added to the City's By-Name List to be connected to housing supports that meet their needs.

The current funding agreement ends on June 30, 2023 and would require approximately \$540,000 to extend the operating and lease costs until March 31, 2024.

### Funding

The two additional shelter programs were funded through the Social Services Relief funding provided by the Province during the COVID pandemic. This funding ended effective December 31, 2022.

The city is entering the final year of a five-year funding agreement through the Federal Reaching Home program which will end on March 31, 2024. An additional allocation of \$936,336 has been added to the funding agreement by the Federal government for the 2023/24 period. This funding is intended to help communities extend their response to COVID-19 and provide them with the flexibility to use these

investments to meet local needs and priorities, such as:

- extending COVID-19 measures for those experiencing homelessness
- finding permanent housing for those temporarily housed
- reducing the inflow into homelessness, including homelessness prevention and shelter diversion activities.

The additional Federal Reaching Home Program funds can be used to extend the two emergency shelter programs until March 31, 2024. There has been no information to date regarding the continuation, approved activities, or funding allocation of a Federal Homelessness Program past March 31, 2024.

### Emergency Shelter System

These new emergency shelter programs have added 14 new shelter beds and 10 overnight warming spaces to the 35 shelter beds at the Off the Street Shelter, operated by the CMHA and 26 beds at Cedar Place Women and Families Shelter operated by the Salvation Army, to bring the total capacity to 75 emergency shelter beds. These beds have been operating at close to full capacity which is reported regularly to the public through the City of Greater Sudbury website: <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/live/homelessness-initiatives/>

The additional beds continue to be required to meet the need in the community, provide persons with an option to living outdoors in encampments, and connect people to the supports and services they require to become housed.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will work with the service providers to extend the funding agreements. Staff will prepare a business case to bring back in fall 2023 regarding the funding for the emergency shelter system for the 2024 budget.

### **Resources Cited**

Resolution FA 2020-60 - November 3, 2020

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=38816>

Warming Centre and Temporary Youth Shelter update report- January 18, 2021

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=38155>

Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 2 Funding Proposal- January 18, 2021

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?documentid=38159>

City of Greater Sudbury Encampment and Action Plan- October 12, 2021

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=42061>

Service Enhancements for Persons Experiencing Homelessness- November 23, 2021

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=42563>

Progress report- Service Enhancements for Persons Experiencing Homelessness-June 20,2022

<https://pub-greatersudbury.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=46632>