



## REPORT FOR ACTION

# Supplementary Report - Creating New Non-Profit Co-operative Homes at 685 Queen Street East

**Date:** July 27, 2020

**To:** City Council

**From:** Executive Director, Housing Secretariat

**Wards:** Ward 14 - Toronto Danforth

### SUMMARY

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At its meeting of July 13, 2020, the Planning and Housing Committee adopted Item PH15.12 - "Creating New Non-Profit Co-operative Homes at 685 Queen Street East", with amendments, requesting the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning in consultation with the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to report directly to City Council at its meeting on July 28 and 29, 2020, on a plan to ensure that a number of the new affordable rental units to be developed at 685 Queen Street East are designated for artists, and include the number of units and the tenant access plan and that staff work with the Co-op Housing Federation, Riverdale Co-op and the local Councillors in developing this plan.

This supplementary report responds to the Planning and Housing Committee's request and recommends that Council approve the allocation of five new affordable rental units for artists at 685 Queen Street East, with future occupants/households to be selected in accordance with the Access Policy outlined in Attachment 1.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Executive Director, Housing Secretariat recommends that:

1. City Council direct that Executive Director, Housing Secretariat in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to work with Riverdale Co-operative Homes and the Co-Operative Housing Federation of Toronto and designate five of the new affordable rental homes to be created at 685 Queen Street East for artists, with future occupants/households to be selected based on the Access Policy (the "Access Policy") outlined in Attachment 1.
2. City Council authorize the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, to amend the existing municipal housing facility agreement (the City's "Contribution Agreement") with

Riverdale Co-operative Houses to ensure that Riverdale's Tenant Access Plan, to be approved by the Director, Housing Stability Services prior to first occupancy, includes the Access Policy for artists outlined in Attachment 1, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat and in a form approved by the City Solicitor.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There is no financial impact arising from these recommendations.

## **EQUITY IMPACT**

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The HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan envisions a city in which all residents have equal opportunity to develop to their full potential. The HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan is also centred on a human rights based approach to housing. This human rights based approach recognizes that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of a person and to building inclusive, healthy, sustainable and liveable communities.

The redevelopment of 685 Queen Street East will increase the opportunity for lower income individuals and families to access affordable, safe, and well-maintained homes. In addition, this initiative will create new housing opportunities for low-income and vulnerable individuals, as well as those from equity-seeking groups, including Indigenous and Black communities, to access safe, healthy and adequate homes.

Access to good quality, safe, affordable housing is an important determinant of health and also improves the social and economic status of an individual. Good quality, affordable housing is also the cornerstone of vibrant, healthy neighbourhoods and supports the environmental and economic health of the city, region and country as a whole.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of July 13, 2020, the Planning and Housing Committee adopted Item PH15.12 - "Creating New Non-Profit Co-operative Homes at 685 Queen Street East", with amendments, and requested the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning in consultation with the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to report directly to City Council at its meeting on July 28 and 29, 2020, on a plan to ensure that a number of the new affordable rental units to be developed at 685 Queen Street East are designated for artists, and include the number of units and the tenant access plan. <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.PH15.12>

At its meeting on December 17 and 18, 2019, through PH11.8, "Increasing Non Profit Housing Opportunities: Results of the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative Request for Proposal", City Council authorized the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, to negotiate and enter into, on behalf of the City, a municipal housing facility agreement

(the City's Contribution Agreement) with the Riverdale Co-operative for 685 Queen Street East. The group was awarded \$3,900,000 in Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative funding following its successful Request for Proposals submission.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.PH11.8>

At its meeting on October 2, 2019, through PH8.3, "Open Door Program Call for Applications 2019: Support for 651 New Affordable Rental Homes", City Council approved capital funding of \$640,000 from the City's Development Charges Reserve Fund for Subsidized Housing (XR2116), as well as an estimated \$1,369,303 in City fees and charges exemptions for 685 Queen Street East.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.PH8.3>

At its meeting held on June 18 and 19, 2019, through report PH6.4, "Providing New Affordable Rental Housing at 685 Queen Street East", City Council approved the provision of \$500,000 in financial assistance for pre-development activities to be undertaken to support the affordable housing development on property owned by Riverdale Co-operative Houses Inc. located at 685 Queen Street East.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.PH6.4>

At its meeting of December 9 and 10, 2015, City Council, through report TE12.7, "Final Report - 77-79 East Don Roadway and 661-677 Queen Street East - Zoning Amendment Applications", directed that the community benefits to be secured as part of the development approvals for the mixed-use project at 77-79 East Don Roadway and 661-677 Queen Street East be a cash payment and be used towards the provision of affordable housing in Ward 14 (formerly Ward 30).

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.TE12.7>

## **COMMENTS**

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### **New Affordable Rental Homes at 685 Queen Street East**

Riverdale Co-operative Houses' ("Riverdale Co-operative") property at 685 Queen Street East has nine apartments that are in need of substantial capital repairs, including upgrades and renovations to address the accessibility needs of current and future residents. The Co-operative is also in need of additional affordable homes for its members.

Streetcar Developments ("Streetcar"), a private sector developer, who is developing the adjacent site, is willing to work with Riverdale Co-operative to help redevelop the 685 Queen Street property. However, this arrangement requires that all planning approvals be in place and construction be able to commence by mid-2021, to align with Streetcar's current schedule at the adjacent site.

This proposed arrangement will leverage Streetcar's development expertise to ensure that good quality homes are delivered at a cost that is financially feasible for Riverdale Co-operative, allowing the homes to be rented at affordable levels in perpetuity. In the absence of this partnership, it would be difficult for Riverdale Co-operative to move

ahead with the redevelopment due to the cost to develop a small stand-alone site plus their limited funding and financing options to develop a larger site.

By taking advantage of Streetcar's purchasing power (including the developer already being mobilized onsite), plus the City's financial contributions to the project, Riverdale Co-operative will now be in a position to move ahead with this project and provide safe, secure and adequate homes for its existing and future residents.

The 26 brand new units proposed to be developed, including 17 net new and 9 replacement units, will include 2 studios, 13 one-bedrooms, 9 two-bedrooms and 2 three-bedroom units, of which 62% will be fully accessible. The monthly occupancy costs the 26 homes will be at or below 80% Average Market Rent and 25% will be allocated to clients in receipt of a housing benefits. By layering on housing benefits, qualifying households will be able to secure deeper levels of affordability.

### **Affordable Housing Opportunities for Artists**

Affordable housing opportunities for artists is a vital part of supporting the City's creative sector and its cultural economy. However, the high cost of rent and limited affordable housing options have made it challenging for many artists to continue to live in the city.

It is proposed that 5 of the 26 new affordable rental homes at 685 Queen Street East be allocated to provide much-needed affordable housing for professional artists in the Riverdale community. These units will be designated and operated for residential use, and future occupants/households will be selected in accordance with the attached Access Policy. The City will approve, monitor and enforce the Access Policy for all units in the development, including the 5 units for artists, through the Contribution Agreement signed between the City of Toronto and Riverdale Co-operative Homes.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Abigail Bond  
Executive Director, Housing Secretariat

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 - Access Policy for Artist Designated Units  
Attachment 2 - Affordable Rental Housing - Eligibility and Income Verification Guide