



HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM INVESTMENT PLAN

May 2025



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BACKGROUND



Introduced in 2022, the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) is a provincially funded program administered through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), designed to assist Service Managers in preventing, addressing, and reducing homelessness, including chronic homelessness.

In support of this objective, HPP provides funding aligned with three key goals:

- 1 Prevent homelessness: People at risk of homelessness remain housed and have connections to support services.
- 2 Address homelessness: People who are homeless and chronically homeless obtain and retain housing and support services.
- 3 Reduce chronic homelessness: Reduction in chronic homelessness.

HISTORICAL COMMUNITY INVESTMENT REVIEW

In September 2022, Committee and Council approved the application process for allocating community funding (HPP and Municipal Community Grants) as identified in the Community Investment Review (CIR). The CIR established the priorities by which decisions on the allocation of funding to various support programs are to be made. The CIR was initiated in response to increasing demands for funding from community organizations and the limited funding available.

Due to the extensive needs of people in our communities for food, transportation, shelter, and transitional housing supports, funding has historically been focused on general poverty-reduction strategies and homelessness services. Given the dire lack of homelessness funding available, longer term preventative actions need to be funded. As the Service Manager, we need to focus planning and funding toward homelessness solutions, not just supports.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE - SHIFTING OUR FOCUS

As our requests for funding support increase, Hastings County must focus and streamline investment into the areas that provide evidence-based need and results. Recognizing that all of the programs that deliver services to our community are providing important supports, allocation recommendations are based on funding source guidelines and greatest need.

Staff continue to explore innovative new strategies to fill gaps in required resources and funding through program coordination and implementation.

To support critical decision making, Hastings County strives to increasingly improve data collection and quality which provides important information regarding the current state of homelessness as well as indicates patterns and trends. Sources of data include the Point-in-Time Count Enumeration and Survey, By-Name Data

(BND), Coordinated Access engagement, Warming Centre statistics, and Living Experience Interviews. Hastings County also gains important information through community agency outcome reporting.

Total homelessness and chronic homelessness counts in Hastings County are steadily increasing. Data indicates total homelessness has doubled from March 2024 (146 people) to March 2025 (291 people) and chronic homelessness has increased by 32%. To date, chronic homelessness is high in Hastings County, more than 45% of people on BND are experiencing chronic homelessness. **This alarming rise in homelessness requires a shift in focus.** The current priority need is to work towards reducing homelessness, rather than general poverty-reduction strategies. While poverty-reduction is an important goal, data shows that action must be taken to reduce and prevent homelessness utilizing the financial supports being provided for this specific targeted issue.

Specific data outcomes indicate a need to address homelessness in the following target populations: youth, single individuals, and those experiencing mental health and substance use challenges. This is in keeping with our previous funding decisions related to Grace Inn Shelter, St. Leonard's Home and John Howard Society. **This trio of partnerships remains essential in reducing homelessness, including chronic homelessness recognizing their critical support.**

Data reveals that more than 35% of people experiencing homelessness first became homeless as a youth. Approximately 30% of people were engaged with the child protection or foster care system. Youth homelessness (16-24 years of age) was 9% of total homelessness enumerated in 2024. This data speaks to the need for youth prevention, emergency, and long-term programs.

In terms of family composition, the majority of people experiencing homelessness are single individuals over the age of 25 years. At least 80% of the homeless population indicate they are single, speaking to the need for small, single-occupancy solutions.

Individuals experiencing homelessness cite mental health and substance use as significant barriers to living the life they want. Mental health and addictions were the most frequently identified challenges and common reasons for homelessness. People experiencing homelessness regularly indicate they need supports to effectively address these challenges speaking to the need for treatment programming.

In 2024-25 requests from the community totalled over \$4.2 million, exceeding available funding by \$1.7 million. Funding shortfalls are a constant reality, which calls for innovative responses. Therefore, Hastings County has partnered with Loyalist College Centre for Healthy Communities to provide an asset map, including investigating alternative sources of funding that could be accessed by community partners.

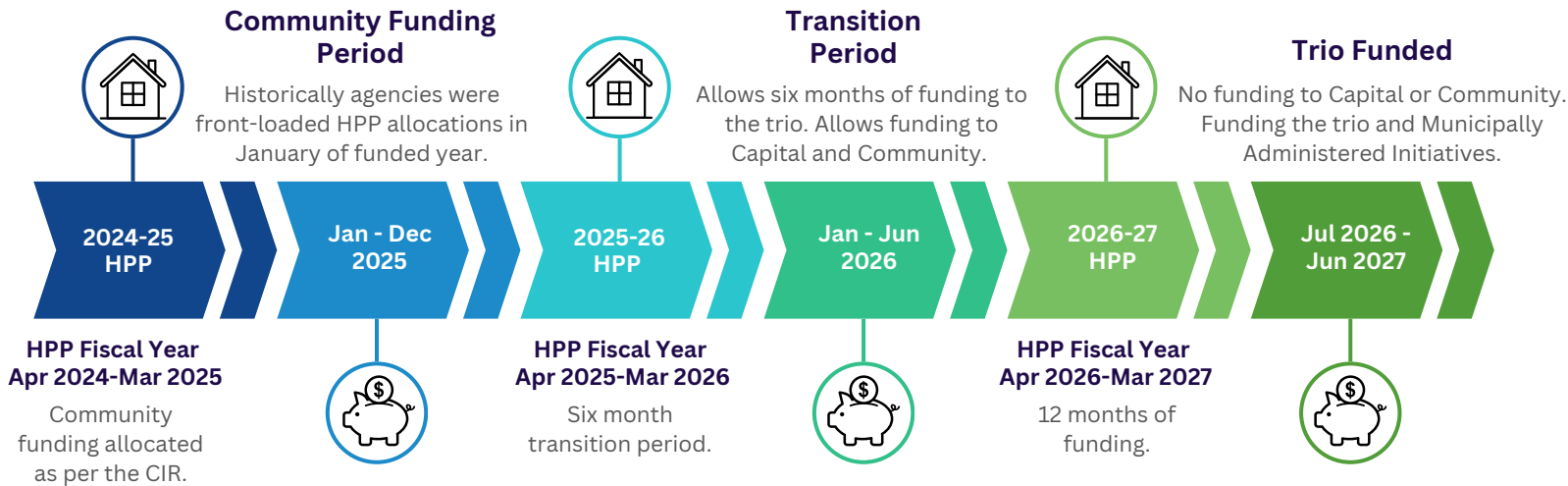


SUMMARY

Hastings County recognizes the important role that we play as stewards of providing accessible, sustainable and fiscally responsible programming that serves individuals and families experiencing homelessness, including chronic homelessness. Ensuring there are varying services across the homelessness serving continuum remains a priority as well as ensuring that funding allocations are made in alignment with the guidelines set by provincial and federal governments.

Therefore, this report serves as a guiding framework to ensure ongoing sustainable funding decisions to alleviate uncertainty for critical community programs including shelters and integrated hub models.

COMMUNITY FUNDING ALLOCATION REVIEW



Innovative solutions as detailed below, are proposed to address the important supports provided by other community agencies that are being impacted by the funding shortfall.

2024-25 HPP FUNDING YEAR

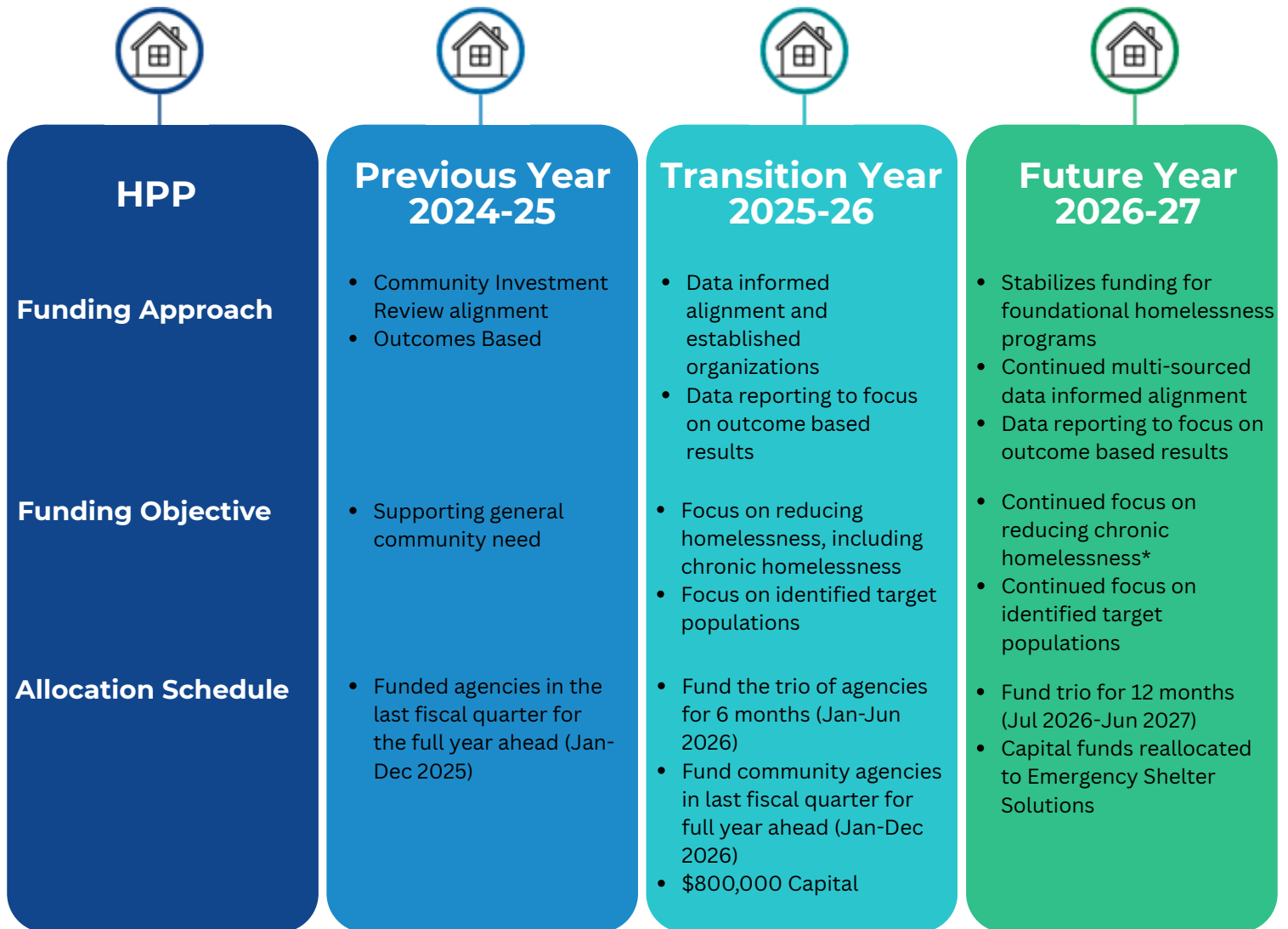
During the 2024-25 HPP funding year, allocations were approved in alignment with the CIR. Funding requests were over-subscribed. All approved agencies were funded from January 2025 until December 2025.

2025-26 HPP TRANSITION YEAR

Current homelessness funding to Hastings County does not meet the demand: HPP continues to be oversubscribed. In an effort to transition to a homelessness reduction focused funding approach and to allow for an adjustment period for community agencies, staff recommend using the 2025-26 funding year as a transition period.

Six months of funding the trio (Grace Inn Shelter, St. Leonard's Home and the John Howard Society) allows for a final community call-out and capital application for 2026.

This new funding allocation model allows for the trio to maintain uninterrupted funding thus ensuring no service delivery lapse as well as facilitating a transition year for the community agencies who historically apply for HPP to seek out and apply for more appropriate funding streams.



*50% reduction in chronic homelessness by 2027-28 required through Reaching Home

A final call-out for community funding applications in the amount of \$595,751 and a capital funding application in the amount of \$800,000 will be issued in the summer of 2025. Operational and financial reviews of funded organizations will occur to ensure accountability, outcome measurement, and alignment with HPP objectives. Staff will also provide messaging to currently funded agencies notifying them of the final call-out for HPP community funding. All municipally administered initiatives will continue as preventative supports to homelessness.

To concentrate funding on homelessness reduction, staff recommend allocating funds to Grace Inn Shelter and St. Leonard's Community Support, Prevention, and Residential Services for emergency shelter and supported transitional housing. Staff also recommend funding the John Howard Society Daytime Drop-In for homelessness prevention and support services, foundational services that are vital to the homelessness system within Hastings County and are a part of the operational model year over year for the Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hub (Hart Hub).

Staff recommend 2025-26 and 2026-27 HPP allocations as per the following chart:

PROGRAM	HPP 2025/26	HPP 2026/27
Grace Inn Shelter	\$584,166 (6 Months)	\$1,168,332 (12 Months)
St. Leonard's Home	\$517,500 (6 Months)	\$1,035,000 (12 Months)
John Howard Society	\$424,360 (6 Months)	\$848,720 (12 Months)
Community Call-Out	\$595,751 (Jan-Dec 2026)	\$0
Capital Call-Out	\$800,000	\$0
Food Redistribution Centre	\$500,000 (one-time)	\$0
Municipally Administered Initiatives	\$2,713,175	\$3,082,900
Administrative Allocation	\$307,648	\$307,648
Total	\$6,442,600	\$6,442,600

**Projected based on expected 2026-27 HPP allocation from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.*

The trio is currently funded until December 2025 by 2024-25 HPP. The transition year would entail funding the trio from the last fiscal quarter of 2025-26 HPP for six months (Jan 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026). A new funding allocation from the 2026-2027 HPP (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) will allow for uninterrupted flow of funding. **Staff recommend the identified trio agencies be funded ongoing year over year through the HPP funding allocation.**

Should any additional homelessness funding be allocated to an agency of the Trio from any other source, which results in an overfunding of their program, HPP funds should be returned to Hastings County. Returned funds will be allocated to housing assistance programs that prevent and support reductions in homelessness including chronic homelessness. Housing Assistance includes long term rent supplements and housing allowance programs to create more sustainable housing options.

WARMING CENTRES

Warming Centres are designed to offer a safe and warm environment for those experiencing homelessness during the winter months. Unlike shelters, warming centres do not provide accommodations but offer nightly support during the coldest months of the year. The primary purpose of warming centres is to prevent injury and death from exposure to the elements. Hastings County jointly operates warming centres in the Town of Bancroft, the City of Belleville and the City of Quinte West.

Historically, warming centres operated on a temperature threshold model of -10 degrees. In 2022 operations shifted to a nightly model commencing December 15th. In the 2023-24 and 2024-25 seasons the warming centre program opened earlier on December 1st as directed by Committee and Council.

Recognizing the key support for warming centres in the established communities, **staff recommend warming centres operate from December 1 to March 31 and are funded out of the Municipally Administered Initiatives through HPP.**



FOOD REDISTRIBUTION CENTRE (ONE-TIME START UP COSTS)

Food insecurity continues to be a significant community need as a poverty-reduction strategy. In the last ten years, Hastings County has issued over \$2.5 million to food insecurity programs. **In response to increased community calls for funding, and in recognition of the importance of broader social determinants of health, staff recommend funding the development of a County Wide Food Redistribution Centre (FRC), designed to connect and strengthen food programs across Hastings County.** Staff are recommending a community application process to ensure wide-reaching impact, efficient service coordination, and future program sustainability. The recommended one-time allocation to initiate the FRC is \$500,000 with a self-sustaining operational requirement. The FRC would receive all community requests for food programs once operational, which would allow for equitable distribution County wide. This would address the need for food programs, while allowing homelessness funding to focus on homelessness solutions. The transition period will allow previously funded community agencies providing food programs to apply for HPP funding in the final call out while the FRC becomes operational to avoid a gap in service. During this 18-month transition those agencies will be supported in researching and applying for alternative funding envelopes in an effort to become self-sustaining programs.



MUNICIPALLY ADMINISTERED INITIATIVES

Municipally Administered Initiatives are funded through the Homelessness Prevention Program and are delivered internally by Hastings County. These initiatives are comprised of: Warming Centres, After-Hours Homelessness Service, Rent Arrears and Deposits, Emergency Minor Home Repairs, Hoarding and Infestation, the Community Response Program, Rent Supplements funding, Home for Good Operations, Enumeration, Grocery Cards, Emergency Motel Stays, HIFIS Hosting and Virtual Coordinated Access, and the Quinte West Transitional Units.

2026-27 HPP FUNDING YEAR

In the 2026-27 HPP funding year staff plan to allocate 12 months of funding to the trio beginning in July 2026. There will be no application process. Additionally, all capital funds will be reallocated to maintain existing homelessness focused programming; the current HPP allocation does not have capacity to fund any new operational cost requests that ultimately result after a capital project is complete.

Therefore, in the 2026-27 funding year the trio will be the only community agencies funded. Recognizing that HPP can no longer fund agencies outside of the trio, the Coordinated Access System provides the opportunity for community collaboration, wrap-around supports and solutions, and to streamline resources to meet client needs. Participating agencies meet regularly to case manage and explore opportunities for housing solutions and poverty reduction strategies using a common database to support individuals in a no wrong door and housing first approach. All municipally administered initiatives will continue as preventative supports to homelessness.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the entirety of the information outlined in this executive summary, staff recommend the following:

- 1 Direct staff to issue an application to community for 2026 Community Funding (\$595,751)
- 2 Direct staff to issue an application to community for 2026 Capital Funding (\$800,000)
- 3 Direct staff to issue an application to community for a Food Redistribution Centre (\$500,000)
- 4 Direct staff to issue a letter to currently funded agencies outlining the final call-out for HPP community funding
- 5 Fund ongoing Warming Centre operations commencing December 1 and conclude March 31 each year.
- 6 That Grace Inn Shelter, St. Leonard's Home, and the John Howard Society be funded year over year without an application process.
- 7 Direct staff to allocate any returned HPP funds to Housing Assistance programs that prevent and support reductions in homelessness, including chronic homelessness.