

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Community and Health Services
October 3, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Community Investment Fund – Recommendations for 2020 Funding

1. Recommendations

1. Council approve the projects and initiatives under the Community Investment Fund and associated funding up to \$5,783,711 in 2020, as detailed in Attachment 1, subject to approval of the 2020 budget.
2. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to negotiate, enter into and execute service agreements with community agencies to deliver projects and initiatives under the Community Investment Fund.
3. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to adjust project-level funding, as required, pending finalization of the 2020 budget and service agreements with community agencies.

2. Summary

This report seeks Council approval for projects and initiatives to be funded in 2020 under the Community Investment Fund as detailed in Attachments 1 and 2. Both Attachments represent the Community Investment Fund recommendations for 2020 funding. Attachment 1 lists projects by Community Result Area and Attachment 2 lists projects alphabetically by the agency delivering service.

Key Points:

- Community Investment Fund invests in preventative and early intervention services that support vulnerable residents living with low and moderate income
- Funding is targeted towards community projects and initiatives that address local service gaps, complement Regional services, and support Regional priorities
- For 2020, 45 community projects and related initiatives aimed at improving health, economic independence, housing stability and social inclusion outcomes are being recommended for approval and funding of up to \$5,783,711
- Recommended projects for 2020 include 8 initiatives under the Community Health result area identified through the 2019 Call for Proposals process, and 37 previously

approved projects under Economic Independence, Housing Stability and Social Inclusion result areas

- Council approval is required at this time to initiate development of service agreements and allow sufficient planning to enable projects to commence/continue in 2020. Agreements will not be finalized until the 2020 budget is approved.

3. Background

York Region is part of a complex human services delivery system and plays a number of different roles

Delivery of human services is complex and involves multiple players. Within this system, the Region plays a number of different roles. The Region is the provincially-mandated Service System Manager for housing, homelessness community programs and children's services. The Region is also sole provider of other programs and services, such as public health, paramedic services and Ontario Works.

To support achievement of its vision of strong, caring, safe communities, the Region also invests in the development and delivery of initiatives beyond those mandated or funded by senior levels of government. These initiatives, such as the Community Investment Fund, are intended to complement or enhance other Regional programs and services, address needs specific to York Region residents, and deliver on policy priorities set by Regional Council.

The Region's Community Investment Fund leverages local initiatives to address service gaps, complement other Regional services, and advance Council priorities

Established as part of a community funding strategy approved by Council in 2002, the Community Investment Fund supports high-impact local projects that would likely not receive sufficient funding through regular programs. As the projects are developed and delivered by community agencies, the Region benefits from the agencies' familiarity with local needs, expertise with supporting specific populations, and existing service infrastructure.

The Fund targets projects that provide preventative and early intervention services for York Region residents living with low to moderate income. These services, in turn, help divert vulnerable residents from needing to access more costly services such as Ontario Works and homelessness programs.

Projects funded under the Community Investment Fund support achievement of one or more of the following four community result areas:

1. Community Health: residents are healthier and able to make healthy choices
2. Economic Independence: residents have and keep jobs matching their skills and have financial stability
3. Housing Stability: residents can live in affordable, adequate and suitable housing

4. Social Inclusion: residents are connected and able to engage in their communities

In addition to project-level funding, the Community Investment Fund provides fare assistance to help residents living with low and moderate income access basic needs including food, housing, health care, education and employment. Fare assistance is administered under the Transit Ticket Program and delivered by community agencies. The Community Investment Fund also provides a modest level of support for capacity building in the not-for-profit sector. Funded initiatives could include professional development activities to help community agencies strengthen skills to more effectively and efficiently manage projects.

Project and funding decisions are made annually through competitive selection and review processes

Projects for possible funding under the Community Investment Fund are identified through a Call for Proposals process. Proposals from community agencies are assessed based on a number of factors, such as alignment with the identified community result, demonstration of service need, and strength and soundness of the project plan. The selection process also includes an independent review of agencies' audited financial statements. Recommended projects based on available funding are submitted to Council for approval.

In [May 2018](#) Council approved an updated model for the Community Investment Fund that includes staggered intakes and three-year funding terms for projects. An intake focused on one, or more, of the four result areas occurs annually. The competitive Call for Proposals process is used to select projects for new three-year funding terms. Projects previously approved and within their multi-year funding term are still subject to a yearly review, including assessment of project results and compliance with service agreements. In this way, all projects and funding under the Community Investment Fund continue to be approved by Council annually.

As part of the transition to the new model, an intake for the Social Inclusion community result area took place in 2018 and Council approved 18 projects for a new three-year term (2019 to 2021). Council approved funding extensions for existing projects under the other three community result areas pending completion of their scheduled intake processes in 2019 (Community Health) and 2020 (Economic Independence and Housing Stability). Figure 1 illustrates the staggered intakes and three-year funding terms under the updated model.

Figure 1
Community Investment Fund Model

COMMUNITY RESULT	YEAR				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Social Inclusion	3-Year Funding Term			New 3-Year Term	
Community Health	2018 Agreement Extended	3-Year Funding Term			New 3-Year Term
Economic Independence	2018 Agreement Extended		3-Year Funding Term		
Housing Stability	2018 Agreement Extended		3-Year Funding Term		

4. Analysis

2019 Call for Proposals for Community Health projects resulted in several submissions proposing to tackle a variety of local needs and service gaps

The Call for Proposals for Community Health projects for a new three-year funding term (2020 to 2022) was released by Procurement Office on April 3, 2019 and closed on May 8, 2019. Thirty-five proposals were received from 33 community agencies requesting over \$2.6 million in 2020. Based on research and consultations with subject matter experts, mental health programs and support services, food literacy, and food share services were identified as funding priorities and informed the selection process for Community Health projects.

Eight project proposals are recommended for approval and new three-year funding terms under the Community Health result area

Of the 35 proposals submitted and assessed, the eight top-ranked projects are recommended for Council approval and three-year funding arrangements (\$753,597 funding in 2020), as detailed in Attachments 1 and 2. Through the recommended projects, targeted services will be provided to vulnerable populations, including:

- Immigrants and newcomers will have improved access to linguistically, culturally appropriate mental health services
- Youth experiencing trauma will receive counselling and mentoring supports to improve their mental health and well-being

- Residents living on a limited budget will receive knowledge on nutrition and preparing healthy food through workshops and hands-on meal preparation to promote healthy lifestyles
- Students will have improved access to a daily breakfast and snacks to support their health and education

Twenty-seven project proposals are not recommended for funding.

All thirty-seven projects previously approved under Economic Independence, Housing Stability and Social Inclusion result areas are recommended for continued funding

All thirty-seven projects previously approved under the Economic Independence, Housing Stability, and Social Inclusion result areas are recommended for continued funding of \$4,915,114 in 2020, as detailed in Attachments 1 and 2. These projects were reviewed for compliance with service agreements. Recommended funding extensions for 2020 include a modest inflationary increase of 1.0%. Examples of recommended projects for continued funding include:

- Support for residents with unique needs by delivering projects such as technical, soft skills and life management skills training intended to help program participants find and keep employment that match their skills, giving them financial stability
- Valuable preventative and early intervention services for residents experiencing and at risk of homelessness, such as mobile street outreach and legal support for tenants at risk of eviction; these services should help divert these residents from having to access more expensive emergency supports
- After-school and peer support programs to help residents connect and engage with others in their communities, decreasing feelings of isolation

Call for Proposals for new three-year funding terms under the Economic Independence and Housing Stability result areas are planned for 2020.

Recommended funding for 2020 also includes \$115,000 for transit fare assistance and capacity building for the non-profit sector.

Results achieved through recommended projects will be reported to Council, along with any proposed recommendations for continued program improvements

Results of the proposed projects under the Community Investment Fund will be presented to Council through annual reporting. In support of continuous improvement, staff will also assess the effectiveness of the new model and, more broadly, the focus areas and program structure of the Community Investment Fund and report to Council on any recommended changes. There may be opportunities to refine focus areas and funding models so they may be better aligned with, and supportive of, Regional priorities and initiatives.

Community Investment Fund supports the objectives of the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan and Vision 2051

Projects funded under the Community Investment Fund are intended to help improve the quality of life for residents living with low and moderate income by enhancing access to health services, affordable housing, and employment and social support systems. The Fund helps the Region move towards its Vision 2051 goal of being a place that fosters healthy living and is safe, accessible, inclusive and supportive. It also helps the Region achieve its 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan objective to support community health, safety and well-being.

5. Financial

The Community Investment Fund is managed within the budget of the Community and Health Services Department and is 100 per cent tax levy funded. Total funding of \$5,783,711 in 2020 as detailed in Attachments 1 and 2 is within the department's approved budget outlook, but is subject to final 2020 budget approval.

6. Local Impact

Recommended projects under the Community Investment Fund will provide services that respond to human services needs for residents living with low and moderate income in all nine local municipalities. The Fund fosters and supports partnerships with community agencies across the Region.

7. Conclusion

The Community Investment Fund supports residents living with low and moderate income in York Region by partnering with community agencies to deliver local projects that promote community health, economic independence, housing stability, and social inclusion.

A total of 45 projects and funding of approximately \$5,783,711 in 2020, as detailed in Attachments 1 and 2, is recommended for Council approval.

For more information on this report, please contact Joseph Silva, Director, Strategies and Partnerships Branch at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77201. 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

September 20, 2019
Attachments (2)
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