INFORMATION UPDATE

TO: Mayor and Members
City Council

DATE: February 12, 2020

SUBJECT: Canada–Ontario Housing Benefit (City Wide)

WARD(S) AFFECTED: City Wide

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Johnson
General Manager
Healthy and Safe Communities Department

SIGNATURE:

INFORMATION

The Government of Canada is investing $2 B into housing stability solutions through the Canada–Ontario Housing Benefit, with Provinces cost-matching for a total national investment of $4 B. From April 2020 to March 2029, the Canada–Ontario Housing Benefit will provide funding through portable housing benefits directly to households in need of housing affordability and who are on or eligible for a social housing waitlist. This program is modelled after and replaces the Survivors of Violence Portable Housing Benefit and will provide assistance at levels similar to Rent-Geared-to-Income.

The Province has allocated $1.15 M for 2020-2021 to the City of Hamilton. The City will not deliver the program directly but will refer applicants to the Province who will determine eligibility and make payments to participants. The City of Hamilton will receive administrative funding based on the number of approved applications. Applying the Province’s average annual benefit estimation of $3,400/year/household, Hamilton’s allocation translates into approximately 320-350 portable housing benefits for a duration of nine years.

In order to maximize Hamilton’s allocation and mitigate risks related to Hamilton’s portion being reallocated by the Province to other regions or municipalities, the Housing Services Division is developing a strategy that will ensure portable housing benefits are assigned to eligible households who meet both provincial and local priorities within 60 days of the program’s start on April 1, 2020. Staff will bring the strategy to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in March for discussion and approval.

Should you require further information please contact Edward John, Director, Housing Services Division at 905-546-2424 ext. 4860 or via email at ejohn@hamilton.ca.
APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None