



Attachment 1

*Crises Response Pilot Project –
Independent Evaluation Report to Council
dated April 14, 2025*

REPORT

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: April 14, 2025

From: Lisa Spitale,
Chief Administrative Officer
File: 05.1035.10

Item #: 2025-110

Subject: Crises Response Pilot Project – Independent Evaluation

RECOMMENDATION

That the report titled “Crises Response Pilot Project – Independent Evaluations” from the Chief Administrative Officer dated April 14, 2025, be received for information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community regarding the independent evaluation of the Crises Response Pilot Project.

SUMMARY

A component of the Crises Response Pilot Project is to retain an independent evaluator. The purpose of independent evaluation is to: assess the design of the CRPP to effectively meet the intended outcomes; to measure the progress and outcomes over time; to identify unmet needs, gaps and constraints that limit the ability of the CRPP to address the three interrelated crises; to assess the extent to which the CRPP is reaching its intended populations; and to examine the CRPP as a means for effective advocacy and policy development.

Douglas College has been retained to undertake an independent evaluation of the pilot project and report on the findings. Dr. Anne Tseng is leading the evaluation for Douglas College. Dr. Tseng will be attending the April 14th Council Meeting and will be present the methodology to Council.

DISCUSSION

The City has engaged Douglas College to undertake an evaluation of the pilot project and report on the findings. The evaluation is intended to assess the outcomes of the project, inform refinements to the project and assess the transferability of the project to other jurisdictions to assess the three inter-related crises of homelessness, mental health and substance use. Evaluation reports will be produced for August 2025 and at the end of the project at August 2026. The evaluations are to examine the outcomes, inform project refinements and assess the portability of the project to other jurisdictions experiencing similar crises. Relevant information from evaluations during the project will be shared as they are available to help promptly inform refinements to the project as lessons are learned.

Data will be assessed from a variety of sources including from each of the CRPPs three teams, the Crises Response Team (CRT), the Operations Support Team (OST) and the Policy and Advocacy Team. Other sources of data include residents, businesses, City staff, people with lived and living experiences, community partners, the point-in-time homelessness count, facilities and shelter records, intake polls narrative case studies and independent evaluator observational data.

The evaluation will be independent of those directing or working on the project and will be undertaken by Douglas College, an external third party. Using an external and independent party will ensure an objective and unbiased assessment of the project and will allow for a comprehensive analysis without being influenced by internal biases, ultimately helping to improve decision-making and accountability by offering credible insights and recommendations for improvement. The independent third party will guide evaluation metrics, evaluation methodology and perform the analysis.

The goals of the evaluation are:

- to assess the design of the CRPP to effectively meet the intended outcomes;
- to measure the progress and outcomes over time;
- to identify unmet needs, gaps and constraints that limit the ability of the CRPP to address the three interrelated crises;
- to assess the extent to which the CRPP is reaching its intended populations; and
- to examine the CRPP as a means for effective advocacy and policy development.

Research questions to be addressed by the evaluator include:

- Does the progress and work of the CRPP reflect culturally sensitive and trauma-informed approach?
- To what extent does the CRPP develop collaborative relationships to meet its goals related to service delivery, community building and advocacy?
- How does the CRPP respond to and account for concerns expressed by community partners and members?

- Since the implementation of the CRPP what services and supports have been delivered?
- Since the implementation of the CRPP, what work has been carried out by the OST and at what magnitude?
- What are the constraints that limit the ability of the outreach team to deliver services?
- What are the constraints that limit the ability of the operations support team to carry out their work?
- To what extent is the CRPP meeting the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, mental illness and/or substance use?
- What are the perceptions of community members, including residents and businesses, regarding the CRPP and the project's effectiveness?
- Who is accessing the services provided by the Crises Response Team?
- Since the launch of the CRPP, what facilities or resources have been materialized or are in development?

Data types for the evaluation will be diverse and will be comprised of quantitative measurements, qualitative summaries, surveys and polls, engagement sessions, narrative case studies, interviews and the independent evaluator's observations.

Sources for obtaining the data will be broad to account for all interest holders including from each of the CRPPs three teams, the CRT, the OST and the Policy and Advocacy Team. Other sources of data include residents, businesses, City staff, people with lived and living experiences, community partners, the point-in-time homelessness count, facilities records and shelter records. Attachment A provides a table that outlines the data used in the evaluation.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The CRPP is a high priority Council initiative which involves several departments working on the three inter-departmental teams. The independent evaluation will inform the CRPP, and thus the work plans of several City departments.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Data to evaluate the Crises Response Pilot Project

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Brad Davie, Deputy Fire Chief

This report was reviewed by:
John Stark, Manager, Social Planning

Lisa Leblanc, Director, Engineering and Deputy CAO
Jackie Teed, Director, Planning and Development

This report was approved by:
Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer