
2023 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Housing Access and Support Services Grant Funding

Issue/Background:

- On January 13, 2023, the Budget Committee requested the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, in consultation with the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA), to prepare a briefing note on the following:
 1. Amount of Housing Access and Support Services grant funding including funding for drop-ins, homelessness prevention, and housing supports;
 2. Criteria by which Housing Access and Support Services grant applications are considered and outline specific criteria used to award grant applicants to drop-ins; and
 3. Number and amount of grants awarded for 2022/23 and number of contracts signed.
- The City of Toronto receives on-going multi-year funding from the provincial and federal governments for housing and homelessness programs and services. The Housing Access and Support Services (HASS) funding call is 100% funded by the provincial and federal governments and the City of Toronto provides and administers multi-year grant funding for non-profit, community based and Indigenous organizations to deliver a variety of programs and services to residents.
- The HASS grant funding call was launched jointly by the Housing Secretariat and SSHA divisions in the spring of 2022 to realign: grant projects with priorities outlined in the Council approved HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan (HousingTO Plan) and the 2021 SSHA Homelessness Solutions Service Plan; with changes to federal/provincial funding requirements; and to address increased costs and inflationary pressures.
- The competitive HASS grants call for applications included six funding opportunities:
 - i. Street Outreach
 - ii. Homelessness Prevention
 - iii. Housing Focused Client Supports
 - iv. Housing Access
 - v. Housing Focused System Supports
 - vi. Daytime Drop-in Programs

- A total of 97 grants totalling \$32.9 million in annual funding were awarded through the HASS call and with an effective date of October 1, 2022 to March 31, 2025 to match annual funding commitments made under federal and provincial programs in accordance with the set terms and conditions of the funding agreements each year.

Key Points:

1. Funding

- The HASS grant funding call for 2022-2025 was set at \$24.1 million on an annual basis. This was enhanced by \$8.8 million or 36.5% for a total of \$32.9 million annually to better meet the demands and needs of Toronto residents who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- The response to the HASS grant funding call demonstrated a greater need for funding for organizations than what was available.
- In light of the increasingly complex needs of people experiencing homelessness, and the increasingly rates of inflation, poverty and homelessness, it is critical that the federal and provincial governments increase their investments in HPP, RH and other programs to further assist community-based organizations which support marginalized and vulnerable individuals.
- New and enhanced investments in housing and homelessness programs (including homelessness prevention programs) are urgently needed from the federal and provincial governments for them to achieve our shared objective of making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

2. HASS Assessment Criteria

- To support applicants, City staff prepared an application guide and delivered an information session for each funding opportunity, which were developed in consultation with program and service experts. Staff also provided guides, drop-in helpdesk information sessions, and Question and Answer communications to support applicants in how to use the application forms. All material was made available on the [Housing and Homelessness Grants](#) webpage.
- Submissions were assessed through a three-phased process which included individual application reviews, a panel review meeting and a management-led award process.
- Projects that served Indigenous and Black residents were prioritized, as they aligned with the objectives of the HousingTO Action Plan, the Homelessness Solutions Service Plan, Meeting in the Middle Engagement Strategy and Action Plan, and the Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism.

- Key considerations for Daytime drop-in's included:
 - Geographic location – ensuring levels of services are provided across the City of Toronto;
 - Population-specific programming – applicants must demonstrate the ability to implement projects and provide drop-in programs for vulnerable populations and equity-deserving groups;
 - Clear and achievable outcomes and targets;
 - Clear Work Plan demonstrating an understanding of the key service delivery requirements;
 - Financial stability and oversight;
 - Experience and Capacity to work with people with histories of homelessness including those from equity deserving groups; and
 - Experience in collective impact and building community partnerships.

3. HASS Grant Awards and Annual Funding

- Summary of the Grants awarded for October 1, 2022 to March 31, 2025:

Funding Category	Grants Awarded	Annual Funding (\$M)
Street Outreach	6	2.9
Homelessness Prevention	7	2.5
Housing Focused Client Supports	36	15.5
Housing Access	12	4.0
Housing Focused System Supports	12	3.0
Daytime Drop In Services	24	5.0
TOTAL	97	32.9

- The Housing Secretariat and SSHA have awarded all 97 grants with an effective date of October 1, 2022 to March 31, 2025 and all contracts have been executed or in the process of being executed.

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