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SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (SCPI) (SECOND ROUND FUNDING)

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, August 22, 2003, from the Commissioner of Community Services and Housing:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Staff be authorized to work with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), social service providers and the community, to make application for funding and update *York Region's Community Plan to Address Homelessness*, acceptable to HRDC and the Region, so that York Region may access the available new funding under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) Program.
2. The Regional Municipality of York continue the role of "Community Entity" under the SCPI Program and take all steps to assist the Federal government to administer the funds in York Region.
3. The Commissioner of Community Services and Housing be authorized to enter into such legal agreements as may be necessary to access Federal funding, subject to review by the Regional Solicitor.
4. Staff be authorized to do all things necessary to give effect thereto.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the recent announcement made by the Federal government that York Region is eligible for \$1,626,865 in SCPI Program funding as part of the second round of funding for this program.

3. BACKGROUND

In December 1999, the Government of Canada announced an investment of \$753 million over three years in a strategy to help reduce and prevent homelessness across Canada. The SCPI Program was part of this announcement. York Region received \$543,000 per annum over a three-year period to allocate this funding to the community (2002-2003). Although projects funded over this time period received an extension of time to complete their initiatives, actual funding for the program ended March 31, 2003.

In January 2001, York Region was authorized to work with HRDC and social service providers in the community to develop a Community Plan that would satisfy the requirements for the Federal SCPI Program funding.

In April 2002, the Region executed an "Entity Agreement" with the Government of Canada to administer the SCPI Program in York Region. Since then the Region, in partnership with the Federal government, has provided funding to 13 initiatives ranging from urgently needed items (sleeping bags, winter clothing), minor capital items (refrigerators, stoves), to social and outreach services (research, ID clinics) to the creation of new shelter beds.

In March 2003, the Government of Canada announced the extension of the National Homelessness Initiatives (NHI).

In July 2003, York Region received notification that the total allocation of funding to the Region over the next three years will be \$1,626,865 or approximately \$543,000 per annum (2003-04 to 2005-06). This brings the total allocation to the community to \$3,253,730. The release of this funding to the community is contingent upon an update of the Community Plan.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Over the next three years, the Government of Canada expects to strengthen and broaden its partnership efforts to engage more Federal departments and agencies, the business community, unions and other private and public sector interests in helping communities address the needs of homeless people.

The goal of this program is to help communities build capacity, support and co-ordination to ensure that their efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness are more sustainable.

SCPI communities, such as York Region, are required to update their Community Plan before receiving funding.

The Federal government anticipates that, in identifying continuing community needs, many communities will shift efforts from emergency needs to more proactive supports for homeless people, such as transitional housing and services to help homeless individuals move towards self-sufficiency.

4.1 Relationship to Vision 2026

Participation in the SCPI Program supports the goals of *Vision 2026*, specifically Goal 5 (Housing Choices for our Residents) and the action area that identifies the requirement to address homelessness and development of homelessness prevention programs.

The SCPI Program also responds to the needs of the residents (Goal 4 of the plan) by sponsoring programs and services that attempt to meet the basic shelter needs of the community.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Government of Canada funds the SCPI Program. Communities are required to match the federal funding on a dollar for dollar basis. York Region, through its current spending on homelessness initiatives exceeds the proposed Federal government contribution to the Region, ensuring that no additional municipal funding is required to meet minimum program requirements. Regional programs include Domiciliary Hostels, Emergency Shelters, Regional Homelessness Initiatives, which are jointly funded by the Province of Ontario and York Region at an approximate annual cost of \$4,700,000. The following table provides the Homelessness Budget for 2003.

Table 1
Matching Contributions

Federal	Matching Contributions	From Other Sources
SCPI	Provincial	Regional
\$860,000	\$3,600,000	\$1,150,000

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Participation in the SCPI Program supports the Region's commitment to strengthening the quality of life in our communities and to helping a segment of its population break the cycle of poverty.

7. CONCLUSION

The Region's continued participation in the SCPI program would be consistent with the recommendation of the Homelessness Task Force and the *York Region's Community Plan to Address Homelessness*. The Region's participation will confirm for the community that the Region is committed to working with senior levels of government to prevent and reduce homelessness.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.