

Housing Secretariat Staffing Resources Review - Housing Now Initiative

Date: February 15, 2019
To: Budget Committee
From: City Manager
Wards: All

SUMMARY

On December 13, 2018, City Council approved the new Housing Now Initiative to activate 11 City-owned sites for the development of affordable housing within mixed-income, mixed-use and transit-oriented communities. This initiative is to create approximately 3,700 new affordable rental homes.

On January 30, 2019, City Council approved an action plan to deliver the Housing Now Initiative and to identify the resources required to expedite the implementation process. This included establishment of a Housing Secretariat Office to manage the overall implementation of the initiative, with funding of \$352,500 in 2019 for three (3) temporary positions including salary, benefits and equipment.

This report responds to Council direction on January 30, 2019 that the City Manager review the Housing Secretariat staffing allocation to determine if positions can be filled using existing staff resources from the Affordable Housing Office, CreateTO and City Planning and to report the results of this review to the Budget Committee as part of the 2019 Budget Process.

Based on a review carried out by City staff, there are insufficient staffing resources to fill Housing Secretariat positions using the existing staff complement from the Affordable Housing Office, CreateTO and City Planning, given their existing and ongoing work including the Open Door Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

1. Budget Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendation of this report. The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

On January 30, 2019, City Council adopted the report *Implementing the "Housing Now" Initiative*, approving an action plan to deliver the program and to identify the resources required to expedite the implementation process. The City Council decision can be found here: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EX1.1>

On December 13, 2018, City Council adopted the *Housing Now* report approving the activation of 11 City-owned sites for the development of affordable housing as part of creating mixed-income, mixed-use and transit-oriented communities. City Council requested the City Manager to report to the Executive Committee in January 2019 on "Housing Now" with an action plan to roll out this Initiative and identify the resources required to expedite the implementation process. The City Council decision can be found here: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.CC1.3>

COMMENTS

Responding to City Council direction on January 30, 2019 through the report *Implementing the "Housing Now" Initiative*, recommendation 20, City staff conducted a review of the feasibility of filling any of the three (3) positions approved for the Housing Secretariat using existing staff resources from the Affordable Housing Office, CreateTO and City Planning.

Based on this review, City staff have concluded that there are insufficient resources to fill Housing Secretariat positions using the existing staff complement from these sources. Existing staff are currently engaged in the delivery of:

- The Open Door Program to scale up affordable rental housing developments in partnership with non-profit and private sector organizations, currently averaging 1,000 new affordable rental homes annually.
- Affordable homeownership assistance program for low-income renters.
- \$481 million in government investments leveraging approximately \$1.6 billion in private/non-profit developments
- The Housing Plan 2020-2030 including conducting public and stakeholder consultations.
- Oversight on approved affordable housing developments under construction.
- The Toronto Renovates Program to assist low-income senior and persons with disabilities in making home modifications.

This is consistent with Council's decision through the *Implementing the "Housing Now" Initiative* report which recognised the need for additional staffing resources to implement an initiative of the magnitude of Housing Now.

Specifically, through recommendation 19, Council approved considering funding for the following additional staffing resources through the 2019 budget processes:

- Funding of \$352,500 for three (3) new temporary positions including salary, benefits and equipment for the Housing Secretariat Office to manage the overall implementation of the Housing Now Initiative.
- Funding for City Planning of \$195,000 for two (2) new temporary positions for four years, including salary, benefits and equipment to support expedited delivery of the 11 sites identified in the Housing Now Initiative.
- Funding for CreateTO of \$292,500 for two (2) temporary positions for four years, including salary, benefits and equipment, to support expedited delivery of the 11 sites identified in the Housing Now Initiative.

Further, on January 30, 2019 through recommendation 45, Council directed the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services, as part of the Fall report on the City's 10-year Housing Plan 2020-2030, to provide City Council with an updated staffing framework for the co-ordination, streamlining and efficient delivery of the full range of the City's housing programs and policies.

In the interim the work and function of the Affordable Housing Office will be merged as part of the new Housing Secretariat to streamline the City's efforts on affordable housing and the delivery of the Housing Now Initiative.

City Council through the Open Door Affordable Housing Program approved 1,191 new affordable rental homes in 2017 and 1,497 in 2018, exceeding the City's annual targets for the first time. The 2019 Housing Now Initiative is expected to yield approximately 10,000 residential units on 11 City-owned sites, of which some 3,700 will be new affordable rental homes.

This substantially increased volume of market and affordable housing, to be delivered on an expedited timeline, will result in increased pressure on existing staff resources,

consistent with Council's direction January 30, 2019, to increase staffing in the Housing Secretariat, City Planning and CreateTO.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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