



ADDRESSING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY

September 19, 2023



COUNTY OF SIMCOE DESIGNATED AS HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICE MANAGER BY PROVINCE

- In 1998, the Province of Ontario designated the County of Simcoe as the Service Manager responsible for planning, funding and managing social housing, emergency shelters and homelessness services within the county as well as Barrie and Orillia.
- The costs of providing these services (net of any Provincial dollars received) are funded by the County, City of Barrie, and City of Orillia.
- As the City of Barrie is not the Service Manager, it does not have any staff who have the training or expertise in homelessness prevention services.
- The City relies on and partners with the County as the lead for these services.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION: OPTIONS TO ADDRESS CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY

- On May 17, 2023, Council adopted a resolution to address chronic homelessness in the City.
- The resolution included several actions that the Chief Administrative Officer was to consider or utilize.

REQUEST FUNDING FROM THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO:

DIRECTION:

- Additional financial support for the Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic to provide more beds and to increase the hours of operation; and for a similar organization that provides long-term counselling and treatment.

UPDATE:

- Letter from Mayor Nuttall sent to Minister Tibollo requesting additional provincial funding.
- Met with Minister Tibollo at AMO conference. Minister requested to come to Barrie and meet with City and community partners for roundtable discussion in fall 2023.



FAMILY REUNIFICATION FUND:

DIRECTION:

- Family Re-unification Fund to pay for the transportation costs and help re-unite individuals with families or support groups.
- The operation of a shuttle service for individuals released from the Central North Correctional Centre.

UPDATE:

- City provided \$20,000 to Elizabeth Fry and John Howard Society for family reunification.
- A six-month shuttle pilot in collaboration with the Ministry of Solicitor General will be launched September 2023.



COOLING/WARMING CENTRE

DIRECTION:

- Approve funding for a Cooling and Warming Centre for at-risk individuals and the provision of daily meal programs that are currently being offered on public lands and in public parks over multiple years.

UPDATE:

- The County of Simcoe and the City of Barrie partnered to provide funding to operate the first cooling centre in Barrie. The Gilbert Centre was awarded the contract for the operation of a seasonal cooling centre for unhoused residents from July – mid September 2023.
- The County has advised it is engaged with partners to secure an operator of 20 Rose St modular units as a temporary shelter during winter 2023-2024 and is securing an agreement for additional warming centre services in Barrie – both funded through a partnership between the City and County.



FOOD SECURITY

DIRECTION:

- Provide funding to the Salvation Army or a similar organization to support a lunch program.

UPDATE:

- The City will be providing funding to Salvation Army to acknowledge the lunch program that they ran during COVID and to assist with fall campaigns.



DIRECTION:

- Provide funding for food security programs through local agencies to reduce the needs associated with panhandling.

UPDATE:

- An allocation of the funds identified in the direct motion will be provided to the County of Simcoe's Social and Community Investment Fund to support local food security programs.



MOBILE OUTREACH PILOT

DIRECTION:

- Request permanent funding from the Province of Ontario and the County of Simcoe for the County of Simcoe's mobile outreach pilot program in downtown Barrie.

UPDATE:

- Pending completion of the pilot in September 2023, the County of Simcoe and City of Barrie will meet to determine if the pilot was successful.
- If deemed successful, a request will be made for permanent funding.



CITY OF BARRIE BY-LAWS

DIRECTION:

- Changes to City's By-laws related to distribution of tents, tarps food and grocery products in public spaces and reducing the time required to address camping/storage of goods in parks and public spaces

UPDATE:

- By-laws referred back to staff to modernize the language.
- By-laws are being reviewed in context of other municipalities' by-laws and language updated.





PUBLIC EDUCATION: PANHANDLING

DIRECTION:

- The placement of signs on City off-ramps to discourage panhandling or financial support thereof and encouraging donations to local social service agencies.

UPDATE:

- An education campaign will be launched in late September to encourage residents to give money to organizations instead of panhandlers.



HOUSING PLEDGE

- City Council pledged a commitment to the Province of building 23,000 homes to help meet the Provincial housing target. 17,000 units have already been approved.
- City Council at the August 16, 2023 meeting identified several parcels of City-owned land for possible sale.
- It is expected that this additional land supply could help create additional housing to help to address the housing crisis in Barrie.



Thank you