

Creation of a Fair and Streamlined Access System for Affordable Housing

Date: April 8, 2021

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration; Chief Planner & Executive Director, City Planning; and Executive Director, Housing Secretariat

Wards: All

SUMMARY

As outlined in the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan, the City continues to develop and implement a range of program and policy initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing in Toronto. The City currently considers affordable housing to be rental housing where the total monthly shelter cost is at or below average market rent [determined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation \(CMHC\)](#), as defined in the Official Plan and Municipal Housing Facility By-law

Affordable housing is developed and operated by private and non-profit housing providers under various agreements with the City that secure and govern affordability. In addition to the City's social housing stock, there are over 8,000 affordable units currently under agreement with the City. This number is expected to rise substantially over the next ten years as the City works to meet its target in the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan to approve 40,000 new affordable rental homes. Ensuring these units are filled by eligible households is critical to optimizing Toronto's limited affordable rental supply.

The Housing Secretariat creates partnerships with housing providers to increase the supply of affordable housing through programs such as Open Door and Housing Now, where the City offers land, capital funding and other municipal incentives (e.g., property tax exemptions and waiving of planning application fees and development charges). Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) is responsible for the ongoing administration of these units, providing oversight to ensure contractual compliance of rent levels and that units are being filled by households that meet eligibility and income requirements.

In addition, City Planning oversees units created or secured through Official Plan policies, including rental replacement and Section 37 policies, which have different administrative requirements and compliance remedies than those developed through Creation of a Fair and Streamlined Access System for Affordable Housing

affordable housing programs led by the Housing Secretariat. Some affordable units secured through Section 37 also receive Open Door incentives, and as such, are administered by SSHA.

As the City's delivery of affordable housing is expanding across a range of housing initiatives, this report recommends the creation of a centralized access system to streamline the process of advertising and filling future affordable units in a fair and transparent way. The proposed system will leverage the City's existing choice based access system for subsidized housing, with the goal of creating a single entry point for applicants to navigate a range of affordable and deeply affordable housing options that suit their needs.

This report is seeking Council approval to execute an Implementation Plan (Attachment A), involving the design of a new affordable housing access system that integrates a client portal for the public to search and apply for available units, and a vacancy management system for housing providers to post vacancies and review applications. System design will be informed through a range of community and stakeholder consultation, with the goal of ensuring that access to the City's affordable housing units is transparent, fair and accessible.

Additionally, this report provides an overview of the current affordable housing access and allocation system, as well as cross-divisional efforts underway to streamline administration and improve City oversight. This responds to City Council's request at its meeting on October 27, 2020 (item PH17.3), that the Housing Secretariat, SSHA and City Planning report back with an implementation plan that establishes transparent access plans for new affordable housing, including rental replacement units, and a process to ensure compliance with access plan requirements.

All new housing projects under SSHA administration are already required to complete and submit an Access Plan for City review and approval. Access Plans guide and document how housing providers are advertising available units and selecting tenants, in support of a transparent selection process. City Planning is working to strengthen oversight of affordable units and align access requirements with SSHA where possible, until a centralized access system is in place. As part of these efforts, City Planning has been working with rental replacement owners to develop housing access plans for all units that are not occupied by returning tenants.

At this meeting, City Council also requested that staff review compliance of existing agreements that secure rental replacement units to ensure that owners are advertising and filling units on a fair and open basis. City Planning will fulfill this request in Q3 2021, through a historical review of previous rental replacement agreements to ensure compliance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration; Chief Planner & Executive Director, City Planning; and Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, recommend that:

1. City Council approve the Centralized Access System for Affordable Housing Implementation Plan, as set out in Attachment A.
2. City Council direct the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to execute the Implementation Plan in Attachment A, for the development of a centralized affordable housing access system for units subject to an agreement with the City of Toronto that include a maximum income requirement and limits rents to average market rent, as determined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; and direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, and Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, to work with the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to implement this plan.
3. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to include requirements in all new term sheets to be implemented in all new agreements securing new affordable housing units and new affordable replacement rental units for land owners to advertise and allocate affordable units in a manner consistent with practices for new affordable housing units secured by the Housing Secretariat, and administered by Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, including requirements for an approved access plan, housing benefit targets, income eligibility and the use of a centralized affordable access system.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report. Anticipated financial impacts resulting from the development and operation of a centralized access system for affordable housing will be included in the 2022 budget submission for Shelter, Support and Housing Administration for consideration through the Budget Process.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Access to safe and affordable housing provides a foundation for improving social and economic outcomes. Through the design and implementation of a client-centered housing portal, the City will make finding affordable housing more simple, fair, and accessible. Staff will conduct consultation to inform the design of the new housing portal

with a focus on populations who may face barriers in the application process to support a system that is accessible and inclusive to all equity-seeking groups, including persons with disabilities, seniors, racialized groups and newcomers.

DECISION HISTORY

On October 27, 2020, City Council adopted the report *Taking Action to Increase Affordable and Supportive Housing Opportunities* (item PH17.3), which described actions taken to date by staff in preparation for impending federal funding through the national Rapid Housing Initiative, as well as details on the City's plans to pivot to permanent housing solutions while maintaining capacity in the shelter system for its intended short-term emergency use.

Through this item, City Council requested that staff report back with an implementation plan that establishes transparent access plans for new affordable housing units and a process to ensure compliance. This staff report provides an overview of existing access plan requirements, as well as cross-divisional efforts underway to streamline these requirements across housing programs and improve City oversight.

City Council also requested that staff review compliance of existing agreements that secure rental replacements to ensure that owners are advertising and filling units on a fair and open basis. In Q3 2021, City Planning will be conducting a historical review of previous rental replacement agreements to ensure compliance.

The staff report and decision document can be accessed at the following link:
[Taking Action to Increase Affordable and Supportive Housing Opportunities](#)

On December 17, 2019, City Council adopted the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan and its recommended actions as a strategic framework to guide the City's efforts on housing and homelessness needs over the next ten years. Action 22 of this plan is to modernize and simplify access to social and affordable housing by developing and implementing a transparent access system for new affordable housing opportunities.

The staff report and decision document can be accessed at the following link:
[HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan](#)

COMMENTS

Overview of Toronto's Affordable Housing System

Through its Official Plan and Municipal Housing Facility By-law, the City defines affordable housing as rental housing where the total monthly shelter cost, inclusive of utilities, is at or below average market rent as determined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

For 2021, CMHC's average market rents for Toronto range from \$1,211 for a bachelor, to \$1,896 for a unit with three or more bedrooms (Table 1). These rents are lower than the average rents for vacant units in Toronto's private rental market, which range from \$1,450 for a bachelor, to \$2,549 for a unit with three or more bedrooms.

Table 1: Maximum rents in affordable housing units by unit size

| Unit Size | Maximum rent of Affordable Units <i>(CMHC's average market rent)</i> |
|--------------------|--|
| Bachelor | \$1,211 |
| 1 bedroom | \$1,431 |
| 2 bedrooms | \$1,661 |
| 3 or more bedrooms | \$1,896+ |

Affordable housing is developed and operated by private and non-profit housing providers under various agreements with the City that secure and govern affordability over a set term. Housing providers are responsible for the day-to-day operations of affordable housing projects, including advertising and filling available affordable units, and verifying household income to determine eligibility. The City is responsible for providing support and oversight of agreement compliance.

Such agreements are generated through a range of City policies, programs and initiatives led across various divisions that establish affordability terms based on community and stakeholder consultation, system-level planning and Council direction. These initiatives have contributed to over 8,000 affordable units under City administration, working towards the goal of adding 40,000 net new affordable units by 2030 as set out in the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan.

As the City works to address housing need across the housing continuum (Figure 1), the rents established through the City's affordable housing initiatives are intended to suit the housing needs of low to medium-income households. To deepen affordability for low-income households that do not have adequate income for rents at CMHC's average market rent, many agreements require that a certain number of affordable units be provided to tenants in receipt of a housing benefit (a monthly financial benefit funded by the City to reduce the financial burden of rent). For example, the Open Door program requires that developers provide 20% of units to tenants in receipt of a rent-geared-to-income housing benefit. Current plans to align the administration of the City's affordable housing programs include creating consistent requirements for housing providers to provide a minimum number of affordable units to households in receipt of a rent-geared-to-income housing benefit.

Figure 1: Housing Continuum



Housing benefits help to bridge the affordability gap and increase access to housing opportunities for some of Toronto's most vulnerable populations, while also helping to promote mixed-income communities. For example, a single person household receiving Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program receive a maximum shelter allowance of \$390 and \$479 respectively per month, which would not be sufficient to cover rents in affordable units without a layered housing benefit. The City will continue to fill rent-geared-to-income housing units (social housing) with eligible low-income households through the centralized waiting list for subsidized housing.

Current system for filling affordable units

The City's affordable housing initiatives vary in affordability terms, administration, and methods to remedy compliance. The majority of the City's affordable units are currently overseen by SSHA (over 7,700 units), with the remaining affordable units secured through City Planning policies (over 500 units) which have a separate set of administrative and tenant access rules.

Affordable housing overseen by SSHA

SSHA currently provides administrative oversight for the affordable units generated by the Housing Secretariat through programs such as Open Door the future Housing Now sites. The Housing Secretariat enters into Contribution Agreements with housing providers, which grants SSHA the authority to oversee administration of affordable units in the following key areas:

Tenant Access:

Affordable units under SSHA are subject to the [Municipal Housing Facility By-Law](#), which states that the gross annual income of all persons who reside in a housing unit, can be no more than four times the annualized rent (monthly rent multiplied by 12) at initial occupancy. For example, a one bedroom unit at average market rent is \$1,431, making \$68,688 the corresponding annual gross household income limit.

All new housing projects are required to complete and submit an Access Plan for SSHA staff review and approval. Access Plans are meant to guide and document how housing providers are advertising available units and selecting tenants, to ensure their selection processes are fair and transparent. Access Plan templates are standardized across housing projects and require information such as income and eligibility verification

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processes, any additional landlord screening criteria, the number of units dedicated to serve priority populations, and the number of units with a housing benefit. For an access plan to be approved by the City, housing providers must agree to non-discriminatory tenant selection processes that are documented and transparently communicated to applicants.

Housing providers advertise available affordable units through their own mediums (e.g. website, housing portals), sharing information such as unit size(s) available, accessibility features, and household eligibility and income requirements. The City also promotes available units on its [website](#), over social media, and to all Housing Help Centres (a program that helps connect affordable housing opportunities to people who are under-housed, at risk of losing their housing, or experiencing homelessness).

Recognizing that some residents may face barriers accessing mainstream information about available units for a variety of reasons (e.g., no internet access, language barriers, accessibility challenges), SSHA is working to expand its advertising mediums, including identifying and partnering with additional community organizations that serve equity-seeking groups, such as persons with disabilities, newcomers and racialized communities.

Tenant Selection:

The current system for selecting tenants to fill affordable units in a new development is a random draw process. Under this allocation system, housing providers generate a randomized list of the names of tenants that have expressed interest in the available unit during a set time period. Housing providers contact applicants in that order, who are then invited to proceed with the income and eligibility verification stage of the application process.

Some affordable housing projects have units that are set aside for a particular population group. This includes units in buildings with an approved mandate (e.g. seniors' buildings); housing with layered support services; and modified units for persons with physical disabilities. These units involve different eligibility verification and selection processes, which must be approved by the City through the housing provider's Access Plan.

City Oversight:

SSHA staff monitor housing provider compliance of agreement terms using a number of reporting and oversight mechanisms. This includes requiring that housing providers submit annual reports comprising rent levels, initial household incomes of tenants, and financial statements. Housing providers must also comply with City's audits of tenant files which take place every three to five years to verify that units are being filled by households that meet the City's income and eligibility requirements.

SSHA supports housing provider compliance of agreements through training, tools, monitoring housing project reporting and providing guidance on operational and capital planning. If housing providers are found to be in default of their agreement terms, for example not meeting requirements related to rent levels or income verification of

tenants, City staff support compliance by notifying the housing provider of the default and escalating events as necessary to identify solutions and remedy the situation.

Housing providers have the opportunity to remedy identified events of default after receiving notice from the City. If the housing provider does not sufficiently remedy the default, City staff then enforce the penalties as available in the respective contribution agreements.

Affordable housing established through City Planning policies

City Planning currently secures affordable housing through the development review process in two policy areas: rental replacement units, as required pursuant to Section 111 of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, and affordable units secured as a Section 37 community benefit under the Planning Act. As noted previously, where Open Door incentives are layered on top of Section 37 units, these units are administered by SSHA.

Rental Replacement Units: Official Plan policy 3.2.1.6 requires that where six or more existing rental units will be demolished as part of a redevelopment, the same number, bedroom type and size of rental units must be replaced in the new development with similar rents. Depending on the rent category for the existing rental units, the rents for replacement units are secured at affordable rents (average market rent) or mid-range rents (up to 150% of average market rent). Where a previous tenant returns to a replacement unit, the new rent is based on their previous rent paid plus applicable Rent Increase Guideline increases and a one-time capital allowance.

Section 37: In recent years, a greater number of newly built affordable units have been secured as a Section 37 community benefit (as opposed to receipt of a cash contribution). Affordable units are either provided as a requirement of Official Plan policies, such as the large site policy that requires new affordable housing on sites greater than five hectares and policies in the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan that specify a percentage of new affordable housing that should be included in new developments, or as a negotiated community benefit to include new affordable units in a development.

Going forward, the City is also advancing Inclusionary Zoning policies that would secure new affordable units. Additionally, Section 37 will be replaced by the Province's new Community Benefit. As such, Section 37 as currently applied will no longer be used to secure new affordable housing by September 2022 (or earlier), upon the adoption of the Community Benefit By-Law. Pursuant to Section 111, rental replacement housing will continue.

Tenant Access:

For rental replacement projects, existing agreements typically require that owners submit a tenant access plan at least six months prior to occupancy. Replacement rental units are offered to previous tenants of the existing rental building first regardless of their income. As rental replacement units are replacing a stock of housing that is not

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funded by the City and that previously did not have any access or income requirements, the past practice has been to have the remaining units made available to the general public through a fair, open and transparent process consistent with standard practices for the private rental market and are not subject to tenant income limits. Depending on the number of units not prioritized for returning tenants, the City has used a number of avenues to ensure fair, open and transparent access to available units, including requesting that owners target advertising of the units to a local community agency, through the Councillor's office and/or through the City's social media channels.

Where new affordable units are secured as a community benefit, Open Door incentives are often layered with the Section 37 contribution to either extend the length of affordability (for example from 15 to 99 years), secure rents below average market rent, or increase the total number of affordable units. In these cases, the affordable housing is secured both through an agreement pursuant to Section 37 as well as through a Contribution Agreement, and the process for advertising and allocating the affordable units is addressed through the access plan process secured in the Contribution Agreement, and is expected to be fair, open and transparent.

Tenant Selection:

City Planning and SSHA staff have been working together to align tenant selection practices until a new coordinated access system is in place. On an interim basis, City Planning staff have been working with rental replacement owners to develop a housing access plan for any unit not occupied by returning tenants and encourage that units are allocated to households that meet the income requirements consistent with units under SSHA administration and the Municipal Housing Facility By-Law, which is no more than four times the annualized rent.

City Oversight:

City Planning maintains oversight of compliance of the secured rental replacement units and new affordable units by ensuring that the housing terms are included in the site-specific zoning by-law and legal agreement(s) registered against the land. Their terms include requirements that building permits for rental replacement units and affordable units be issued prior to or at the same time as market housing units, as well as reporting requirements on rent levels and annual increases.

In Q3 2021, staff will conduct a review of existing agreements to ensure compliance. On an interim basis, staff will work with owners to align the tenant access plan process with SSHA's practices. Subject to Council approval, all new agreements will include requirements that housing providers use the City's centralized access system going forward, ensuring coordination in how affordable units are allocated and administered.

Moving towards a new centralized access system

The City's delivery of affordable housing has expanded and become more complex with the addition of new housing policies and programs, as well as work underway to achieve the target of adding 40,000 affordable units over the next ten years. As such, there is a growing need to coordinate the administration of all new affordable units being delivered across multiple divisions and provide for seamless and transparent access to these units for members of the public.

This report recommends City Council approval of the Implementation Plan in Attachment A, which outlines the steps to procuring and implementing a new technology system that will streamline the process of advertising and filling affordable units with an income requirement, including future affordable rental or affordable replacement rental units under development by City Planning.

The new system is not intended to address access to affordable ownership units, new mid-range replacement rental units or to affordable replacement rental units secured under older legal agreements. Staff will work with owners with existing rental replacement agreements to strongly encourage voluntary use of the new system when filling vacant units. This includes highlighting the value of the new system and how it will create administrative efficiencies, as well as providing training materials on how to operate the new system.

Jurisdictional Scan and Consultation Findings

Many jurisdictions facing similar housing challenges as Toronto use a random-draw process to fill affordable units and have invested in technology systems that streamline the tenant application process and unit allocation. Examples of municipalities that have a centralized access portal for affordable housing and fill units through a randomized list include: New York, Boston, Jersey City, San Francisco, and Amsterdam.

Key themes found in the jurisdictional scan on best practices in affordable housing access include:

- Common use of a technology that integrates systems for tenant access and housing provider administration with standardized information included in housing advertisements and applicant instructions.
- A focus on creating user-friendly websites that use plain language, have accessibility features, can be translated in different languages, and aim to have practical completion times (e.g. full application can be completed under 20 minutes).
- Access portals are designed to support informed housing choices by allowing applicants to search by neighbourhood, features, what they can qualify for based on their household income, as well as keep people abreast of their application status.
- Access portals promote services and resources available to applicants such as housing counselors, language supports, and tools (e.g. document checklists).
- Randomized draws are conducted both electronically and physically, with some lotteries including prioritization mechanisms for population groups.

The City's Innovation Team has started community consultation to inform the design of a new Affordable Access system, by conducting interviews with people seeking affordable housing. Early findings showed the need to raise public awareness of what affordable housing is, how to apply for it, and the difference between affordable housing and housing with a rent-geared-to-income subsidy.

As outlined in the Implementation Plan, SSHA and City Planning will continue to work with the City's Innovation Team to engage residents and stakeholders to inform the design and implementation of a new centralized access system (subject to Council approval).

Proposed Access System

Future system development will align with the choice based access system, procured by the City to manage applications on the centralized waiting list for subsidized housing. Leveraging and adapting existing processes and systems will bring efficiencies both in initial design and longer-term operation and maintenance. Alignment will also support better integration between the access points for affordable and subsidized housing. This connection will provide a more seamless experience for clients to identify and compare their housing options, and in turn support more informed housing choices.

Plans to centralize and modernize affordable housing access involve the development of a new technology with the following two primary functions:

1) Access portal for applicants to search and apply for available affordable housing

A central online access portal will enable people to search and apply for affordable housing opportunities across Toronto. Applicants will be required to upload income and other household information and supporting documentation to confirm eligibility. The system will use the information provided in the application (e.g. income, requested unit sizes, location preferences, accessibility needs) to filter search results and better match applicants to suitable housing options that they qualify for. This will save time for both applicants and housing providers.

As part of the Implementation Plan, staff will conduct community consultation to inform the design of the client access portal with a focus on identifying and engaging populations that may face barriers in the application process. Consultation will allow the City to better understand client needs and experiences searching and applying for housing, in support of the following key principles:

Simple: The website interface is intuitive to navigate, with simple application instructions that can be completed within a reasonable time frame.

Fair: Processes are transparent and promote equal opportunity for eligible applicants to be successful in the random draw process.

Accessible: System features are accessible to people with a range of abilities and in the applicants' medium of choice, with well-communicated supports (e.g. housing counsellor contacts and translation services).

Informative: Applicants understand the options available to them, how households are selected for units, their application status, and are provided clear information on what they are eligible for based on their household income.

2) Allocation system for housing providers to post and fill available units

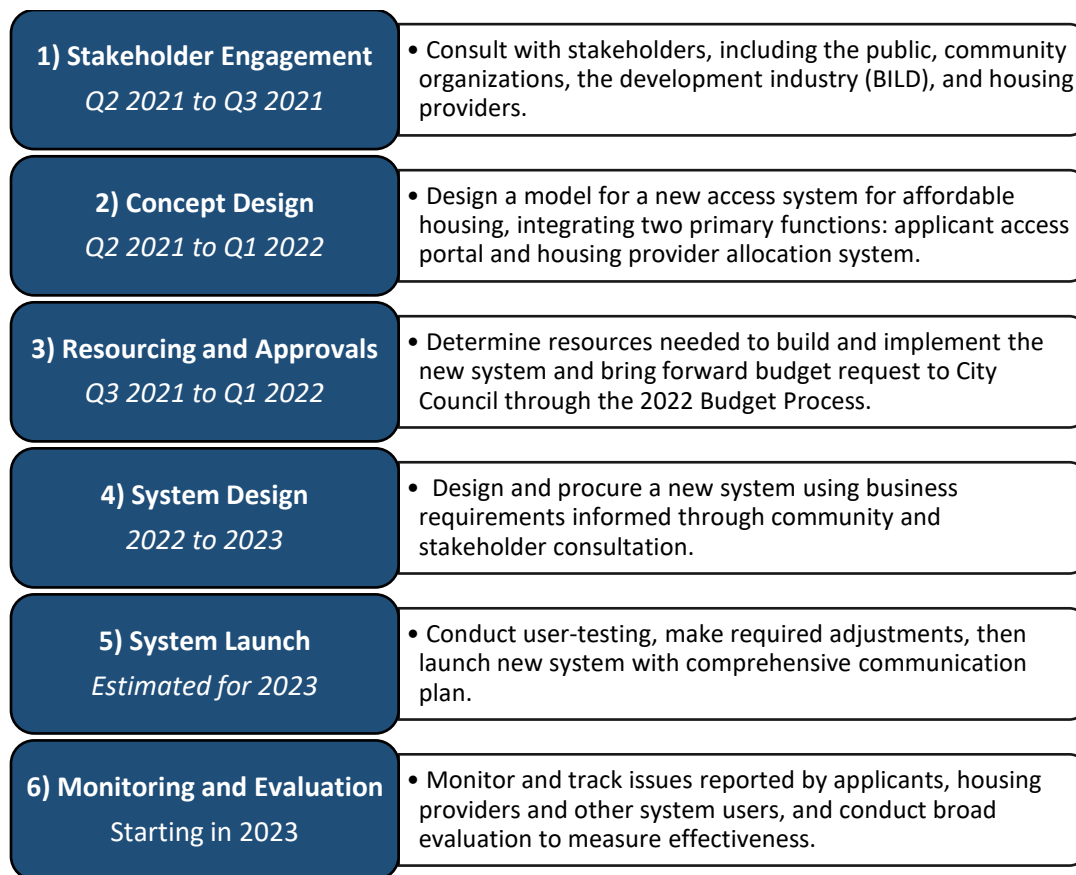
The allocation function of the system will enable housing providers to review applications to their available units, automate the randomization of applicant order, and facilitate preliminary eligibility verification and applicant contacting. Housing providers will continue to confirm eligibility and verify household income prior to occupancy of a unit, to ensure units are being occupied by households below the established income limits.

Continuing to use the randomized draw allocation approach in the new system is in line with current practice in the housing sector, efficient to administer (expediting the housing offer process), and allows for equal opportunity of similar household types to access affordable housing units.

Where applicable, housing providers will continue to fill units with distinct contractual arrangements outside of the randomized allocation system. This includes affordable units provided to low-income households in receipt of a housing benefit which are filled through referral agreements and the centralized waiting list, as well as established priority populations housed through mandates and referral agreements with community agencies (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, seniors, Indigenous peoples).

Implementation Plan

Subject to Council approval, SSHA will work in collaboration with the Housing Secretariat, City Planning and the City's Innovation Team to design a new system according to the Implementation Plan detailed in Attachment A. This implementation plan includes the following key stages:



Next Steps

Pending approval of this staff report, SSHA will collaborate with City Planning, the Housing Secretariat, and the Innovation Team, to complete the implementation activities outlined in this report, obtaining resource approvals through the 2022 budget process.

While the new access system is underway, SSHA and City Planning will continue to make interim improvements to the administration and access of affordable housing, including:

- Building new partnerships with community organizations that serve underserved populations or populations that may face barriers in the application process (e.g. seniors, persons with disabilities, newcomers).
- Increase communication of available affordable housing advertisements to equity-seeking groups and the organizations that serve them, as a way to foster more equitable housing outcomes.
- Undertake a review of existing rental replacement agreements to ensure compliance in Q3 2021, and work with owners subject to existing agreements to encourage the use of an approved access plan and the future centralized access system when they are filling vacant units and upon unit turnover.
- Finalize and distribute SSHA's Affordable Housing Administration Manual to housing providers, which will serve as a supporting document for applicable housing providers promoting consistency in how affordable units are advertised, filled and administered.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Centralized Access System for Affordable Housing Implementation Plan

Attachment A: Centralized Access System for Affordable Housing Implementation Plan

| Stage and Estimated Timeline | Implementation Actions |
|--|--|
| <p>Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p><i>Q2 to Q3, 2021</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public awareness on what affordable housing is, who it is best suited for, and the roles of the City and housing providers. • Consult with the following stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public, with a focus on those in need of affordable housing • Community organizations, including those that represent and serve equity-seeking groups • Development industry (BILD) • Housing providers and their agents (including private and non-profit housing providers) |
| <p>Concept Design</p> <p><i>Q2 2021 to Q1 2022</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging the current choice-based system for subsidized housing, design a model for a new affordable housing centralized access system with two primary functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access portal for applicants to search and apply for available affordable housing • Housing providers to advertise and fill affordable units with eligible applicants through a randomized draw process • Apply an equity lens to identify populations that may face barriers accessing affordable housing, and collaborate with related groups to develop strategies and ongoing program improvements to support more equitable outcomes. • Complete a risk assessment to identify, evaluate and mitigate potential challenges or opportunities. |
| <p>Resourcing</p> <p><i>Q3 2021 to Q1 2022</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine resources needed to build and implement the new system, including ongoing operational staff resources. • Bring forward budget requests to City Council through Shelter Support and Housing Administration's capital and operating budgets in the 2022 budget process. |

| Stage and Estimated Timeline | Implementation Actions |
|--|--|
| <p>System Design</p> <p><i>2022 to 2023</i></p> | <p>System Design Phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping & Planning • Procurement (approximately six months) • Design, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage equity research collected through stakeholder engagement to determine the diverse needs of system users • Develop design requirements • Conduct a technical feasibility assessment, reviewing and evaluating options against the design requirements identified • Build and Implement, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prototyping and testing with end users to further refine design requirements and capabilities • Upload new affordable unit advertisements (including photos and unit descriptions) • Organize and onboard staffing complement to administer system |
| <p>System Launch</p> <p>Estimated Launch in 2023</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct user testing and review system • Launch new system • Training with staff and housing providers • Develop and execute a change management plan, including communication with the following audiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public • Current and prospective housing providers • Community partners (e.g. housing referral agencies) • City councillors |
| <p>Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p>Starting in 2023</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and track issues reported by applicants, housing providers and other system users. • Conduct an evaluation to measure performance including user experience, housing outcomes and equity, and system efficiencies. |