



Minute No. 40 as recorded in the Minutes of the meeting of the Council of The Regional Municipality of York held on March 27, 2014.

UPDATE ON EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Committee of the Whole recommends receipt of the recommendation contained in the following report dated March 26, 2014 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council authorize the Commissioner of Community and Health Services to award and execute an agreement between The Regional Municipality of York and The Governing Council of The Salvation Army of Canada to set up and operate Belinda's Place for the provision of emergency and transitional housing for women, on the following terms:
 - a. the initial term of the agreement shall commence on April 18, 2014 and expire on December 31, 2015;
 - b. total cost of the initial term shall not exceed \$1,794,528.97 plus applicable taxes;
 - c. the award shall be conditional upon the negotiation of a scope of services satisfactory to the Commissioner.
2. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to exercise four options to extend the agreement for an additional term of one year, resulting in an extended term expiring on December 31, 2019, provided that the service provider has performed the services to the satisfaction of the Commissioner and it is within the approved operating budget for this project.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks Council approval to enter into negotiations and execute an agreement with The Governing Council of The Salvation Army of Canada (The Salvation Army) as the service provider for Belinda's Place, York Region's first emergency and transitional housing facility for unattached homeless women. The selection of The Salvation Army was a result of RFP No.P-13-139 that closed on January 6, 2014.

Council approval is required under the Purchasing Bylaw because the total cost of the contract for the initial term and all potential renewal terms will exceed \$2,000,000.00 and because the total contract term will exceed five years if all renewal options are exercised.

3. BACKGROUND

The Region is currently constructing a women's-only emergency housing facility with transitional housing in Newmarket known as Belinda's Place. It is anticipated to be open early in 2015 with 28 emergency beds and 9 transitional beds. Once built, Belinda's Place will be the first emergency housing in York Region for unattached homeless women who are not eligible to stay in a Violence Against Women shelter. Belinda's Place will provide single women who are homeless with stability and supports to transition back into the community.

Service providers have identified single, unattached homeless women as having needs that are very complex. When women who are homeless make their way to a shelter, they are in crisis and require access to specialized services that can help them move out of crisis and plan the next steps to becoming self-sufficient.

The Region's new vision for homelessness guides investments and service planning for Belinda's Place

In 2012, there was a fundamental provincial shift (and Council-approved direction) to move from a primary focus on investing in crisis intervention to housing stabilization. Council adopted a new vision for emergency housing and homelessness prevention services on November 15, 2012 through Clause No. 1 of Report No. 9 of the Community and Health Services Committee, as part of significant, ongoing program reform. The new vision for homelessness services in York Region is for a better-coordinated, integrated service delivery system to prevent and address homelessness.

After consultations and an operational and best practice review in 2013, new core standards were incorporated into 2014 funding agreements with all York Region emergency housing service providers. The goal, over time, is to shift from primarily reactive services to more proactive, permanent solutions based on two key outcomes that are also part of the provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiatives funding:

1. People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing.
2. People at risk of homelessness remain housed.

The core standards combine the outcomes required under the provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiatives and best practices outlined by the Region, with the goal of ensuring that residents receive the same consistent service across York Region. The Region's new vision for homelessness and the work done in 2013 guides investments

and service planning for Belinda's Place as well as the rest of the Region's homelessness services.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The service provider for Belinda's Place will provide essential supports to women to become housed and reintegrated into the community

The service delivery model will:

- Provide clients with a safe place and basic needs (food, bedding and hygiene) to stay while they emerge from crisis.
- Assess each client with respect to their level of need for wrap-around services.
- Provide qualified staff to support each client at the intensity and duration levels they need.
- Provide situational coaching and advice to enhance life skills and community living skills, as needed.
- Support each client to find suitable, affordable long-term housing.
- Connect clients to the services and supports that they need to retain housing, including income.
- Connect clients to the community.
- Provide follow-up services after women leave emergency housing until such time as they are supported by other services and/or have achieved housing stability.
- Contribute to evidence-based decision-making by collecting and reporting information about people experiencing homelessness, the services that they use, progress made, and housing stability outcomes.

The Region released a Request for Proposal to select a service provider with the expertise and capacity to operate a women's-only shelter

A Request for Proposals (RFP) P-13-139 was posted and open to the community between November 14, 2013 and January 6, 2014. An announcement about the RFP was sent to all York Region emergency housing service providers and Violence Against Women shelter operators as well as service providers in the GTA with expertise in operating women's-only emergency housing.

Twenty proponents downloaded the documents. Upon closing on January 6, 2014, proposals were received from Blue Door Shelters, Dr. Roz's Healing Place, Project Hostel (Yellow Brick House), and The Salvation Army.

Services identified in the RFP were divided into two phases:

Phase One: Operational preparation and set-up of a women's-only emergency and transitional housing including development of programs and services, policies and procedures, partnerships and drop-in services. This phase includes hiring and training of staff, and providing input into the functionality of the building (e.g. items that directly impact the clients and the operations of programs). The total upset cost of the first phase is set at \$400,000.

Phase Two: Begins with the opening of Belinda's Place to clients. The service provider will be required to provide staffing and program delivery simultaneously for three areas: emergency housing, transitional housing and drop-in services to women in the community. The upset cost of this phase is set at a maximum \$1.4 million to fund the operating costs in 2015.

The RFP document provided a framework for evaluation

Each proposal was evaluated on the basis of all the information provided and using criteria that assessed the proponents' managerial, programmatic, administrative and financial capacity to operate Belinda's Place. Assessment criteria included:

- Knowledge of the target population
- Ability to deliver services including wrap around supports
- Operational effectiveness and ability
- Work plan
- Plan to collaborate with partners
- Reporting accountability

In addition, the audited financial statements of each proponent were sent to an independent third party for an assessment of each proponent's financial health.

It is recommended that RFP-13-139 be awarded to The Governing Council of The Salvation Army of Canada

Table 1 below shows the results of the evaluation. Proponents were required to achieve a minimum technical score of 48 points out of a possible 80 points in order to qualify their financial score for review.

Table 1
RFP -13-139 Evaluation Results

Proponent	
The Salvation Army	Passed; Total Weighted Score of 76.40 points in the amount of \$397,610.00 for Phase One and \$1,396,918.00 for Phase Two.
Blue Door Shelters	Did not pass technical evaluation
Dr. Roz's Healing Place	Did not pass technical evaluation
Yellow Brick House	Did not pass technical evaluation

The Salvation Army had the highest technical score of all four proposals and the financial submission was within budget. The Salvation Army was the only proponent to meet the minimum technical score. The other three proponents were not successful in meeting the requirements of the technical evaluation of the RFP as their technical scores did not exceed the pass/fail threshold of 48 out of 80 points which constitutes 60% of the available points. It is therefore recommended that RFP-13-139, to open and operate Belinda's Place, be awarded to The Salvation Army.

The delivery model proposed by The Salvation Army for Belinda's Place is strong and clearly demonstrates how this agency will focus on helping clients obtain and maintain housing stability, connect to community supports, and meet provincial and Regional requirements. Unattached women who are homeless will have dedicated emergency and transitional housing and supporting programs and services to meet their unique needs. As well, drop-in services will be available to women in the community who are in crisis or in need of support but do not require shelter.

The Salvation Army has had success in running similar forms of emergency housing in several other jurisdictions, and has had a contract with York Region over the past several years to run the Sutton Youth Shelter. The Sutton Youth Shelter has delivered positive outcomes and has strong regional partnerships.

Upon Council approval, staff will engage the Salvation Army in negotiations in order to:

- amend the Region's standard form emergency housing operator agreement to include a scope of services applicable to Phase One operational preparation and set up services
- define the financial terms applicable to the Region's renewal option rights based upon the criteria of satisfactory service, past performance and pricing

Link to key Council-approved plans

Belinda's Place will assist in furthering York Region's goal to respond to housing choices for people of all ages and stages as outlined in *Vision 2051*. Belinda's Place will help to address the root cause of social and health issues through partnerships, education and the delivery of wrap-around services to unattached homeless women. The services and programs that will be offered at Belinda's Place also directly support the strategic priorities of the *2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan* through the provision of a range of housing choices that meet the diverse needs of residents and by helping residents access basic needs.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Community and Health Services 2014 budget includes total annual homelessness program expenditures of approximately \$16.3 million offset by \$10.4 million in provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiatives funding. The pre-opening costs of Phase One to support the service provider with the set-up of Belinda's Place in preparation for opening were set at a maximum of \$400,000, and are included in the approved 2014 department operating budget.

The total annual cost of Phase Two was set at a maximum of \$1.4 million. These costs will be included as part of the 2015 operating budget and will be accommodated within the existing budget envelope through an offset to be identified as part of the 2015 budget process.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 operating costs are exclusive of construction costs and ongoing facility maintenance expenses for Belinda's Place.

The upset limit of \$1.8 million for shelter operating costs, previously noted on June 27, 2013 through Clause No. 1 of Report No. 2 of Regional Council, was based upon Regional knowledge and experience with shelter operations as well as research of best practices. The Salvation Army's financial proposal falls under the upset limit, and based on contracting experience for shelter services and staff's knowledge of services for those at-risk and the homeless, the suite of services offered by the Salvation Army for Belinda's Place offers good value.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Through Belinda's Place, unattached homeless women living in York Region will be supported to move out of crisis, effectively plan their next steps, and access the services they need to become self-sufficient. This is part of the Region's investment in integrated services to help residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness find and keep appropriate housing as well as integrate successfully into the community.

7. CONCLUSION

There is a need for emergency and transitional housing for homeless women in York Region to address a significant and growing gap in service to a vulnerable population.

It is recommended that Council authorize the negotiation and execution of a contract further to the award of RFP-13-139 to The Salvation Army to December 31, 2015, with an option to renew the contract for four additional, one-year periods.

For more information on this report, please contact Cordelia Abankwa, General Manager, Social Services at Extension 72150.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.