



City of
Peterborough

TO: Members of the Joint Services Steering Committee

FROM: Malcolm Hunt, Director of Planning and Development Services
Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2013

SUBJECT: Report PLHDJSSC13-001
10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan Update – Information Report

PURPOSE

A report to provide information and a presentation regarding progress in the development of a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That Joint Services Steering Committee endorse the recommendation outlined in Report PLHDJSSC13-001 dated January 10, 2013, of the Director of Planning and Development Services, as follows:

That the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan Update report and presentation be received for information.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget and financial implications arising from this recommendation.

BACKGROUND

The City of Peterborough, as the Service Manager for Housing and Social Services for the City and County of Peterborough, is completing a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The Plan will create a long-term vision and identify goals that reflect the distinct housing and homelessness-related issues and needs for the City and County of Peterborough.

Development of the Plan requires on-going collaboration between the Housing and Social Services Divisions as some current responsibilities are inter-related. Also, there is a shift in focus from the province to long-term solutions rather than emergency responses to homelessness. The development of the Housing and Homelessness Plan project is led by a Steering Committee and a Project Team (see City, County and Township staff membership lists attached as Appendix A).

City Council Report PLHDJSSC12-003 of June 13, 2012 describes the provincial requirements for the Plan as set out in the Housing Services Act (2011) and the Provincial Housing Policy Statement.

The withdrawal of some provincial social assistance funding (i.e. capping Discretionary Benefits and eliminating Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit) creates a challenging context in which to discuss the Plan. The province has created new programs (i.e. Investment in Affordable Housing and Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative) which have greater municipal flexibility but overall there is less provincial funding. Municipalities must set priorities to meet local needs, and exercise solid judgement around the need for service delivery and cost control.

Housing and Homelessness Plan Consultant Hired

The City received three submissions in response to a Request for Proposals, in August, 2012. Tim Welch Consulting (TWC) was the successful proponent. This firm's submission and subsequent interview demonstrated a good understanding of strategic planning, and offered a well rounded team of professionals with knowledge of housing, homeless services and community consultation. TWC began working with the City in October 2012.

Need and Demand Study

Currently, TWC is developing the Need and Demand Study for the City and County, based on a review of current documents and reports from the City, County and community, first-hand accounts of need especially among people experiencing homelessness and those serving them, and a special order for Statistics Canada census data. The Need and Demand Study will be completed February 2013.

A sample of early observations is as follows:

- Population growth in the City is due to in-migration across all age cohorts (unlike similar sized areas where there is a net decline of young adults).
- There is a forecasted growth in ‘young’ seniors over the next decade, and many in this cohort are homeowners now.
- Housing stock in this area is relatively old, and the need for major repairs is slightly higher in Peterborough City and County than the rest of Ontario.

Communication and Engagement Plan

TWC has completed a detailed and broad Communication and Engagement Plan, which has been approved by the Project Team. Engagement Discussion Questions are relatively simple, and are prompts to stimulate considerable discussion. These questions are attached as Appendix B.

TWC has agreed use the Affordable Housing Action Committee and the Homelessness Support Services Coordinating Committee as on-going community ‘sounding boards’. The consultants are carrying out almost thirty individual key informant interviews and have participated in two Township Council delegations.

TWC is attending committee meetings including: the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Advisory Board, the Social Housing Provider Group (including Supportive Housing Network, Home Grown Homes, Habitat for Humanity and several AHP developers), the Home Response Coalition, several aboriginal organizations, and the Poverty Reduction Networks subcommittees.

TWC has organized Round Tables for in-depth discussion among specialists. One meeting with builders, a landlord association and realtors has been held, and future meetings will be held with service providers, market and social housing tenants, and people with lived experience or who are at risk of homelessness.

Housing and Homelessness Plan Bulletins are part of the communications strategy of the Project Team, and will continue to the end of the project. Bulletins 1 and 2 are attached as Appendix C and D. The City of Peterborough website has a section on the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan at the following link:

http://www.peterborough.ca/Living/City_Services/Housing_Division/10-year_Housing_and_Homelessness_Plan.htm

Early in 2013, as a second step in community engagement, TWC will produce a “What We Heard” document to validate their findings and confirm with the Project Team, Steering Committee, and community members that various perspectives are accurately reflected.

The consultant's initial findings from consultations with stakeholders include the following observations:

- A significant number of households have ongoing affordability problems.
- There are strong information sharing and co-ordination practices exist among the organizations providing support services for homeless people and housing.
- Proactive co-ordinating work in the sector is undertaken by City staff.
- Various models of housing with supports could help meet some of the specific or higher needs of people in the community.
- Some people remain in the shelters (and therefore are homeless) for many weeks at a time as there is no housing alternative that they can afford.
- There are significant costs to fire, police and EMS services because of the lack of supported or supportive affordable housing.
- Multiple stakeholders have expressed concern over substandard rooming house units, which can provide the only affordable housing alternative for people in the shelters.

Township Perspectives

Delegations to eight Township Council meetings have been completed by the Housing Division with support from the Project Team. Council members were provided with an update on Housing Division business, including the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. TWC went to two of these Township meetings, and have plans to call several Township Council representatives to follow up.

Generally, all Townships expressed concern about high core housing need in Peterborough County, and reinforced concerns about aging demographics in the County, the scarcity of rental housing options, and stated that some current homeowners have trouble with maintenance and upkeep of their own homes. Land use land initiatives such as community improvement plan area incentives for affordable housing are in the works in one Township. Some questions were asked about provincial funding cuts and several specific operational issues were raised about social housing.

SUMMARY

The Housing and Homelessness Plan project is progressing well. This report provides an update on the Plan during its development phase. A subsequent report will present the draft plan to Joint Service Steering Committee and City Council, before it is submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for their review. The final Plan is due to the Ministry in January 2014.

Submitted by,

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Housing Division Manager

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Director of Community Services

Linda Mitchelson
Social Services Division Manager

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Attachments:

- Appendix A – 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan
Committee Membership Lists
- Appendix B – Engagement Discussion Questions
- Appendix C – Ten-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – Vol. 1 Issue 1
- Appendix D – Ten-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – Vol. 1 Issue 2

**10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan
 Committee Membership Lists**

Project Steering Committee

Malcolm Hunt (Chair)	City of Peterborough, Director of Planning and Development Services
Ken Doherty	City of Peterborough, Director of Community Services
Bryan Weir	County of Peterborough, Director of Planning
Linda Mitchelson	City of Peterborough, Social Services Division Manager
Susan Bacque	City of Peterborough, Housing Division Manager
Rebecca Morgan-Quin	City of Peterborough, Housing Programs Officer
Dorothy Olver	City of Peterborough, Social Services Program Manager
Alex McLeod	City of Peterborough, Manager, Real Estate
Michelle Longhurst	City of Peterborough, Housing Programs Assistant

Project Team

Susan Bacque (Chair)	City of Peterborough, Housing Division Manager
Linda Mitchelson	City of Peterborough, Social Services Division Manager
Angela Chittick	Smith/Ennismore/Lakefield, Township Clerk
Iain Mudd	County of Peterborough, Manager of Planning
Dorothy Olver	City of Peterborough, Social Services Program Manager
Rebecca Morgan-Quin	City of Peterborough, Housing Programs Officer
Sharron Hayton	City of Peterborough, Customer Service Coordinator
Janet Sheward	City of Peterborough, Corporate Policy Coordinator
Christie Maclsaac	City of Peterborough, Planning Technician
Ken Hetherington	City of Peterborough, Manager of Planning
Michelle Longhurst	City of Peterborough, Housing Programs Assistant



ENGAGEMENT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

At the engagement sessions, TWC is seeking input and response to the following questions:

1. What are the greatest strengths of the system of affordable housing and homelessness-related services in the Peterborough area, or the greatest progress in recent years?
2. What are the largest issues, challenges and unmet needs in affordable housing and in Peterborough – City and County?
3. What are the greatest issues, challenges and unmet needs in homelessness prevention, emergency services, outreach and getting and keeping stable housing?
4. Still considering needs, what would you suggest about the following aspects?
 - Which population/client groups have most severe needs/highest priority?
 - The different or distinct needs of the City and the County?
 - What steps are needed to make the system more client-centre?
 - What steps are needed to enhance community capacity?
 - What steps are needed to increase public awareness?
5. Which elements or directions in recent strategic or planning documents are most important to carry over into a 10-year plan, including a 3-year action plan?
6. What are the most significant strategies and actions that the City and/or County can take locally with the community, to address such needs (i.e. focusing on local action while recognizing that federal/provincial priorities and resources are also needed)?