TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

A Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen Community Services and the City of Toronto

Date: March 24, 2017
To: City Council
From: Deputy City Manager, Cluster A
Wards: Ward 30 Toronto-Danforth

SUMMARY

WoodGreen Community Services continues to play an important role in delivering a number of services to residents including affordable and social housing to low-income people primarily in Ward 30 Toronto-Danforth.

At present WoodGreen Community Services, the umbrella organization for the group of corporations under which WoodGreen operates ("WoodGreen") is involved in three housing initiatives including a redevelopment at 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East, social housing at 835-841 Queen Street East and the consequences of the end of its operating agreement for 160 units of social housing for seniors at 444 Logan Avenue.

Given the mutual interest in providing affordable and social housing for low-income people, a Local Agency Housing Agreement between the City of Toronto and WoodGreen would serve to co-ordinate and support these three housing initiatives.

This report recommends City Council give authority for the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration, in consultation with the City Solicitor, to enter into a Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen to support the above initiatives to create, and continue to provide affordable and social housing in Ward 30.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Deputy City Manager, Cluster A recommend that:

1. City Council authorize severally each of the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration, to negotiate, enter into and execute a Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen Community Services to establish a co-ordinated framework for the development and operation of 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East, 835-841 Queen Street East and 444 Logan Avenue, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration, and in a form approved by the City Solicitor.

2. City Council authorize the Chief Corporate Officer to obtain appraisals for each of 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East, 835-841 Queen Street East and 444 Logan Avenue, if considered necessary, the cost of which to be paid from the Capital Revolving Fund for Affordable Housing (XR-1058).

3. City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the Chief Corporate Officer to negotiate the terms of the redevelopment of 835-841 Queen Street East with WoodGreen Community Services for the continued use of the property as affordable housing and/or community use, if feasible, including the terms of a possible acquisition of the property by the City and to report back to City Council on the outcome of those negotiations.

4. City Council authorize an extension of the date by which WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated, or its successor, is obligated to re-convey 444 Logan Avenue to the City to July 1, 2018, to allow time for the City to negotiate the terms of the continued operation of this social housing project and to report back to City Council on the results of those negotiations.

5. City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office and the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration to negotiate the terms and conditions of WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated, or its successor, continued use and occupation of 444 Logan Avenue and to report back to Council on the result of those negotiations.

6. City Council authorize the Director, Affordable Housing Office to negotiate the terms and conditions of federal/provincial and City financial assistance to WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated for the redevelopment of 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East, subject to receipt by the City of a business case for the development of the project and on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Director, Affordable Housing Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report recommends actions be taken to assist WoodGreen in continuing its housing provider role as well as potential expanded solutions under consideration. At this time, known financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report relate to the costs of appraisals for the three subject properties, estimated at a maximum of $30,000 to be funded from the Capital Revolving Fund for Affordable Housing (CRF). Sufficient funds exist within the CRF for these appraisals.

Any further actions required by the City to support the proposed Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen that may result in financial implications will be reported to City Council through the appropriate Standing Committee and/or as part of the following year's operating and capital budget process.

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

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Lack of access to safe, secure, affordable housing in complete communities is a barrier to lower-income Toronto residents. The recommendations contained in this report address this barrier by working with the non-profit sector to create 36 new affordable rental homes, to maintain existing social housing units and develop affordable housing and social housing initiatives.

The provision of affordable housing serves equity-seeking groups such as lower-income residents, women, seniors, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, individuals with mental health issues and other vulnerable groups.

DECISION HISTORY

On October 22, 1965 Metropolitan Toronto and WoodGreen Community Centre Towers Incorporated (now WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated) entered into an agreement to facilitate the development and operation of 160 units of social housing for low-income seniors at 444 Logan Avenue. This agreement provided that WoodGreen would re-convey the property to the City upon maturation of its mortgage and the end of its operating agreement on July 1, 2017.

On March 10, 2016 Toronto and East York Community Council adopted recommendations related to the preliminary staff report for 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East that directed staff to report back on options for a swing space for the Parent Resources Center during the redevelopment of 1117 and 1119 Gerrard Street East. The report can be accessed at http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.TE14.37

On March 9, 2017 City Council deferred the item TE22.9, 835-841 Queen Street East – Rental Housing Demolition Application Under Municipal Code Chapter 667 – Final Report (TE22.9), to allow staff more time to create a Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen Community Services. The report can be accessed at http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.TE22.9

On March 9, 2017 City Council deferred the item TE22.8, 1117 and 1119 Gerrard Street East – Official Plan Amendment, Zoning Amendment Applications – Final Report (TE22.8) to the meeting of March 28, 29 and 30. The redevelopment proposes a five-storey building and 36 new affordable rental housing units for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities. The report can be accessed at http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.TE22.8

COMMENTS

WoodGreen Community Services

WoodGreen Community Services has been operating in Toronto's east end for more than 80 years and provides a range of services including affordable and supportive housing, childcare, training and employment services.

At present, WoodGreen provides more than 800 homes in 10 locations for low-income people, including seniors and persons with disabilities.

835-841 Queen Street East

WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated has submitted an application for demolition of 36 social housing units at 835-841 Queen Street East. The Official Plan (Policy 3.2.1.7) requires that any demolition of six or more social housing units be replaced. As a result of recent developments as outlined in this report, the demolition application is proposed to be deferred until a later date.

In future, should WoodGreen proceed with the demolition application, existing tenants at 835-841 Queen Street East will be provided with a tenant relocation assistance plan to be developed by WoodGreen and approved by the City's Chief Planner and the General Manager, Shelter Support and Housing Administration. Tenants will be guaranteed to be re-housed in rent-geared-to income units within WoodGreen's housing portfolio or another non-profit housing provider.

WoodGreen intends to repurpose the site for affordable housing and community use. In the event that WoodGreen decides not to repurpose the site for affordable housing and community use, WoodGreen has agreed through the Local Agency Housing Agreement, to provide the City with the first option to purchase the site within one year of its application to redevelop the site. WoodGreen would also provide the City with a business case with the intended uses of the property.

1117 and 1119 Gerrard Street East

WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated has submitted an application to build a five-storey building at 1117 Gerrard Street East. The redevelopment requires both an Official Plan and zoning amendment as the proposal exceeds the four storey building height permitted within the Neighbourhoods land use designation of the Official Plan and exceeds the height and density permissions of the in-force Zoning By-law.

The redevelopment includes 35 one-bedroom affordable housing units and the addition of one-bedroom affordable housing unit at 1119 Gerrard Street East for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities.

The implementing Zoning By-law secures space for a 235 square metre community center use. It is anticipated that the Parent Resources Centre which currently operates out of 1117 Gerrard Street East will be temporarily relocated and return when the redevelopment is completed.

City Planning recommended approval of the application for the redevelopment at 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East in its report dated February 6, 2017.

To facilitate and expedite the creation of 36 new affordable housing units the City through the Local Agency Housing Agreement proposes to prioritize WoodGreen for available federal/provincial and City incentives through the Open Door program.

444 Logan Avenue

In July 2017, WoodGreen will have reached the end of its operating agreement for 444 Logan Avenue. The 1965 legal agreement between Metropolitan Toronto and WoodGreen Community Centre Towers Incorporated (now WoodGreen Community Housing Incorporated) requires WoodGreen to re-convey the property to the City at this time.

WoodGreen operates social housing at 444 Logan Avenue. This building is home to 160 low-income seniors. It has been in operation for almost 50 years and assists the City in providing much needed housing. Both the City and WoodGreen have expressed interest in continuing to provide affordable housing at this site.

A Local Agency Housing Agreement

Both the City of Toronto and WoodGreen Community Services have a mutual interest in providing affordable and social housing. The three initiatives underway by WoodGreen provide a unique opportunity for the City to enter into a Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen to provide a framework to support and coordinate a positive response to these initiatives and, in particular, to:

1. provide the City with an option to acquire the property at 835-841 Queen Street East within one year of its application to redevelop should WoodGreen not be able to repurpose the site for affordable housing and community use;

2. re-affirm the planning requirement to replace rental units resulting from the demolition at 835-841 Queen Street East**;**

3. facilitate and expedite the creation of 36 units of new affordable housing with secured affordability for a minimum of 25 years by using available federal/provincial and City financial incentives through the Open Door program in the redevelopment at 1117 and 1119 Gerrard Street East; and

4. provide the City and WoodGreen the necessary time to renegotiate the terms of reconveyance at 444 Logan Avenue to ensure its operation as affordable housing, and to ensure no loss of affordable rental housing in the city.

Conclusion

WoodGreen currently has three affordable and social housing initiatives underway that are of interest to the City including a redevelopment at 1117-1119 Gerrard Street East, social housing for low-income people at 835-841 Queen St. and social housing for low-income seniors at 444 Logan Avenue.

This report recommends the City enter into a Local Agency Housing Agreement with WoodGreen to facilitate and expedite the creation of 36 new affordable homes, maintain funding for 36 existing rent-geared-to-income subsidies and maintain 160 homes for low-income seniors.

This report has been prepared in consultation with City Legal, City Planning, Corporate Finance, Real Estate Services and Shelter**,** Support and Housing Administration.

CONTACT

Sean Gadon
Director, Affordable Housing Office
Phone: 338-1143
E-mail: sean.gadon@toronto.ca

Daniel Woolfson
Senior Planner, Community Planning, City Planning
Phone: 392-7574
Email: Daniel.Woolfson@toronto.ca

Doug Rollins
Director, Housing Stability Services, Shelter Support and Housing Administration
Phone: 392-0054
Email: Doug.Rollins@toronto.ca

Tim Park
Manager, Real Estate Services
Phone: 392-5838
Email: Tim.Park@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Giuliana Carbone
Deputy City Manager, Cluster A