

Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee

Meeting held September 23, 2020 via Zoom video conference

A meeting of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee is held this day commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

Marina Clemens, Chair
Councillor Kieran McKenzie
Fiona Coughlin
Phil Dorner
Mayor Gary McNamara, Town of Tecumseh
Jim Steele
Leigh Vachon (arrives at 9:35 a.m.)
Angela Yakonich
Joyce Zuk

Regrets received from:

Jessica Brunet
Kathy Hay
Eric Hill

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Debbie Cercone, Executive Director of Housing & Children's Services
Judith Binder, CMHC
Kelly Goz, Coordinator, Housing Administration & Development
Tina Moore, Coordinator, Housing Administration & Development
Jennifer Tanner, Manager Homelessness & Housing Support
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 9:33 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule "A" attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Disclosure of Interest

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by A. Yakonich,
That the minutes of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee of its meeting held June 23, 2020 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1 Housing & Homelessness Master Plan 2019 Annual Report

K. Goz advises a report will be going to Council in the next few months that will provide additional information relating to the 2019 Annual Report. As 2019 was a transition year between the previous version of the 10 Year Plan and the new one, the structure of the report flows a little differently in response to the targets that were identified in the renewed 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Master Plan.

Councillor McKenzie states that the number one priority is to expand the supply of affordable housing. He asks if the number of new affordable housing units added in 2019 was zero. K. Goz responds that the amount of housing has expanded and increased in terms of affordable units that are supported through rent supplement and the number of households that have accessed those units. It does not necessarily mean that the housing is new bricks and mortar but how we are expanding affordability across Windsor-Essex which also includes rent subsidies for units that already exist in the community.

Councillor McKenzie indicates he is not sure the statistics are quantified in the report. K. Goz replies that 670 new households were assisted in either RGI, affordable rental housing units and/or rent assisted units in 2019. She adds when the report comes before Council, they can provide a more detailed breakdown of this data.

Councillor McKenzie asks if consideration has been given to whether or not there has been a breakdown of private or public sector and non-profit sector units added in the affordable housing space and is there access to that data. K. Goz responds that this matter is being looked at by administration to determine how to gather and track that information. She notes that information was received from Windsor Family Homes and Community Partnerships and Habitat for Humanity regarding the net increases for affordable housing in 2019. She adds that it is her understanding that the Building Department will be putting in a system in place that will assist with tracking the number of affordable units created through the private sector.

Councillor McKenzie asks how are we trending towards the 10,000 unit goal and where are we after year one. We should have added 1,000 units which should be

included in the report and what are the bricks and mortar builds that are directly tied to the municipality. K. Goz questions what the Councillor means by “bricks and mortar builds” and asks if it is tied to incentives and CIP’s.

Councillor McKenzie states that we are supporting a number of different groups and organizations that are providing affordable housing across the community. When we’re talking about new builds that the city is responsible for, if we’re going to reach the goal of 10,000 units, the city has to build some.

K. Goz advises that the target identified in the Master Plan speaks to increasing the number of households assisted in either RGI, affordable rental housing units and/or rent assisted units by 30% by 2028.

J. Zuk advises that perhaps the distinction that Councillor McKenzie is looking for is the difference between overall units and actual stock and how we add it to the actual build that is either owned by the City of Windsor or is under contract being maintained as affordable housing. It is a contentious point because it is important to track rent supplements as currently, that is the only vehicle that we have had to create those affordable units given that buildings are not happening and we do not have inclusionary zoning.

F. Coughlin remarks she would like to see an increase in the number of new units whether it is through the rent subsidies or through new builds. The City does partner with Habitat for Humanity on their builds and these new units are included in the data on the 2019 annual report.

Mayor McNamara asks Administration if the private sector is included in qualifying for affordable housing. K. Goz responds that known investments of rental housing capital dollars in 2019 were included in the report. Future reports can depict the net increases of the number of units and dollars invested in Windsor Essex annually. In any of the Provincial/Federal capital programs delivered by Housing Services, there has been a requirement for municipalities to consent to participation in these programs, the City of Windsor has historically participated in every rental capital program back to 2007.

Mayor McNamara suggests that if we are going to meet targets over a period of time, that perhaps a chart that outlines what has transpired the year before and what is coming up over the next few years would be helpful.

D. Cercone advises that a template/report can be created and sent out to the municipal planning and building departments to collect information about affordable housing built by the private sector, i.e. three years would be a good benchmark and bring it back to HHAC.

J. Binder states as Windsor-Essex is a large community, to look at the spectrum of housing as a need and where it is being filled, i.e. CMHC is looking at many developers that may be offering different levels of affordability.

4.2 Housing & Homelessness Master Plan

Goal 1: Sustain & expand social housing & affordable housing supply

Fiona Coughlin advises Habitat for Humanity in 2019 completed three houses and partnered on eleven apartments on the rental side of things, i.e. transitional housing. Their biggest barriers relates to land as people at one time donated land for housing. She notes they have been working with Real Estate Services, City of Windsor in this endeavour.

T. Moore provides the following as it relates to:

- Canada Ontario Housing Benefits (COHB) and Windsor Essex Housing Benefit Update
- OPHI/COCHI Update
- 2019 Ontario Renovates: Social Housing Repair Program
- 2020 Ontario Renovates: Social Housing Repair Program
- Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) Project Announcement

Canada Ontario Housing Benefits (COHB) and Windsor Essex Housing Benefit Update (WEHB)

Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (CHC) continues to administer both the COHB and WEHB programs. Interest in both programs continues to be high and enquiries are being received and responded to on an ongoing basis. Staff continue to work through the enquiries and are diligently working to assess eligibility and complete and process applications for eligible applicants for both programs as required.

WEHB offers must be made in order of priority on the Central Housing Registry Windsor Essex waitlist as these benefits count towards our legislated service level standard. WEHB offers to Priority I applicants have been issued, addressed and processed. The next round of offers to Priority II applicants were issued on September 17, 2020 with a deadline to respond by October 8, 2020. CHC staff will be working to provide further information, guidance to interested applicants, as well as, confirming program eligibility, providing assistance and direction in terms of completing the application process for individuals who are deemed eligible and subsequently processing applications and issuing payments for the eligible applicants.

OPHI/COCHI Update – RFP Operational Reviews/Facility Condition Assessments Social Housing Business Process and Asset Management Review Consultant

A Request for Proposal funded under Ontario's Community Housing Renewal Strategy to hire a consultant to conduct Asset Management planning services, such as building condition audits and technical assessments, Operational reviews, Governance and succession planning review and analysis and identifying potential acquisition and mergers

of the federal and provincial housing providers under the HSA. We are currently in the evaluation stage, the project is scheduled to be complete early 2022 and will inform funding decisions for the next phase of funding under the Community Housing Renewal Strategy.

2019 Ontario Renovates Social Housing Repair Program (OR SHRP)

The Ontario Renovates Social Housing Repair Program (OR-SHRP) is funded under Ontario's Community Housing Renewal Strategy and is intended to assist Windsor and Essex County social housing provider(s) to rehabilitate units that require essential repairs which preserve and extend the functional lifespan of the social housing supply and/or modify units to increase accessibility. The 2019-20 funding amount of \$2.3 M was distributed to 21 Windsor and Essex County social housing providers to address urgent and necessary repairs representing 1,100 social units to be repaired by December 31, 2020.

2020 Ontario Renovates Social Housing Repair Program (OR SHRP)

We are pleased to announce the 2020 Ontario Renovates – Social Housing Repair Program (OR-SHRP) has been released to eligible social housing providers. The funding allocations for eligible Windsor and Essex County social housing provider(s) is up to approximately \$2.7 M for 2020-21. Our office has approved 20 Housing Providers to address immediate and urgent repairs to 1,250 social housing units by the program deadline of December 31, 2021.

Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) Project Announcement

On September 10, 2020 at 3100 Meadowbrook Lane Honourable Minister Clark, Minister of MMAH introduced the Provincial investments in Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation's Meadowbrook Development capital project and Community Living Essex County's Youth Supportive project on Division Street in Kingsville. The Minister was joined by Irek Kusmierczyk, MP Windsor-Tecumseh, Mayor Drew Dilkens and Jim Steele, CEO, Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation.

Goal 2: Sustain & expand housing that is Linked with Supports and Goal 3: Ending Homelessness

J. Tanner provides the following comments as it relates to COVID-19:

To date there has not been a COVID outbreak at any of the emergency shelters. The COVID Isolation & Recovery Centre has provided a safe place for 34 people to isolate

while awaiting COVID test results or recovering from the virus. Only one person is known to have been COVID positive.

The situation in the Housing with Supports Homes has been more concerning.

- 5 Housing with Supports Homes have had outbreaks
- 14 staff have tested positive
- 22 residents have tested positive
- 4 residents in 1 home have died

COVID Funding & Services Supported

Quickly after the pandemic began the provincial and federal government provided additional funding to assist the Housing department in supporting its funded agencies and vulnerable populations.

The below table provides an overview of the COVID-related streams.

Funding Stream	Funding Ministry	Amount	Date of Allocation	Purpose and Services Supported
Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF Phase I)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$3.7 million	Apr 1, 2020	<p>To help social service providers such as emergency shelters, food bank, supportive housing to deliver their critical services, hire additional staff and find ways to promote social distancing and self-isolation. Falls under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) guidelines.</p> <p>This funding has been mainly used to provide additional support and resources at 3 emergency shelters and 22 Housing with Supports Homes so they can better adhere to public health guidelines to protect clients, residents and staff from COVID-19. (e.g. More cleaning staff, PPE)</p> <p>The COVID Isolation & Recovery Centres (IRC) for people experiencing homelessness and the new day program at Windsor Water World have also been supported by this funding.</p>
Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF Phase II)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$4.5 million (Planning allocation)	Aug 12, 2020	<p>Administration submitted a business case to MMAH in mid-Sept.</p> <p>It is expected that MMAH will provide feedback / approval of this business case by the end of October.</p>
Canada's COVID Economic Response Plan	Employment & Social Development Canada (ESDC)	\$1.8 million	Apr 1, 2020 & July 14, 2020	<p>To provide assistance to organizations attending to the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness during the pandemic. This funding has specifically been used for the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding for one emergency shelter to reduce the spread of COVID (e.g. PPE, enhanced cleaning, security)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police and security costs at IRC / day program
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)	n/a	\$34,000	Jun 3, 2020	To provide COVID-19 related supports to vulnerable populations.
COVID 19: Temporary Pandemic Pay (TPP)	MMAH	\$837,000 (approximate allocation, to be reconciled by September 30,2020)	Jun 12, 2020	<p>To provide pandemic pay increase of \$4 / hour and lump sum payments (\$250 / month) for eligible employers and employees for the period of Apr 24 to Aug 13, 2020. Specific guidelines issued for this program. The City of Windsor, as Service Manager, will have to determine eligibility and administer this program.</p> <p>The Housing department oversaw the implementation of TPP under the MMAH funding stream for 25 employers with over 300 employees, including eligible City staff</p>

Through these substantial funding contributions from upper levels of government, Administration has been able to meet the immediate needs of service providers that support some of our community’s most vulnerable populations and has begun to plan for longer-term housing solutions that will protect people from contracting COVID-19. However, no funding commitments have been made after March 31, 2021 and by all accounts, Canada will still be dealing with the pandemic after that time.

K. Goz provides an overview of the day program, outcomes and partnerships as follows:

As of September 18, 2020:

Totals To Date	
Total Visitors	4664
Total Unique Visits	3603
Total New Clients	387

- The site currently is operating in partnership with Family Services Windsor-Essex, Housing Information Services, Canadian Mental Health Association and CommUnity Partnerships
- Support agency staff have been instrumental in providing the following supports, which have evolved over time, to people experiencing homelessness:
 - Referrals and updates to the By-Names Prioritized List;
 - Completion and updates to Central Housing Registry application forms;

- Assistance in completing applications for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB);
- Connection to income maintenance staff at Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program offices as applicable;
- Connection to Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee Office as appropriate;
- Review of housing listings found online;
- Assistance in obtaining necessary documents required for housing applications (ex. Identification, income verification, etc.);
- Referrals to other support agencies as required (ex. Legal Assistance of Windsor, WEFight, Crisis & Mental Wellness Centre, Assisted Living Southwestern Ontario, Canadian Mental Health Association, etc.);
- Referrals to primary health care providers, as required;
- Harm Reduction; and
- Warm transfer and service restriction resolution into Emergency Shelter.

In addition participants have requested the following resources be offered at the space:

- Housing, medical assistance
- Overnight sleeping space
- Mental health supports
- Bulletin board with available affordable units
- Assistance obtaining identification
- COVID funds

Additional comments provided by participants have been:

- Thank you for the space.
- This staff was the best. [The Outreach Worker] helped my mental state.
- Your care and concern helps me be a better person.
- I love this place, its amazing for people that are homeless that there is somewhere safe where we can go and get the help we need.
- Water World provides me time away from the challenges of shelter life.

Participant feedback has guided the evolution of the program.

The day program has provided folks with a safe, reliable, place to escape the elements while connecting to a variety of service providers. With the library closed and many agencies not conducting face to face visits, Water World fills a sizable gap for this vulnerable population. Most of these clients do not have phones to contact landlords, income support workers, and probation. Having staff to facilitate these phone calls provides support to a significant barrier in accessing services and housing. Navigating housing and income systems can be complicated; daily check ins with staff ensures clients feel supported to reach their goals and can receive help when a hurdle seems too challenging to complete independently.

- Some of the outcomes and successes achieved to date include but are not limited to:
- Female client came to Water World after being released from Windsor Police cells in a blue, thin jumpsuit that had holes in it. She was provided with clothing and resources and a connection to her CMHA worker. Connected male participant to primary care for follow up regarding infection and psychiatric meds. Connected participant to income after not receiving Ontario Works benefits and being homeless for a year.
- Provide informal supports to low income gentleman, who is diagnosed with cancer and is not pursuing treatment.
- Participant was deemed to be suicidal at Water World, stated he had attended hospital the night prior but was discharged without support. He stated he felt no one was taking him seriously, after advocacy and a call to 911 he was admitted to hospital for a psychiatric stay. Staff stayed with him for three hours awaiting an ambulance.
- Female participant attended Water World to talk to staff when her mother passed away and to escape an abusive relationship. She is now receiving addiction treatment services at House of Sophrosyne.
- A female attended Water World after an abusive incident with her partner, staff provided advocacy to get her into Hiatus House (Domestic Violence Shelter) until she is able to move into safe housing.
- Two participants have been presented at the Windsor Essex Situation Table due to having acute elevated risk.
- An 82 year old gentleman who had been staying in shelter for the past 3 years was housed in permanent housing with an IAH(E) rent supplement.
- A gentleman received advocacy support regarding his physical health needs and received an emergency life saving surgery.
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- BNPL current data
 - As of August 2020 – 422 people experiencing homelessness, of which 342 are chronic. There were 21 households who moved into housing.

J. Zuk remarks there was recent media coverage relating to encampments near the waterfront due to the reticence of people to go to facilities due to COVID-19. She adds this is not a “tent city” but where people live outdoors.

Goal 7: Monitor, report & evaluate

J. Tanner reports in terms of HIFIS – Homeless Individuals and Families Information System, that an agreement between the city and service providers who will be utilizing the system has been developed. Three emergency shelters have signed this agreement and will be the first to be onboarded onto HIFIS.

4.3 HHAC Subcommittee

Discussion ensues regarding the HHAC Administrative Subcommittee and the members Subcommittee and the need to ensure that the subcommittees are not working at cross purposes with each other

4.4 Windsor Star Article

It is noted that the Windsor Star article referred to Councillor Bortolin who provided comments and further referred to the need for additional, affordable units throughout the city to meet the demand for affordable housing stock.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 25, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR