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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE RECEIVES GRANT FOR MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM ENHANCEMENT**

**THAMES CENTRE** - The Municipality of Thames Centre is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a significant grant to strengthen the local OPP Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT). This grant, totaling \$117,750, will empower the community to expand the vital mental health and addiction support services offered by the MCRT within Middlesex County.

The province has demonstrated a profound commitment by investing more than \$4.5 million to strengthen police services in offering specialized support to individuals struggling with mental health or collaboration with trained crisis workers, ensuring a more targeted response to those in need.

Thames Centre has a diverse landscape, which encompasses both urban and rural communities, and has experienced a steady population surge. This demographic shift has significantly heightened the demand for specialized teams like the MCRT. The allocation of this grant not only aligns with this growth but also addresses the mounting number of mental health and addiction-related calls we receive.

The MCRT consists of local OPP, Strathroy-Caradoc Police Service, and the dedicated efforts of two full-time Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Crisis Workers. Since its inception, the MCRT has played a pivotal role in the community of Thames Centre, demonstrating a positive impact. However, there has been an increased demand for additional support, particularly in the realm of follow-up care for mental health and addiction-related calls for service. With the help of this grant, the team is poised to integrate a full-time crisis worker exclusively focused on executing follow-up tasks, constituting a significant 65.6% of team calls. This funding infusion will be carefully directed towards amplifying the team's capacity, ensuring a stronger and more effective service provision for our community.

This grant not only stands as a lifeline for our residents in their time of need but also significantly contributes to the overall well-being of our community. It alleviates the strain on emergency services and fosters a more efficient and compassionate response to mental health and addiction crises.

"Working collaboratively with our partners allows us to amplify our service delivery to the benefit of the community. This successful grant is yet another demonstration of the commitment of Thames Centre Council and staff towards ensuring our residents are receiving enhanced supports" – *Thames Centre Mayor McMillian*

For further information about the MCRT Grant and the Municipality of Thames Centre, please contact:

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