




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members of City Council
DATE:	September 11, 2025
SUBJECT:	Interim Housing Assistance Program: Funding Update
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Michelle Baird Director, Housing Services Division Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

The purpose of this update is to provide information about confirmed funding awarded to the City of Hamilton through the Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

INFORMATION

On August 1, 2025, the City of Hamilton was awarded \$12.34M in IHAP funding. This represents approximately 88% of the City's request for 2025/26 and 75% for 2026/27. The program requires municipal cost-sharing, with the City contributing 5% in 2025/26 and 25% in 2026/27.

This funding supports 85 dedicated beds, case management, a portion of City shelter costs, and a capital contribution. Services are delivered through Good Shepherd Bakhita House (10 beds), Wesley (75 beds), and Refuge Newcomer Health (coordination hub and supports). The program has been highly effective, with participants moving into permanent housing within an average of three months and pressures on the emergency shelter system significantly reduced.

This investment aligns with the City's April 2025 proposal, outlined in Report HSC24016(a) - Asylum-Claimants Transitional Housing Proposal, and significantly offsets costs already approved by Council for 2025 and identified for 2026/27 budget consideration. The City has signed back the agreement with IRCC. IHAP is scheduled to end after March 2027, and staff continue to work with other municipalities to monitor developments and assess potential impacts beyond the current funding period.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Background

Since early 2023, Hamilton has experienced an increase in refugee and asylum-seeking households requiring emergency shelter. At its peak in February 2024, up to 35% of shelter spaces were occupied by this population. During this time, IHAP operated on a cost-recovery basis, with Hamilton receiving \$5.2M for 2023 and \$3M for 2024 in partial reimbursement.

To address growing pressures, Council approved several measures including: 40 beds and 100 caseload spaces in April 2024, an additional 45 beds in September 2024, and continuation of 85 beds with case management supports in April 2025. These approvals anticipated eventual federal support through IHAP.

In late 2024, IRCC announced a shift to a granting model with required municipal cost-matching. Hamilton submitted a proposal in January 2025 and was awarded funding in August 2025.

Since programs launched in June 2024, over 240 individuals have been permanently housed and more than 325 people, including family members, have received case management supports. The share of asylum seekers in Hamilton's shelter system has declined from approximately 35% in early 2024 to 7% by July 2025. The program has been recognized for its effectiveness in reducing pressures on the local emergency shelter system and supporting rapid transitions to permanent housing.

Next Steps

This federal investment will reduce reliance on reserves for 2025 and ease anticipated budget pressures in 2026, with final impacts to be determined through the multi-year budget process. Staff will continue to monitor program outcomes and engage with federal and municipal partners to prioritize the need for longer-term funding solutions beyond the current confirmed duration of the IHAP program.

For more information, please contact Michelle Baird, Director, Housing Services Division, at Michelle.Baird@hamilton.ca or 905-546-2424 ext.4860.

Previous Reports Submitted

- [Asylum-Claimants Transitional Housing Proposal \(HSC24016\(a\)\)](#) – April 9, 2025, General Issues Committee
- [Reducing Homelessness and Managing Encampments \(HSC24027\(b\)\)](#) – September 25, 2024, General Issues Committee
- [Asylum-Claimants Transitional Housing Proposal \(HSC24016\)](#) – April 3, 2024, General Issues Committee
- [Interim Housing Assistance Program \(IHAP\) \(HSC24003\)](#) – January 17, 2024, General Issues Committee