SUBJECT: Crime Prevention Community Pilot - BOH08002 (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

a) That the Board of Health approve the transfer of $100,000 from the Remedial Measures cost-recovery budget to a designated community agency to implement the Crime Prevention Pilot; and

b) That the Medical Officer of Health be authorized to execute an agreement between the City and the designated community agency, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor, to implement the above recommendation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

More than 1600 individuals in Hamilton are charged with drug offences each year and one-quarter of persons on probation are individuals with substance use problems. Many of these individuals never get the direct help for their substance use problems due to lack of specific addictions programs available to them during their court process. Alcohol, Drug & Gambling Services (ADGS) has surplus funds that have accrued over several years in the Remedial Measures cost-recovery budget ($100,000). Public Health Services has identified that this could be allocated to finance a one year pilot project with the intent to demonstrate the effectiveness of such a prevention model in order to secure more stable funding. The proposed pilot project involves a designated community partner agency hiring addiction specialists to intervene with individuals charged with a
Substance use related crime (non-violent offences) during their court process. The target population is individuals 18 years and over who have been charged with a non-violent crime related to substance use and who demonstrate the willingness to engage in some form of rehabilitation for the problems they are experiencing. It is estimated that over 200 individuals will receive direct intervention during this pilot project.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2004, in response to a stabbing incident in the downtown core, a taskforce was formed which subsequently became known as Substance Use Related Crime in Hamilton (SURCH). This taskforce was initially made up mostly of City of Hamilton employees, including community services, police services and addiction services but eventually drew on community stakeholders such as the Law Association, Elizabeth Fry Society, John Howard Society, Social Planning and Research Council and others. More than 1600 individuals in Hamilton are charged with drug offences each year and one-quarter of persons on probation are individuals with substance use problems. Many of these individuals never get the direct help for their substance use problems due to lack of specific addictions programs available to them during their court process. The literature suggests that intervention during the court process for those whose substance use is related to their crime helps to reduce the chances that an individual will repeat that behaviour and re-offend. The taskforce identified that there was and still is a lack of treatment services for individuals who are charged with a substance use related crime.

SURCH explored various existing intervention models but none were felt to have the capacity to address the identified needs. It was determined that a "made in Hamilton Treatment Model" would be more economical and more easily adopted in the justice system. The model recommended by the SURCH taskforce for this project, following the best existing evidence-based practices, would give individuals who do not present with an underlying severe mental health issue the opportunity of intervention while in the justice system. These individuals are underserved in the system now. The specific goal of the model is to develop a crime prevention initiative in order to reduce continued criminal behaviour related to drugs. Other municipalities are engaged in similar projects such as the Durham Drug Treatment Court program.

The SURCH taskforce has been seeking funding for the pilot project since 2004 and have been unsuccessful despite submitting several funding proposals to crime prevention initiatives. Submission for further funding from crime prevention sources is ongoing. Alcohol, Drug & Gambling Services (ADGS) has surplus funds that have accrued over several years in the Remedial Measures cost-recovery budget ($100,000). Public Health Services has identified that this could be allocated to finance a one year pilot project with the intent to further demonstrate the effectiveness of such a prevention model in order to secure more stable funding. The funding will be flowed to a designated community agency determined by the taskforce and in keeping with existing City purchasing policies.

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individuals 18 years and over who have been charged with a non-violent crime related to substance use and who demonstrate the willingness to engage in some form of rehabilitation for the problems they are experiencing. It is estimated that over 200 individuals will receive direct intervention during this pilot project.

Referrals to the project will be accepted from defense lawyers, crown attorneys, federal prosecutors and judges in the criminal justice system. The addiction specialists will provide assessments regarding the clients’ substance use and provide recommendations for appropriate treatment. The addiction specialists will also offer individual client support when underlying issues are identified and give options of case management to help them reduce their drug use, stabilize their physical and mental health, commence treatment for drug dependency, cease criminal activity and identify further needs and goals for treatment. This intervention will enhance the chances of rehabilitation from drug use for this population. SURCH will take on the role and responsibility of Advisory Committee to provide oversight to this project.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

This initiative will give the community an opportunity to provide services during the pilot that are currently not readily available to this population. There is ongoing work being done to find additional resources for these services. The pilot has a component of research to determine outcome measures that would provide the evidence necessary to apply for further sustainable funding once the pilot has completed.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

The Substance Use Related Crime in Hamilton taskforce could continue to seek funding for the pilot project through other grant applications but given the lack of success to date this population would likely remain under-served.

The surplus funds could be used to temporarily increase staff and to enhance the existing services within ADGS. However, waiting lists for ADGS programs are short and the pilot helps to address the most significant unmet need within the addictions area in Hamilton.

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

With careful management of the Remedial Measures (Back on Track) program, a cost-recovery program provided through Alcohol, Drug & Gambling Services (ADGS), surplus funds have accrued over several years in this cost-recovery budget ($100,000). Public Health Services has identified that this could be allocated to finance the one year pilot project.
POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

This service agreement will be implemented in accordance to City of Hamilton Purchasing and Finance & Administration policies. Legal Services and Risk Management will be consulted regarding the development of the Service Agreement.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Finance & Admin were consulted to confirm the amount of funding in the cost-recovery budget. Extensive consultation has occurred with police and other community partners including the Law Association, Elizabeth Fry Society, John Howard Society, and the Social Planning and Research Council.

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

- Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes ☐ No
- Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. ☐ Yes ☑ No
- Economic Well-Being is enhanced. ☐ Yes ☑ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? ☐ Yes ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? ☑ Yes ☐ No