



## REPORT FOR ACTION

### **New Supports and Housing for Survivors of Human Trafficking**

**Date:** November 14, 2017  
**To:** Executive Committee  
**From:** Director, Affordable Housing Office  
General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration  
Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration  
**Wards:** To be determined

#### **SUMMARY**

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This report seeks City Council approval to participate in and allocate funds to Covenant House Toronto from the new provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund and the federal/provincial Investment in Affordable Housing Program.

Toronto is one of the principal destinations in Canada where individuals are being trafficked and sexually exploited. On any given night, there are approximately 2,000 homeless youth in Toronto vulnerable to being trafficked. To address this concern, the City in partnership with Covenant House Toronto applied to the Province to undertake new initiatives to provide supports, transitional housing and rent supplements for eligible women and girls who are survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has confirmed Toronto's Community Supports Fund allocation of \$885,000 to the City to support Covenant House in providing support services for individuals being trafficked. The City also applied for \$885,000 in capital funds to provide transitional housing and \$297,000 to provide rent supplement support for women who are survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking. An announcement with respect to the capital and rent supplement funding is anticipated shortly.

The City Anti-Human Trafficking Working Group, comprised of 21 City services, will continue to collaborate with other orders of government and several community partners to identify ways to strengthen the protection of its residents and communities from human traffickers and to determine ways how City staff can effectively respond to the needs of trafficked persons.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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**The Director, Affordable Housing Office, General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration recommend that:**

1. City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office, to enter into an administration agreement and/or related agreement(s) with the Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Community and Social Services or any other provincial entity necessary for the receipt and expenditure of funding under the Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund and the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) Program on such terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, and in a form approved by the City Solicitor.
2. City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office, in consultation with General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to undertake the Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund and IAH Program administration in accordance with the related administration agreements, including appropriate measures as the program proceeds to adjust program parameters, recipients, and year-end funding among program components as required to ensure full and effective use of available federal / provincial funds.
3. Subject to the adoption of Recommendations No. 1 and 2 above, City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office in consultation with General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to enter into agreements with the provincial government, other City divisions, community agencies, private entities and/or individuals to deliver the Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund and IAH program, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Province's guidelines and the approved allocations on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration in a form approved by the City Solicitor.
4. Subject to the adoption of Recommendation No. 3 City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office to:
  - a. negotiate, enter into, and execute on behalf of the City, as necessary, a municipal housing facility agreement, a City "Contribution Agreement", or other agreements with Covenant House Toronto satisfactory to the Director, Affordable Housing Office, subject to receipt by the City of a business case for the repair and renovation of the property or properties and a program delivery plan, to secure the financial assistance being provided and to set out the terms of the project or projects and operation of the new affordable rental housing, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director, Affordable Housing Office and in a form approved by the City Solicitor; and

b. execute, on behalf of the City, any security or financing documents or any other documents required to facilitate the funding process, including any documents required by Covenant House Toronto or its mortgagee(s) to complete construction and conventional financing and subsequent refinancing, where and when required during the term of the municipal housing facility agreement.

5. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to execute, postpone, confirm the status of, and discharge any City security documents registered as required by normal business practices.

6. City Council authorize the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and the Director, Affordable Housing Office, to make the necessary budget adjustments to the 2018 City Operating Budgets for Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and the Affordable Housing Office, to utilize and spend (net \$0) affordable housing funding from the capital and operating allocations of the IAH Program and the Anti-Human Trafficking Community Support Fund, with future year requests subject to Council approval through the annual budget process.

7. City Council authorize the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to make the necessary budget adjustments to the 2018 City Operating Budget for Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and to enter into the appropriate agreements with the provincial government, other City divisions, community agencies, private entities and/or individuals to allocate the IAH Program rent supplements.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The City of Toronto has been allocated \$885,000 through the new Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund for support services. The City anticipates receiving an additional \$885,000 through the IAH program for capital repairs and renovations and \$297,000 through the IAH program operating component for rent supplements. The new funding allocations for Toronto from these programs are outlined in the chart below.

<b>Federal/ Provincial Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund - Support Services	\$885,208
Investment in Affordable Housing - Capital Component	\$885,000 *
Investment in Affordable Housing - Rent Supplements	\$297,750 *
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,067,958</b>

\* Based on the City's application to the Province.

No new funding commitments are required from City sources to support the initiative in this report as all costs are to be recovered through provincial funding. If municipal tax relief is required, staff will bring forward a site-specific Municipal Housing Capital Facilities bylaw to Council. The net present value of tax relief will be provided in the financial implications section of this report.

This report authorizes the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and the Director, Affordable Housing Office, to make the necessary budget adjustments to the 2018 City Operating Budgets for SSHA and the AHO, to utilize and spend (net \$0) federal-provincial affordable housing funding outlined in this report. Future year requests will be processed through the annual budget process.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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The provision of safe, secure and affordable housing as recommended by this report will allow young women who are survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking to receive supports to help them stabilize their lives and move on to more permanent housing. These are particularly vulnerable individuals whose housing and support needs are not met by the regular housing market.

Lack of access to affordable housing is a barrier to lower-income people living in Toronto. This initiative addresses this barrier by providing program funding in partnership with an experienced community agency, Covenant House Toronto, to create new homes for vulnerable young women.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of March 31, April 1 and 2, 2015, Council adopted EX4.8 *Providing Property Tax Exemption for New Transitional Housing for Young Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking*. The report recommended that City Council exempt eight units from property taxes for a period of 15 years.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX4.8>

At its meeting of June 10, 11, 12, and 13, 2014, Council adopted EX42.17 *New Transitional Housing for Young Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking* that recommended up to \$0.850 million in financial assistance for the capital repairs of a TCHC property to provide transitional housing for young women who are survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.EX42.17>

At its meeting of December 16, 17 and 18, 2013, Council adopted EX36.13 *Initiatives to Address Human Trafficking* that recommended staff continue to work with all stakeholders to raise public awareness of this crime, increase services and supports for trafficked persons, and increase efforts to prevent human trafficking.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX36.13>

At its meeting of October 29, 2013, the Affordable Housing Committee requested staff to investigate creating a pilot housing initiative for young women who are survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.AH7.4>

The above request was initiated by a letter from Councillor Ana Bailão, Chair, Affordable Housing Committee, on the subject, which included a report entitled *Creating Housing For Youth Victims of Human Trafficking*.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/ah/bqrd/backgroundfile-62614.pdf>

On August 5 and 6, 2009, City Council adopted EX33.47 *Housing Opportunities Toronto: An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010-2020* to address Toronto's affordable housing challenges over 10 years. The City Council Decision is available here:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2009.EX33.47>

## COMMENTS

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In 2013, a City Anti-Human Trafficking Working Group was created by Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA) to review the issue of human trafficking in Toronto to identify ways to strengthen the protection of its residents and communities from human traffickers and to determine opportunities to improve City services for trafficked persons. Twenty-one City divisions, agencies and boards collaborated with other orders of government and community partners to implement actions that would effectively respond to the needs of trafficked persons, primarily women and children.

In October 2013, the Affordable Housing Committee considered a report prepared by the Affordable Housing Office entitled *Creating Housing For Youth Victims of Human Trafficking*. The report highlighted the importance of providing adequate housing with supports as a major factor in the recovery process of survivors of human trafficking. In 2014, working with Toronto Community Housing, the City's Affordable Housing Office (AHO) identified a vacant and run-down TCH home and the City funding needed to redevelop it. The property has since been renovated into a safe and secure transitional home for seven survivors of sexual trafficking. The home is leased to Covenant House who provide specialized services to the residents on site.

In spring 2017, the Ministry of Community and Social Services launched a new Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund to support community-based solutions to help human trafficking survivors and to increase protection for people at risk of being trafficked. On behalf of the City, SDFA led the process to complete an application for

the Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund. Three City services contributed to the process: Affordable Housing Office, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, and Toronto Police Service.

There is an urgent need to provide supports and transitional housing opportunities for individuals who have been sexually exploited and trafficked. Toronto is one of the principal destinations in Canada where this occurs. On any given night there are approximately 2,000 homeless youth in Toronto vulnerable to being trafficked.

The investments outlined in this report represent an opportunity to achieve goals set out in the City's 10-year Housing Opportunities Toronto Action Plan 2010-2020, SDFA's Initiatives to Address Human Trafficking and Ontario's Strategy to End Human Trafficking. It also aligns with City Council's direction for coordinated efforts to address human trafficking in Toronto.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has confirmed funding in the amount of \$885,000 for the City of Toronto to support Covenant House Toronto in providing support services for survivors of human trafficking.

The City of Toronto anticipates receiving a further \$885,000 to purchase and/or repair property to create new supportive housing and \$297,000 for rent supplements to support Covenant House and women who are being trafficked. Rent supplements will be distributed to eligible individuals who meet the provincial eligibility criteria.

The Affordable Housing Office is working with the City's Tenants First Project Team, Toronto Community Housing and Covenant House to identify suitable properties to repair, renovate and house survivors of human trafficking. Covenant House is also reviewing other property options. The Affordable Housing Office will work with Shelter, Support and Housing Administration and Covenant House to deliver the rent supplements.

To activate the funds outlined in this report, it is being recommended that Covenant House provide a delivery plan to the City, no later than the end of February 2018 to the satisfaction of the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the Director, Housing Stability Services, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration. The delivery plan will outline any proposed repairs and renovations, a draft operating budget demonstrating sustainability, supports, a management plan and a community engagement strategy.

### **Update on City Initiatives to Address Human Trafficking**

To date, the City has: trained Municipal Licensing & Standards (MLS) bylaw inspectors, licensing office staff, and management staff to recognize the indicators of trafficked persons, and how to handle potential human trafficking situations; facilitated Shelter, Support and Housing Administration symposiums on human trafficking for staff and agencies; funded a community agency to establish the Toronto Counter-Human Trafficking Network and create a Toronto Response Model; and, mobilized new community partnerships to prevent human trafficking and protect children and youth from sexual exploitation.

City staff continue to work with key community partners, including Indigenous agencies, to identify sustainable and long-term support services for persons that are vulnerable to being trafficked, as well as survivors of human trafficking. Obtaining information in a timely and precise manner is crucial for a person's safety, survival and long-term recovery needs. The City does not have a specialized 24/7 telephone service to provide the necessary localized information and referrals to assist trafficked persons, the public, and/or community service providers who are seeking services to refer their clients. For the past year, City staff have been working with members of the Toronto Counter-Human Trafficking Network, FindHelp/211, and the Province of Ontario to determine the best approach to pilot a helpline. The helpline will also allow the opportunity to collect adequate data related to the type of trafficking, location of caller, gender identity, age, ethnicity, and help to identify service gaps.

The City Anti-Human Trafficking Working Group members are also collaborating on several actions to better inform and prepare staff in the event they encounter potential human trafficking situations. These actions include the development of a City response protocol, the staff training module delivered in MLS will be modified to be rolled out to other relevant City Divisions, and Agencies and advocacy to the Ministry of Housing to include human trafficking as a special category for priority under the Geared-to-Income Rent Legislation.

## **CONCLUSION**

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This initiative aligns with the City's 10-year housing and homelessness plan, Housing Opportunities Toronto, an Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010-2020 that recognizes the need to create housing opportunities for vulnerable individuals and work with partners to secure affordable housing and necessary supports.

The new provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund provides the City and Covenant House the opportunity to provide safe, affordable, supportive and transitional housing for survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

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