



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: October 6, 2016
Re: **Housing Operations – Monthly Activity Update**

This Housing Operations update provides highlights of progress made against the 2016 Business Plan. It includes a summary of key events and progress on: the Richmond Hill Hub and Woodbridge redevelopment project; site activities in July and August 2016; tenant engagement actions; and a financial status update.

Michelle Musgrave

Sadly, on July 21, 2016 Housing York lost a key member of its team. Michelle Musgrave, Director, Housing Operations and Acting Chief Financial Officer passed away after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Michelle played a key role progressing the non-profit housing sector in many different capacities in both Ontario and the UK. The work she has done will be a lasting impact to families and communities for generations. Staff were inspired by Michelle's vision for Housing York and are committed in fulfilling the delivery of that vision.

2016 Business Plan

Opportunities for Young People Update:

A youth employment campaign, aimed at high school students living in Housing York communities, was launched in April 2016. The goal of the campaign was to hire students to complement our team of post-secondary landscape and maintenance students who returned this summer and to give Housing York youth the opportunity to gain valuable work experience.

On July 4, 2016, four high school students living in Housing York communities began working with the operations team to provide landscape and maintenance project support at various Housing York communities. They partnered with our university students and worked very well together. More importantly, they were each able to gain experiences

from one another sharing their schooling plans and future career paths. Their last day of employment was September 2, 2016.

One of our students from Thornhill Green in Markham has offered to be a permanent member of the Thornhill Green landscape committee. This is a volunteer group of tenants who manage the landscape budget and advise Housing York on landscape issues at their site.

Overall, this program has been a success. We look forward to having the students that have worked for us share their experiences with other youth in the community and encourage them to apply next year.

Emergency Preparedness Plan:

The fire at Fairy Lake Gardens in Newmarket, earlier this year, was a rare event for Housing York. To better prepare for such an event in the future, Housing York carried out a table top, mock emergency exercise with management and staff on July 26, 2016 at Armitage Gardens in Newmarket.

The exercise was created to:

- Familiarize Housing York staff in taking a lead role with the Housing York Emergency Response Plan
- Test and evaluate the functional aspects of the emergency response structure
- Familiarize staff with their roles and responsibilities during an emergency
- Examine the flow of communications between Site Command and the Command Centre
- Confirm the resources needed to effectively support an emergency response

Although this was the first emergency exercise for most participants, staff were fully engaged in the process. “Exercise Eagle Street” was successful in both its execution and in meeting its objectives. It was determined that the emergency response structure in place effectively supports normal operations as well as the escalation into a high level emergency response.

Events

Social Infrastructure Fund:

Housing York was pleased to host the Honourable Chris Ballard, Minister of Housing and Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy, on July 13, 2016 at Tom Taylor Place in Newmarket where it was announced that The Regional Municipality of York would be receiving \$23 million in provincial and federal funding to build, renovate and provide critical housing options to meet the diverse and growing needs of York Region residents.

This announcement from the provincial and federal governments will see \$5.1 million invested in maintenance and capital repairs to the Region's non-profit and co-operative housing communities, while the remaining \$17.9 million will support the Region's growing housing supply relating to the Woodbridge and Unionville developments. Housing York will also benefit from a portion of the \$5.1 million for capital repairs and maintenance.

Site Activities

Woodbridge – Redevelopment:

The Woodbridge Redevelopment project has been allocated \$10.4 million from the Social Infrastructure Fund which requires that preliminary redevelopment of the site commence by March 31, 2017.

To meet this timeline, the seniors' building at 275 Woodbridge Avenue must be completely vacated before the end of this year. The relocation of tenants from this site has been in process for several months. By October 30, 2016 all tenants will have moved to subsidized units in other Housing York seniors' buildings. Staff met with tenants to assist them in their selection of other Housing York properties. Although all tenants were offered assistance with moving costs, only a few accepted support. The feedback from the tenants regarding the relocation process has been positive and all have expressed satisfaction with their new homes.

The demolition of Woodbridge Lane, at 64 Abell Avenue, will start later than 275 Woodbridge Avenue. Woodbridge Lane is a family site with a mix of market rent and subsidized units. Of the fourteen units at this site, nine are still occupied. These tenants will have to vacate their units by the spring of 2017. Unfortunately Housing York does not have any family sites in Vaughan. The closest options for tenants who want to move to other Housing York properties are in Richmond Hill and Markham. Some tenants have indicated that they do not want to move out of the Woodbridge area from where they currently work or where their children go to school.

Housing York has discussed the redevelopment with all of the remaining families who will each receive a letter outlining their options for next spring. Market rent tenants will be offered priority to move into market units in other Housing York properties. Tenants in rent-geared-to-income units will be offered two options:

1. Transfer to a rent-geared-to-income unit in another Housing York building.
2. Choose rental housing in the private market. If the unit is legal and the landlord is willing to accept a monthly payment directly from the Region, the Region will subsidize the rent until the new building is ready for occupancy. Tenants will be responsible for all housing costs in excess of the subsidy payment.

Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, Housing York will be required to give any remaining tenants a formal notice 120 days before the building is demolished. This notice is called a Form N13 and is a Notice of Eviction. Tenants will receive their Notice after Housing York receives the demolition permit which is anticipated in November 2016. The N13 enables Housing York to require tenants to vacate the unit if they have not already done so.

Richmond Hill Hub – Rental Update:

The Richmond Hill Hub is now 99% occupied. Of the 202 units available, 141 are occupied by applicants from York Region's Centralized Waiting List. Revenues are ahead of budget and expenses continue to be in-line with budget. Since the building opened in late January 2016, Housing York has been able to self-finance operating expenses and contribute the equivalent of \$420,000 of rent subsidy to Richmond Hill Hub tenants, with no financial assistance from the Region required.

Fairy Lake and Evergreen Terrace – Elevator Replacement Update:

The elevators at Fairy Lake Gardens in Newmarket and Evergreen Terrace in Richmond Hill are being replaced in order to ensure reliable service for these four-storey buildings in the future. Currently, each building has one elevator serving the building. Prefabrication of equipment is in process and the contractor is scheduled to start work at both buildings by the beginning of November 2016. Work is expected to be complete by the end of the year.

Staff met with residents at both sites (each building has 56 tenants) to identify the types of supports they will need during this period. All tenants are aware of the six-week repair timeline and support the project as they will benefit from more reliable service in the long run. All have indicated they can take the stairs, but at least eight to ten tenants at each site will need varying degrees of assistance including carrying items such as groceries, laundry and walking devices. These tenants have asked for temporary seating to be made available between floors and for support workers to be available daily during a pre-established time to assist with resident needs.

Tenants will also have the opportunity to make special requests for service appointments that fall outside of these pre-established times. Housing York is committed to ensure these requests are honoured and have engaged the service of We Care Home Health to assist. This organization has helped Housing York in the past when unplanned emergency repairs to elevators were required.

Heritage East – Parking Garage Ramp:

Construction of the ramp replacement to the underground garage at Heritage East commenced the beginning of June 2016. This six-month project requires major adjustment and repair to the original retaining walls and the foundation footings require extensive excavation. Access to the parking garage and ramp is closed and will not be re-opened until mid-November 2016. Tenants are currently utilizing surface parking and

street parking as provided and approved through the Town of Newmarket. To date, there have been no issues or concerns related to the parking restrictions.

Hadley Grange & Fairy Lake Gardens – Parking Lot Replacement:

Parking lot upgrades are in their final stages at Hadley Grange in Aurora and Fairy Lake Gardens in Newmarket. Asphalt replacement and line painting are complete and residents are able to park in both lots. The remaining new lighting installations will be completed with only minimal impact to residents. This work will require up to three parking spaces reserved at each lighting location to allow the connection of the new lights. Each connection will take three to four hours. With the lighting installations underway, the project should be completed within a few weeks.

Tenant Engagement

Lakeside Residences – Connecting Tenants:

Housing York received feedback from tenants at Lakeside Residences in Keswick regarding their ability to understand and connect to their community both internally and externally. A project was launched to increase the overall health and resiliency of the community in response to this feedback.

The objectives of the project are to: create a shared community vision; identify priorities for shared action; strengthen relationships; and tap the skills, talents and resources within the community. Community Partnerships and Support Services engaged the Tamarack Institute who works with non-profits, governments, businesses and the community to advance positive community change.

Supported by many internal partners, several conversations were held in August 2016 at various dates and times to gather information from the majority of tenants to identify the shared vision and residents' skills and assets. The Tamarack Institute has provided tools to host tenant conversations and supports to collect, analyze and prepare a plan to implement tenant recommendations. Priorities will be identified and shared with the entire Lakeside community in the coming months.

Based on the successes at Lakeside, this model can be used to engage tenants and their communities at other Housing York properties.

Glenwood Mews - Refresh and Community Event:

Glenwood Mews, a 64 townhome site in Keswick, recently underwent a siding replacement project. This type of project is disruptive to the tenant's use and enjoyment of their yards and common area spaces.

Housing York organized two events to thank tenants for their patience during construction and to celebrate the completion the project which has enhanced the look of their homes.

In July, 27 families enjoyed a movie in the park, complete with ice cream and popcorn. In August, a community barbeque was held with a focus on building relationships where the kids were surprised with giant inflatable games and Georgina Fire had a truck on display. About 70 residents attended. Tenants were very pleased with both events and appreciative of the work done to keep the site looking its best.

Financial Update

Work is currently underway on the 2017 Budget and Business Plan. A variety of future predictive economic and statistical assumptions are being collected and validated during this process. The goal is to arrive at a comprehensive 2017 Budget that reflects the strategic directions captured in Housing York's 2017-2020 Plan. Along with the 2017 Budget, a financial outlook will be prepared for the 2018 -2020 period. The 2017 Budget and Business Plan will be presented to Housing York's Board for review and approval at their December meeting.

Rick Farrell
General Manager

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