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**For Information**

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**REPORT TITLE:**      **Reaching Home Funding Update 2021-2024**

**FROM:**                Janice Sheehy, Commissioner of Human Services

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update on the Region of Peel's federal Reaching Home funding allocation.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Reaching Home, Canada's Homelessness Strategy is a community-based program focused on preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada.
  - The Region of Peel has been designated as the Community Entity for Reaching Home funding, and together with the Community Advisory Board is responsible for selecting projects for funding.
  - The Region of Peel has been allocated a total of \$12,053,459 in Reaching Home base funding for April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024.
  - For the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024, the Region of Peel has approved funding for eight projects.
  - The funded projects directly align to the Reaching Home eligibility criteria and support the Transform Service Strategy of the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan.
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**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

**Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy**

As highlighted to Regional Council on March 28, 2019 in a report titled "Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Funding", the federal government has invested \$2.2 billion in preventing homelessness over 10 years. This funding will be used to support vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable, and affordable housing, and to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50 per cent by 2028.

Reaching Home is a part of the National Housing Strategy; it is a community-based program with a requirement that it be administered by a Community Entity at the local level. A Community Entity is defined as a local organizing committee responsible for setting direction for addressing homelessness in their community. The Region has served as the Community Entity for federal homelessness funding since it began in 2009.

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As the Community Entity, the Region is responsible for guiding a community planning process whereby a Community Advisory Board (Appendix I), comprised of community agencies and members, advises on funding priorities and recommended projects. On an annual basis, a workplan outlining key milestones and performance measures, must be submitted to Employment and Social Development Canada.

In December 2018, the Region of Peel was allocated a total of \$12,053,459 under Reaching Home base funding over a five-year period for April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024. The Region of Peel's annual allocation for Reaching Home base funding is as follows:

	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
Reaching Home Funding	\$1,783,340	\$1,783,340	\$2,315,170	\$2,315,170	\$2,315,170
Coordinated Access	\$141,780	\$124,780	\$124,780	\$115,955	\$115,955
*COVID-19	\$918,019				
<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>\$2,843,139</b>	<b>\$1,908,120</b>	<b>\$2,439,950</b>	<b>\$2,431,125</b>	<b>\$2,431,125</b>

\*one-time COVID-19 funding

Eligibility criteria for Reaching Home funding includes:

1. Housing Services that lead an individual or family to transition into safe, affordable, and stable housing including transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and activities associated with household set up.
2. Prevention and Shelter Diversion, including services aimed at preventing homelessness by supporting individuals and families at risk of homelessness before a crisis occurs such as financial assistance to avert eviction including rental arrears, utility costs, moving costs.
3. Client Supports, including individualized services to improve access and connection to key support structures, such as the provision of basic needs and treatment services.
4. Capital Investments which are intended to increase capacity or improve the quality of facilities that address the needs of those who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.
5. Coordination of Resources and Data Collection, including activities that enable communities to deliver services in a coordinated manner and align homeless information systems to federal coordinated access requirements.

## 2. Funded Projects

Reaching Home directives require that the project selection process be conducted in an open, fair, and transparent manner. The Region of Peel, as the Community Entity, is responsible for soliciting project proposals, and assessing, approving, and entering into funding agreements with projects based on the recommendations of the local Community Advisory Board.

On December 22, 2020, Housing Services staff, in collaboration with the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board released applications for the Reaching Home funding fiscal period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024. Projects funded in fiscal periods April 1, 2019 to

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March 31, 2020 and April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 were carried over from the former Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding. These projects continued to align with Reaching Home Directives.

A total of nine applications were received which were reviewed by the Community Advisory Board and Regional staff.

Of the nine applications received, eight projects met the eligibility criteria listed above and were approved. The projects include:

- I. The Governing Council of the Salvation Army in Canada: REACH Project in the amount of \$401,361 yearly for two years (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023). This program is a Housing First program and part of the Home for Good in Peel Collaborative which provides housing allowances and support services to high acuity chronically homeless individuals from Peel's By-Name List.
- II. Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Branch: Streets to Homes Project in the amount of \$150,000 for two years (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023). Streets to Homes is a Housing First program and part of the Home for Good in Peel Collaborative and provides housing allowances and support services to high acuity chronically homeless individuals from Peel's By-Name List.
- III. Our Place Peel: Peel Alliance to End Homelessness Coordinator/Analyst position in the amount of \$160,000 yearly for three years (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024). The Peel Alliance to End Homelessness is a group of organizations, focused on housing and homelessness. They work collaboratively to advocate for systemic change and investments, through innovative approaches, to ensure the prevention and elimination of homelessness in Peel. The Program Coordinator/Analyst will facilitate research, planning, implementation, and project management of the community wide program.
- IV. Regeneration Outreach Community: Housing Support Services project in the amount of \$303,671 for one year (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022). This project will focus extensively on system navigation and liaising to support individuals in accessing housing, mental health, addiction, and income supports, both in crisis and on-going circumstances. This project will also assist individuals in meeting basic needs by providing services such as food, hygiene products and clothing.
- V. Restoration and Empowerment for Social Transition (R.E.S.T.) Centre: The Bridge to Hope project in the amount of \$201,968 for one year (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022), with two optional 12-month terms. The Bridge of Hope program connects primarily Black youth experiencing or at-risk of homelessness with safe and stable housing provided by dedicated and well-trained host families, with the goal of transitioning them to independent living.
- VI. Punjabi Community Health Services: Housing and Support Services project in the amount of \$266,547 for one year with two optional 12-month terms. This project will assist individuals and families in finding and maintaining housing as well as employment, while empowering them to break the cycle that leads homelessness.
- VII. Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto: Housing Outreach project in the amount of \$171,296 for one year (April 1, 2021 to March 3, 2022) with two optional 12-month terms. This project seeks to support francophone individuals and families at imminent

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risk of homelessness with services in French. The goal of the project is to connect 50 francophone families to health and social services to prevent homelessness.

- VIII. Pathways Non-Profit Housing Developments Inc. Peel: Community Support Coordinator in the amount of \$58,260 yearly for three years (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024). This position will act as a liaison among tenants at high risk of homelessness, landlords and community resources to help mitigate any tenancy issues and assist with housing retention.

The one application that was not approved did not provide programs that were directly tied to homelessness and homelessness prevention. At this time, there is \$236,073 in unallocated project funding remaining for the fiscal period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024. Unused Reaching Home funds will be utilized to address local priorities, based on input from the Community Advisory Board.

### RISK IMPLICATIONS

Reaching Home funding is designed to assist those experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness. All funding allocated to Peel helps to achieve these important outcomes. Funded agencies must submit performance reports to ensure funds are being used as intended.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Region of Peel has been allocated a total of \$12,053,459 in Reaching Home base funding over a five-year fiscal period, from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024. The 2021 Housing Support budget reflects this allocation and there are no financial implications to this report.

### CONCLUSION

Reaching Home is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness. In December 2018, the Region of Peel was allocated a total of \$12,053,459 of Reaching Home base funding over a five-year period starting April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2024.

As the designated Reaching Home Community Entity or fund administrator, the Region of Peel has worked with the Community Advisory Board to allocate funds for fiscal period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024.

This funding will allow for the creation of new programs as well as maintain funding for projects aimed at reducing and preventing homelessness in Peel.

### APPENDICES

Appendix I – Reaching Home Community Advisory Board Membership

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*For further information regarding this report, please contact Aileen Baird, Director, Housing Services, Ext. 1898, [aileen.baird@peelregion.ca](mailto:aileen.baird@peelregion.ca).*

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***Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:***

Department Commissioner, Division Director, Financial Support Unit and Legal Services.