

Background

In March 2017, Chris Ballard, Minister of Housing announced that \$100 Million over the next two years for housing and support services would be available. The Ministry of Housing invited Service Managers across the Province to submit an expression of interest to define the supportive housing needs in their community, to inform the Ministry about the Service Manager's ability to deliver housing assistance and support services, and to identify potential community partners to deliver supportive housing services. Operating costs can be used for either housing assistance such as rent supplement or support services such as counseling, case management, life skills training, etc. Additionally, there will be capital funding for a total of 400 units in each of the two (2) years (same funding formula as Affordable Housing Program). It is the province's intention to provide operating funding on an ongoing basis, beyond 2018-19.

Eligible capital projects must be one of the following: new construction, including additions and extension; acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing residential buildings to maintain or increase the affordable rental housing stock; or conversion of non-residential buildings or units to purpose-built rental buildings/units. Capital funding is to be used to increase the supply of physical supportive housing units, which can be in either transitional or long term supportive housing projects. Units must also be linked to housing assistance and support services, funded through program operating dollars.

Approved capital projects must remain affordable for a minimum period of twenty (20) years. Affordability is defined as having rents for the project that are at or below 80% of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Average Market Rent (AMR) at the time of occupancy. Capital funding will be provided based on affordability payments. This involves the Ministry of Housing advancing payments over a twenty (20) year period.

The Ministry of Housing has indicated an interest in supporting Service Managers across the Province to collaborate with other sector organizations (housing, health, community services, and children and youth sectors) to develop a coordinated supportive housing system with flexible approaches to meet resident's changing needs, and to assist individuals to obtain and retain safe, affordable, and adequate housing with the appropriate level and type of support services. The Home for Good program has a direct link to the Province's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update issued in 2016 and supports the Ministry's goal to end chronic homelessness by 2025.

Funding will be provided to Service Managers to assist recipients who fall within one or more of the four (4) targeted provincial priority homelessness areas: chronic homelessness, youth homelessness, indigenous homelessness, and homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded institutions and service systems (i.e. hospitals and prisons).

As the Home for Good Program strives to ensure that recipients with complex needs avoid homelessness and remain stably housed over time, the Province is open to funds being used for a variety of housing models.

The expression of interest must demonstrate capacity to deliver all aspects of the proposal (housing assistance, support services, and capital projects (as applicable)), including a list of potential partners. Preference will be given to submissions that can successfully highlight key partnerships that would be leveraged to maximize the benefits

of the proposal and provide stronger service integration, and include a variety of new and enhanced arrangements that cover areas such as financial or in-kind contributions, capacity building, or training in addition to service delivery.

The proposals will be assessed based on how it best meets the guidelines and desired outcomes of the program. The following criteria will be used: alignment and rationale; program design and sustainability; implementation; organizational capacity and partnerships; and feasibility.

Expression of Interest

A proposal was submitted on May 19, 2017 requesting a combination of capital and operating funds to support locally relevant and community-driven solutions to chronic homelessness in Sudbury. The goal of this proposal is to ensure the provision of assistance along a continuum of housing support from the greatest level of need (congregate care) to decreasing levels of assistance through supportive housing and rent supplements; each level is dependent on the abilities and choice of individual clients.

The Government of Ontario's *Realizing Our Potential* strategy recognizes that moving clients from homelessness to housing must include a continuum of supports. Greater Sudbury has adopted a Housing First philosophy for the delivery of homelessness programming, which aligns directly with the goals of the province. The proposed projects within the expression of interest close the gap of the service continuum by providing safe, affordable and supportive options for people either living or discharged into homelessness. The proposed services included in the expression of interest do not duplicate, compete or replace existing assistance in the community.

The target populations identified for services include three (3) provincial priorities: chronic homelessness, homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded institutions, and Indigenous homelessness. All programs and services will be available in both official languages to adults over the age of eighteen (18). It is expected, based on past experience that participants assessed as chronically homeless will also have a host of serious issues, which the services are prepared to address.

The expression of interest is divided into two components, Year 1 and Year 2 funding.

Year 1 funding

Funding focuses on 200 Larch Street and the renovations required to renovate the building and set up a Community Hub model of services.

The proposed partnership is between the City of Greater Sudbury, the Canadian Mental Health Association Sudbury/Manitoulin, North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) and Health Sciences North. This collaborative/co-location model is being developed in order to share current resources to provide comprehensive client care to those most in need. It is the goal of the partnership to effectively utilize opportunities created in order to provide a higher quality of service to each of the respective target populations while not only maintaining the state of current services offered, but also by enhancing services through a collaborative model that is ultimately taking a more holistic approach to all of the client's needs.

The goal of this partnership is to share a location that provides high quality, familiar services to those that are homeless or living in poverty that may have mental health or substance abuse issues.

Community Hub Model

Consolidating the partners within one location will achieve several functional program and operational objectives that are currently lacking. The goal of the community hub program is to keep clients safe, stabilize and improve their overall health status and support the clients to transition to other services and affordable housing within the community.

Programs such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Harm Reduction Home Program, the City of Greater Sudbury "Off the Street" Low Barrier Emergency Shelter Program, Primary Health Care, and an Indigenous Healing Space are types of programming that could operate at 200 Larch Street. These programs will run out of the main floor. The second floor will host a fifteen (15) bed congregate care residential managed alcohol program. This section will be considered transitional housing. Residents will have the capacity to access support services that are offered on the main floor. Once the residents are stabilized, CMHA will assist residents to access permanent affordable housing. There will also be office space located on the second floor.

The goal of the Year 1 proposal is to ensure the provision of assistance along a continuum of housing support from the greatest level of need (congregate care) to decreasing levels of assistance through supportive housing and rent supplements; each level is dependent on the abilities and choice of individual clients.

Operational funding requested includes housing allowances, tenancy support, and support services incorporated into the community hub model. Capital funding requested includes the conversion of a non residential building into 15 congregate care units.

Year 2 funding

Year 2 funding moves the housing continuum forward by consolidating the partners to achieve permanent housing for graduates of the programs instituted at 200 Larch Street.

The goal of the proposed Supportive Home for Good apartment building is to decrease hospitalization, and assist individuals in finding permanent housing; increase supportive housing options for individuals returning/remaining in the community, and maintain stabilized affordable housing.

A four storey 38 unit supportive housing apartment building is being proposed. The target population for this building will be the chronically homeless, indigenous homeless and homeless following transitions from provincially-funded institutions and service systems. A community consultation process including Council approval will be required to determine site selection for this project.

The first floor will host a common space for residents to utilize for social gatherings, a 6 bedroom pod congregate care dorm style supportive housing program and office

space. The second floor will host an additional two 6 bedroom pod congregate care transitional housing for individuals who want to be housed from the shelter, correctional facility, or chronically homeless. Floors three and four will be a mix of 20 one bedroom and bachelor apartments providing permanent housing. Support will be minimal however if individuals require support they can access services through floors one and two. All residents will be eighteen (18) years of age or older.

Operational funding requested is for support services to run the necessary programs within the building and capital funding for the construction of 38 housing units.

Greater Sudbury is a community with a network of agencies that work cooperatively. As such, the priorities within the proposal are those most important to the community – they are the gaps in the service continuum. With the inclusion of the proposed supports, clients will be able to move seamlessly from homelessness to affordable housing with the most appropriate level and type of support services based on their changing needs over time.

Next Steps

If the Home for Good Funding Expression of Interest is approved, a report to Community Services will be brought forward to indicate the work being completed with the community partners to ensure the project meets all of the Province's funding criteria to begin Year 1 renovations. The report will also contain information regarding community consultations and potential site locations for Year 2 funding for Council's review.

References

Ministry of Housing, A Stronger Supportive Housing System for Ontario,
<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page13793.aspx>