

Memorandum

COM-C 11-2025

Subject: Cold Weather Advisory Response Programs

Date: May 6, 2025

To: Public Health and Social Services Committee

From: Cathy Cousins, Director Homelessness Services

At the Public Health and Social Services Committee meeting held on March 4, 2025, the following Councillor Information Request was made:

“Provide an overview of the cold weather advisory response programs of other communities.” Councillor Kaiser.

Homelessness Services is currently in the process of completing a program evaluation of the “2024-2025 Homelessness Plans for Winter”. The evaluation includes an analysis of key performance metrics to determine the effectiveness of the program in meeting community needs. The evaluation also includes a review of feedback from community partners and individuals with lived experience to identify opportunities for improvement. Finally, the program evaluation includes an environmental scan of the cold weather advisory response programs of other communities.

Staff have started the environmental scan. Preliminary work has identified very few communities that have taken a more innovative approach to addressing this complex challenge. A few communities have modernized their cold response system and taken a more intersectoral approach to responding. Staff are taking a more in-depth look at these programs to identify opportunities for us to adopt some of the more progressive practices that address the unique challenge of providing housing for individuals that are chronically homeless and facing significant service restrictions.

Staff will be rolling the outcomes of the program evaluation into the development of the “2025-2025 Homelessness Plans for Winter” and bringing the plan to Public Health and Social Services Committee this summer.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Cathy Cousins

Director, Homelessness Services