



Community and Health Services Department
Housing York Inc.

Memorandum

To: Members of the Housing York Inc. Board of Directors
From: Rick Farrell
General Manager
Date: March 2, 2017
Re: **Housing York Inc. – Monthly Activity Update**

This monthly activity update provides information on tenant engagement activities, capital work and financial updates for January and February 2017. It also highlights the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) Large Providers' Forum hosted by Housing York.

ONPHA Tours with Housing York for the Large Housing Providers' Forum

In today's rapidly evolving federal and provincial policy and investment environment, Housing Providers are looking for strategies to sustain and grow their organizations. The new rent subsidy model at the Richmond Hill Hub and Housing York's redevelopment initiatives are generating interest among these Housing Providers.

York Region and Housing York were honoured to host ONPHA's annual Large Housing Provider Forum. The February event was open to ONPHA members with portfolios of 400 units or more. Attendees discussed the Region's innovative rent subsidy programs and explored the challenges and opportunities for redeveloping existing social housing sites. The event also highlighted the partnerships and collaboration that are essential to engage with tenants and communities in a Region encompassing dense urban cities and small towns.

More than 50 representatives from housing provider organizations across the province toured current and future Housing York properties including Unionville in Markham, Woodbridge Lane in Vaughan, the Hub in Richmond Hill and Kingview Court in King City. They heard about Housing York's project to strengthen the sense of community at Lakeside Residences in Keswick and visited the Ja'Fari Islamic Housing Corporation to see their redevelopment project and hear about their community partnerships.

Tenant Engagement Update

New Partnerships at the Richmond Hill Hub

Two community-based groups are delivering new programs with great success at the Richmond Hill Hub. Community Living coordinates a weekly tenant coffee group. Home on the Hill, a new partner, offers an eight-week cooking class in the Hub's sixth floor lounge. The program is also being offered in Farsi.

Tenants get on-board with free Presto cards

On January 27, 2017 and January 31, 2017, tenants at Fairy Lake Gardens, Armitage Gardens and Founders Place in Newmarket learned how to use PRESTO cards to take transit. Tenants had the opportunity to get fee-waived PRESTO cards, and to set-up and register, with assistance from York Region Transit staff. They were also able to share their experiences with senior York Region Transit and VIVA staff, offering both compliments and suggested improvements. Housing York will investigate opportunities for other housing communities to participate in a similar consultation.

Connecting Lakeside – a collaboration with other Housing York communities

The “Connecting Lakeside” initiative brings tenants together to build a strong community. In January 2017, tenants at Lakeside Residences in Georgina invited their Housing York neighbours from Pineview Terrace and Keswick Gardens to join them for a discussion on accessibility in the community. Over 25 tenants attended and brainstormed on how accessibility issues could be resolved by engaging community partners and businesses to make improvements such as adding ramps and changing doors.

This collaboration is a first for Housing York communities to engage and work on community change. Connecting Lakeside is a tenant-led initiative with support from Housing York.

Partnership with Hospice Georgina

Hospice Georgina approached Housing York to offer workshops focusing on dealing with different types of loss, including major life changes and bereavement. In February 2017, the Hospice delivered interactive workshops, “Coping with Loss and Change”, at Northview Court, Keswick Gardens and Lakeside Residences in Georgina. These workshops address a need identified by other partners who provide services in these communities.

Tenant Programs at Mackenzie Green

Tenants at Mackenzie Green in Richmond Hill can participate in Zumba classes in the Common Room. These popular fitness classes are led by an instructor who lives in the building. The Saturday morning coffee club is also enjoying success among tenants - hosting their own Super Bowl party in the lounge. Tenants are enjoying leading and running their own programs and events and in creating a community in their building.

Woodbridge Lane Tenant Relocation

Housing York continues to work with remaining tenants at Woodbridge Lane in Vaughan to assist with relocation. In January 2017, Housing York provided all remaining tenants with notices terminating their tenancies effective May 31, 2017.

All tenants have the option of transferring to other Housing York locations. Of the remaining eight occupied units, two are awaiting transfer to other locations. Six of the remaining tenants however, have expressed a strong preference for remaining in the Woodbridge area while the new building is under construction. As Housing York does not have other housing options in Woodbridge, a Regional program has been established to provide rent subsidies to assist these tenants in securing private sector rental units. Staff continue to work closely with tenants to identify appropriate interim housing arrangements.

Capital Work Update

Mulock Village and Springbrook Gardens - Kitchen Replacements

Housing York experienced contractor challenges with kitchen replacements at Springbrook Gardens in Richmond Hill and Mulock Village in Newmarket. Staff are working through the challenges and expect to begin the remaining kitchen replacements in the spring. Tenants will be kept informed of the new project schedule and timelines.

Brayfield Manor - Bathrooms Renovations

Completion of the remaining 20 bathroom renovations are in progress at Brayfield Manor in Newmarket. Included in this work are upgrades to five barrier-free bathrooms. Construction started in mid-February 2017 and is expected to be complete by April 2017.

Rose Town - Kitchen Replacements and Common Area Update

The kitchen replacements at Rose Town in Richmond Hill are now complete. The update started in the summer of 2016 and included replacing kitchen cabinets, countertops and stoves for approximately 70 units. Rose Town's common areas are also getting a refresh. The tenant lounge was redecorated in December: wallpaper was replaced in the Common Area and hallways; and unit doors were repainted.

55 Orchard Heights – Window Replacement

Window replacements are underway at 55 Orchard Heights Boulevard in Aurora. The current windows are 35 years old, not energy efficient and require on-going regular maintenance. Arrangements have been made to assist tenants with moving furniture away from the window areas. As well, a Common Room has been established to provide a warm environment for tenants during the three to four hours it will take to replace the windows in each unit.

Hadley Grange - Boiler Replacement

The two existing boilers at Hadley Grange in Aurora are beyond their equipment life cycle and will be replaced with higher efficiency models. The boilers will be replaced sequentially to ensure the facility has one functioning unit at all times so there is no disruption to tenants. The work started on January 30, 2017 and is expected to be complete by the end of March 2017.

Financial Update

The Finance team is currently preparing Housing York's 2016 financial statements to submit to the auditors in early March. The audited financial statements and annual report will be presented to the Board in June 2017.

Rick Farrell
General Manager

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