
REPORT TITLE: COVID-19 Response for the Homeless Update

FROM: Sean Baird, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the contract (Document 2022-602N) between the Region of Peel and Logixx Security Inc., for additional security services for the Wilkinson Shelter and Peel Family Shelter, be extended to December 31, 2023, in the estimated annual amount of \$263,000 (exclusive of applicable taxes); and**
- 2. That the contract (Document 2022-507N) between the Region of Peel and Logixx Security Inc., for additional mobile security services for the Cawthra Road Shelter, be extended to December 31, 2023, in the estimated annual amount of \$510,000 (exclusive of applicable taxes); and**
- 3. That the contracts (Document 2022-362N) previously awarded to Peel hotels in the total cumulative amount of \$1,450,000.00 to provide homeless shelter overflow accommodations for persons in need, be increased up to the estimated amount of \$1,250,000.00 for the months of November and December, 2022, and additional suitable contracted hotels if required, for a revised estimated total contracts award amount of up to \$2,700,000.00 (excluding applicable taxes); and**
- 4. That the contracts with the Peel hotels for the provision of homeless shelter services, be extended and increased further as required in 2023, and additional suitable contracted hotels if required, to address the ongoing need for shelter overflow accommodations in 2023, subject to the receipt of suitable pricing and available budget, all in accordance with Procurement By-Law 30-2018, as amended.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- To date, the Region of Peel has been allocated \$98,565,518 from the federal and provincial governments to support and protect the homeless and other vulnerable populations throughout the pandemic.
- The emergency COVID-19 funding provided by the federal and provincial governments enabled the Region of Peel, with our community partners, to maintain, adapt and in some instances, enhance services and supports provided to the homeless and other vulnerable populations during the pandemic.
- This report provides Regional Council with an update on how Phase 4 of the Social Services Relief Funding was spent and how the Phase 5 allocation has been committed up to December 31, 2022.
- This report also seeks Council approval to increase shelter overflow contracts and extend security services at our emergency shelters, overflow hotels and surrounding

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areas established during the pandemic, in compliance with the Region's Procurement By-Law 30-2018, as amended, section 5.2.2, where the required security services will be additional to similar services being supplied under an existing contract.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

As regularly reported to Council throughout 2020 and 2021, the Region of Peel received emergency COVID-19 funding for the homeless and other vulnerable populations from the federal and provincial governments. The temporary funding was provided by the federal government through the Reaching Home program, and the provincial government through the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF), the Ontario Isolation Centre Initiative, one-time mental health and addictions support and the Isolation Emergency Support Fund.

Since the last update to Regional Council on October 28, 2021, the Province allocated the Region of Peel an additional \$5,308,400 under the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 5, the final phase of provincial emergency pandemic funding for the vulnerable. Regional Council was made aware of the SSRF 5 allocation through communication from the province provided on the April 28, 2022, Council meeting agenda.

This report provides Regional Council with an update on how Phase 4 of the Social Services Relief Funding was spent and how the Phase 5 allocation has been committed up to December 31, 2022.

2. COVID-19 Emergency Funding for the Vulnerable Allocated to Date

Since April 2020, the Region of Peel has been allocated \$98,565,518 from the federal and provincial governments to support and protect the homeless and other vulnerable populations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The table below lists the allocations received to date.

COVID-19 Emergency Funds for the Homeless and Vulnerable Allocated to Peel	
Federal Government	
Reaching Home COVID-19 Emergency Funding	\$13,125,392
Provincial Government	
Social Services Relief Fund	\$49,443,988
Isolation Emergency Support Fund	\$554,000
One-time Mental Health and Addictions Support	\$313,338
Ontario Isolation Centre Initiative	\$35,128,800
Total Provincial Funding	\$85,440,126

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Total Provincial & Federal Funding	\$98,565,518
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The Region of Peel's COVID-19 response for the homeless included:

- Extra cleaning and enhanced infection prevention and control protocols at regional shelters.
- Decreased occupancy at regional shelters with increased use of overflow hotels during the height of the pandemic.
- Isolation and recovery centres for the homeless and for those who could not safely self-isolate at home.
- Additional out-of-the-cold programs during the winter months.
- A temporary drop-in centre in downtown Brampton during 2021.
- Provision of portable washrooms and showers for homeless residents during the provincial lockdowns.
- Funding to community agencies in Peel to support our most vulnerable residents during the pandemic.

The pandemic response for the homeless also included additional security services at Regional shelters, overflow hotels and surrounding areas. Staff is seeking Council approval to increase shelter overflow in response to demand and extend additional security services until the end of 2023, in compliance with the Region's Procurement By-Law 30-2018, as amended. Recommendations about the preferred security model for homelessness supports and shelters will be brought forward to Council in a future report.

The emergency COVID-19 funding provided by the federal and provincial governments enabled the Region of Peel, with our community partners, to maintain, adapt and in some instances, enhance services and supports provided to the homeless and other vulnerable populations. Throughout the pandemic, over 400,000 vulnerable Peel residents were assisted using these funds.

3. Social Services Relief Fund Phase 4

The Region of Peel received \$12.02 million through Phase 4 of SSRF. This funding needed to be spent before March 31, 2022. The chart below outlines how the funding was used.

Response	Description	Social Services Relief Fund Phase 4
		Amount Spent to March 31, 2022
Regional Response		
Overflow Shelter Hotels	To prevent/slow the spread of the virus within the shelter system, hotels were used to house approximately 50% of shelter clients. This allowed for physical distancing to be practiced within the shelter system.	\$0.69 million
Isolation Hotel	Provided space for individuals to safely isolate while awaiting COVID test results or for the homeless to recover who were confirmed positive for the virus.	\$1.54 million

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Supports & Services for Overflow and Isolation Hotels	Funds to cover the costs of social service supports staffing, medical staffing, food, cleaning, laundry/linen, and PPE.	\$3.79 million
Shelter minor capital repairs	Funds to install plexiglass and other complete other minor repairs within the shelter system to prevent the spread of the virus.	\$0.2 million
Capital funding	Partial funding for two new capital projects that received federal Rapid Housing Initiative funding.	\$5.54 million
Admin Funding	Program administration funding	\$0.26 million
	TOTAL	\$12.02 million

4. Social Services Relief Fund Phase 5

The Region of Peel received \$5.31 million of funding through Phase 5 of SSRF. The chart below outlines how this funding has been allocated. All funds will be spent by December 31st, 2022.

Response	Description	Social Services Relief Fund Phase 5
		Amount Committed to December 31, 2022
Regional Response		
Overflow Shelter Hotels	To prevent/slow the spread of the virus within the shelter system, hotels were used to house approximately 50% of shelter clients. This allowed for physical distancing to be practiced within the shelter system.	\$2.16 million
Isolation Hotel	Provided space for individuals to safely isolate while awaiting COVID test results or for the homeless to recover who were confirmed positive for the virus.	\$0.80 million
Supports & Services for Overflow and Isolation Program	Funds to cover the costs of social service supports staffing, medical staffing, food, cleaning, laundry/linen, and PPE.	\$2.16 million
Shelter minor capital repairs	Funds to complete minor repairs within the shelter system to prevent the spread of the virus.	\$0.03 million
Admin Funding	Program administration funding	\$0.16 million
	TOTAL	\$5.31 million

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

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Emergency COVID-19 funding for the homeless and other vulnerable groups from the federal and provincial governments is temporary. Phase 5 of the provincial Social Services Relief Fund is the final allocation and must be spent by December 2022.

While the federal and provincial emergency pandemic funding for the vulnerable has come to an end, some requirements and services offered during the pandemic must continue. This places financial pressure on the Region to fund on an ongoing basis. These budget pressures will be tabled at Regional Council through the 2023 budget process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report includes a request for procurement authority for shelter overflow and additional security services at our emergency shelter sites, pursuant to the Procurement By-Law 30-2018, as amended where the required security services will be additional to similar services being supplied under an existing contract. These additional costs will be funded from available funding in the 2022 Housing Support operating budget and a request for operating funds included in the proposed 2023 Housing Support budget. Staff will monitor service levels and return to Council if additional services and funding are required.

CONCLUSION

This report provides Regional Council with an update on how the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 4 was spent and how SSRF Phase 5 has been committed to December 31, 2022. The COVID-19 emergency funds from the federal and provincial governments have greatly assisted the Region of Peel and our most vulnerable Peel residents throughout the pandemic.



Sean Baird, Commissioner of Human Services

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