



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: May 5, 2016  
RE: **Housing Operations – Monthly Activity Update**

---

This Housing Operations update provides highlights of progress against the 2016 Business Plan and 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**

#### Opportunities for Young People:

Over the past few months Housing York has run a youth employment campaign aimed at Grade 11 and 12 high school students living in our communities. We had over 11 of our young people, meeting the high school criteria, apply. Students have been provided with links to supports and job aids to assist them in preparing resumes and tips for a successful interview. Our goal is to hire between four and eight of these students to complement our team of post-secondary landscape and maintenance students. The young people that have applied are excited to have the opportunity to be considered for a position at Housing York this summer in order to gain some employment experience working in housing. Post-secondary student interviews have been completed and high school student interviews are currently underway.

#### Maximize Rental Revenue:

A Housing Services working group has been established and has met on three occasions during the month of March to process map the current unit turnover process. The group will identify opportunities to reduce vacancy times, review best practices within the housing sector, and establish and document new processes to be rolled-out across the portfolio. This group is expected to complete its work and roll out new procedures and targets in Quarter 2.

### Rewards & Recognition Program:

Housing York is about to launch its first annual Good Neighbours Award Program. The program is designed to recognize tenants who care about their home and their neighbours and to showcase and encourage positive actions to sustain healthy, welcoming communities. Award categories include:

- Showing community involvement and spirit
- Taking leadership to make a Housing York community a better place to live
- Outstanding pride in the home
- Performing an act of kindness or consideration for a neighbor
- Honouring cultural diversity

Nominations will be accepted from June 1 to August 31, 2016 and can be submitted by tenants, community agencies and community leaders. The Good Neighbour Awards will be presented in November 2016. Every tenant who is nominated will be recognized.

### **SITE ACTIVITIES**

#### Torview Condominium:

Housing York staff were excited to take possession of a suite at 9471 Yonge Street, on February 12, 2016. This unit is part of a condominium project known as Expression Condominiums, a two-tower project with 15 floors each located at 9471 Yonge Street in Richmond Hill.

The unit comes to Housing York via Section 37 of the *Planning Act*, which allows municipalities to leverage community benefits in exchange for added height and/or density. Part of the agreement with Torview Property Inc. included the transfer of a one-bedroom residential unit at no cost to Housing York.

This exceptional unit is being made ready for tenants who will be selected from the Region's waiting list. The rent for the unit is set at \$980 which is consistent with the Richmond Hill Hub program model at 65% of average condo market rent. The rent will cover the cost of the condominium fees, taxes, minor maintenance within the unit, and funds for any replacement items necessary over the longer term.

#### Richmond Hill Hub:

On March 1, 2016, 360° Kids took occupancy of their 1,800 square foot corporate office space at the Richmond Hill Hub. This is Housing York's first venture as a commercial landlord and this lease will generate an additional \$42,000 in revenue annually.

360° Kids opened their drop in centre known as "Home Base" on March 9, 2016 and their emergency shelter known as "STAY" on March 17, 2016. The Housing York team

at the Richmond Hill Hub has been working diligently with Social Services staff to ensure the transition for 360° Kids.

#### Rose Town and Heritage East Standby Generators – Richmond Hill & Newmarket:

In the fall of 2015, a public tender was issued for installation of stand-by generators at Rose Town and Heritage East. The tender prices received significantly exceeded the original budget. As a result, the tender was cancelled in late 2015. A third party consultant was engaged to review the design documents and provide recommendations to reduce the scope and construction costs at both properties. The consultant's report recommends the installation of larger generators at both properties which would reduce the electrical wiring modifications. The new scope of work would result in the majority of electrical modifications confined to the basement level with minimal impact on the resident floors. The revised design will be tendered this summer and brought to the board for award in the fall, with expected completion in 2017.

#### Heritage East Garage Ramp & Retaining Wall – Newmarket:

The underground garage ramp and retaining wall at Heritage East is near the end of its useful life. Work will commence this spring to ensure structural integrity is maintained and performance of the heating cables continues throughout future winter seasons. This work is expected to be completed by the fall. Staff are working to develop a parking plan which will involve the use of an adjacent parking lot.

#### Fairy Lake Gardens Exterior Improvements – Newmarket:

The Region is working with JCI Studios Inc. to provide recommendations for improvements to the exterior building appearance of the 14-storey building at Fairy Lake Gardens. The review is considering aesthetic enhancements that could be completed and aligned with future necessary capital work (i.e. balcony panel replacement). Funding will be included in the 2017 Capital Plan and Budget for the Board's consideration.

#### Hadley Grange & Fairy Lake Gardens Parking Lot Upgrades – Aurora & Newmarket:

The parking lots at Hadley Grange and Fairy Lake Gardens have reached the end of their useful lives. Work at both locations will commence this June to replace the asphalt and upgrade the parking lot lighting. As part of the project, the walkway along the back of Hadley Grange will also be replaced. Alternative parking arrangements will be made and communicated to the tenants. This work is expected to be completed by September.

#### Glenwood Mews Siding Replacement - Georgina:

The original siding on the 64 townhouses at Glenwood Mews was at the end of its useful life. It has been replaced with an improved product that is more durable. Tenants

were engaged in the colour selection process. The choice significantly enhanced the appearance of the buildings.

#### Kingview Court Air Conditioning Repair – King:

There have been significant operational issues with the air conditioning at Kingview Court over the past two years. The system has repeatedly failed and is not able to consistently maintain the cooling for the site. The warranty period for this unit has passed and the contractor, manufacturer and staff have spent considerable resources troubleshooting and repairing the unit, however the design of the current system does not meet the cooling needs for the building and a new system is required. Design of a new system will begin in May and the new system will be ready for operation in April 2017. In order to ensure residents are comfortable throughout the 2016 summer season a temporary cooling system is being installed.

## **EVENTS**

#### Nobleview Pines:

Housing York received its first automated external defibrillator, (AED). Through the support of several Township of King representatives, an AED device was recently donated to us by The Mikey Network Foundation. Nobleview Pines, in Nobleton, is the first Housing York location to have the assisted device installed in the lobby of the building. Training for tenants was provided by representatives from the local fire department and York Region's paramedics. Tenants are very pleased to have the device in such close proximity.

#### Mental Health First Aid Training:

Housing York partnered with York Support Services Network to provide the Housing Operations team with Mental Health First Aid Training.

Housing York staff received two full days of training to help staff better recognize mental health problems, increase their confidence in providing help to others with mental illness, increase their knowledge of appropriate treatments and reduce the stigma around mental health issues.

Mental Health First Aid Training is an initiative of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

## **TENANT ENGAGEMENT**

Housing York is partnering with Thornhill Green residents to establish a Landscape Committee for the purpose of improving the curb appeal and landscape of the property. This is a great opportunity for Housing York tenants to have a say in

decisions that affect their community. The Committee will develop and implement a plan to:

- Coordinate new gardens throughout the property
- Work with the City to problem-solve garbage issues
- Assist neighbours by providing ideas and advice for their own yards

They will meet on a regular basis throughout the year with the majority of the time spent in the early spring so Housing York can move forward on ideas right away.

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Housing York's financial situation is positive and stable at the end of the first quarter, with an estimated \$179,465 surplus. Rental and non-rental revenue levels are on target. However, total revenue is lower than expected due to lower regional subsidies received. This is a reflection of the lower expenditures experienced in areas like administration and utilities.

Administration expenditures are lower by 11.65% due to hiring delays and the timing of labour costs reconciliation with the Region. Utility costs are lower by 21% due the mild weather experienced during the first quarter.

---

Rick Farrell, General Manager

RF/mm

#6699134