

Staff Report



Community Services Department

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REPORT TO: Finance and Corporate Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: December 12, 2022

SUBMITTED BY: Mark Hildebrand, Director, Neighbourhood Programs and Services, 519-519-741-2200 ext. 7687

PREPARED BY: Steve Roth, Manager, Community Centres, 519-741-2200 ext. 7077

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All

DATE OF REPORT: November 14, 2022

REPORT NO.: CSD-2022-480

SUBJECT: House of Friendship – Funding Agreement

RECOMMENDATION:

That funding of \$158,621 for the services provided by House of Friendship be moved from the Tier 1 grant program and placed into the Neighbourhood Programs and services operating budget, and

That the General Manager, Community Services be authorized to execute a Funding Agreement every two years with House of Friendship to cover expenses associated with providing food programs at City of Kitchener facilities, said agreement to be subject to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

BACKGROUND:

The House of Friendship is a Waterloo Region-based non-profit organization that provides food, housing, addiction treatment and neighbourhood support to individuals and families in the region. For over a decade, the House of Friendship, in partnership with the Food Bank of Waterloo Region has received funding through the City's tiered funding program to offer several food related programs (e.g. emergency food distribution, community gardens, cooking classes) at Chandler Mowat and Kingsdale community centre. Increasing community need saw these programs expanded to 3 more community centres between 2019 and 2022, including Centreville Chicopee, Forest Heights, and Victoria Hills community centres. Prior to 2019, House of Friendship served approximately 2,500 individuals experiencing poverty during the year, out of Chandler Mowat and Kingsdale Community Centre. Since adding the other 3 community centre sites (at the City's request), this number has doubled to more than 5,000 community members.

The City of Kitchener historically has provided funding to the House of Friendship through its Tier 1 grant program. However, given that the food programs and need continue to grow in the city, staff believe it makes more sense to manage this relationship through a contracted fee for service model rather than through the grant program. To do that, staff are suggesting to move the funds, provided to the House of Friendship from the Tier 1 grant program, to the

Neighbourhood programs and services operating budget, and entering into a fee for service funding agreement.

REPORT:

The City of Kitchener provides annual operating support for foundational not-for-profit organizations and groups (like House of Friendship) that are delivering services essential to a healthy and vibrant community, through the Tier 1 grants program. To be eligible to continue receiving an annual grant, each year all Tier 1 organizations must submit information demonstrating that they continue to satisfy the requirements set out in their grant funding agreements with the City. Any increases to an organization's grant are typically limited each year to an inflationary increase. As per the council-approved Community Investment policy, additional requests over and above this are to be negotiated through the agreement process and brought forward to Council for consideration during the annual budget process. The number of additional requests brought forward to Council are very minimal.

It has been the case since 2019, due to the expansion of the food programs to more City facilities, that staff have had to negotiate additional funding requests with House of Friendship and bring forward to Council for consideration and review during budget deliberations. Neighbourhoods have come to rely on the food security programs provided by the House of Friendship out of these facilities, and it is quite possible that this partnership may grow as need in Kitchener continues to increase. Staff believe that managing this relationship through the Tier 1 grant is not effectively meeting the needs of this growing relationship, that staff overseeing the Tier 1 grants are not the most appropriate to oversee this relationship, and that a more efficient approach would be to move funding outside of the tiered grant program and entering into a fee for service funding agreement. Through this approach, House of Friendship would negotiate directly with Neighbourhood Programs and Services staff annually, who understand the needs in the community; determining the food programs required and the facilities they are required in. If there is a need for more resources to expand food programs at city facilities that would be considered as a part of the City's annual budget process. This approach eliminates the additional work required by the House of Friendship to submit a Tier 1 grant application.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no additional funding being requested. Staff are recommending to move the Tier 1 grant allocation of \$158,621 over to the Neighbourhood Programs and Services annual operating budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

APPROVED BY: Michael May, General Manager Community Services & DCAO