

3

SUTTON YOUTH CENTRE PROPOSAL CALL FOR OPERATOR

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, December 18, 2003, from the Commissioner of Community Services and Housing:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. A Request for Expression of Interest (REI) be issued by Supplies and Services to identify qualified agencies interested in providing emergency shelter and transitional housing services for youth at the Regionally owned facility at 20898 Dalton Road, Sutton, in the Town of Georgina.
2. The qualified agencies identified through the REI be invited to quote for the provision of shelter and transitional housing services under contract to the Region subject to the approval of Committee and Council.
3. Staff be authorized to do all things necessary to give effect thereto.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks authority for the issuance of a REI in operating an emergency shelter and transitional housing project for homeless youth at 20898 Dalton Road in Sutton, a property purchased for this purpose by the Region in partnership with the Town of Georgina.

3. BACKGROUND

Beginning in 2002, discussions were held with officials of the Town of Georgina and a wide range of community agencies about establishing a 'multi-service centre' for at risk youth in Sutton at a surplus school site located at 20898 Dalton Road.

In June 2002, Councils for the Town of Georgina and the Region authorized funds for purchasing the site from the York District Catholic School Board. It was agreed that the facility would be owned by the Region but part of the facility, namely the existing gym and library areas, would be used primarily by the Town for the operation of recreation programs for children and youth. The classroom area of the school is to be renovated by the Region for use as emergency shelter/transitional housing for male and female youth aged 16 to 25 years, and community agency office space. The Town will act as property manager for the entire facility including services such as snow plowing and grass cutting.

In December 2002, Council authorized the purchase of the site at a cost of \$250,000 (\$200,000 to be paid by the Region and \$50,000 to be paid by the Town) and the hiring of an architect to develop renovation plans for the school building. Staff were also authorized to seek out funding opportunities to pay for the cost of the renovations.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Capital funding for the renovations to the existing school building is being sought from a number of sources. Application has already been made to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) funding for the transitional housing which will take the form of up to 10 'Single Room Occupancy' (SRO) units whose occupants will have access to the services of the shelter such as meals, washroom and laundry facilities.

Funding for the shelter and office component will be sought from the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) Program when a proposal call is announced.

Once the budget and funding package are complete, a report will be presented to Committee and Council for approval.

As previously authorized, an architect will be engaged to develop plans and specifications for the required renovations of the school building. In order to ensure that these plans will be suitable for the intended uses it is advisable to identify the users early in the design process so that they may be involved in an advisory capacity.

The major user of the Region's share of the project will be the shelter/transitional housing operator. The provision of these services requires particular expertise and is not a service that would be directly offered by the Region but would be contracted out to a qualified agency. The previous reports to Committee on this project have identified that an operator would be sought at the appropriate time.

4.1 Procurement Process

A two-stage procurement process is proposed in order to identify and pre-qualify potential operators who have the expertise and experience needed to provide services to a particularly hard-to-serve client group.

An REI in providing these services will be issued by Supplies and Services. The pre-qualification process will involve evaluating the submissions based on pre-set criteria that will include both service provision, particularly for youth, and a proven track record in facility management.

Based on the evaluation results, the selected proponents from the first stage will be invited to respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP) to be issued by Supplies and Services. The RFP will detail the Region's requirements and expectations of the operator.

As well, the RFP will require proponents to provide complete program, staffing and management plans and a detailed operating budget.

The submissions from the two-stage procurement process will be reviewed and evaluated by a team consisting of staff from the Community Services and Housing Department and the Supplies and Services Division of the Finance Department at the Region as well as staff from the Town of Georgina.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Previous reports have identified the need to budget for per diems for the emergency shelter beds to be developed at this site. Accordingly a total of \$258,948 (annualized) has been included in the 2004 Business Plan and Budget for the Community Services and Housing Department. Of this amount, 80% or \$207,158 is funded by the Province of Ontario, leaving a net cost to the Region of \$51,790.

The transitional housing accommodation planned will take the form of SRO units, which will be financially self-supporting through the budgeting of market rent revenue. Rent Supplement funding, which is 100% Provincially funded, will be sought in order to make the units affordable for low-income youth.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

This project will provide much needed youth services in the Town of Georgina. The addition of shelter beds and SRO accommodation, particularly for females, will benefit the northern portion of the Region, as it will help fill a noticeable void in existing services.

7. CONCLUSION

This project contributes to the implementation of the Region's Affordable Housing Strategy by forming a close partnership with a local municipality to resolve a pressing community issue while achieving benefits for the wider Region.

The identification of a shelter operator in the early stages of project development will help ensure that the building's design will best meet the needs of the clients to be served when it is in operation.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.