# City of Toronto
Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms
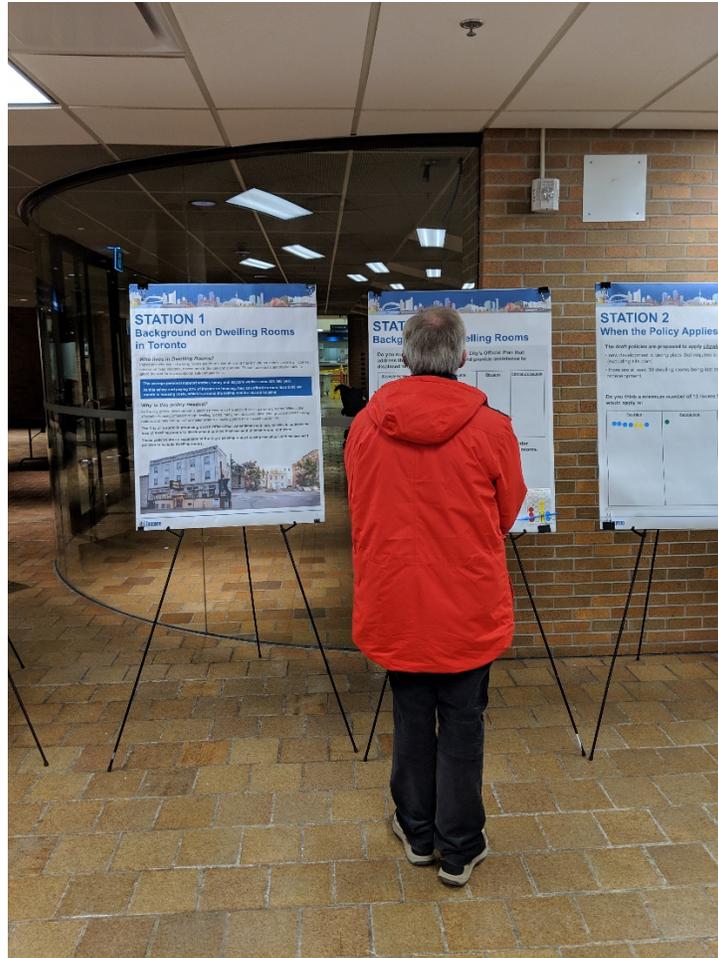
Consultation Summary Report

Prepared by Lura Consulting for the City of Toronto

January 21st, 2019

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Executive Summary

Dwelling rooms in rooming houses are a key component of Toronto's affordable housing landscape, specifically the lower end of the private rental market. As the city grows, development is placing pressure on the stock of existing dwelling rooms. Toronto's City Council directed the City Planning Division to develop a policy framework to address the loss of dwelling rooms. Lura Consulting was retained to carry out a consultation process to gather feedback on the proposed draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms.

This report provides an overview of the project, summarizes the consultation process undertaken, and presents the feedback heard. The consultation process was designed to be comprehensive and representative. It provided opportunities for multiple stakeholder groups and the general public to provide input on the proposed draft policies through a variety of channels. A total of 11 consultation events took place, in addition to an online survey and the opportunity to submit written comments through email. An approximate total of 263 participants were engaged; they included current and former tenants of dwelling rooms, landlords and operators of rooming houses, the development industry, advocates and organizations working in Toronto's affordable housing sector, and the general public.

1. Project Overview

By definition, dwelling rooms are individual rooms for rent in rooming houses, which are buildings that provide separate accommodation in the form of dwelling rooms and have shared areas such as a kitchen and/or bathroom. Dwelling rooms may include cooking facilities (e.g. a hot plate or kitchenette) or bathrooms, but not both.

Dwelling rooms are typically the most affordable private market rental option. Many individuals who live in rooming houses are unable to afford the private market rent for a conventional self-contained rental unit. They may include households with low incomes, seniors on fixed incomes, newcomers to the city, and students.

As Toronto grows, development is placing pressure on the stock of existing dwelling rooms. The current policy and regulatory framework for the demolition of rental units does not address the loss of rental housing in the form of dwelling rooms specifically.
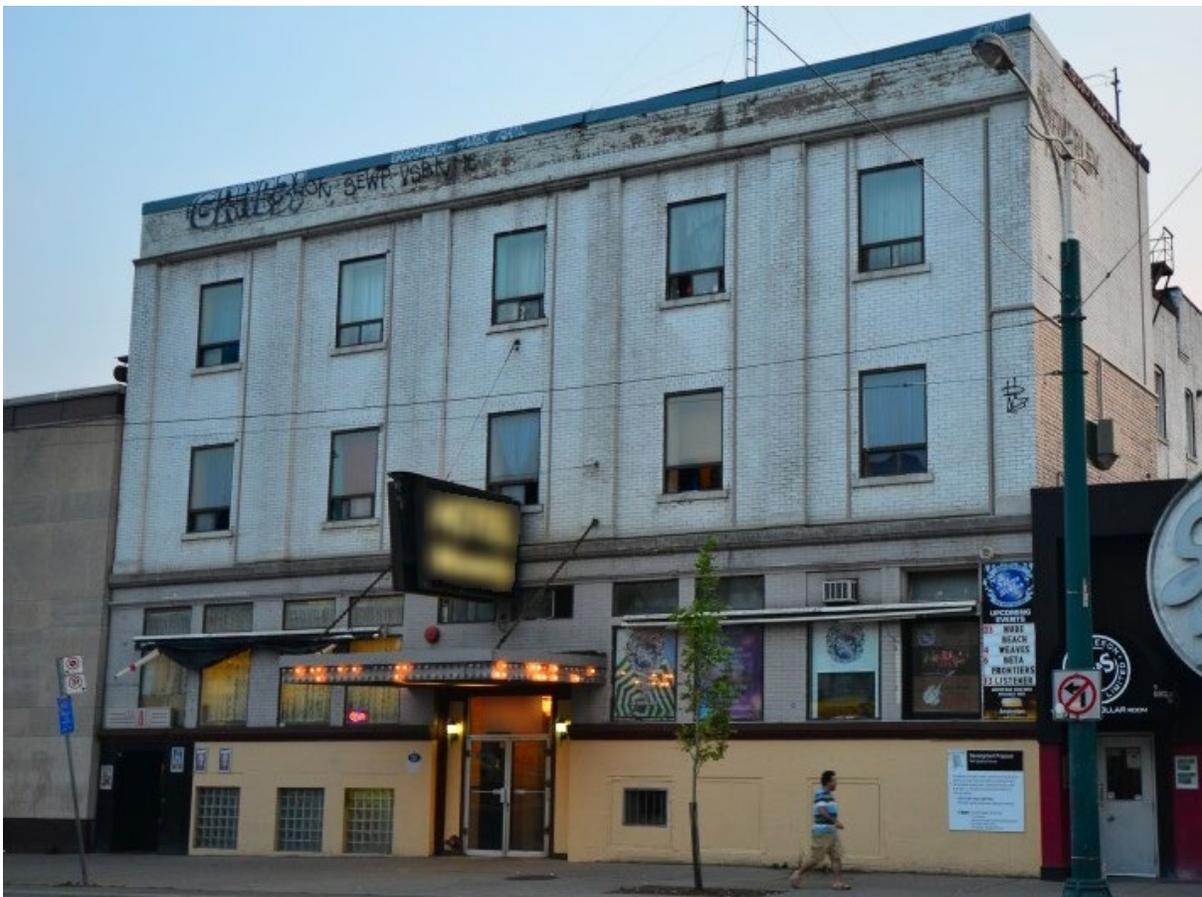
Figure 1: Photo of a rooming house in Toronto (Source: Google Street View)

In response to these development pressures, a motion was put forward at the October 12, 2017 meeting of the City of Toronto Planning and Growth Management Committee to report back on draft Official Plan policies that address the loss of dwelling rooms, similar to the existing policies in the Official Plan that provide for the protection of conventional self-contained rental units.

The draft Official Plan Amendment proposes new policies that address the loss of dwelling rooms to development by requiring replacement and that assistance be provided to displaced tenants. Specifically, the draft policies would:

- apply to development that would result in the loss of ten or more dwelling rooms;
- require the same amount of residential gross floor area to be replaced and maintained as either rental units or dwelling rooms;
- require that rents for the replacement housing have rents similar to those in effect at the time of the development application for a period of at least 25 years with a five-year phase-out; and
- require an acceptable tenant relocation and assistance plan, including addressing the right to return to replacement housing.

The draft policies would also require assistance be provided to displaced tenants to lessen hardship when development would result in the loss of one or more dwelling rooms.

At its June 7, 2018 meeting, the Planning and Growth Management Committee endorsed the draft policies for consultation.

The City of Toronto retained Lura Consulting, a neutral third-party firm specializing in stakeholder consultation and engagement, to work with the City to develop and conduct the consultation process. The main purpose of the consultation process was to provide information and solicit feedback on the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms. The objectives of the consultation were to:

- engage a broad audience that is also representative of the diversity across the City of Toronto in a conversation about the importance of affordable housing;
- inform and educate City of Toronto residents and stakeholders about affordable housing types, the housing system and gaps in the housing market within the City of Toronto;
- foster a sense of understanding of the need for affordable housing, especially dwelling rooms/shared accommodation;
- better understand the needs of those who currently live, or who have lived, in dwelling rooms;
- inform and educate about the tools available to the City of Toronto to address the loss of affordable housing, with a specific focus on the role of the proposed policies;
- inform and educate about the proposed dwelling room policies, including the connection to existing rental housing replacement policies; and
- solicit feedback on the proposed policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, ways to address the loss of affordable dwelling rooms, and assistance required to support tenants who are displaced.

2. Consultation Process

The public and stakeholder consultation process combined methods of face-to-face and digital engagement while using various channels to promote and disseminate information about the draft policies. City Planning established a project-specific website (accessed through toronto.ca/planningforhousing) and used social media, public notices in newspapers and newsletters, and email lists to engage members of the community and stakeholders.

To ensure broad stakeholder and geographic representation, and to maximize the diversity of perspectives and feedback on the draft policies, the following groups were engaged through the consultation activities across the city:

- Current and former tenants of dwelling rooms and other types of deeply affordable housing;
- Agencies and organizations that serve dwelling room tenants and/or those seeking affordable housing in Toronto;
- Housing advocates and researchers;
- Landlords and operators of dwelling rooms in rooming houses;
- Development industry representatives; and
- Other members of the general public.

Barriers to participation were addressed in several ways throughout the consultation process to maximize physical, economic, and digital accessibility, as well as privacy and confidentiality. These steps were important in ensuring that all participants could share their feedback and feel comfortable and safe. Specific examples are mentioned below within each engagement activity section.

2.1 Consultation Activities

Table 1 below summarizes the consultation activities, when they took place, the number of events, and the number of participants involved.

Consultation Activity	Date	Number of Events	Number of Participants
Public Meetings	November 26 – November 29, 2018	4	114
Stakeholder Roundtable Sessions	November 16 – December 12, 2018	7	75
Online Survey	November 14 – December 14, 2018	N/A	69
Written Email Submissions	N/A	N/A	5
TOTAL		**11**	**263**

Table 1: Summary Table of Consultation Activities

2.1.1 Public Meetings

Four meetings targeted at the general public were held in each of Toronto's four Community Council districts. Details of these meetings, such as when they were held, where they were held, and how many people attended can be found in Table 2 below. Full meeting summaries can be found in Appendices A-D.

Date	Community Council District	Number of Participants (Sign-Ins)*	Number of Participants (Visual Count)*
November 26, 2018	Etobicoke York	18	28
November 27, 2018	Toronto & East York	25	45
November 28, 2018	North York	10	11
November 29, 2018	Scarborough	20	30

Table 2: Summary Table of Public Meetings
*Some participants opted not to sign in at the public meetings. The visual count of participants is an approximation.

Objectives:
- Provide information on the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms
- Solicit feedback on the draft policies, including the minimum number of rooms for when the policy would apply and replacement housing priorities

Communication Approach

To maximize outreach and participation rates, the City issued an official public notice, which was published in the Toronto Star, NOW, and Novae Res Urbis news publications, as well on the City's public consultation website, project website, and social media accounts. This public notice was also circulated through a Mailchimp email campaign to stakeholders using a City-provided list of individuals and agencies that have expressed interest to the City in engaging in dwelling room-related issues. Stakeholders were encouraged to be ambassadors of the consultation process by circulating the information through their networks and communities. The public notice can be found in Appendix E.

Meeting Format
Each public meeting began with a brief presentation by Lura to provide context on the place of dwelling rooms within Toronto's affordable housing landscape, the elements of the draft policies that the City is seeking feedback on and an overview of the consultation process, including multiple ways to be involved. Presentation slides can be found in Appendix F. The presentation was followed by an "open house" with three stations where attendees could learn more information through display boards with background information and provide feedback on the policy elements using dot stickers and sticky notes on the display boards (Figure 2). Display boards can be found in Appendix G.
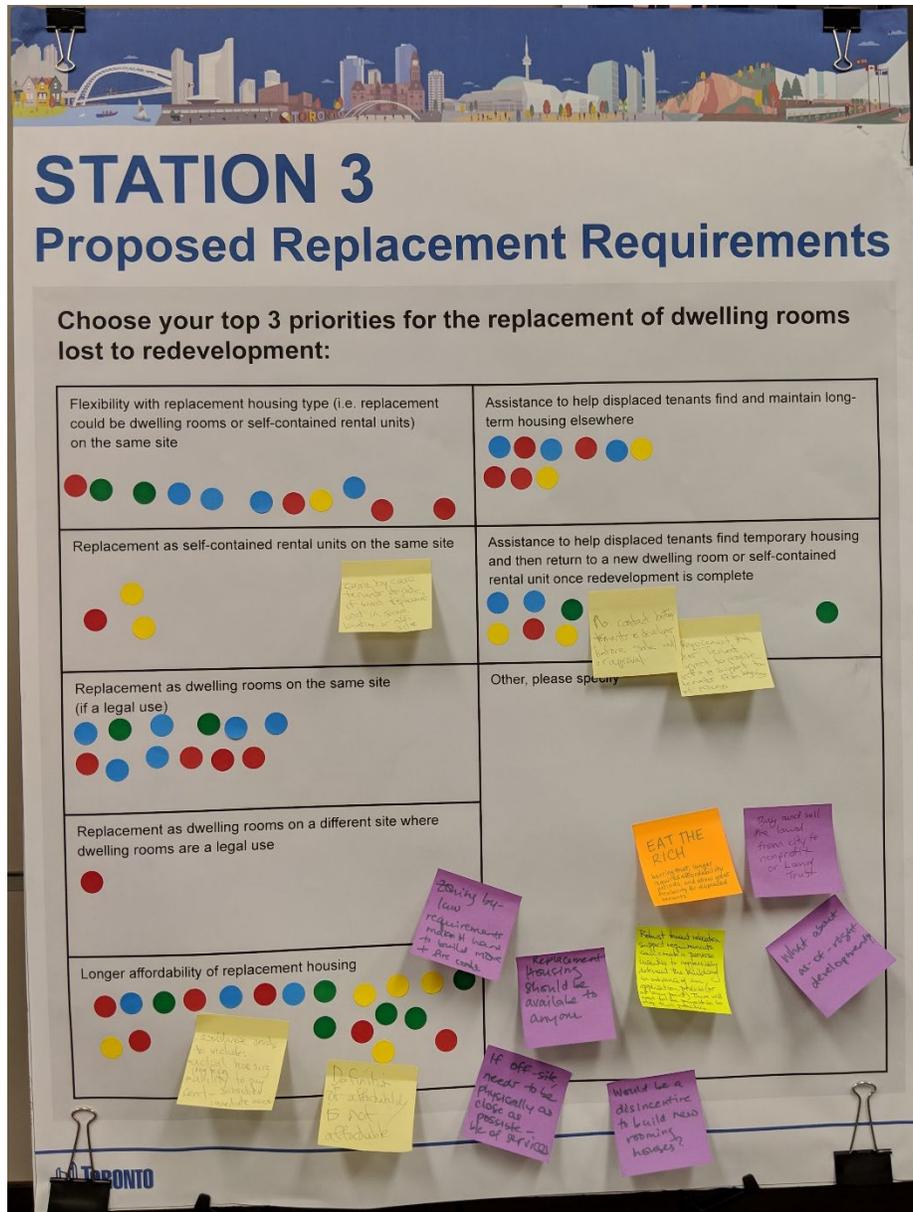
Figure 2: A display board used to collect participant feedback at the public meetings.

City Planning staff were also available at each of the stations to discuss the draft policies with attendees and answer questions. This allowed participants to obtain answers to their questions, as well as put a face to the consultation process and build relationships with City staff.

The online survey was also made available at the meetings through electronic tablets and large-print paper copies in consideration of accessibility needs.

Accessibility and Privacy
Public meetings took place in barrier-free venues located at the Civic Centres of each of the four Community Council districts. Attendees were provided the option to sign in by depositing a sign-in information card into a ballot box to ensure anonymity of personal information.

2.1.2 Stakeholder Roundtable Sessions

Seven roundtable sessions for various stakeholder groups were held across the city. Details of these meetings including when they were held, the stakeholder group targeted, and how many people attended can be found in Table 3 below. Summaries of individual roundtable sessions can be found in Appendices H-M.

Date	Stakeholder Group	Number of Participants
November 16, 2018	Agencies/Organizations (Central & Citywide)	9
November 19, 2018	Agencies/Organizations (North & West)	1
November 20, 2018	Agencies/Organizations (East)	7
December 5, 2018	Development Industry (BILD)	14
December 5, 2018	Tenants	22
December 6, 2018	Landlords/Operators	11
December 12, 2018	All Stakeholders	11

Table 3: Summary Table of Stakeholder Roundtable Sessions

Objectives:
- Provide information on the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms
- Solicit feedback on the draft policies, including the minimum number of rooms for when the policy would apply and replacement housing priorities
- Discuss opportunities, challenges, and concerns the draft policies present for stakeholders

Communication Approach

Agencies/organizations, housing advocates and researchers, and members of the development community were invited to the roundtables through a Mailchimp email invite campaign using a stakeholder list provided by the City that included individuals and agencies that have expressed interest to the City in engaging in dwelling room-related issues, as well as through word-of-mouth within the networks of those invited through Mailchimp. Stakeholders for the tenant and landlord/operator sessions were invited directly by organizations and agencies that attended one of the first three stakeholder sessions.

Meeting Format

Each roundtable session began with a brief presentation by Lura to provide context on the place of dwelling rooms within Toronto's affordable housing landscape, the elements of the draft policies that the City is seeking feedback on, and an overview of the consultation process, including multiple ways to be involved. The presentation was followed by an opportunity for attendees to ask questions, with a City staff representative from City Planning available to provide clarification. Lura then facilitated a guided discussion on the opportunities and challenges the draft policies presented for the stakeholders in attendance, as well as input they had about the specific policy elements.

While all roundtable sessions sought feedback on the same policy elements, the discussion questions and prompts were tailored to each stakeholder group. This customized approach was done to be mindful of the different needs and experiences of each targeted audience but also to optimize both the quality and quantity of feedback. For further details on each roundtable session, please refer to Appendices H-M.

Accessibility and Privacy

Stakeholder roundtable sessions were held in barrier-free venues located centrally to the districts of the city where tenants live or agencies/organizations, landlords/operators and other stakeholders are based. Sign-in was optional for tenants and landlords. TTC tokens were provided upon request to tenant attendees. No feedback arising from the roundtable discussions was tied to any participant by personal name, however the names of the organizations that some participants represented have been associated with some of the feedback to provide additional context.

2.1.3 Online Survey

Stakeholders and the general public had the opportunity to provide their feedback on the draft policies digitally through an online "fast feedback" survey that complemented the in-person consultation activities. The survey was administered directly by the City and the feedback generated was compiled and forwarded to Lura for analysis and reporting. A summary of the online survey feedback can be found in Appendix N.

Date	Stakeholder Group	Number of Participants
November 14 – December 14, 2018	All Stakeholders and General Public	69

Table 4: Summary Table of Online Survey

Objectives:
- Provide information on the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms
- Solicit feedback on the draft policies, including the minimum number of rooms for when the policy would apply and replacement housing priorities

Communication Approach

The link to the online survey could be accessed directly through the project website. The link was widely distributed in every Mailchimp invite campaign, in public notices posted online, in news publications, in email replies to inquiries from individual stakeholders, and was provided at public meetings so attendees could share with their networks.

Survey Format

The online survey was designed to provide contextual information ahead of each question in order to explain the policy element to participants before they provided responses. Most questions were quantifiable in order to make participation as quick and easy as possible. A few qualitative questions were incorporated to allow respondents to provide additional context to the project team so that the team could better understand feedback received.

Accessibility and Privacy

The online survey was anonymous and did not require that any personally identifying information be provided to complete. The survey was made available electronically and in paper format with large print for accessibility considerations. Lura staff were also available to help guide participants through the survey at public events if additional assistance was required.

2.1.4 Written E-mail Submissions

The project team welcomed and encouraged ongoing dialogue about the draft policies. Contact information for both City Planning staff and Lura staff were provided through all communication methods. Written emails from stakeholders with input on the draft policies represented another form of ongoing feedback collected.

3. Summary of What We Heard

A high-level summary of the participant feedback obtained through the consultation process is presented below and organized by specific draft policy elements. Points that are unique to a specific stakeholder group or geographic area are noted explicitly. As mentioned earlier in this report, more detailed summaries of each public meeting and roundtable session, and of the online survey, are available in Appendices A-D and H-N.

3.1 Minimum Threshold

Policy Element: The draft policies stipulate that any redevelopment of a building or related group of buildings that requires a planning application and "would result in the loss of ten or more dwelling rooms" would not be approved unless "at least the same amount of residential gross floor area is replaced and maintained" as either self-contained rental units or dwelling rooms.

Agencies/organizations, advocates, tenants, smaller landlords/operators in Scarborough, and the general public indicated that 10 dwelling room units is too high a threshold. For many tenants living in rooming houses that are part of a landlord or operator's larger portfolio, the concern was that larger landlords with the financial resources to comply with replacement requirements will be able to evade them if their individual properties contain fewer than 10 dwelling rooms. For smaller landlords/operators in Scarborough, the rationale is simply that very few to no rooming houses are physically able to contain 10 dwelling rooms as a result of the single-family detached bungalow typology that predominates in that area of the city. However, since Scarborough rooming house landlords generally run smaller-scale operations than landlords in more central parts of Toronto, they are also concerned that they will not have the means to comply with the replacement requirements triggered by a lower threshold.

Large rooming house landlords and operators as a whole do not support any minimum threshold or any policy that would require them to replace dwelling room units that they redevelop, because, in their opinion, the combined cost to both redevelop and replace could potentially threaten the viability of their business without monetary assistance from the City. However, they suggested that if there *were* to be a minimum threshold, **the City should clearly justify how the threshold was determined. It was also proposed that since dwelling rooms vary in size and rent across properties, the City should make the minimum threshold less arbitrary and more standardized than just the number of dwelling rooms lost**. For example, one large landlord suggested that instead, all rooms below 1.5 times the average market rent be eligible for protection. Another proposed using a minimum floor-space index (FSI) as the threshold measure.

Some homeowners support higher minimum thresholds as a way to reduce the number of dwelling rooms in their neighbourhood, which they said lower their property values. **However, some**

homeowners indicated that they have lived next to rooming houses for more than 30 years and they want to ensure they remain in their neighbourhoods.

5 or 6 dwelling room units was the most frequently suggested minimum threshold that the policies should include. One example cited to support this figure was that it is the most common room count for individual rooming house properties according to various stakeholder groups (including both tenants and landlords/operators) across different areas of the city. It was also noted that this number corresponds with the current threshold for policies around the loss of self-contained rental units.

Some suggested that <u>all</u> dwelling room units lost to redevelopment (i.e. a 1-unit minimum) should be replaced. This opinion was put forth on human rights grounds and tied into a discussion on the right to safe, affordable, stable housing.

3.2 Replacement Unit Type

Policy Element: The draft policies stipulate that any redevelopment of a building or related group of buildings that requires a planning application and "would result in the loss of ten or more dwelling rooms" would not be approved unless "at least the same amount of residential gross floor area is replaced and maintained" as either <u>self-contained rental units or dwelling rooms</u>.

Some agencies/organizations, advocates, tenants, and members of the general public preferred that dwelling rooms lost to development be replaced as new dwelling rooms (generally in the same site or area), while others preferred conventional self-contained rental units. It was suggested that sometimes there is a perceived negative stigma against dwelling rooms. However, it was also noted that self-contained units could be socially isolating. Several participants indicated that having a shared kitchen and private bathroom is preferred as social activities and connections are very often made in the kitchen of rooming houses. Preference for replacement as dwelling rooms is slightly higher downtown and in North York; preference for self-contained rental is slightly higher in Etobicoke and Scarborough.

Landlords and operators, specifically, desired complete freedom to choose the type of replacement unit in their redevelopment; they viewed this as a property right that the City should not infringe upon. The Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD), representing developer interest, echoed this sentiment, **requesting flexibility in the type but also the size of the replacement unit** (e.g. bachelor or one- or two-bedroom units if the replacement unit is self-contained). BILD **also asked for flexibility for property owners and developers to pay cash-in-lieu for replacement units** if they do not want to build them themselves.

Some tenants and landlords/operators suggested that the number of tenants in the lost dwelling rooms, or simply the number of rooms lost, be used as the measure of fulfilling the replacement requirements instead of gross floor area (GFA).

3.3 Right of Return and Replacement Units Not Occupied by Returning Tenants

Policy Element: The draft policies would "[address] the right to return to occupy the replacement housing at similar rents"

There was consensus among stakeholders that all displaced tenants should be given first right of refusal for replacement housing before it can be assigned to others. However, there were conflicting opinions on who should take priority for housing not occupied by a returning tenant. Some tenants and

other stakeholders noted the there is an increasingly long centralized waiting list for rent-geared-to-income housing and those on the list should take priority. Others supported the position that those who are homeless should be prioritized over those on the centralized waiting list. It was also suggested that **regardless of who occupies a replacement room/unit, rent protections or affordable status should be attached to the unit.**

There was consensus among tenants and agencies/organizations that although many tenants have strong, often long-term social, economic, and institutional ties to their neighbourhoods and are most comfortable there, displaced tenants should ultimately be given a choice of where they want to be relocated. This means choosing between temporary relocation elsewhere and then permanent relocation to a replacement unit on the original site after redevelopment is complete, *or* permanent relocation to an alternative unit elsewhere as soon displacement occurs. A few participants suggested that displaced tenants be given portable housing benefit payments to use at their discretion if they are required to secure replacement housing themselves.

Both large rooming house landlords/operators and BILD noted **that many rooming house tenants do not match the perceived intended demographic of the draft policies, since they are living in dwelling rooms by choice and not by financial need,** and would have the means to move to more expensive forms of private market rental housing at will. Therefore, **the draft policies should not provide these tenants with the right of return to replacement housing at similar rents.**

3.4 Length of Affordability

Policy Element: The draft policies would require that "for a period of at least 25 years with a 5-year phase-out, the rents for replacement housing will be similar to those in effect at the time the development application"

Feedback provided on the length of affordability was highly polarized and tied into a larger conversation on housing affordability (tenants, advocates, and agencies/organizations) and economic viability (landlords/operators).

Tenants, advocates, and agencies/organizations prefer rent protections for replacement units to exist in perpetuity. They indicated that a time cap should not be placed on replacement units' affordable rent protections because it would perpetuate affordable housing issues into the next generation.

Some tenants suggested that **if the policy must place a time limit on rent protections for replacement units, then there should at least be a review after 10 years, as well as a transitional phase-out period** (which is already provided for in the draft policies). It was proposed that the relatively gradual pace of inflation would be a fair benchmark to tie to rent increases during such a phase-out of rent protections.

Landlords/operators prefer that there be no rent protections on the replacement units. Without financial assistance or incentives from government, rent from tenants would not keep pace with rising costs to run and maintain their rooming houses, and thus their inability to charge market rent would drive them out of business. The landlords/operators also indicated that rent protections over an extended period of time would dissuade potential owners or developers from purchasing and maintaining their properties because they would not be able to break even on their investment with such a reduced stream of rental income. **BILD requested justification of the 20- and 25-year lengths of**

the rent protections, and expressed concern that the rent protection phase-out terms currently in the draft policies are too vague.

3.5 Assistance for Displaced Tenants

Policy Element: The draft policies would require "an acceptable tenant relocation and assistance plan addressing the right to return to occupy the replacement housing at similar rents, the provision of alternative accommodation at similar rents, and other assistance to lessen hardship"

Tenants consulted generally welcomed assistance in the event of displacement, but had specific suggestions for how assistance could be more comprehensive and enforceable. For example, **assistance should not only include securing a new place to live, but also help with moving and furniture expenses.** Additionally, some tenants who receive benefits from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) stressed **having a new unit secured and guaranteed for them as a pre-requisite for receiving other types of assistance** because without a current address, they risk not receiving their benefits.

Tenants and advocates concurred that the onus should be on the landlord or developer redeveloping the property to secure temporary housing for the displaced tenant before redevelopment begins (Vancouver was cited as an example where this is a requirement). It was also suggested that **the redeveloping landlord or development company should serve as the guarantor** on the application for the tenant's new unit. Some tenants said they would be open to landlords or developers connecting them with housing support services, but widespread distrust of rooming house landlords among most tenants and advocates consulted led many to request that **any assistance agreements be confirmed in writing** and that the policies should **require a neutral third-party to liaise between tenants and landlords during the displacement and relocation process**. **Assistance and relocation plans should be created immediately upon the tenant learning of an impending redevelopment of their current dwelling room, be flexible and customizable to suit tenants' changing circumstances and needs, and end no earlier than 3 months after the tenant moves into permanent replacement housing.**

There was broad consensus among all landlords/operators and BILD that the City should not download onto them all the financial responsibility for not only assisting tenants, but also providing adequate levels of well-maintained affordable housing stock in Toronto. Most recognize dwelling rooms as an integral part of Toronto's affordable housing landscape, but are of the position that governments should financially incentivize them to not redevelop their properties and thus prevent displacing their tenants. **The policies should use incentives over restrictions (some agencies/organizations and advocates agreed with this approach).**

For the same reason mentioned in Section 3.3 above, **BILD did not support the proposed requirement to provide relocation assistance to displaced rooming house tenants who have the financial means to secure replacement housing and pay for furniture and moving expenses on their own.**

3.6 Stakeholder Opportunities

Many stakeholders, including some smaller landlords, expressed optimism that the policies will contribute towards solving Toronto's complex affordable housing crisis by:

- Proactively closing existing policy gaps;
- Spurring enforcement of other legislation (e.g. Residential Tenancies Act, fire and safety codes);

- Educating tenants on their rights and policies to protect them; and
- Raising the public's awareness of the importance of dwelling rooms as part of the city's lower-end private rental housing stock.

Some advocates and agencies/organizations saw opportunity to partner with the City in the implementation of the policies, particularly in the establishment of a financial pathway (e.g. cash-in-lieu) for the replacement requirements and becoming not-for-profit landlords/operators of redeveloped rooming houses.

Many landlords and operators, both large and small, remarked on the potential for the City or other levels of government to contribute subsidies or other funding to ease the financial burden of complying with the policy requirements and incentivize the construction and maintenance of new dwelling room units.

3.7 Stakeholder Challenges and Concerns

Stakeholders and the general public identified a range of challenges and concerns associated with the policies.

Tenant Education and Access to Information: Many advocates and agencies/organizations were concerned that the effectiveness of the policies will be impacted if tenants are not made aware of the policies and how they will affect them, including from a legal rights standpoint.

Enforcement and Closing Loopholes: Some advocates and agencies/organizations cautioned that robust enforcement and penalty mechanisms must be put in place for the policies or else landlords/developers may take advantage of loopholes whereby they could escape rent protection, replacement, or assistance requirements by harassing tenants into voluntarily leaving or otherwise trying to wrongfully evict tenants.

Phase-In/Transition/Grandfathering Provisions: Both landlords/operators and BILD requested that phase-in/transition and grandfathering provisions be written into the policies to ease the financial and administrative burden for developers, property owners, and landlords/operators in complying with the policies' requirements.

Property Rights vs. Human Rights: Landlords/operators generally indicated that the policies are too restrictive and infringe upon their property rights by interfering with the free market. On the other hand, tenants, advocates, and agencies/organizations saw the policies as a way to protect dwelling room tenants' human right to housing.

Distrust Between Tenants and Landlords: Many tenants and advocates expressed distrust of landlords to do right by tenants and doubted their compliance with the policies. Some gave examples of tenants being bullied, harassed, or manipulated by landlords, some to the point of wrongful eviction. On the other hand, some rooming house operators, particularly smaller owners, noted that a history of damage-causing tenants and tenants who do not reliably pay rent has led them to discourage others in their network from becoming or continuing to be rooming house operators, thus preventing valuable dwelling room stock from coming onto the market. They suggested that the government offer a financial guarantee that would cover costs associated with damage, higher insurance premiums, or late/defaulted rent payments.

Legal Basis for Policies: Through written submissions, the development community voiced concerns over the City's legal authority to regulate dwelling rooms through the draft policies.

3.8 Other Feedback

Collaborations and Partnerships: Some advocates and representatives of agencies/organizations noted that City Planning should explore the integration of the proposed policies with other existing policy and funding frameworks within the wider system of supportive housing services. Another suggestion was to leverage the resources of other City departments like Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (SSHA) in the shaping and implementation of the policies. It was also suggested that Councillors organize community charettes with City staff, community organizations and community members to develop actionable ideas that are neighbourhood-specific.

Consistency through Zoning: A frequently voiced concern was that without the regulatory consistency afforded by citywide legalization of dwelling rooms through zoning, the policies will not apply as equitably or be as effective in achieving their aims. First, in areas where rooming houses are currently illegal like Etobicoke, North York, and Scarborough, there was concern that landlords will continue to operate underground without fire and safety inspections and tenants will be hesitant to seek help out of fear they will lose their already precarious housing. Second, amassing critical data about dwelling room conditions, stock levels, and tenants is not possible without citywide rooming house licencing. Third, prospective rooming house landlords who would only operate if it were legal to do so would otherwise not rent out their much-needed affordable housing stock.

Further Research: Finally, both tenants and landlords suggested that City Planning research best practices for government involvement in affordable housing elsewhere in the world. San Diego's Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) model, Vancouver's replacement and relocation requirements in cases of displacement, and Singapore's large publicly funded and operated housing sector were cited as examples.

4. Summarizing Highlights

To assist with refining the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, this section presents summarizing, actionable highlights from the bolded feedback points presented in Section 3 above.

4.1 Minimum Threshold

- Many stakeholders suggested setting the minimum number of dwelling room units on a single site that would trigger the replacement requirements at 5 or 6, as this figure represents the most common number of dwelling rooms in individual rooming house properties across the city. However, other stakeholders such as smaller-scale rooming house operators noted that they may not be able to afford complying with the replacement requirements unless the threshold is higher or the City provides monetary support.
- Provide a rationale for the minimum threshold and the measurement by which it is defined (e.g. number of dwelling rooms, FSI, etc.).

4.2 Replacement Unit Type

- Almost all stakeholders supported flexibility in the type and location of replacement housing units and how they are funded. For example, prioritizing replacement units on the same site or in the same neighbourhood in order to preserve displaced tenants' existing local social, economic, and service provider relationships, but in certain contexts, also providing developers and property owners with the option to construct or provide cash-in-lieu for new, replacement dwelling rooms or self-contained units offsite, where permitted.
- Provide a rationale for which measurement is chosen to meet the replacement requirement (e.g. gross floor area [GFA], unit count, or number of tenants).

4.3 Replacement Units Not Occupied by Returning Tenants

- Stakeholders agreed that returning tenants should be given the first right of refusal for replacement units, but some suggested considering restricting this right of refusal to those displaced tenants who do not have the ability or financial means to secure housing on their own elsewhere.

4.4 Rent Protection Length

- When setting the rent affordability/protection requirement for replacement housing, stakeholders indicated a need to balance the long-term financial infeasibility for many landlords/operators and developers to absorb the cost of reduced rental income with the reality that over the long term, many displaced tenants' incomes will not increase sufficiently to afford market rent. Some stakeholders suggested providing landlords/operators and developers with financial subsidies or other incentives as necessary if the protections will last many years.
- Reflecting feedback from all stakeholders, create phase-in and phase-out periods to lessen hardship for both landlords/operators and tenants.

4.5 Assistance for Displaced Tenants

- Many stakeholders agreed that the assistance policies should be comprehensive and go beyond just securing new units for displaced tenants, but some also suggested considering limiting the scope of assistance provided to tenants who are not in need from a financial or disability perspective.
- A few stakeholders noted that the financial burdens for displaced tenants during the displacement and relocation process should be the responsibility of the landlord, operator, or developer, with the City providing monetary assistance as necessary.
- Some stakeholders also suggested giving displaced tenants the choice to move to a different neighbourhood or remain in the area with which they are familiar.
- A few stakeholders suggested establishing individually customized displacement and relocation plans for tenants immediately and in writing, and retain a neutral third-party to liaise between the landlord/developer and tenant in their implementation

4.6 Other Highlights

- Collaborate with other divisions and agencies both within and outside the City, and integrate these policies with others;

- Ensure tenants are well-informed about the policies;
- Approach the policies from a positive, incentivizing approach rather than a negative, punitive approach;
- Establish a guarantee program to incentivize small operators to take on and keep dwelling room tenants; and
- Ensure that the policies do not overreach the City's legal jurisdiction.

5. Next Steps

The City of Toronto City Planning Division will consider the feedback presented in this consultation summary report when finalizing the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms. Recommended policies are expected to be brought to the Planning and Housing Committee, and subsequently Council, in mid-2019.

Appendix A: Etobicoke York Public Meeting Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Public Meeting #1 (Etobicoke York) – Summary Report (Appendix A)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Monday, November 26, 2018
Location: Etobicoke Civic Centre, Council Chambers, 399 The West Mall, Toronto, ON, M9C 2Y2
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm

2. Attendees

Members of the Public

- Approximate number of attendees: 30
- Number of attendees who signed in: 28

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Sharon Hill, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Deanna Chorney, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Public Meeting Summary

Introduction & Presentation

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, introduced the project team and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, then provided a brief overview presentation about the context of affordable housing in Toronto, the current issues dwelling rooms face, the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, and what specific feedback was being sought as part of the consultation process.

Open House

Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the draft policies and ask City Planning staff questions at three stations. The three stations and feedback questions were:

- Station 1 – Background on Dwelling Rooms
    - Feedback Question #1: Do you support having policies in the City's Official Plan that address the loss of dwelling rooms and provide assistance to displaced tenants?
    - Feedback Question #2: Please share any feedback you would like the City to consider regarding the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms.
- Station 2 – Where the Policy Applies
    - Feedback Question #3: Do you think a minimum number of 10 rooms for when the policy would apply is (too high/appropriate/too low)?
    - Feedback Question #4: What should the minimum number of dwelling rooms be for when the policy would apply and why?
- Station 3 – Proposed Replacement Requirements
    - Feedback Question #5: Choose your top 3 priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment.

Each station had 1-2 boards with contextual information and 1-2 boards to collect feedback. Attendees were invited to provide feedback on various elements of the draft policies using dot stickers and sticky notes. A summary of the feedback collected at the open house through conversations and feedback boards is presented below.

Station 1: Background on Dwelling Rooms

There was strong attendee support for policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, with 100% of respondents strongly agreeing that the City's Official plan should have such policies. Some attendees felt that legalizing dwelling rooms across the city and integrating them with existing zoning schemes like the "Avenues" needs to take place in tandem with the policies.

Station 2: When the Policy Applies

All two respondents agreed that the 10-room minimum threshold for dwelling room replacement is too high. One attendee suggested 5 as a more appropriate number, and another suggested that both total gross floor area (GFA) and the number of rooms need to be replaced if the threshold were met.

Station 3: Proposed Replacement Requirements

Most responses to this station's feedback question were in support of longer affordability of replacement housing and replacement on the same site as the lost dwelling rooms, with some consideration for flexibility of type.

Appendix B: Toronto & East York Public Meeting Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Public Meeting #2 (Toronto & East York) – Summary Report (Appendix B)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Tuesday, November 27, 2018
Location: Metro Hall, Room 309, 55 John Street, Toronto, ON, M5V 3C6
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm

2. Attendees

Members of the Public

- Approximate number of attendees: 35
- Number of attendees who signed in: 27

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Deanna Chorney, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Jeremy Kloet, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Public Meeting Summary

Introduction & Presentation

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, introduced the project team and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, then provided a brief overview presentation about the context of affordable housing in Toronto, the current issues dwelling rooms face, the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, and what specific feedback was being sought as part of the consultation process.

Open House

Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the draft policies and ask City Planning staff questions at three stations. The three stations and feedback questions were:

- Station 1 – Background on Dwelling Rooms
    - Feedback Question #1: Do you support having policies in the City's Official Plan that address the loss of dwelling rooms and provide assistance to displaced tenants?
    - Feedback Question #2: Please share any feedback you would like the City to consider regarding the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms.
- Station 2 – Where the Policy Applies
    - Feedback Question #3: Do you think a minimum number of 10 rooms for when the policy would apply is (too high/appropriate/too low)?
    - Feedback Question #4: What should the minimum number of dwelling rooms be for when the policy would apply and why?
- Station 3 – Proposed Replacement Requirements
    - Feedback Question #5: Choose your top 3 priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment.

Each station had 1-2 boards with contextual information and 1-2 boards to collect feedback. Attendees were invited to provide feedback on various elements of the draft policies using dot stickers and sticky notes. A summary of the feedback collected at the open house through conversations and feedback boards is presented below.

Station 1: Background on Dwelling Rooms

Attendees overwhelmingly supported having policies in the Official Plan to address the loss of dwelling rooms. A group of homeowners specifically indicated that they have had rooming houses in their neighbourhood for more than 30 years and want to ensure they are protected and maintained. However, one respondent indicated that there is currently enough supply of dwelling rooms in the City. One person commented than many people are unaware of the rooming houses in their neighbourhoods. A few noted suggestions for the City to consider include:

- Legalizing dwelling rooms across the city through zoning
- Ensuring replacement units are in close proximity of the development site
- Ensuring additional rooming house preservation initiatives are in place to supplement the policies
- Finding ways to address conversion issues with short term rentals

- Collaborating with Municipal Licensing and Standards to propose a by-law or zoning amendments
- Hosting a charrette to create actionable ideas with Councillors, City of Toronto staff, community organizations and community members

Station 2: When the Policy Applies

Most respondents noted that the draft policies' minimum replacement threshold of 10 dwelling rooms is too high, and a few indicated it was too low. Several respondents suggested a minimum threshold of 5 or 6 dwelling rooms. A couple of respondents proposed 1 unit as the minimum as this would ensure that the current stock does not decrease. Another idea noted was that replacement requirement could be based on the number of affordable units in the proposed redevelopment.

Station 3: Proposed Replacement Requirements

About one third of respondents said that longer affordability of replacement housing was their top priority. Some supported assisting displaced tenants in finding housing elsewhere, but some were concerned about the proximity of replacement units to tenants' local community and services. One respondent emphasized that the tenant assistance requirements in the policies may drive rooming house operators to evict their tenants before redevelopment to evade compliance, and penalties should be put in place to discourage this practice. A couple of respondents suggested the City consider different land ownership and development models for rooming houses. Another respondent supported making replacement units available to others.

Appendix C: North York Public Meeting Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Public Meeting #3 (North York) – Summary Report (Appendix C)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Wednesday, November 28, 2018
Location: North York Civic Centre, Council Chambers, 5100 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON, M2N 5V7
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm

2. Attendees

Members of the Public

- Approximate number of attendees: 11 people in attendance
- Number of attendees who signed in: 11

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Sharon Hill, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Jym Clark, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Jim Faught, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Public Meeting Summary

Introduction & Presentation

Jim Faught, Lura Consulting, introduced the project team and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, then provided a brief overview presentation about the context of affordable housing in Toronto, the current issues dwelling rooms face, the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, and what specific feedback was being sought as part of the consultation process.

Open House

Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the draft policies and ask City Planning staff questions at three stations. The three stations and feedback questions were:

- Station 1 – Background on Dwelling Rooms
  - Feedback Question #1: Do you support having policies in the City's Official Plan that address the loss of dwelling rooms and provide assistance to displaced tenants?
  - Feedback Question #2: Please share any feedback you would like the City to consider regarding the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms.
- Station 2 – Where the Policy Applies
  - Feedback Question #3: Do you think a minimum number of 10 rooms for when the policy would apply is (too high/appropriate/too low)?
  - Feedback Question #4: What should the minimum number of dwelling rooms be for when the policy would apply and why?
- Station 3 – Proposed Replacement Requirements
  - Feedback Question #5: Choose your top 3 priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment.

Each station had 1-2 boards with contextual information and 1-2 boards to collect feedback. Attendees were invited to provide feedback on various elements of the draft policies using dot stickers and sticky notes. A summary of the feedback collected at the open house through conversations and feedback boards is presented below.

Station 1: Background on Dwelling Rooms

There was strong attendee support for policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, with 90% of respondents strongly agreeing and 10% agreeing that the City's Official Plan should have such policies. One respondent called for the legalization and monitoring of rooming houses across the city, and another pointed out the need to address the stigma associated with temporary housing [Not clear if respondent was referring to dwelling rooms or to temporary replacement housing specifically]. Someone commented that homeowners' concerns about dwelling rooms may be politically driven. Another respondent wrote about the importance of affordable and supportive housing to alleviate poverty and homelessness in the city.

Station 2: When the Policy Applies

Most respondents to the first question said using dot stickers that the 10-room minimum threshold that would trigger the replacement requirement is too high, and a smaller proportion felt that it was appropriate. However, the second question asking for a specific minimum number garnered a wider variety of responses, spanning from 1 room to more than 10. One respondent suggested the threshold be based on the number of tenants instead of units, and another was concerned about the effect of dwelling rooms on property values in their area. One respondent sought clarification on how long dwelling room tenants could stay in their dwelling rooms over the course of what can be a long permitting process if the property is slated for redevelopment.

Station 3: Proposed Replacement Requirements

There was a diversity of opinion in attendees' top priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment, with some supporting same-site replacement and some supporting assisting displaced tenants with long-term housing elsewhere. A handful of respondents reported being concerned with affordability as a top priority (including the high rents for self-contained units), and one called for rent protection requirements in the policies to be permanent. Many were concerned that the proposed 25-year length of the rent protection requirement was not long enough. Other points raised included a need for greater fire and safety code compliance in shared accommodation like dwelling rooms and the possibility of leveraging the expertise of existing agencies that both manage housing and provide services. There was mention of the need for more government support for housing co-operatives, and someone suggested that the cost of rent be tied to the provincial Trillium benefit.

Appendix D: Scarborough Public Meeting Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Public Meeting #4 (Scarborough) – Summary Report (Appendix D)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Thursday, November 29, 2018
Location: Scarborough Civic Centre, Council Chambers, 150 Borough Dr, Toronto, ON, M1P 4N6
Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm

2. Attendees

Members of the Public

- Approximately 30 people in attendance, 24 of whom signed in

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Sharon Hill, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Jeremy Kloet, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Dave Dilks, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Public Meeting Summary

Introduction & Presentation

Dave Dilks, Lura Consulting, introduced the project team and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, then provided a brief overview presentation about the context of affordable housing in Toronto, the current issues dwelling rooms face, the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, and what specific feedback was being sought as part of the consultation process.

Open House

Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the draft policies and ask City Planning staff questions at three stations. The three stations and feedback questions were:

- Station 1 – Background on Dwelling Rooms
  - Feedback Question #1: Do you support having policies in the City's Official Plan that address the loss of dwelling rooms and provide assistance to displaced tenants?
  - Feedback Question #2: Please share any feedback you would like the City to consider regarding the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms.
- Station 2 – Where the Policy Applies
  - Feedback Question #3: Do you think a minimum number of 10 rooms for when the policy would apply is (too high/appropriate/too low)?
  - Feedback Question #4: What should the minimum number of dwelling rooms be for when the policy would apply and why?
- Station 3 – Proposed Replacement Requirements
  - Feedback Question #5: Choose your top 3 priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment.

Each station had 1-2 boards with contextual information and 1-2 boards to collect feedback. Attendees were invited to provide feedback on various elements of the draft policies using dot stickers and sticky notes. A summary of the feedback collected at the open house through conversations and feedback boards is presented below.

Station 1: Background on Dwelling Rooms

There was strong attendee support for policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, with 80% of respondents strongly agreeing and 20% agreeing that the City's Official Plan should have such policies. No responses were given to the second, open-ended question of this section. There were comments made in conversation that implored the City and Council to better understand the unique needs of Scarborough when compared to the rest of Toronto. One attendee expressed concern about the General Motors plant closure in Oshawa driving more illegal dwelling rooms in Scarborough. Another pointed to redevelopment resulting in significant losses of motel and dwelling room stock along Kingston Road as a concern.

Station 2: When the Policy Applies

Three-quarters of respondents thought that the that the 10-room minimum threshold that would trigger the replacement requirement is too high, and one quarter thought it was appropriate. Most respondents to the second question at this station which asked for a specific number for the minimum threshold thought that 5 or 6 units would be ideal, but some said that

1 would be appropriate and some said it depends on the general size of rooming houses across the dwelling room stock.

Station 3: Proposed Replacement Requirements

The most common responses for attendees' top 3 priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment were for flexibility of same-site replacement housing type, assistance for displaced tenants in finding temporary housing before returning to a dwelling room or self-contained rental unit after redevelopment, and long-term affordability of replacement housing. Comments were made that that immediate housing needs must be addressed (including building more shelters), but replacement units must be permanent over the long term and that 25 years is not a long enough affordability requirement. There was support for requiring developers to assist displaced tenants, but attendees indicated that relocation priority should be given to the same community where displaced tenants can access the same services they used to; this also serves to prevent discrimination through displacement to other neighbourhoods, someone stated. Among the open-ended responses to this station, there was consensus that legalizing dwelling rooms across the city should be a priority.

Appendix E: Public Notice for Public Meetings

Please contact the planner listed on the following study webpage for the public meeting notice:

https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/addressing-the-loss-of-dwelling-rooms

Appendix F: Public Meeting Presentation Slides

Please contact the planner listed on the following study webpage for the public meeting presentation slides:

https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/addressing-the-loss-of-dwelling-rooms

Appendix G: Poster Boards for Public Meetings

Please contact the planner listed on the following study webpage for the public meeting poster boards:

https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/addressing-the-loss-of-dwelling-rooms/

Appendix H: Central/Citywide Agencies/Organizations Stakeholder Roundtable Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Stakeholder Roundtable Session #1 (Central & Citywide Stakeholders) – Summary Report (Appendix H)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Friday, November 16, 2018
Location: CAMH College Street Site – Room 163, 250 College Street, Toronto, ON, M5T 1R8
Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

2. Attendees

Stakeholders

- Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust
- The Homeless Hub
- YWCA Toronto
- Habitat Services
- Homes First Society
- Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (PARC)
- Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Meeting Summary

Presentation

Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, outlined the agenda for the stakeholder roundtable session, reviewed the project context and proposed draft policies, and explained the consultation process for the project and why the attendees' input was being sought. Narmadha Rajakumar, City of Toronto project lead, provided clarification as needed.

Guided Discussion

Following the presentation, Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, facilitated a discussion with attendees using questions designed to solicit feedback on various aspects of the draft policies and the opportunities and challenges they create for participant organizations and the tenants and communities with whom they work. Summarizing points from this discussion are presented below.

Opportunities

- Dwelling room protections are invaluable because the need for and importance of dwelling rooms in Toronto's housing landscape today is overwhelming.
- The City taking a proactive approach to addressing the loss of dwelling rooms legitimizes the importance of dwelling rooms as an integral part of the neighbourhood fabric, and promotes public discourse surrounding this segment of the housing stock.
  - It is an opportunity to shift the language in public discourse from "relocation" to "replacement" and "right of return"
- The policies present an opportunity to invest in the diversity and character of neighbourhoods and use dwelling rooms as a form of "gentle density."
  - Data on neighbourhoods' socioeconomics and demographics would be helpful in deciding how to integrate dwelling rooms into different neighbourhoods
  - Ottawa and Winnipeg were cited as examples of cities where there are existing models for tenants, organizations, and municipalities to work together on integrating rooming houses into neighbourhoods.
- The City's action will close existing policy gaps between tenants of dwelling rooms and tenants of self-contained units, and it will help clarify who is subject to the replacement, assistance, and rent protection requirements within the policies.
- Some attendees indicated that the policies will generate more attention, investment, and enforcement in supportive housing, eviction prevention, and the physical condition and maintenance of dwelling rooms. This was seen as part of a larger human rights issue with regard to the right to housing.
- Potentially forging a partnership with the "Toronto Renovates" program (for example) for funding a dwelling room repair program was suggested.
- There is a direct financial link between the amount of investment in dwelling rooms and the cost of homelessness and health issues. City needs to consider the implications of one for the other.
- One attendee mentioned that tenants have a right under the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) to live in a well-maintained unit, and the City now has an opportunity to better enforce these maintenance standards for rooming houses because some tenants are too vulnerable to advocate for themselves.

- Many hoped that the policies will help maintain a discussion of expanding rooming house licencing citywide, and will spur more thorough municipal data collection on the stock and location of dwelling rooms across the city, the longevity of the dwelling rooms and the tenancies for this type of housing, and the gender breakdown of tenants (because addressing women's issues within the context of dwelling rooms was a noted as important).
  - One attendee cited an example from St. John's, NL whereby seniors and students live in the same household. Instead of living in a dwelling room, the student helps the senior with chores in place of rent, so it's affordable for them both. However, it was also noted that this model is not legal there.
- Some attendees representing non-profit organizations that own and/or manage housing saw an opportunity for replacement units to be put under the ownership and/or management of such non-profits.
- Many attendees supported establishing within the policies a financial pathway for dwelling room replacement (e.g. cash-in-lieu vs. direct reinvestment), and clarifying the parties involved in this pathway (e.g. not-for-profit housing agencies).
  - Frameworks for municipal investment in rooming houses already exists in other cities; Vancouver was cited as one successful example

Challenges and Concerns

- There was general consensus among attendees that dwelling room protections need to implemented urgently
- The protections in the dwelling room policies need to be closely aligned with tenants' rights under the RTA
- There is no advantage to having rooming house owners licenced unless dwelling room protections are encoded in bylaws and enforced
- Without better data-gathering, communication, and collaboration between housing organizations and the City, enforcement of dwelling room protections will not be as effective
- Tenants need to be better educated on their rights under the RTA as a proactive eviction prevention method
- One attendee raised a concern that a single homeowner with one property that has more dwelling rooms than the threshold may not have the financial means to comply with the replacement requirements without external support. But larger landlords, however, could easily replace the dwelling rooms without financial hardships but currently do not because they are not legally required to.
- Many dwelling rooms are being redeveloped and upscaled into housing for wealthy international students

- De-facto rooming houses classified as hotels under the Innkeeper's Act are not subject to the same licencing requirements as rooming houses officially classified as such, but the tenants of both have the same needs, an attendee indicated.
- There should be a parallel planning application system specific for dwelling rooms
- Some attendees were concerned about balancing the property rights of landlords with the human rights of tenants.

Displacement and Replacement

- A cultural hierarchy of what housing type is considered desirable was flagged by attendees as something to consider when shaping the replacement requirements in the policies. As a result of this hierarchy, some displaced dwelling room tenants would prefer that their replacement unit be self-contained. However, some dwelling room tenants (particularly seniors) may not enjoy the isolating or individual nature of self-contained units, and so would rather their replacement housing be more shared or communal.
- Replacement of gross floor area (GFA) alone is not enough to protect tenants or the stock of dwelling rooms, an attendee said, but it opens the possibility for replacement as conventional self-contained units.
- Clarity is needed on guidelines for maintaining the geographic boundaries of tenants' communities in the event of displacement (so as to prioritize securing replacement housing within those boundaries as a way to prevent hardships for tenants in adapting to a new neighbourhood or community)
- The "right of return" has historically been implemented poorly in cases of displacement, so there should be an option (but not a requirement) for temporary relocation of tenants in the same community during displacement
- Switching to non-profit management of the replacement process would help address the problem of developers intentionally filtering out certain returning tenants once the redevelopment is complete, and introduce more diversity and expertise into the process.
- The entire displacement process needs to be comprehensively managed
  - There is no data on where tenants' money goes after they're bought out and leave before a redevelopment
  - Tenants thinks they can simply move to a new room down the street but don't realize that the stock has already decreased when they have to move from their rooming house
  - Developers need to be involved in paying for tenants' long-term costs beyond short-term relocation and returning to replacement housing
  - Cases of dwelling room displacement should be elevated in priority status like cases of fleeing violence

- There should be more flexibility in how replacement units are financed, an attendee said.
- An attendee was of the position that the City should not just help facilitate tenant assistance during instances of displacement, but prevent rooming houses from being bought out and redeveloped in the first place.

Replacement Threshold

- Many attendees felt that without a lower replacement threshold, if landlords were to redevelop many rooming houses in their portfolio at the same time, they would take advantage of a loophole whereby they would not have to replace the dwelling room units lost to the redevelopment because the individual rooming houses in the portfolio would be below the threshold.
- One attendee mentioned that there is currently no data on these kinds of details in the dwelling room stock (e.g. landlords who own multiple rooming houses, but each has a small number of dwelling rooms), but it should be considered by the City when evaluating development applications because significant total quantities of dwelling rooms on multiple adjacent properties with a single property owner could be lost as a result of this loophole

Length of Affordability

- Many attendees were pleased to see affordability addressed in the draft policies through a 25-year rent protection requirement and commented that it is a significant improvement from the 10-year period they have seen in other rent protection policies.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- An external funding framework should be put into place to ensure that operating rooming houses is fiscally viable. Some rooming houses are being converted to offices because they're more lucrative.
- The importance of the private sector in creating and maintaining affordable housing stock should not be forgotten, because it is successful in other cities (Montreal, for example).
  - Commercial rooming houses being taxed at the residential rate makes them more profitable but also more sustainable as a business, thus maintaining this key housing stock for tenants. Taxation needs to be tied to affordability.
- One attendee said that the policies should not be shaped by owners and the idea of ownership
- An attendee remarked that more attention should be given to protecting tenants' personal property rights (e.g. their belongings)

- One attendee stressed the importance of ensuring that tenants have ready access to legal advice
- One attendee called for collaboration between organizations and the City on gathering data on rooming houses, dwelling room units, and tenants.

Questions

- Would the policies apply citywide?
- Are Airbnb units considered dwelling rooms?
- How were stakeholders invited to this consultation process? Where did the stakeholder list come from?
- How does the City know how many dwelling room units exist out there?
- How can we identify unlicensed dwelling rooms?
- What is the rationale for having a 25-year cap on affordability for replacement units?

Appendix I: North & West Agencies/Organizations Stakeholder Roundtable Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Stakeholder Roundtable Session #2 (North & West Stakeholders) – Summary Report (Appendix I)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Monday, November 19, 2018
Location: York Woods Library, 1785 Finch Ave W, Toronto, ON, M3N 1M6
Time: 10:00am – noon

2. Attendees

Stakeholders

- Youth Without Shelter

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Meeting Summary

Introduction

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, gave introductions and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Then Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, gave a more detailed background overview of the draft policies and project, as well as reviewed what specific feedback was being sought at the meeting. An opportunity for attendees to ask questions at this point was given.

Guided Discussion

Following these introductions, Liz McHardy facilitated a discussion with attendees using questions designed to solicit feedback on various aspects of the draft policies and the opportunities and challenges of the draft policies based on their agency's experience. Summarizing points from this discussion are presented below.

Opportunities

- The attendee felt that there are definitely opportunities to explore since he sensed greater recognition of and partnership on housing-related issues and mental health at the City, as well as a greater willingness to find solutions to address them.
- Youth Without Shelter is starting a new strategic plan to create more youth housing and is interested in partnering with the City to manage empty or unused TCHC units as a way to replace lost dwelling room units and maintain stock levels.
- Youth Without Shelter is starting a new strategic plan to create more youth housing and is looking into becoming a landlord as an organization, possibly in partnership with the City and/or developers.
- There could be a cash-in-lieu component from redevelopment to bring dwelling room units up to code.
- The attendee noted the potential interconnectedness of other policies beyond these draft policies that could also help address the loss of dwelling rooms.

Challenges and Concerns

- Loss of dwelling room stock is a concern for the attendee.
- Because Youth Without Shelter works with clients under 25, the attendee expressed concern about external funding and support for clients' housing once they age out at 25.
- Youth Without Shelter's average length of stay has increased, partly due to an uptick in refugee claimants and a greater proportion of emergency shelter beds reserved for them. About 25-30% of Youth Without Shelter's clientele are now refugee claimants, and the attendee feels that the organization has been taking on a disproportionate role in refugee housing settlement compared to downtown agencies.
- There is much stigma and NIMBYism with regard to diversity and homelessness (largely due to fears of decreasing property values) despite widespread awareness of the need for solutions in the affordable housing crisis.
- The attendee's clients face heavy stigma and have a hard time looking for housing and staying housed, partly due to a lack of transitional housing between shelters and independent living and a lack of comprehensive, holistic approach to support services.
- The attendee is concerned about the reliable maintenance and availability of low-rent units, and for that reason Youth Without Shelter favours portable housing benefits tied to the individual client to use wherever they can secure available housing. However, the client has to be homeless for minimum 6 months before they can use the benefit and if fleeing abuse, needs documentation from their abuser (virtually impossible).
- The attendee is concerned about the connection the loss of dwelling rooms and gentrification.
- Developers are finding and taking advantage of loopholes that are exacerbating the loss of affordable housing stock (including dwelling rooms) that the attendee's clients need.

- One of the attendee's most pressing concerns is to close loopholes, and the City needs to partner in this.

Displacement and Replacement

- Because he has seen many clients start over from square one in a far and unfamiliar neighbourhood, the attendee felt that focus should be shifted from the replacement itself to the speed of the replacement and location of the replacement in close proximity to the original units they are replacing.
- Dedicated case managers or a separate third-party entity could be responsible for coordinating the displacement and replacement process for tenants.
- Displaced tenants should have the option to live wherever they choose, the attendee remarked, but acknowledged that it is difficult for them to move to a new area once they have laid down roots.

Replacement Threshold

- The attendee expressed concern about situations where an operator owns multiple rooming houses with each having fewer dwelling rooms than the threshold, thereby escaping the replacement requirements. But the effect of displacement is the same as if the total number of rooms across all properties were to be located at just one property. [This was a point raised in other stakeholder roundtables]

Replacement Housing Not Occupied by Returning Tenants After Redevelopment

- The attendee was of the position that as long as displaced tenants have the first right of refusal for replacement units, the replacement units not occupied by displaced tenants should be open to those on the TCHC affordable housing waitlist.

Assistance for Displaced Tenants

- Portable benefits could be paid monthly to displaced tenants of dwelling rooms (or their parents if they are minors) until they are able to secure permanent replacement housing.
- Assistance requirements should come with a set, enforced timeframe so that compliance is not put off into the future.

Affordability and Rent Protection Requirements

- A parallel affordability requirement situation the attendee raised was for rent-geared-to-income (RGI tenants) who are given a long rent protection period, but once it ends it can be difficult for them to avoid imminent bankruptcy.
- Developers need incentives to create affordable housing and discourage them from taking advantage of loopholes.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- The attendee remarked that his current role is to assist displaced tenants, and believes that there must be sufficient housing for the working poor.
- The attendee emphasized that no one policy will affect every property and every issue, but expediency is universally key in increasing the affordable housing stock because homelessness is increasing at a faster rate than the construction of affordable units.
- Finding points where the politically attractive and the expedient intersect in the realm of affordable housing will be a win-win that will help reduce homelessness.
- The attendee commented that from a relative standpoint, especially when compared to the United States, that the City of Toronto looks after its most vulnerable decently well despite the funding limitations and the political environment.
- St. John's, NL as well as Mississauga and Windsor are an example the attendee cited of where good progress has been made in working towards zero homelessness.
- Youth Without Shelter helps its clients be individually responsible and financially literate so that they can be proactive in navigating the financial and advocacy support services provided to them.
- The attendee suggested an online website or information repository for the dwelling room policies that's accessible to the public. This will help garner public support for the project, show how the policies affect them, control the narrative and minimize the spread of misinformation. The website should be in the form of social media or a blog, because Youth Without Shelter's clients find them more trustworthy than more mainstream sources.
- Many residents of Rexdale in northern Etobicoke (where Youth Without Shelter is based) are generally opposed to zoning that would legally allow rooming houses to be located near them

Appendix J: East Agencies/Organizations Stakeholder Roundtable Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Stakeholder Roundtable #3 (East Stakeholders) – Summary Report (Appendix J)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Tuesday, November 20, 2018
Location: 25 Mendelssohn Street, Toronto, ON, M1L 0G6
Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

2. Attendees

Stakeholders

- East York East Toronto Family Resources (EYET)
- WoodGreen Community Services
- Agincourt Community Services
- West Scarborough Community Legal Services
- Central Neighbourhood House
- The Neighbourhood Group
- The Housing Help Centre

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Senior Planner, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Meeting Summary

Introduction

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, gave introductions and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Then Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, gave a more detailed background overview of the draft policies and project, as well as reviewed what specific feedback was being sought at the meeting. An opportunity for attendees to ask questions at this point was given.

Guided Discussion

Following these introductions, Liz McHardy facilitated a discussion with attendees using questions designed to solicit feedback on various aspects of the draft policies and the opportunities and challenges of the draft policies based on their agency's experience. Summarizing points from this discussion are presented below.

Opportunities

- There is an opportunity to licence currently unlicenced rooming houses and create a better quality stock of dwelling rooms
- One attendee noted that the form of rooming houses in Scarborough is unique compared to elsewhere in the city, and that it's important to preserve the affordability, safety, and legality of the dwelling rooms within them.
- A representative of WoodGreen Community Services commented that as long as it were cost-effective, their organization could potentially operate its own rooming houses as a way to reduce stigma and increase the reputation of rooming houses within the community.
- Multiple attendees called for greater inter-agency and agency-City coordination and communication for provision of layered/integrated assistance and support services.

Government Partnerships and Incentives

- One attendee remarked that it is important to incentivize developers and remove bureaucracy so that they will build more dwelling rooms. This could reduce the proportion of illegal "underground" rooming houses. An example of an incentive could be no taxes on properties used as rooming houses, another suggested.
- It was noted that it is becoming more difficult for housing agencies to place clients, so some of them have begun to use incentive funds to entice landlords to take on their clients as new tenants.
- The Housing First Layers Support Program and the Toronto Transitional Housing Allowance Program were cited as examples of how landlords could be incentivized to take on new tenants, knowing that the tenant would have support services available and they would have subsidies.
- An attendee noted that once dwelling rooms are legalized, landlords would be able to access City programs to maintain and repair their properties so they meet fire and building codes. They would not spend their own money to do so otherwise, especially if their properties are illegal.

Challenges and Concerns

- A comment was made that it can be difficult to rely on housing support programs because many are uncoordinated and can be unstable in funding and/or management from year to year.
- An attendee pointed out that Scarborough rooming house landlords would be required to report their properties (all currently illegal) to participate in City support programs, which could trigger fire and safety code inspections that could shut down their properties and take much-needed dwelling room stock off the market.
- An attendee was concerned that the draft policies' requirements could drive tenants and landlords even further underground because of the reporting and expenses involved.
- One attendee was concerned that the draft policies will not apply citywide because they remarked that without legalizing rooming houses in Scarborough, the replacement requirements could not be fulfilled in that part of the city.
- An attendee noted that racism towards rooming house tenants needs to be addressed.
- It was commented that Scarborough's councillors play a role in perpetuating stigma surrounding dwelling rooms and supportive housing.
- The need for enforcement was stressed, particularly the rent protection requirements and ensuring that the replacement units are actually built and are used as dwelling rooms.
- It was stated that immediate and medium-term needs must be addressed as well and the focus should not solely be on long-range plans for 10 or 20 years into the future. For some people who are homeless, securing housing is an immediate life or death situation.
- An attendee pointed to the dire need for more housing units (even transitional housing), and doubted the effectiveness of the policies without increased housing stock.
- It was indicated that displacement from rooming houses can start a cycle of homelessness for tenants.
- An attendee remarked that landlords of temporarily relocated tenants must be able to accommodate what may be a short-term lease before taking the tenants on.
- The safety and adequate size of dwelling room units was emphasized by multiple attendees.

Displacement and Replacement

- All affordable housing units lost to redevelopment should be replaced at a one-to-one ratio, an attendee indicated. Others insisted that redeveloped dwelling room units should be doubled or tripled upon replacement and go beyond just replacing them one-to-one.
- In Scarborough most rooming houses contain 5, 6, or 7 dwelling rooms; very rarely do they contain greater than 10.

- An attendee was of the position that the homeless should take priority over those on the affordable housing waiting list for replacement units not occupied by returning tenants.

Assistance for Displaced Tenants

- It was suggested that developers create temporary tenant relocation plans be created whenever current tenants are displaced during redevelopment. An example was given where a developer bought an entire house for displaced tenants and then transferred ownership to a non-profit housing agency when the original property completed redevelopment.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- An attendee commented that the many motels along Kingston Road have been an important of Scarborough's affordable private rental stock.
- One attendee stated that tenants' poverty, mental health, and/or settlement needs are just as important as making sure that the units the tenants live in are up to code.
- Affordable housing is a critical piece of community infrastructure and community development, one attendee remarked, just like schools and libraries.
- Many attendees said that they know informally through their networks where illegal rooming houses are located in Scarborough.
- An attendee commented that housing needs to be addressed at not only the city level, but at the wider societal level, too.
- Many landlords of rooming house bungalows in Scarborough live in the same house and sub-divide the house into as many dwelling rooms to maximize the rental income from tenants to pay their mortgage.
- Homeowners' property rights should not be forgotten
- It was noted that many people do not want to live in dwelling rooms, but if they must, then having a bathroom within the unit should be prioritized over a kitchen. It was also suggested that "bachelorette" be used in place of the term "dwelling room".

Trends

- An attendee called for more thorough data gathering on the tenants and locations most affected by housing issues, and resources to address them should be allocated proportionally based on where these needs are. Tenants' family sizes and sources of income should be included in this data.
- Someone mentioned that their housing agency is starting to see more mothers and their children living in rooming houses than before. Another attendee remarked that some rooming house tenants live in their dwelling rooms very long-term, some even until they pass away.

- It was mentioned that some people purposefully choose to live on the street instead of rooming houses because they do not want to be around other people or because their behaviours are not well-tolerated by other tenants.

Accessibility

- It was emphasized that consultation processes for dwelling room and housing issues must be designed to address tenants' privacy concerns and fears that they will lose their housing. Tenants should not be asked for their postal code or address especially.
- Several attendees called for interpreters and staff sharing the same background to be made available so that tenants of diverse languages and cultures can fully participate in the consultation process and know where to access services.
- An attendee pointed out the need to take accessibility needs of tenants with disabilities into consideration.

Representation

- One attendee remarked that Scarborough is more affected by the city's affordable housing crisis than other districts, and that dwelling rooms provide an important housing stock for Scarborough's unique population composition.
- A comment was made that Scarborough is currently underrepresented at Council, which does not realize how heavily the housing crisis has affected that part of Toronto.
- An attendee noted that there has been much advocacy by multiple groups over the years to fight for rooming house legalization in Scarborough
- One attendee responded to the above point by saying that rooming house legalization in Scarborough should be an eventual goal, but the current focus should be on safety and fire code compliance and that the property rights of homeowners should not be forgotten.

Questions

- Why are dwelling rooms illegal in Scarborough?
- How will the Official Plan Amendment enabling the policies work in Scarborough where rooming houses are illegal and most have been shut down?
- What is the plan for dwelling rooms in Scarborough specifically?
- Whose responsibility is it to handle the relocation and right to return?
- What happened to the City's earlier pilot housing project in Scarborough that stopped?

Appendix K: Tenants Stakeholder Roundtable Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Stakeholder Roundtable Session #4 (PARC Tenants) – Summary Report (Appendix K)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Wednesday, December 5, 2018
Location: Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (PARC), 1499 Queen St W, Toronto, ON M6R 1A3
Time: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

2. Attendees

Stakeholders

- Approximately 22 tenants (14 of whom signed in)
- PARC
- Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust
- Parkdale-High Park Councillor Gord Perks

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Sharon Hill, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Meeting Summary

Introduction

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, gave introductions and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Then Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, gave a more detailed background overview of the draft policies and project, as well as reviewed what specific feedback was being sought at the meeting. An opportunity for attendees to ask questions at this point was given.

Guided Discussion

Following these introductions, Liz McHardy and Zoie Browne facilitated a discussion with attendees using questions designed to solicit feedback on various aspects of the draft policies and the opportunities and challenges the draft policies create for attendees as tenants of precarious housing, including dwelling rooms. Summarizing points from this discussion are presented below.

Opportunities

- A tenant commented that the policies present an opportunity for prospective buyers and sellers of dwelling rooms to have a better understanding of the legal obligations they have to their tenants.
- It was noted that better data is needed on dwelling room stock in different areas of the city.

Challenges and Concerns

- There was concern that the policies may push landlords to wrongfully evict tenants before redeveloping their properties so as to evade complying with the policies' replacement and assistance requirements.
- One tenant remarked upon pest infestations and maintenance issues they face and said that he no longer receives the prompt help to address him that he used to in the past.
- Many tenants lose their personal belongings and property when they are suddenly displaced from their rooming house
- A housing advocate and policy researcher in attendance noted that some rooming houses demolished in Parkdale are legally classified as hotels, so they would not be covered under the draft policies.
- A tenant who is facing imminent eviction raised a concern that she doesn't understand how to respond to the situation because she doesn't know her rights or the legal technicalities of the situation. Another tenant added that advocacy should be prioritized over legal advice because the latter can be confusing for tenants.

Displacement and Replacement

- One tenant preferred that the replacement requirement be fulfilled through the number of tenants displaced instead of Gross Floor Area (GFA).
- Some tenants indicated that if they were to be eventually displaced from their rooming houses, they would prefer to be relocated temporarily and then move into a permanent replacement unit, while some said they would prefer to move into a permanent replacement unit as soon as they are displaced. Most said they would prefer being relocated within their own neighbourhood.
- Several tenants commented on the unique character and vibrancy of Parkdale and the excellent access to support services that it offers as reasons why displaced Parkdale tenants should be relocated within the same neighbourhood.
- A tenant pointed out that replacement housing in a different neighbourhood could potentially disorient displaced tenants, especially those with mental health challenges.
- It was pointed out that several tenants in attendance had previously been displaced as a result of redevelopment.

- A policy researcher in attendance noted that currently more dwelling rooms are being lost than replaced, resulting in many tenants not being able to return to replacement housing in the city. Many end up moving far away, even to other parts of the province or country, a tenant added.

Minimum Threshold

- Many tenants in attendance (most of whom live in the Parkdale area) indicated that they live in rooming houses with greater than 10 dwelling rooms.
- A tenant supported a minimum threshold below 10 dwelling rooms so that more tenants would be covered by the policies.
- There was general consensus that 10 dwelling rooms is too high a minimum threshold and instead the number of lost rooms should be replaced at a one-to-one ratio.
- It was pointed out that a sizeable proportion of rooming houses in Parkdale contain fewer than 10 dwelling rooms and so would not reach the minimum threshold for replacement.

Replacement Unit Type

- Replacement housing should ideally be similar to tenants' current housing, a tenant in attendance suggested, but tenants should be assessed on their capacity to live in a different type of unit (e.g. one that has a kitchen).
- Gord Perks, City Councillor for Parkdale-High Park, remarked that some tenants may prefer that their replacement unit be in the form of a dwelling room.
- A tenant felt that most people would prefer a self-contained replacement unit as long as it were affordable.

Replacement Housing Not Occupied by Returning Tenants

- A tenant supported having replacement units not occupied by returning tenants be assigned to those on the affordable housing waitlist.

Affordability and Rent Protection Requirements

- One tenant was of the position that rent protections should last in perpetuity.
- An attendee supported the draft policies' rent protection requirements as a proactive measure, saying that they are important for those tenants whose incomes cannot meet rent increases.
- A tenant emphasized the importance of an indefinite rent protection requirement in the policies as a key step towards breaking the cycle of poverty and homelessness.
- One tenant called for citywide rent control, and citied New York City as an example.
- Another tenant responded to the above point saying that rent control would limit the income stream that landlords use to maintain upkeep of their properties.
- A tenant commented on the stigma that many social assistance recipients face and the need to keep rents affordable to those on social assistance.

Assistance

- One tenant stated that relocation assistance is not useful if there is no housing secured to relocate to.
- It was noted that without a secure mailing address, many tenants on social assistance will be unable to receive their benefit cheques.
- A tenant remarked that a logistically streamlined assistance process that included items beyond a replacement unit, like moving expenses and furniture, would help. They suggested that relocated tenants could obtain furniture from a furniture bank, but would need a referral.
- Many tenants in attendance agreed that the onus should be on the developer or landlord to find temporary housing for displaced tenants until redevelopment is complete, as is a requirement in other cities like Vancouver. One tenant mentioned the Parliament Street fire as an example, and pointed out that relocation may be wherever space is available, not necessarily close to the original building.
- An attendee who has been displaced and currently lives on the street suggested that a database should be established for prospective tenants to know the reputation history of different landlords as told by previous tenants.
- One tenant said they appreciated the assistance local organizations provided when he was displaced previously.
- Many tenants stressed the importance of the rich network of supports and connections within the neighbourhood, both between residents and between organizations and residents.
- Tenants collectively commented on widespread distrust many tenants have of landlords and the suggested that in the event of displacement, all assistance agreements and referrals to service providers be made in writing between tenants and landlords and negotiated and executed by a neutral third-party liaison.

- One tenant called for greater government support in preventing homelessness and displacement. They cited other countries where the magnitude of these issues is less or non-existent.
- One tenant said that tenants can pass information and refer each other to people and organizations who can help them in the event of displacement.
- One tenant emphasized the importance of post-relocation support, not just support before displacement takes place.
- The importance of keeping accurate track of displaced tenants' contact info for service providers to communicate with them was emphasized.
- A monthly meeting for displaced tenants at organizations like the Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (PARC) to obtain essential assistance information was suggested, particularly for those displaced tenants without internet access.
- It was suggested that Toronto 311 provide assistance referrals for displaced tenants.

Other Topics

Government Partnerships and Incentives

- A comment was made that incentives need to be provided to landlords to make them less likely to evict tenants.

Enforcement

- Several tenants were concerned about enforcement and preventing landlords/operators from taking advantage of loopholes.
- Many tenants agreed that the City needs to improve enforcement of bylaws, policies, standards, codes, etc., including hiring more inspectors and focusing on TCHC properties.

Questions

- How was the figure of 10 or more rooms determined for the replacement threshold in the policy?
- Would the replacement units have higher rents? If the replacement units are self-contained and more expensive, could we get more financial assistance?
- What is the "right to return?"
- How will landlords have to prove financial difficulty complying with the policies?
- What will happen to tenants who lose their housing because they live in a rooming house whose dwelling room count is below the minimum threshold for replacement?
- Are any replacement units going to be built with kitchens inside?
- Is there a set number of units that differentiates hotels from rooming houses?
- What is the difference between a boarding house and a rooming house?

Appendix L: Landlords/Operators Stakeholder Roundtable Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Stakeholder Roundtable Session #5 (Scarborough Landlords/Operators) – Summary Report (Appendix L)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Thursday, December 6, 2018
Location: The Housing Help Centre, 2500 Lawrence Ave E, Toronto, ON M1P 2R7
Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm

2. Attendees

Stakeholders

- 11 landlords/operators
- The Housing Help Centre

Project Team

- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Meeting Summary

Introduction

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, gave introductions and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Then Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, gave a more detailed background overview of the draft policies and project, as well as reviewed what specific feedback was being sought at the meeting. An opportunity for attendees to ask questions at this point was given.

Guided Discussion

Following these introductions, Liz McHardy and Zoie Browne facilitated a discussion with attendees using questions designed to solicit feedback on various aspects of the draft policies and the opportunities and challenges the draft policies create for the attendees as dwelling room landlords/operators. Summarizing points from this discussion are presented below.

Opportunities

- One attendee commented that the policies will help the community grow and people live more comfortably.
- There was general understanding among attendees of the importance of rooming houses in providing affordable housing for newcomers, students, and people with disabilities. The overall income of these groups is too low to afford most housing, and that's where rooming houses can fill the gap.
- Many attendees enjoyed the meeting and wished for more like this one where they could provide their input as landlords.

Challenges and Concerns

- Many landlords want to help low-income people and newcomers by taking them in as tenants, but there have been cases of irresponsible tenants causing property damage and endangering the landlord, along with other tenant issues that have discouraged landlords from continuing to offer their dwelling room stock for rent.
- Most Scarborough dwelling room operators are have small rooming house properties and want to abide by the law and help solve the housing affordability crisis by putting their dwelling rooms up for rent, but are frustrated by the blanket zoning prohibition of dwelling rooms in Scarborough.
- Some landlords leave the business of operating dwelling rooms because it is difficult to evict problematic tenants under current legislation.
- Some attendees felt that they do not receive much external support as landlords but they do support each other and provide each other with advice.
- Some landlords are hesitant to invest in rooming houses because they are targeted to lower income groups, which attendees report are perceived in the landlord community as tenants who are riskier to take on without external financial incentives, especially for insurance and utility costs.
- Some landlords are hesitant to take on additional tenants out of concern they will be taxed more and have to pay more in insurance premiums.
- One attendee said that it would cost more for them to take on a new tenant after the old one left than if the old tenant had stayed, and that if a current tenant is happy with their unit conditions, why renovate and try to recover the cost?
- One attendee commented that a lack of strong rent control regulations on high-rise housing is placing more demand and tax strain on small rooming house landlords like themselves who provide more affordable housing stock.

Replacement Requirements

- Many Scarborough landlords concur that most rooming houses in Scarborough have about 5 dwelling rooms between the basement and ground floor combined. Many agree

that it would be impossible to find a single rooming house with 10 dwelling rooms in Scarborough

- One attendee remarked that smaller landlords with around 5 dwelling rooms should not be subject to the same replacement requirements as larger landlords with more resources because it would be hard for them to afford compliance. For this reason, the replacement threshold should be higher than 5 rooms. One attendee believed 10 would be appropriate.
- One attendee felt that total square footage should be the variable in replacement policies, not the number of dwelling rooms.

Affordability and Rent Protection Requirements

- All landlords in attendance agreed that the affordability and rent protection requirements in the draft policies are too long.
- Some attendees feel that the 25 year requirement is too long because they believe that taxes, inflation, and the cost of operating will increase over those 25 years but their incomes will remain flat. This will make renovations financially infeasible.
- Many attendees felt that the definition of affordability and the range of affordability over a 25 year period is too ambiguous.
- One attendee said that it would cost more for them to take on a new tenant after the old one left than if the old tenant had stayed, and that if a current tenant is happy with their unit conditions, why renovate and try to recover the cost?
- Two attendees agreed that the shorter the affordability and rent protection requirements, the better.
- One attendee felt that 5 years is appropriate.
- One attendee suggested that the definition of "affordability" be dynamically adjusted year-to-year based on the market.

Other Topics

Government Partnerships and Incentives

- There was broad consensus among attendees that financial incentives from government would incentivize them to remain dwelling room landlords, or at least landlords at the more affordable end of the private rental market.
- Several attendees remarked that the government itself should invest in dwelling rooms and be a partner of the private landlord community. It could look to other countries like Singapore as a model.
- Many landlords are concerned with the quality of tenant candidates, and some felt that the City playing a role in screening potential dwelling room tenants would be helpful.
- Many attendees feel that they are providing an important service to the City and its citizens by activating their housing stock as dwelling room operators, but need

more incentives (particularly financial ones like tax reductions) in return for helping City provide Torontonians with shelter.

- One idea an attendee had was for tenants on social assistance to be backed by a government guarantee that the landlord will be able to reliably collect rent.
- One attendee said that as landlords, they will simply not invest in rental housing if the City does not address their concerns, because they are not in the market to invest in dwelling rooms specifically. The attendee felt that international student housing is a more lucrative use of rental units, so although Scarborough is a prime location to build up the dwelling room stock, they need to be incentivized more over other forms of rental housing.
- One attendee suggested an idea for the City to review dwelling room tenants' rents every few years and adjust accordingly to match landlords' increased costs.

Landlords' Rights

- Many attendees agreed that the policies should be the same in favour between landlords and tenants, so both are equal in rights.
- Some are dissatisfied with the current state of landlords' rights and feel that the Residential Tenancies' Act has not changed in tandem with their lived experience as landlords, and so want more confidence in dealing with problematic tenants
- All landlords in attendance agreed that the Residential Tenancies Act needs to be changed.

Miscellaneous

- One attendee expressed shock at current market rents and felt that the government policy favours the rich because it is not doing enough to limit increases
- Some attendees expressed disappointment that the government makes money off disputes between tenants and landlords through the dispute process's fees

Questions

- What is the penalty for not following the policy requirements? How would it be enforced?
- How would I de-convert a rooming house if I don't want to rent it out anymore? How would policies affect this scenario?
- How would inflation factor into percentage rent increase limits in the policy?

Appendix M: Multi Stakeholder Roundtable Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Stakeholder Roundtable Session #6 (Multi-Stakeholder) – Summary Report (Appendix M)

1. Meeting Details

Date: Wednesday, December 12, 2018
Location: Metro Hall, Room 309, 55 John St, Toronto, ON M5V 3C6
Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

2. Attendees

Stakeholders

- 6 landlords/operators
- 2 tenants
- 1 external consultant
- 1 housing advocate/worker
- 1 developer

Project Team

- Narmadha Rajakumar, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Sharon Hill, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Deanna Chorney, Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, City of Toronto
- Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting
- Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting
- Amitai Zand, Lura Consulting

3. Meeting Summary

Introduction

Liz McHardy, Lura Consulting, gave introductions and explained the context and purpose of the meeting. Then Zoie Browne, Lura Consulting, gave a more detailed background overview of the draft policies and project, as well as reviewed what specific feedback was being sought at the meeting. An opportunity for attendees to ask questions at this point was given.

Guided Discussion

Following these introductions, Liz McHardy and Zoie Browne facilitated a discussion with attendees using questions designed to solicit feedback on various aspects of the draft policies and the opportunities and challenges the draft policies create for each of

the stakeholder groups present. Summarizing points from this discussion are presented below.

TABLE A: LANDLORDS/OPERATORS, DEVELOPERS, HOUSING ADVOCATES/WORKERS

Opportunities

- The redevelopment of Regent Park into a mixed-income community was suggested as a successful case study to draw upon in shaping the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms.
- A suggestion was put forward for the City to lease its own land out for rooming houses and only charge the successful bidder a nominal administration fee instead of development charges.
- An owner/operator called for the City to grant zoning variances to allow them to build replacement units at a one-to-one ratio with the number of dwelling rooms lost.
- An idea was proposed to allow landlords to transfer gross floor area (GFA) between each other like carbon cap-and-trade units.
- An owner/operator suggested a cash-in-lieu model for fulfilling the replacement requirements in the draft policies.
- It was noted that San Diego subsidizes Single-Room Occupancy hotels (SROs), which fill a similar niche to rooming houses in the private housing market.
- SROs were cited as a more flexible affordable housing model by allowing for smaller unit sizes on City-owned and/or City-subsidized land.
- If the SRO model were to be implemented in Toronto, it was suggested that SRO units be located in areas with fewer families.
- A "density swap" scheme was proposed as a way to preserve rooming houses; an example of this in the context of heritage preservation in the Jarvis St corridor was cited.

Challenges and Concerns

- Some attendees saw protecting or replacing dwelling rooms as an indirect, ineffective policy measure to assist those receiving benefits from the Ontario Disability Support Program and others among the most marginally housed in Toronto.
- Several owner/operators called for a transitioned, phased, and/or grandfathered approach for implementing the proposed draft policies, along with a testing or pilot period to fine-tune them and study their effects.
- One owner/operator preferred that he be able to build fewer replacement units than the number of dwelling room units lost to redevelopment.
- It was lamented by one owner/operator that the City does not carry out enough enforcement of illegal rooming houses, particularly in Toronto's inner suburbs.
- Several owner/operator attendees doubted that the City will incorporate feedback from this consultation into the draft policies.

Affordability and Rent Protection Requirements

- Many rooming house operators in attendance expressed concern over their ability to financially absorb the 25-year proposed rent protection/affordability requirement without additional City support. It was mentioned that such a requirement would negatively impact the marketability of their properties to potential buyers in the future because protected rents today would drop to only about a third of market value after 25 years.
- One rooming house owner operator called the effectiveness of the proposed rent protection/affordability requirements into question by raising the point that not all of his tenants are low-income and many can afford his dwelling rooms without difficulty. Another commented that all his tenants are working and had to be earning at least minimum wage for him to take them on.
- The benchmark measure the City uses for what is considered affordable housing was called into question.
- An owner/operator commented that regulating rooming houses is unjustified because there are already thousands of rental listings across Toronto on Kijiji and Craigslist that would classify as affordable.

Minimum Threshold

- An owner/operator was of the opinion that replacement units that are similar to the lost units in size and configuration should be subject to the proposed rent protection requirements, but replacement units that are larger and/or renovated should not be subject to the requirements because otherwise the operator would not have the sufficient, steady stream of rental income necessary to recover the costs of the replacement units.
- An owner/operator suggested that the proposed 10-room minimum threshold triggering the replacement of dwelling rooms should not be arbitrary but rather changed to more rationally reflect the actual Floor-Space Index (FSI) of each individual rooming house property.
- One owner/operator suggested that the threshold for dwelling room replacement should be based on rent levels, as is done through the City's existing rental de-conversion bylaw (threshold is 1.5x the average market rent as determined by CMHC).

Assistance

- A developer expressed concern that the proposed relocation requirements are currently too vague/not specific enough: Will this responsibility be placed on the seller of a rooming house being redeveloped or passed down to the buyer? If the latter, it will be a disincentive to purchase the property. He also took issue with the blanket applicability of the policies, whose core intent he perceived to be targeted to a specific low-income, precariously housed tenant demographic.

Incentives and Subsidies

- All developers and owner/operators in attendance were of general consensus that the City should work from an incentivizing approach, not a restrictive or punitive one.
- It was suggested that the City consider various forms of incentives, such as development charge rebates.
- It was noted that protecting the low end of Toronto's existing housing stock should be just one piece of a policy solution to the city's affordable housing crisis, and it should be complemented by incentives to build new housing stock.
- One owner/operator said that he has successfully helped his tenants secure other housing in the past and insisted that he could continue to relocate his tenants on his own to other private market stock as long as he has financial support from the City.
- An owner/operator expressed frustration over being able to cover the costs of bringing their properties up to code without financial subsidies.

Responsibility

- There was general consensus among owners, operators, and developers that they should not shoulder such a high or disproportionate financial burden in helping to solve the city's housing crisis. One owner/operator noted that thinking of rooming houses as vehicles for affordable housing on the backs of free enterprise, downloading responsibility onto landlords, is counterproductive.

Flexibility

- A developer in attendance commented that there is not enough flexibility for developers and property owners built into the wording of the policies, and as a result, the rigidity prevents the original intents and goals of the policies from being realized.
- It was stressed that the City introduce flexibility into the policies by considering the different sizes of landlords' rooming house portfolios and the number of dwelling rooms contained within their individual properties.
- A comment was made that despite the goal of maintaining and creating sufficient affordable housing stock, each new restrictive policy actually stifles private market innovation by eliminating economic incentives.

Property Rights

- All owner/operators agreed that they know what is best for their properties and should be able to do to their properties as they see fit without City interference.
- An owner/operator saw the ability to sell their rooming house without any strings attached (e.g. a 25-year rent protection requirement) as an inviolable property right.
- It was stated by an owner/operator that although most rooming house owners recognize the important role dwelling rooms play in the lower end of the housing

stock, they would prefer over the long term to convert their dwelling rooms to self-contained units.

- Many expressed frustration over bureaucratic and policy barriers the City has put in place in order to perform these conversions, for example, development charges.

- An owner/operator likened the draft policies to a form of expropriation without compensation, and felt that they would drive him out of business.

- It was suggested that the City allow owner/operators to subdivide dwelling rooms into smaller units (without development charges) to help alleviate the housing crisis.

- Another owner/operator was frustrated about the heritage restrictions along Queen Street West that prevent him from being able to make desired modifications to his rooming house.

- A land use planner attending on behalf of a developer doubted the usefulness of rooming houses in solving Toronto's affordable housing crisis as long as owner/operators are not allowed to expand, and thus densify, them.

- Similar to the point above, an owner/operator expressed concern that the proposed policies as they are currently drafted will inadvertently prevent the improvement and expansion of rooming houses, something he would like to do and feels is consistent with the intent of the policies.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- Some owner/operators commented that they felt the City treats them poorly and with disrespect, and do not recognize the often decades of experience they have managing their properties and the important service their providing in the lower end of Toronto's private rental market. One suggested that City officials tour the rooming houses they regulate as a way to gain this appreciation.

- An owner/operator remarked that in his central Toronto neighbourhood, he has noticed an impact from the influx of international students on the local housing stock.

- An owner/operator mentioned that he owns one of the only four licenced rooming houses currently existing in Etobicoke.

- A few owner/operator attendees noted that a large, privately operated student residence near U of T is essentially a luxury rooming house, but were frustrated that the City does not classify it as such.

- An attendee called for greater regulation of foreign purchasing and ownership of real estate in Toronto.

- Another attendee expressed frustration with a recent bylaw requiring 12-meter side lot setbacks, while another countered this point, recognizing how it allows for more light and air between buildings.

- An advocate/housing worker in attendance remarked that the conversation had given her a greater appreciation both for the housing that the owner/operators at the table provide and for how much is involved in operating rooming houses.

- One attendee called for consistency in both City enforcement and the information individual City staff provide to owner/operators.

Questions

- According to the draft policies, what is the benchmark for what is considered "affordable"?
- Would the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms apply citywide?
- Would the province have final approval on the policies?

TABLE B: TENANTS

Displacement and Replacement

- Permanent relocation nearby upon displacement should be prioritized over temporary relocation and relocation far away, but the policies should be flexible enough for displaced tenants to ultimately make their own choice of where they want to relocate to.
- The tenants suggested that the City work closely with developers in a collaborative, win-win situation that will improve developer's reputation and trust within the communities and neighbourhoods where they build.

Minimum Threshold

- There was general consensus among the two tenants present that the 10-room minimum threshold in the draft policies is too high because many tenants living in rooming houses with 9 or fewer dwelling rooms could potentially become homeless instantly upon displacement.
- 6 dwelling rooms was suggested as the upper limit for the threshold.

Replacement Unit Type

- A tenant commented that hotel rooms should not be used as a permanent or long-term relocation solution for displaced tenants.
- The two tenants present expressed support for prioritizing self-contained units over other types of replacement housing, saying that most displaced tenants would be happier in them. However, to maintain the social/communal element of rooming houses, they suggested, in newly built replacement buildings there could be common areas within the building but outside the self-contained units that could count as a community benefit the City would require of the developer.
- The tenants proposed different sizes of self-contained replacement units to better suit the needs of tenants of various ages and life stages.
- Newly constructed replacement buildings should have a mix of densities, heights, and incomes, the tenants stated.

Affordability and Rent Protection Requirements

- Indefinite rent protection was preferred, but the tenants remarked that a review after 10 years and a phase-out period would be acceptable, as would increasing the rent in pace with inflation.
- It was recognized that rent protection or rent control could limit the landlord's ability to properly maintain the building, but financial burdens should still not be placed on tenants.
- The two tenants expressed concern over landlords taking advantage of loopholes to evade rent protection requirements and stressed the importance of enforcement in this area
- The tenants suggested a rent-to-own scheme like those already implemented in other countries such as Malaysia.

Assistance

- A tenant called for 6 months' advance notice of impending displacement (1 month would be sufficient for temporary displacement and return to the same site, however)
- It was requested that immediately upon displacement, tenants should receive an enforceable written guarantee of replacement housing or money/subsidies for them to secure replacement housing themselves so that they will not become homeless.
- The displacing landlord or developer should serve as a guarantor when the displaced tenant applies to new housing because many tenants on social assistance and/or without a job have difficulty securing housing, and without an address they will not be able to receive social assistance cheques.
- A tenant stressed that assistance plans must be individually tailored to displaced tenants.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- Distrust, discrimination, and bait-and-switching on the part of landlords were cited as issues experienced by rooming house tenants. An issue of landlords selectively filing taxes for only some of their units was raised.
- The tenants called for better enforcement of maintenance standards in rooming houses.
- A tenant speculated that there are more rooming houses located in Scarborough because property taxes are lower for those properties.
- It was suggested that no rooming house be allowed to contain more than 10 dwelling rooms because of issues associated with garbage accumulation and sharing common spaces with so many people.
- It was proposed that all rental units (dwelling rooms or otherwise) be licenced (with a fee) as a way to create a new revenue stream for government, which could use the funds to help tenants.

- A suggestion was made to convert City-owned property to rooming houses or transitional housing.
- The tenants called for more incentives to encourage smaller-scale landlords to become rooming house operators.
- The tenants said they appreciated the opportunity to provide their feedback through this consultation.

Appendix N: Online Survey Feedback Summary

Draft Policies to Address the Loss of Dwelling Rooms Consultation

Online "Fast Feedback" Survey – Summary Report (Appendix N)

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1. Online Survey Details

Period survey open: November 14 – December 14, 2018

Link distributed via:

- Project website
- Email to all stakeholders, and in turn to stakeholders' networks
- Paper slips containing the link at public meetings
- Paper large-print surveys at public meetings
- Electronic tablets at public meetings

The survey was administered by the City of Toronto and supplemented the in-person consultation events (stakeholder roundtable sessions and public meetings). It broadened the reach of the project's consultation and provided an additional channel for stakeholders and members of the general public to provide feedback on the draft policies to address the loss of dwelling rooms, particularly if they were unable to attend the in-person events or preferred to provide their feedback more anonymously. All 7 questions were optional and the survey did not require respondents to provide any personally identifying information.

2. Respondents

Total respondents: 57

Respondent composition:

Response	Count	Proportion
Current resident of a dwelling room/rooming house	0	0%
Former resident of a dwelling room/rooming house	8	19%
Owner/operator of a rooming house	0	0%
None of the above	35	81%
TOTAL (does not include those who skipped question)	**43**	**100%**

3. Summary of Feedback from Online Survey

Most respondents (80%) strongly supported having policies in the City's Official Plan to address the loss of dwelling rooms, with the remainder either agreeing, having a neutral opinion, or strongly disagreeing.

Most respondents (two-thirds) thought the 10-room minimum threshold triggering the replacement requirements in the draft policies was too high. One-fifth thought it was too low,

and the remaining tenth of respondents were of the opinion that the 10-room minimum was too high. The vast majority of respondents (92%) thought that the minimum threshold should be between 1 and 8 dwelling rooms, with the most common response being 5 rooms; the remaining respondents preferred 20 rooms or above.

When asked to explain their preferred minimum threshold, respondents who supported a lower threshold cited Toronto's current housing crisis and the need to protect vulnerable tenants and existing affordable rental stock; respondents who supported a higher or no threshold justified their opinion by stating that the private sector should not be required to subsidize affordable housing and that the responsibility for providing affordable housing should rest with the City.

While there was support for all the priorities listed in Question 5 (which asked about respondents' priorities for the replacement of dwelling rooms lost to redevelopment), the two with the strongest support were *Longer affordability of replacement housing* at 61%, and *Assistance to help displaced tenants find temporary housing and then return to a new dwelling room or self-contained rental unit once redevelopment is complete* at 49%. Respondents who provided open-ended input to this question stressed maintaining tenants' pre-displacement rent levels and capping rent at a clear definition of affordable (e.g. 30% of income), and permanently relocating tenants on the same site after redevelopment is complete. On the other hand, some respondents wrote that it would be difficult or unfair for private sector rooming house owners and operators to comply with affordability and replacement requirements.

Other open-ended comments related to shifting the focus from protecting dwelling room stock to building more of it, making the language of the survey more accessible to tenants, and requests for legalizing dwelling rooms citywide.