



Community and Health Services Department
Housing York Inc.

Memorandum

TO: Members of the Housing York Inc. Board of Directors
FROM: Rick Farrell, General Manager
DATE: March 3, 2016
RE: **Housing Operations – Monthly Activity Update**

This Housing Operations update provides highlights of progress against the 2016 Business Plan, progress on our new sites – Richmond Hill Hub, Belinda's Place and Woodbridge, a summary of key events and tenant engagement activities that have taken place over the past month as well as a financial status update.

2016 BUSINESS PLAN

Supporting Cultural Awareness:

The "Creating Communities" campaign was launched with a festive season mailing prior to Christmas, newsletter advertisement and campaign web page. The campaign asks Housing York tenants to submit their photos of cultural customs and holiday traditions. These photos will culminate in a collage to promote welcoming and inclusive communities. The first campaign communication resulted in 15 photo entries. There will be ongoing promotions throughout the year.

Annual Tenant Survey:

"How do we measure up" surveys will be mailed to all tenants by February 29, 2016 seeking feedback on how a range of Housing York's services are delivered, including repairs and maintenance, site conditions, customer service, and tenant engagement. This will not only enable us to benchmark how satisfied our tenants are but will guide service improvements and programs over the year. A report detailing the results will be provided to the board at a future meeting.

SITE ACTIVITIES

Richmond Hill Hub:

Richmond Hill Hub opened its door to its first tenants during the last week of January 2016. There have been, on average, three to four move-ins per day, double the rate originally anticipated. One hundred and ten households will call Richmond Hill Hub home by the end of February. Income Bands 4, 5 and 6, representing incomes ranging from \$6,000 to \$40,000 per year and rents from \$429 per month to \$1,120, are fully rented. The remaining two bands, representing incomes ranging from \$34,000 to \$80,000 per year and rents ranging from \$980 to \$1,400 per year are 45% rented. Applicants in this income range have more choice and want to see the product before committing. Now that units are available for viewing, we are not anticipating any difficulty filling these units. In all, 151 units have been rented. Over \$100,000 of rental revenue has been collected in the first month well ahead of original forecasts. Move-ins have gone well and residents are thrilled with their new home.

Belinda's Place:

Doors opened at Belinda's Place to house their first client early in December 2015. The Salvation Army, the operator of the facility, have settled in and have been working very closely with us through training on the building equipment and overall shared site responsibilities. As of January 2016 the site was at full client capacity. In addition, the site has become home to over 30 agency partners that provide a range of services to clients at Belinda's Place.

Woodbridge Redevelopment:

Woodbridge Lane and 275 Woodbridge Avenue tenants got their first chance to have a peek at what their future home in Woodbridge may look like when they met with staff from Housing York and Development on the evening of February 9, 2016. All praised the overall look and were thrilled with the suite layouts, common area spaces, grounds and underground parking. A tour of Richmond Hill Hub is being arranged for tenants to get a sense of what their new home will feel like. Housing York has committed to providing monthly written status reports up until demolition, written confirmation of existing tenant's first right of refusal on units in the new building and to having one on one meetings with the 15 remaining tenants to work on relocation plans.

Exterior Enhancements at Fairy Lake Gardens (468 Eagle Street, Newmarket):

Over the last five years capital improvements made to the building include replacement of the roof, heating and make-up air systems, repainting of the balcony railings and upgrading of the emergency lighting. This year work will include replacement of the parking lot asphalt and improvements to the site lighting.

The existing white metal balcony panels require regular repainting. Staff are exploring the merits and cost implications of replacing the existing metal balcony railings with tempered smoked glass to both improve the general appearance of the building and reduce the need to repaint every five years. An architectural consultant is also being engaged to explore other options that would enhance the overall exterior appearance of the building. The architect's recommendations are expected to be completed by mid-April.

EVENTS

In late January, Housing York was approached by our partners in Transit to consider adopting landscaping rocks that were on the McDonald's property just north of Yonge and Eagle Street in Newmarket. These rocks needed to be moved to accommodate the widening of the Yonge Street corridor for the planned transit expansion underway. After ensuring the rocks could be placed at Belinda's Place without jeopardizing any warranty issues, on February 11, 2016 the rocks were given a new home. This project was a partnership with the McDonald's franchise owner, Enbridge, York Region Transit, and Aecon (Enbridge's contractor).

TENANT ENGAGEMENT

Late in 2015, Housing York held several focus group meetings with the tenants residing at 2185 Major MacKenzie Drive and 133 Fieldstone located in Vaughan to discuss their desire for improved transit options. In partnership with York Region Transit and the City of Vaughan, Housing York staff assisted identifying locations where our senior tenants would like to be dropped off. The front door bus service is scheduled to commence shortly, following the approvals from the various owners of the drop-off locations selected.

Housing York is partnering with the Housing Services Corporation in an energy conservation project. Sites were selected based on high electrical usage. The project has been launched at two communities and includes educating and training our tenants to be more energy conscience as well as working with them to develop site specific action plans that will support energy conservation methods both at the building level and in tenant's individual units. Real data updates will be shared at the two communities allowing tenants to see the positive impacts they are having.

Mackenzie Green is a host building for Canada Revenue Agency's Community Volunteer Income Tax Program. Volunteers, starting March 4, 2016, will complete tax returns for eligible members of the community at no cost.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Housing York's 2015 fiscal year-end is now complete. The corporation's 2015 surplus came in above budget at \$534,000. Housing York's external auditors, KPMG, will commence work on their annual audit in mid-March. The auditors will confirm all of the

final figures as well as provide assurance the company's financial statements are accurate and complete. More information on the year-end results will be presented to the Board in June when the financial statements are tabled.

Carlene Jackson, CFO, will be leaving Housing York on March 18, 2016 to take up a position as CFO of the Toronto Catholic School Board. Carlene has begun some very critical work in terms of preparing a financial strategy that will not only keep us in a solid position but also enable us to embark upon a period of increased growth. She has also laid the groundwork for an IT strategy and Business Improvement project that will see us automate more processes and in turn improve our client service with these new options. We offer our sincere thanks to Carlene for her contribution and wish her the very best in her new position.

Rick Farrell
General Manager

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