



CITY COUNCIL REPORT

Title Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding Investment Plan

Meeting Date January 23, 2024

Submitted By Darrell Mathews, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

Summary

The City currently manages Reaching Home funding from Infrastructure Canada who has recently announced an additional one-time contribution as part of a winter 2023-2024 unsheltered homelessness response.

Administration requires City Council approval, through resolution, to spend additional funding not identified in the operating budget as per Section 248 of the Municipal Government Act.

Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Approve the one-time expenditure of up to \$552,016.00 of Federal Reaching Home funding in alignment with the attached Investment Plan, as may be amended as required by Infrastructure Canada.
2. Approve allocations noted within the Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding allocations as satisfying the [May 13, 2019](#) Council CWSS Needs Assessment & Strategy resolution and allow the City Manager to approve any adjustments to allocations.

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to sign the appropriate contribution agreements, when received, subject to pending available funding from the Government of Canada.

Financial

Infrastructure Canada has allocated a maximum of \$552,016.00 of supplementary one-time Reaching Home (RH) funding to the City of Lethbridge as part of a winter unsheltered homelessness response. This one-time incremental funding must be spent by April 30th, 2024.

Due to the timeframes required to expend the funds, it will be necessary for Council to consider approving both the expenditure of the grant and the allocations to the providers.

Administration requires Council expenditure approval through resolution to spend additional funding that is not identified in the operating budget as per Section 248 of the *Municipal Government Act*.

Federal funding is being offered with no additional matching requirements so there is no net cost to the City of Lethbridge as all expenditures will be externally funded by this grant with an opportunity to have the grant offset existing taxation & grant funded positions for eligible work.

Background and Prior Decisions

- The City of Lethbridge manages federal Reaching Home funding provided to prevent and reduce homelessness in our community. The Community Social Development (CSD) department works closely with community stakeholders to identify service needs, initiate and evaluate procurement processes, seek funding recommendations from the Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy (CWSS) Advisory Committee and approval by City Council and then execute and monitor service delivery agreements.
- In [May 2019](#), upon receiving the CWSS Needs Assessment & Strategy, City Council directed Administration, via Resolution, to proceed with the creation of a community governance model. Further, Council directed dissolution of the Community Social Development and Social Housing in Action (SHIA) committees, and that City Council act as an interim decision-making body for all FCSS, OSSI, and Reaching Home funding allocations (until a community governance model can be established) which supports the requested resolution.
- As a result of this prior Resolution, the investment plan provided to Infrastructure Canada is attached for review. It should be noted that the investment plan may undergo changes pending approval from the Government of Canada. Due to the timeframes to expend the funds, any allocation adjustments made to the investment plan, once reviewed, and approved by Infrastructure Canada, will make it impracticable to resubmitted to City Council for approval. If there are adjustments to allocations as outlined in the investment plan, the overall funding amount will not exceed the maximum of \$552,016.00 specified in the recommendation. Further, Administration will make a concerted effort to adhere to the linked investment plan (Link 1), despite possible allocation adjustments. Based on this, Administration is requesting Council to consider approving the allocations noted within the Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding allocations as satisfying the May 13, 2019 Council CWSS Needs Assessment & Strategy resolution and allow the City Manager to approve any adjustments to allocations.

- Infrastructure Canada notified the City on December 22, 2023 of the one-time Reaching Home Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding of \$552,016.00. Based on this Administration has completed the following:
 - On December 28, 2023, Administration communicated with all partner agencies asking to identify services that could be looked at in alignment with the parameters of the and City procurement limitations. Due to the timelines to expend the funds a deadline for partner agencies responses was set for Jan 4, 2023.
 - Administration a draft of the Investment Plan was circulated internally for review between January 10-12, 2024.
 - Investment Plan submission deadline January 12, 2024.
 - CSD provided the investment plan to the Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy Advisory Committee (CWSS) for review on January 15, 2024 as directed by Infrastructure Canada. The Investment Plan does not require a vote of approval from the Advisory Committee due to the special nature of these funds but endorsement of the plan by the Committee is encouraged.
- Per the conditions of the one-time Reaching Home Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding requirements by Infrastructure Canada, the incremental funding must be spent by April 30th, 2024.

Engagement

CSD provided the investment plan to the Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy Advisory Committee (CWSS) for review on January 15, 2024 as directed by Infrastructure Canada. The Investment Plan does not require a vote of approval from the Advisory Committee due to the special nature of these funds but endorsement of the plan by the Committee is encouraged.

Community Social Development also engaged with currently funded providers and other key stakeholders within the homeless serving sector for feedback on the investment plan and as an opportunity to request this additional funding.

Recommendation and Option(s) Analysis

1. Council approves the one-time expenditure of federal funding (\$552,016.00) from Infrastructure Canada (Administration Recommendation).

- *Community/Citizen:* 1) increased support for organizations serving individuals experiencing homelessness through the winter months, 2) ability to maintain current service levels within existing RH-funded agreements 3) and increased access to stabilization housing and the opportunity for the City of Lethbridge to contribute to the Shelter's Winter expansion for an additional month.
 - *Risk:* Given that this funding is time-bound, there is a risk of not being able to fully expend the funds by April 30th pending approval timelines from City Council and Infrastructure Canada. City Council approving the agreement and investment plan at this stage mitigates this risk and ensures we can fully utilize the funding in our community.
 - *Implementation and Communication Plan:* With approval from City Council, Administration will execute the Contribution Agreement once received and return to Infrastructure Canada. Once Administration receives a fully executed copy and notification from Infrastructure Canada, CSD will commence delivering projects approved in the workplan by April 30th 2024.
2. Council does not approve the one-time expenditure of federal funding (\$552,016.00) from Infrastructure Canada.
- *Community/Citizen:* without approval of funding, service levels will not be augmented and there will be no cost savings from the City of Lethbridge taxation budget.
 - *Risk:* Without approval to expend, Administration will decline Infrastructure Canada's funding which will prevent the City from maintaining or expanding service levels for homeless serving organizations. Declining this allocation may prevent the City of Lethbridge from being considered for future funding opportunities through Infrastructure Canada.
 - *Implementation and Communication Plan:* Administration will decline funding from Infrastructure Canada.

Attachment(s)

1. Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding Investment Plan
2. Winter 2023-24 Unsheltered Homelessness Response Funding Allocations
3. [May 13, 2019 Lethbridge Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy Resolution](#)

Approvals

Department Director: Darrell Mathews

City Manager: Lloyd Brierley