

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Community and Health Services
December 3, 2020

Report of the Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Social Services Relief Fund – Phase Two Authority for Capital Agreements

1. Recommendations

1. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to award direct purchase contracts to expedite the rapid construction of Social Services Relief Fund Phase Two funded projects, at a total cost not to exceed funding amounts.
2. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to execute all necessary documents required under the program.
3. Council approve the development of modular home units on the Housing York Inc. property located at 20898 Dalton Road in the Town of Georgina (Attachment 1).

2. Summary

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has recently approved Phase Two funding through the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) to support capital projects related to affordable, emergency and transitional housing facilities by the end of 2021. Program deadlines limit staff's ability to bring reports to Council to request approvals; therefore, this report recommends authorizing staff to undertake various activities towards maximizing the capital funding opportunities.

Key Points:

- York Region has been approved for \$1.115 million for the creation of modular housing units and building modifications through the SSRF Phase Two on property owned by Housing York Inc (HYI).
- The funds for capital work must be committed by January 31, 2021, with completion of the projects by December 31, 2021.
- Assistance from local municipalities to fast track approvals is necessary to meet funding deadlines.

- An additional \$485,000 has been allocated to Emergency Housing and Housing with Supports agencies to complete improvements that will help keep clients and staff safe.
- Under the Region's Shareholder Direction to HYI, authority is required from the Region to proceed with development or redevelopment projects on HYI property.

3. Background

Funding through the provincial Social Services Relief Fund is intended to help municipalities and social service providers expand and continue to provide a wide range of services and supports for vulnerable populations

In March 2020, the Ontario government announced the first phase of the SSRF. York Region, as the Service Manager for housing and homelessness under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, was allocated \$4,981,700, through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. York Region established a strategy in [April 2020](#) aimed at preventing and stopping the spread of COVID-19 and preventing housing loss while proactively ensuring supports and services were available to those experiencing homelessness through the pandemic. In Phase One, the Region implemented a variety of supports and services as part of the strategy. This initial funding allocation was spent by November 2020.

Social Service Managers were given planning allocations of Social Services Relief Fund Phase Two funding and were required to submit a business case to access the allocations

In August 2020, the Province announced additional funding through Phase Two of the SSRF. Municipalities were given initial planning allocations (\$8,419,414 for York Region) and required to submit a business case to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing outlining how the following provincial objectives could be met using the funds:

1. Mitigate ongoing risk for vulnerable people, especially in congregate care settings
2. Encourage longer-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post-COVID-19
3. Enhance rent assistance provided to households in rent arrears due to COVID-19

The business case detailed how the Region intends to continue the approaches developed during Phase One while increasing the focus on rapid rehousing options and helping people to retain and maintain housing. Information about the full plan for allocation of SSRF Phase Two funding is provided in a memo to Committee of the Whole for the December 3, 2020 meeting.

Social Services Relief Fund has committed \$1.6 million for major capital projects, to be completed before the end of 2021

SSRF Phase Two permitted allocation of funds to capital projects, provided those projects could be completed by the end of 2021. The total major capital allocation for the Region for SSRF Phase Two is \$1.6 million:

- \$1.115 million of this funding is intended for the construction and installation of modular housing units and for building modifications by the Region on property owned by HYI, as part of achieving the provincial objective of encouraging longer-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post COVID-19
- \$485,000 in capital is being funded directly to Emergency Housing and Housing with Supports agencies to complete improvements that will help keep clients and staff safe, consistent with the provincial objective of mitigating ongoing risk for vulnerable people, especially in congregate care settings

4. Analysis

Review of potential sites has identified the preferred location for modular homes in the Town of Georgina

Staff participated in the Region's application submission to the Province to access SSRF Phase 2 funding, to help identify opportunities where new housing could quickly be provided. A review was conducted of Regional and HYI owned properties to determine suitability to construct a minimum of four modular homes. The Sutton Youth Shelter at 20898 Dalton Road in the Town of Georgina was identified as it has sufficient land to accommodate a minimum of four modular home units, and potentially add additional units in the future. This HYI owned property was also identified as a property to redevelop in HYI's Portfolio Management Plan. Attachment 2 includes examples of modular homes.

As property management services are already conducted by Housing York Inc. on this site, the additional operating costs to manage the new housing units should be minimal. Operating costs for these affordable units are expected to be recovered through rent as well existing Social Services programs. The Salvation Army is located on the site as the Emergency Housing provider for the Region, and they will operate and support the occupants of the modular homes.

There are also building modifications in two existing facilities. A summary of the capital projects to be completed by the Region at HYI properties is provided below in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of SSRF Projects by the Region at HYI Properties

Project	Location	Funding
Renovations to covert space to two self-contained transitional units	Sutton Youth Shelter, Georgina	\$115,000
Modular Homes (minimum of four units)	Sutton Youth Shelter, Georgina	\$1,000,000
Total		\$1,115,000

Town of Georgina staff are supportive and interested in moving forward with the modular home project

An initial meeting with Town of Georgina planning staff was held as part of the review of potential sites. Assistance from the Town to fast track approvals will help ensure the units can be implemented by the provincial deadline of December 31, 2021. An engagement and communications plan will be developed for residents and the broader community, with outreach to the neighbourhood early in the process to understand the plans for the site. Staff will work collaboratively with Town of Georgina to implement.

Flexibility with contracts will help facilitate efficient delivery of these projects

Staff have engaged with modular home vendors to review their products and ability to deliver units within the required timeframe. Given the demand that the industry will experience as a result of other SSRF Phase Two recipients also looking to create modular housing, there may be limited entities reasonably capable of providing the deliverables. As a procurement of this nature could take several months, the ability to direct purchase for both the modular homes and the building modifications will assist with expedient delivery of the project to meet the program requirements by the end of 2021. Staff will endeavor to obtain the best value for any deliverables purchased.

As part of the Region’s Shareholder Direction to HYI, authority is required from the Region to proceed with development or redevelopment projects on HYI property (Section 7.3).

The programs support the Region’s Housing and Homelessness Plan, Official Plan, Housing York Inc.’s Strategic Plan and the York Region 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan

The Region’s Housing and Homelessness Plan “[Housing Solutions: A Place for Everyone](#)” includes a goal to increase the supply of affordable and rental housing. Housing York Inc.’s *Building Better Together: Housing York Inc. 2021 to 2024 Strategic Plan* includes a strategic priority to expand the housing portfolio. The SSRF directly contributes to these priorities through the provision of new permanent affordable housing stock.

This funding supports the Healthy Communities priority set by Council in York Region 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan. The Healthy Communities priority in the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan focuses on the health, safety and well-being of the Region's residents through delivering and promoting affordable housing. In addition, the Region's Official Plan directly supports the creation of new affordable housing.

5. Financial

Funding provides 100% capital contribution

The SSRF Phase Two funding provides 100% of the capital funds for the installation of a minimum of four modular housing units and building modifications for \$1.16 million.

Operating costs for these affordable units are expected to be recovered through rent as well existing Social Services programs.

6. Local Impact

The need and demand for affordable housing remains high across the Region. At the end of 2019, there were over 17,400 households on the wait list, with less than 300 new households being housed each year. These projects provide the opportunity to expedite delivery of housing initiatives for the Region.

Local municipalities are critical partners in increasing the supply of affordable housing and will be instrumental in providing timely approvals for these developments. The projects completed through this funding will provide additional and enhanced affordable, longer-term housing options to serve the Region's communities and local municipalities.

7. Conclusion

Through the SSRF Phase Two program, York Region has the opportunity to provide new affordable housing units and building modifications in 2021, with 100% of capital cost funded through the program. Flexibility with contracts will help facilitate efficient delivery of these projects, which will provide additional affordable housing options to serve the Region's communities and local municipalities.

For more information on this report, please contact Kathy Milsom, General Manager, Housing Services at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72091. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by: **Katherine Chislett**
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Approved for Submission: **Bruce Macgregor**
Chief Administrative Officer

November 20, 2020
Attachments (2)
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