



Administrative Report

Office of the Manager, Community Services

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Jeanie Diamond-Francis
Manager, Community Services

Date: Wednesday, October 18, 2023

Subject: Building Bridges Erie Shores Housing Project

Report #: 2023-1018-LCS-R26-JDF

Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Report (the "**Report**") is to seek County Council support to pre-commit the allocation of capital funding to the Building Bridges Erie Shores ("The Bridge") fourth phase housing project.

Background

The Bridge is a not for profit organization that was established in 2018 when they opened their Youth Resource Centre. They provide a multitude of services and support to youth aged 14-24.

In 2020, they expanded their program to include a supportive housing facility. This congregate housing program is supported by the County of Essex through its Residential Services Homes Program and provides safe and affordable supportive housing to ten (10) youth ages 16-24. This program was the second phase of their overall vision.

In addition, through fundraising initiatives, federal funding (Rapid Housing Initiative) and collaborations with community partners such as Habitat for Humanity, the City of Windsor, and the County of Essex, The Bridge was able to achieve the third phase of their vision which includes twelve tiny homes and the purchase of the adjacent land that would eventually become the fourth phase of their overall project. These twelve homes will provide affordable housing to youth and other vulnerable populations in the County.

Discussion

The Bridge is seeking County Council support as they begin the process to add thirty-six (36) housing units to create a safe and inclusive community that will have affordable, mid-level and market rent housing. In order to accomplish this project, they will require funding from various levels of government and will need to continue their fundraising efforts.

Furthermore, the Bridge has begun the process to apply for the Federal Co-Investment Fund through CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation). Through various discussions, they feel confident that they will be successful in receiving a grant to cover partial cost of the project. The amount of funding they will receive is still unknown. With sufficient capital funding, the Bridge will be able to fund the ongoing operations of the housing units with rental income.

Finally, The Bridge is seeking a capital investment from the County of Essex to proceed with the fourth phase of their project. Demonstrating financial support from the County will be crucial while applying for the Co-Investment Fund as this federal program requires the applicants to demonstrate support from other levels of government in order to qualify for the funding.

Financial Implications

The success of accessing Federal and Provincial funding programs designed to increase the affordable housing stock all typically require some type of financial commitment from municipal partners. Funds have not historically been included within the County budget for these types of investments. County Administration will require some time to formulate options on how this request could be funded and the impact on the overall County Budget, for County Council to consider.

Consultations

Meetings between County Administration and the leadership team at the Bridge have taken place to discuss the need for County support for this project.

County Administration consultations occurred with:

Mary Birch, Director of Legislative and Community Services/Clerk

Sandra Zwiers, Chief Administrative Officer

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive report number 2023-1018-LCS-R26-JDF , Building Bridges Erie Shores Housing Project as information, and further that County Administration be directed to present options in the 2024 proposed budget on providing a capital investment to this project.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanie Diamond-Francis

Jeanie Diamond-Francis, Manager, Community Services

Concurred With,

Mary Birch

Mary Birch, Director, Legislative and Community Services/Clerk

Concurred With,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
N/A	N/A