

The Regional Municipality of York

Housing York Inc.
May 5, 2016

Report of the
General Manager

Achieving New Heights through Innovation and Sustainability Housing York Inc.'s Draft 2017-2020 Plan

1. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. The Housing York Inc. Board approve the strategic directions proposed for the Housing York Inc. 2017 – 2020 Plan.

2. Purpose

This report provides the Board of Directors with: an update on the development of Housing York Inc.'s 2017- 2020 Plan; proposes five strategic directions for the Board to consider; and outlines next steps.

3. Background

Renewal of the Housing York Plan is timely in light of federal and provincial housing commitments

The recent federal budget included a number of short term housing investments and committed to the longer term development of a national housing strategy. The provincial government has also released the update to the Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy and the budget included investments to support the Strategy. With both senior levels of government engaged in the housing file, there should be new opportunities for the Region to leverage housing investments and to continue to strengthen the housing and homelessness system.

With a high cost ownership market and a limited rental market, affordable housing options are in short supply in York Region. New policy tools, such as the Province's proposed inclusionary zoning legislation, continued government

investments, and innovative approaches are all needed to address the housing challenge.

Renewal of the Housing York Plan provides an opportune time to look at creative solutions implemented by the national and international housing community and to leverage federal/provincial policy enhancements and investments.

“Achieving new heights through innovation and sustainability” is the draft theme for Housing York’s 2017 – 2020 Plan. A sustainable future includes providing the right support at the right time to tenants, engaging tenants in decisions that affect them, ensuring York Region is maximizing revenues to support future growth, planning to ensure buildings are well maintained and supporting regional initiatives that further the entire housing system.

HOUSING YORK INC.’S CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN CONCLUDES IN 2016

The Board approved the first Housing York Strategic Plan in October 2012

Through a consultative process with the Board, tenants, community partners and staff, the first Housing York Strategic Plan was developed and approved by the Board in October 2012. The first Strategic Plan will conclude at the end of 2016.

Development of the 2017 – 2020 Plan began in September 2015

Housing York recognizes the importance of good strategic planning to better support portfolio growth, tenants’ needs, and evolving business practices. In September 2015, the Board approved the development of a renewed plan to guide Housing York’s strategic priorities over a four-year timeframe.

Three Board Workshops were held in December 2015, January and February 2016 to seek the Board’s feedback on the development of strategic directions.

The Board Workshops encompassed a number of key discussion topics, including: tenant support and engagement; market tenant and rent subsidy eligibility policy options; asset leveraging; profit for purpose; evolving rent subsidy models; and long-term fiscal and asset management strategies.

4. Analysis and Options

Feedback from the Board was consolidated into five proposed strategic directions

The first Board workshop focused on the needs of people who currently live in Housing York as well as the needs of the thousands of people waiting for housing. Much of the discussion focussed on the role of Housing York in relation to other partners, including the health system and other community agencies. The Board also considered the question of eligibility and how to best ensure that communities maintain a healthy income mix while at the same time targeting scarce housing resources to appropriate levels of need.

The second Board workshop focused on Housing York's assets and financial health. The discussion centred on how best to position Housing York to be sustainable over the long term. The third Board discussion reviewed the direction from the first two workshops and revisited the theme of "profit for purpose" an emerging trend in the international housing sector, where housing companies engage in more entrepreneurial enterprises to generate revenues that subsidize their social mandates.

The workshop discussions informed the development of five draft strategic directions and related action areas to support Housing York in the development of the 2017 to 2020 Plan. Through those discussions the draft theme '*Achieving new heights through innovation and sustainability*' emerged. Visual 1 provides an illustration of the five proposed strategic directions.

Visual 1: Proposed Strategic Directions



The five proposed strategic directions build off the success of the existing Strategic plan and carry themes forward to be further explored and enhanced over the next few years.

Each proposed Strategic Direction has overarching outcomes and actions for Board consideration

Each of the five proposed Strategic Directions will be developed in more detail and brought back to the Board for their consideration. This report provides a high level overview of the proposed strategic directions and actions for the Board's consideration.

A. Strengthen Community Health – The Community Health Framework focuses on improving the physical and social environments of our residents and more effectively using community resources.

Proposed actions include:

- Formalizing protocols with partner agencies to enhance tenant supports
- Increasing tenant consultation and communications
- Reviewing program eligibility rules to promote healthy income mixes

- Explore opportunities for social enterprise, skills development programs for tenants, and expanded use of innovative service delivery hubs

B. Build Long-Term Financial Sustainability - Housing York has strong financial health, practices good stewardship, and is well positioned to deliver its objectives in a fiscally responsible and progressive manner.

Proposed actions include:

- Exploring new rent models and business opportunities to generate revenues to support a “profit for purpose” mandate
- Developing a comprehensive long-term plan that addresses growth, capital repair needs, and policies to address investments and retained earnings

C. Effectively Manage Assets – Housing York’s buildings are home to more than 4,000 people and thousands more are waiting to move in. With prudent stewardship of existing buildings and wise investment in new approaches Housing York can continue to provide affordable, quality housing.

Proposed actions include:

- Continue to enhance preventative maintenance, asset management and energy efficiency programs to ensure buildings are in good repair and are more environmentally friendly
- Explore opportunities to leverage existing assets to fund growth and redevelopment
- Partner with senior levels of government, local municipalities, school boards, the private sector and others to maximize development opportunities

D. Provide Good Governance & Strengthen Organizational Capacity – Housing York’s governance and organizational capacity will guide good decision making and ensure that we have the human, operational, and capital resources in place to manage our portfolio.

Proposed actions include:

- In consultation with tenants, staff and stakeholders, renew the Housing York vision and mission statements
- Develop a performance management framework that ensures consistent and measurable service delivery
- Develop a new Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- Enhance our business process and communications through the use of technology

E. Support and Inform Regional Housing Initiatives – As the Region’s housing company, Housing York is well positioned to support the Region’s housing and homelessness goals and to inform housing policy development.

Proposed actions include:

- Contribute to the Region’s 10-Year Housing Plan by exploring affordable home ownership options
- Inform the development of the income and asset limit policies for all subsidized units for Council consideration
- Enhanced access to housing and supports for waiting list applicants and mental health supports for tenants

Housing York will consult tenants and stakeholders

Following the Board’s approval of the proposed strategic directions, staff will implement a consultation process to seek feed-back on the strategic directions and proposed actions. Consultations will be scheduled with tenants across the portfolio, as well as with staff, regional stakeholders and Housing York’s community partners.

The Draft 2017-2020 Plan will be presented to the Board in fall 2016 for approval

The consultation process will inform the development of the 2017-2020 Plan. The plan will be presented to the Board for approval in the fall of 2016.

Link to key Council-approved plans

As the largest housing provider in York Region and home to over 4,000 residents, Housing York plays an important role in supporting many of the housing goals and objectives established in the corporation’s strategic plans.

The Housing York 2017 - 2020 Plan will align with the Region’s long-term corporate strategies, including *Vision 2051*, the *2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan*, the *Region’s 10-Year Housing Plan* and the *Regional Official Plan*.

5. Financial Implications

Initiatives arising from Housing York’s 2017 – 2020 Plan will be presented to the Board for consideration as part of the annual budget process.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Housing York has locations in all nine regional municipalities. The 2017-2020 Plan will benefit Housing York tenants across the Region while enhancing the opportunity to provide affordable housing to more residents.

7. Conclusion

'Achieving new heights through innovation and sustainability' is the draft theme for Housing York's 2017 – 2020 Plan. This report proposes five key strategic directions for the Plan and related actions.

Consultations will occur in the spring and summer of this year to inform the presentation of the plan for Board approval in the fall.

For more information on this report, please contact Rick Farrell, General Manager, Housing York Inc. at ext. 72091.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Recommended by:

Approved for Submission:

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April 21, 2016

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request