

For Information Only

CGS Housing and Homelessness Plan Update

Presented To:	Community Services Committee
Presented:	Monday, Aug 10, 2015
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Recommendation

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Finance Implications

There are no financial implications

Health Impact Assessment

The goal of the CGS Housing and Homelessness Plan is to enhance services and reduce barriers along the full housing continuum to facilitate citizen access to affordable housing. Measures taken and progress achieved will be monitored by CGS staff and reported annually.

Background

The Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy developed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing recognized that local Service Managers across the Province are best positioned to understand and respond to the changing housing and homelessness needs of their specific respective communities. Through new legislation, the Housing Services Act (HSA), 2011 and the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy required Service Managers to create comprehensive, multi-year plans for local housing and homelessness services to be in place by January 1, 2014.

In the development of local plans, Service Managers had a more active, strategic role in working with others in the community to identify priorities and set a course of action to address these priorities. The Housing and Homelessness Plan (The Plan) is intended to address areas of provincial interest while guiding municipalities in creating a flexible, community centred housing and homelessness system. City Council approved Greater Sudbury's Housing and Homelessness Plan via resolution CS2013-53 on November 18, 2013. A copy of the Plan was reviewed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to ensure that it met all legislated requirements.

Signed By

Report Prepared By

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Health Impact Review

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Division Review

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Recommended by the Department

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Recommended by the C.A.O.

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The City of Greater Sudbury (CGS) Plan builds on the community gains already achieved. The CGS has been working over a number of years to co-ordinate and harmonize local housing and homelessness services, and has already established a community network to deliver services. The CGS will continue to collaborate with its partners and stakeholders while moving the housing and homelessness system to a more co-ordinated, people centred system which is focused on achieving positive outcomes for individuals and families.

The goal of the CGS Housing and Homelessness Plan is to ensure systems are in place along the full housing continuum which facilitates citizen access to affordable housing.

The Plan's guiding principle is to continue to support community based delivery of housing and homelessness services.

Reporting

As part of the Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy, the government made several commitments related to performance measurement and reporting. One of the commitments entailed Service Managers to report annually to the public on the progress of their Plans based on the previous year's activities beginning in 2015. Creating an annual reporting progress requirement is intended to enhance local transparency and accountability, while ensuring that local communities remain engaged in the Plan through regular progress updates.

The City of Greater Sudbury's Housing and Homelessness Plan identified six priority areas. Listed below are the objectives, measures taken, and progress achieved in 2014.

Priority #1. There is a need to improve housing options across the housing continuum.

Objectives within this priority are:

- Improve and maintain the existing housing stock
- Improve the accessibility of new housing and full utilization of existing housing stock
- Increase the diversity of affordable housing options
- Increase community acceptance of and provide consistent support for multi-residential housing

Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in 2014:

- CGS enforces changes to the Ontario Building Code regarding energy and water efficiency. Changes to the code are communicated to the construction industry through regular meetings. Energy Star for New Homes information is available at the Building Services counter.
- Under the EarthCare Sudbury Action Plan, information is provided to the public about promoting energy efficiency through televised advertisement, EarthCare Minutes, along with promotion of rebates for residential or business energy programs on the CGS website, and through monthly newsletters.
- CGS enforces accessibility requirements of the Ontario Building Code. Information on barrier free design is available through Building Services
- The 2013 Report Card on Homelessness reported on the six priority areas identified within the Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The Report Card is a public document that is released widely throughout the private sector and economic development circles of the City.
- CGS undertook a study on Second Units in 2013 and the findings were presented to Planning Committee and the development community.
- Greater Sudbury Housing Corporation has identified the need to bring on newer affordable housing through their strategic plan

In 2014:

- 48% of all new dwelling units created were single detached, 38% were apartments and 14% were semi-detached and townhouses.
- CGS approved 16 temporary zoning applications for Garden Suites.
- CGS approved 5 applications for second units in single detached homes.
- CGS processed 6 Site Plan applications for Multi-Residential Buildings

Planned for 2015:

- Second Unit policies are being considered as part of the five year Official Plan Review.

Priority #2. There is a need to improve housing access and affordability for low income households.

Objectives within this priority are:

- Improve housing access and affordability for low income households

Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in 2014:

- CGS participation in the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario 2014 Extension (IAH-E) Program has been confirmed. A Program Delivery & Funding Plan has been submitted to the Province and has been approved. The Plan identifies the majority of senior government funding for new build projects.
- Information about subsidized housing, affordable housing and housing allowance programs are communicated to low income households through CGS Social Services staff, Housing Services staff, homelessness service providers and community agencies.
- CGS will continue to advocate for additional affordable housing through the Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy response.
- 32 households were assisted through the Housing Allowance Program operated by the City of Greater Sudbury Housing Services.

Planned for 2015:

- CGS Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario (IAH-E) funding was allocated to the shared delivery of the Sudbury Housing Assistance Rent Program (SHARP). An additional 57 low income households will receive funding over a five year period. CGS partners in this venture include the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing, & CGS.

Priority #3: There is a need to strengthen approaches to preventing homelessness, increase the diversity of emergency shelter options and support individuals with multiple barriers in obtaining and maintaining their housing.

Objectives within this priority are:

- Ensure emergency accommodation is available when needed, but focus on transitioning to permanent housing.
- Address the needs of the most vulnerable populations of homeless
- Stop discharging people into homelessness from key points of contact like hospitals and corrections
- Address the need for additional educational and awareness of social housing providers and landlords of available crisis services and supports for tenants with special needs

Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in 2014:

- CGS partnered with the North East Local Health Integration Network (NELHIN), Canadian Mental

Health Association, and 17 other community agencies to develop priorities within a Harm Reduction Strategy to meet the needs of persons who are chronically homeless and have active addictions.

- CGS opened a barrier free “Out of the Cold” emergency shelter program which provided up to 30 additional cots per night for persons who were homeless, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or otherwise disengaged from mainstream shelter programs. A pilot program ran from February 19th to March 31st, 2014, and again from December 1st, 2014 to April 15th, 2015. Between 15 and 30 homeless persons per night utilized the program for sleeping. Additional persons used the program as a drop in service.
- A full review of eligibility criteria was completed with the two emergency shelter service providers.
- The NELHIN committed annualized funding to the Canadian Mental Health Association for the operation of a Managed Alcohol Program within the City of Greater Sudbury. This program is in development and is seeking a suitable facility for possible co-location with emergency shelter and health care services.
- Continued connectivity and relationship building has occurred between emergency shelter staff, Homelessness Network case managers, CGS social services case managers, hospital social workers and corrections discharge planners.

In 2014, with support of funding received from the Provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI):

- 958 persons who were homeless used an emergency shelter
- 303 households who were homeless moved to permanent housing
- 126 households moved from emergency shelter to long term housing
- 1,025 households who were at risk of homelessness remained housed

Planned for 2015:

- Continued work with community partners on meeting the priorities within the Harm Reduction Strategy that will address the needs of persons who are chronically homeless with active addictions.
- A “Meet and Greet” opportunity was planned for the Out of the Cold Emergency shelter for January 2015 for community service providers to increase awareness and support enhanced access to the program
- Preparation is underway for development of an Intensive Case Management Housing First program.
- Training for front line service providers in the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT), an acuity tool used for prioritizing the most vulnerable for housing case management.
- A Period Prevalence Homelessness Count will be completed to identify the number of persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in our community, including the number of chronically or episodically homeless, which will be used as a baseline to identify the success of programs aimed at providing services to the homeless in our community.

Priority #4. There is a need for additional supportive services coupled with permanent housing (both supportive housing and supports in private homes).

Objectives within this priority were:

- Ensure the supports are available for individuals to achieve and maintain housing stability
- Ensure adequate permanent housing linked with supports
- Reduce barriers to accessing housing, services and supports

Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in 2014:

- Over 800 households responded to a survey that was sent to social assistance recipients regarding the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) program that is available to support

housing stability by providing funds for paying rental arrears, utility arrears, last month's rent deposits and/or utility deposits.

- Greater Sudbury Housing Corporation recently developed a 5 year strategic plan which is focused on the building of healthy, safe and affordable communities. Two of the main pillars of the plan, and the objectives for each, are "Residents" (successful tenancies, safety, health and well-being, engagement, access to services) and "Community" (partnerships and collaboration, healthy and sustainable communities, resident empowerment, improve social determinants of health).

Several housing programs linked with supports operate in our community. For example, in 2014:

- 34 people were housed and supported through the ASH (Addiction Supportive Housing) Program operated by Monarch Recovery Services
- 14 people were housed and supported at Beyond the Rock, a transitional housing program for men operated by Monarch Recovery Services
- 17 women were supported through Monarch Women's Aftercare program
- 18 people were housed and supported at Victoria place, a six bed transitional home operated by Canadian Mental Health Association

Planned for 2015:

- Preparation is underway for development of an Intensive Case Management Housing First Program
- CGS will participate in the Federal/Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing – 2014 Extension Initiative. Housing proponents may submit proposals through the CGS RFP process to build new affordable housing in 2017/2018
- CGS staff are working with local developers to increase affordable housing options

Priority #5. There is a need to improve co-ordination, collaboration and partnerships among a broad range of stakeholders.

Objectives within this priority are:

- Improve effectiveness of the local housing system by increasing coordination, collaboration and partnerships among a broad range of stakeholders involved in housing

Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in 2014:

- CGS partnered with the North East Local Health Integration Network (NELHN), Canadian Mental Health Association, and 17 community agencies to develop priorities within a Harm Reduction Strategy to meet the needs of persons who are chronically homeless and have active addictions.
- Community Mobilization Sudbury (CMS) began the operation of the Rapid Mobilization Table. CMS is a community partnership representing many different sectors and agencies that provide human services – health, children's services, policing, education, mental health and addictions, and social services. Partner agencies meet twice weekly at a Rapid Mobilization Table to work together to identify situations that place individuals and families at high risk of harm. Together, they respond to those situations in a coordinated and timely way (typically within 24 or 48 hours), connecting those at risk with the services and supports that can help. "No access to permanent housing" was one of the top five risk factors identified in situations presented in 2014.
- CGS advocated through meetings with municipal associations & sector organizations i.e. Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) and Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA)
- EarthCare Sudbury is a unique partnership with the City of Greater Sudbury, over 180 community agencies, organizations and businesses, and hundreds of individuals coming together to chart our own course for a greener, healthier and more sustainable community.

- The 2013 Report Card on Homelessness was released in August 2014. The Report Card on Homelessness is intended to inform, monitor and evaluate the system we have in place to address homelessness within CGS and is released widely to the public, including direct mailings to the business sector and faith based groups.
- The CGS Coordinator of Shelters and Homelessness met with a Downtown Churches committee to provide information about homelessness initiatives within the City of Greater Sudbury and discuss opportunities for their congregations to play a role in meeting the needs of the homeless.

Priority #6. There is a need to monitor and report on progress towards meeting the Housing and Homelessness Plan objectives and targets.

Objectives within this priority are:

- Monitor, analyze and respond to information about the local housing and homelessness situation

Measures Taken and Progress Achieved in 2014:

- The 2013 Report Card on Homelessness was released to the public in August 2014. The report card reported on data around housing and homelessness and outlined the priority areas that had been identified in the Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.
- In September 2014, the Community Plan was approved for the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding. Priorities for this funding were identified through input from the Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. CGS reports back to the Federal Government on outcomes achieved.
- Five year review of City's Official Plan is currently underway.
- CGS receives funding through the Provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) and reports back to both levels of government on the required measures. The goals of these funding agreements are aligned with the priorities identified in the Plan.

Next Steps

CGS will continue to work in partnership with the community to meet the objectives within the Priority areas identified in the Plan and will report back annually on the measures taken and progress achieved.