



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

AD-22-07

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Luisa Artuso, Social Services Administrator
Date: Wednesday, September 14, 2022
Subject: Increased Drop-In Hours in Downtown Guelph

Background:

This report provides further information on the possibility to increase 4 hours of service at a shelter or drop-in centre located in downtown Guelph as requested at the Social Services Committee held on July 21, 2022.

Update:

Emergency Overnight Shelter – Stepping Stone

Stepping Stone is a non-profit organization established in 1983 to help end homelessness in Guelph-Wellington by helping individuals and families experiencing homelessness step forward on a path toward securing permanent housing.

The mandated provision of emergency shelters in the County's role as the Housing Service Manager is primarily contracted to Stepping Stone who currently operate 2 emergency shelters supported with funds provided by the Housing Division:

Holiday Inn located at 545 Silvercreek Parkway North – Open 24/7 with 48 rooms
The Stepping Stone at 23 Gordon – Open 8 pm to 8 am with up to 27 beds

The 23 Gordon location originally operated as a drop-in centre and transitioned to be solely an emergency shelter during the pandemic. In consulting with Stepping Stone to increase hours at this location, County staff were informed that the organization is not in a position to extend their current operating hours due primarily to staff shortages. They also shared that because the beds are side-by-side, individuals who use this emergency shelter tend to leave shortly after they wake up in the morning so they are unlikely to remain on their beds if hours were extended until noon, especially during warm weather.

Drop-In Services – Royal City Mission Church

Royal City Mission (RCM) was officially founded in 1993 and is a registered charity. In 2005, RCM purchased 50 Quebec Street in Guelph and began offering Saturday Night Dinners in 2008. Currently, RCM offers a Worship Service on Sundays, drop-in services from Monday to Saturday (warming centre and meals), as well as many other programmes to bring people together in a safe and loving environment.

Before 2020, RCM provided drop-in services for 4 hours per day, 6 days per week. In the fall of 2020, RCM offered to increase their drop-in services from 4 hours to 8 hours per day on an emergency basis in order to fill a large gap in people needing a place to go during the pandemic. To support RCM, the Housing Division quickly provided them with a portion of one-time COVID provincial funding totaling approximately \$70,000 per year. This one-time funding allocation continued into 2021 and 2022.

As of September 2022, RCM is serving up to 150-170 meals per day with lunch and dinner being provided Monday to Friday and dinner provided on Saturdays. They also have a storage box system for those that would like to store their personal items.

Over time, RCM realized that the costs incurred to deliver the extra 4 hours surpasses the amount provided by the Housing Division. It is important to note that the provision of drop-in programmes is not mandated in the County's role as the Housing Service Manager and one-time funding allocations from the Housing Division to RCM is set to end in 2022.

In consulting with RCM to extend their current hours to 12 hours (8 am to 8 pm), RCM informed County staff that they are interested in expanding their services to 12 hours/day.

However, they need:

- a. To address current fiscal and staffing challenges to deliver the current 8 hours of services. RCM will need a total of \$224,874.00 in community funds to sustain the current 8 hours of drop-in services per day, 6 days per week.
- b. An additional commitment of \$53,848.00 in community funds will be needed to extend services for 4 hours (12 hours in total) for a period of 12 months. (The original request to increase hours for a period of 6 months is insufficient to secure staffing and to meet the needs of the community especially over the winter months.)

To note:

RCM will contribute \$204,288.00 from donations to sustain 8 hours/day (total annual budget = \$429,162.00).

RCM will contribute an additional \$45,557.00 from donations towards increasing services to 12 hours/day (total increase for addition 4 hours from 8 hours to 12 hours = \$99,405.00).

Financial Implications

Total community funds of \$278,722.00 provided with 100% municipal discretionary funds would result in \$27,872.00 for the County and \$250,850.00 for the City in 2023. The traditional shelter system City/County cost split sits at approximately 90% City and 10% County. Any changes to the cost split will be reviewed as part of the County's 2023 budget process.

Housing Services has also entered into a service contract with Stepping Stone for an additional FTE 6-month Street Outreach Worker position (September 2022 to February 2023) to be dedicated to RCM. This position will be funded within the Housing Division budget as it is a mandated service.

Total Budget 2023	Royal City Mission Funds	Community Funds
8 hours \$429,162.00	\$204,288.00	\$224,874.00
		City Portion \$ 202,387.00
		County Portion \$ 22,487.00
4 hours \$99,405.00	\$45,557.00	\$53,848.00
		City Portion \$ 48,463.00
		County Portion \$ 5,385.00
12 hours \$528,567.00	\$249,845.00	\$278,722.00
		City Portion \$ 250,850.00
		County Portion \$27,872.00

Recommendation:

That with the concurrence of the City of Guelph, the Royal City Mission be requested to commence 8:00 am – 8:00 pm drop-in service at its Quebec Street location effective January 1, 2023 as detailed in the report entitled, "Increased Drop-in Hours in Downtown Guelph", dated September 14, 2022; and,

That the County contribute \$27,872 in 100% municipal funds in 2023; and,

That the City of Guelph be requested to confirm its operating contribution of \$250,850 at its December 13, 2022 Council meeting; and,

That the extension of hours be reviewed in the Fall of 2023 by County and City staff, and considered for funding by the County and the City in 2024 budgets.

Respectfully Submitted,



Social Services Administrator