



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Housing Opportunities Toronto 2010-2020 Five Year Review

Date:	February 19, 2015
To:	Affordable Housing Committee
From:	Director, Affordable Housing Office General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	AFS # 20399

SUMMARY

This report seeks the approval of the Executive Committee and the Affordable Housing Committee to proceed with a strategic updating of *Housing Opportunities Toronto – An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010-2020* (HOT). This includes approval of the work plan outlined in this report, which provides for the release of a five-year report card on progress to date, a targeted public consultation process, and a report to Council in early 2016 on proposed changes to update the 10-year action plan.

City Council approved HOT and its 67 proposed actions in 2009. In its first five years the housing action plan has served the City well. It has provided a City-wide blueprint for actions and guided the work of the many Divisions and agencies that have a role in delivering housing and homeless programs and policies. While federal/provincial investments in housing and homeless services have been made during the first five years of the Action Plan, they have fallen short of meeting needs. In this regard, the Action Plan will require the federal and provincial governments to step up, rather than step back from, providing sufficient sustainable funding for the City's efforts to be successful.

The five-year review will incorporate work underway or planned in other divisions that have an impact on the City's housing and homelessness policies and programming.

The review and update of *Housing Opportunities Toronto* will also satisfy the provincial requirement under the Housing Services Act to conduct a five-year update and begin reporting annually on progress. The Province has also requested that the City look to identify actions to address housing issues affecting victims of domestic violence, as well work with the Province to develop additional performance measures.

An interdivisional steering committee, co-chaired by the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, will direct the three phases of the review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Affordable Housing Office, and General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration recommend that:

1. The Executive Committee authorise the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to form an interdivisional steering committee including, but not limited to: City Planning, Toronto Public Health, Long Term Care Homes and Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Corporate Finance, and Social Development, Finance and Administration, to oversee and advise on the review and update of the City's *Housing Opportunities Toronto: Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010 – 2020*.
2. The Executive Committee authorise the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to execute the work plan outlined in the comments section of this report, including strategic public consultations, and to make recommendations to the Affordable Housing Committee, Executive and City Council in early 2016 to update the Housing Action Plan.

Financial Impact

The three-phase work plan will be resourced with existing staff. Funding for the public consultation proposed in this report is estimated to be up to \$50,000. This funding is included in the 2015 Recommended Operating Budget of the Affordable Housing Office.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

Equity Impact

The strategic directions and actions in *Housing Opportunities Toronto* serve the City's equity seeking/vulnerable populations including people with low-income, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, racialized groups, women, seniors, youth, immigrants & refugees, undocumented individuals, the LGBTQ2S community and other vulnerable groups such as victims of violence and homeless/underhoused individuals. HOT also serves residents in Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.

Lack of access to affordable housing is a key challenge for lower-income people and other equity-seeking groups living in Toronto. This initiative addresses this challenge for

particularly vulnerable populations by proposing a framework to provide a mid-term review and progress report for Toronto's 10-year affordable housing action plan, improving the planning, management and delivery of housing and homelessness services for these vulnerable residents.

The impact of this initiative will be monitored by the City for the remaining five years of *Housing Opportunities Toronto* through to 2020.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of August 5 and 6, 2009, City Council endorsed *Housing Opportunities Toronto: An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010 - 2020* as the plan to address Toronto's affordable housing challenges over the next 10 years. The Council decision on this matter can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2009.EX33.47>

At its meeting on December 16, 2013, Council adopted *2014-2019 Housing Stability Service Planning Framework* as the plan to guide the services administered by Shelter Support and Housing Administration over the next five years. The framework aims to improve housing stability for vulnerable Toronto residents, including preventing homelessness and supporting the transition from homelessness to permanent, stable housing.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD25.10>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In November 2007, the consultation document *An Affordable Housing Framework For Public Review and Engagement* was released with the goal to engage the public and key stakeholders in a discussion about how to address Toronto's affordable housing challenges and opportunities over the next decade. Throughout 2008, an extensive consultation process was undertaken with more than 1,800 individuals and organizations participating through public meetings, stakeholder workshops, targeted focus groups, mail and e-mail submissions, and deputations to the June 2008 Affordable Housing Committee meeting.

In August 2009 City Council endorsed *Housing Opportunities Toronto: An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010 - 2020*. HOT has served as the roadmap to guide federal, provincial and City investments, as well as public- and private-sector activity across the full spectrum of housing need in Toronto – from supportive housing for homeless persons to the repair and revitalization of existing rental housing to assisting low-income homeowners to remain in their homes. In all, HOT established eight strategic themes and 67 actions to assist 258,000 households – or 640,000 people – over 10 years.

The eight strategic themes are:

1. Create housing opportunities in all neighbourhoods
2. Help homeless and vulnerable people find and keep homes
3. Assist individuals and families to afford rents
4. Preserve and repair rental housing
5. Revitalize neighbourhoods
6. Create new affordable rental homes
7. Help people buy and stay in their homes
8. Working together.

In the first five years, HOT has served the City and residents well. It has guided Divisions, as well as agencies such as Toronto Community Housing, in delivering homeless and housing services to residents. It has also guided Council in setting priorities for investing City, provincial and federal funding through the Investment in Affordable Housing Program, Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), and the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS).

Over the past five years HOT accomplishments include:

- More than 2,000 persons have been housed through Streets to Homes.
- Some 8,000 families and individuals have been assisted with their housing costs.
- Some 57 apartment buildings and rooming houses have been repaired to assist residents in 4,309 rental homes while keeping them affordable.
- More social housing communities are being revitalized within the Toronto Community Housing portfolio while the City has committed to paying its one-third share (\$864 million) of the projected 10-year capital repair backlog of \$2.6 billion.
- Some 2,792 new affordable rental homes have been opened.
- Some 750 moderate-income families and individuals have been assisted in becoming home owners.

In 2011, the province enacted the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA), which designates the City of Toronto as the Municipal Service Manager for housing and homelessness services. The legislation required Municipal Service Managers to prepare local ten year housing and homelessness plans, which were subject to review by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The City submitted the HOT plan to the Minister to fulfill this requirement. The Minister confirmed that the HOT plan satisfied the requirement for a ten year housing and homelessness plan and identified two areas where the plan could be strengthened to better align with the requirements of the HSA. These included working with the Ministry on development of common performance indicators to track progress towards achieving identified goals, and identifying ways to address the housing needs of victims of domestic violence.

While federal and provincial investments have been made during HOT's first five years, they have fallen short in helping Toronto meet targets set out in the Action Plan. To be successful over the next five years will require the City to redouble its efforts. This comes at a time when the federal and provincial governments have capped funding for housing and homeless services and are withdrawing existing funding for social housing.

COMMENTS

Housing Opportunities Toronto Update: Three-Phase Work Plan

This report seeks approval to proceed with a three-phase work plan to update the Housing Action Plan. The proposed phases are:

1. Initiate the five-year review under the direction of an interdivisional steering committee.
2. Publish a five-year report card and hold targeted consultations with the public and stakeholders.
3. Provide a strategic update report with recommendations to Council in early 2016.

Phase 1: Initiate the Five-Year Review

The five-year review of the HOT plan will be initiated under the direction of an interdivisional steering committee, co-chaired by the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration. Membership is recommended to include, but not be limited to: City Planning, Toronto Public Health, Long Term Care Homes and Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Corporate Finance, and Social Development, Finance and Administration.

The inter-divisional approach is similar to the effort that produced the Action Plan in the period 2007 to 2009.

To provide strategic advice to the staff group it is also proposed that the City's Housing Advocate and Chair of the Affordable Housing Committee convene a small reference group of City Councillors, including the Chair of the Community Development Committee, the Chair of Planning and Growth Management Committee and the City's Poverty Reduction lead.

Phase 2: Report Card and Consultations

Since its adoption by Council in 2009, *Housing Opportunities Toronto* has guided the City's activities in prioritizing investments and providing new affordable housing opportunities. To inform the public consultations, a five-year report card will be published reviewing achievements and challenges.

The five-year report card will also include updated demographic data from the 2011 Statistics Canada Census and other relevant indicators of current and future housing need. The consultation is proposed to take place between September and December 2015.

Consultations will include:

- Public meetings in each Community Council district
- Targeted meetings and feedback from specific organizations and groups serving Aboriginal people, seniors, victims of domestic violence and persons with disabilities
- An on-line questionnaire
- Meetings with groups requested by Councillors.

The consultations will be planned to complement and leverage other City initiatives such as the Rooming House Review by Municipal Licensing and Standards and City Planning; the large sites review by City Planning; the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy; the Task Force on Toronto Community Housing and the Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy led by the Poverty Reduction Advocate.

Phase 3: Action Plan Strategic Update

In early 2016 staff will report to Council with recommendations to update the *Housing Opportunities Toronto* Action Plan.

The report will be informed by the results of the public consultation and a review of affordable housing need to 2020. It will also reflect the results of complementary work being undertaken by City divisions, agencies, boards and commissions; and solicited input from the federal and provincial governments.

CONCLUSION

Along with reducing and preventing homelessness and upgrading private and social housing, HOT also set targets of creating 1,000 new affordable rental and 200 new affordable ownership homes annually. These targets remain a challenge without increased federal/provincial funding. Some 3,542 new affordable rental and ownership homes were completed between 2010 and the end of 2014, compared to a target of 6,000. Only in 2012 was the annual target of 1,000 new rental homes met or exceeded, thanks to a significant increase in funding due to the federal/provincial economic stimulus program.

In this update of HOT, the City has an opportunity to increase its support for affordable housing as well as call on the federal and provincial governments to do their share.

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ATTACHMENTS

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