

## **MEMORANDUM**

To: Directors of Housing York Inc. Board

From: Kathy Milsom, General Manager

Date: September 20, 2021

Re: Housing York Inc. Activity Update

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### **2021 Housing York Inc. Business Plan, third quarter update**

Included with this update, as Attachment 1, is the third quarter report of performance against the 2021 Housing York Inc. (HYI) business plan. As the attachment demonstrates, 66% of actions are in progress and 28% of actions have now been completed, up from 9% in the previous quarter. Some highlights are noted below.

#### **Highlights for Strategic Priority 1: Expanded Housing Portfolio**

- Transitional housing projects are underway. Substantial completion is targeted for the end of 2021 for 18 prefabricated units on the Leeder/Porter Place site in the Town of East Gwillimbury, as well as eight conventionally-constructed units on the Sutton Youth site in the Town of Georgina.
- Meetings have been held with a number of potential partners to support new development/redevelopment. This includes engaging with developers to discuss sites in the Towns of Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville, continued discussions with City of Markham and York Region Rapid Transit Corporation regarding potential development near the Yonge North Subway Extension, and discussions with non-profit providers that are considering redevelopment.

#### **Highlights for Strategic Priority 2: Inclusive Communities and Successful Tenancies**

- A request for proposals has been issued to retain a consultant to establish methodology for resident surveys that will be administered in 2022. Surveys will evaluate measures such as resident satisfaction with referral services, percentage of program participants who feel the right programs are available in their HYI community, and more.
- Business processes have been established to identify and track tenancy management activities for tenancies at risk due to behaviour-related issues. A baseline and four-year

target of 90% has been set for the percent of tenancies that are preserved when the tenancy is at risk for behaviour-related issues, meeting the 2021 target for this action.

### **Highlights for Strategic Priority 3: Financial Sustainability**

- To support operational efficiencies, the Property Management team is engaging with residents who pay by cheque or money order to begin using pre-authorized payments/online banking.
- Proformas are complete for Unionville Commons in the City of Markham and the project in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville that reduce the reliance on Regional subsidies while maintaining a 70/30 subsidized/market split, meeting the target.

### **Housing York Inc. successfully responded to multiple fires in August**

HYI's fire safety program includes resident education as well as regular inspections, testing and enhancement of equipment. This program was put to the test on four occasions during the month of August:

- On August 18, 2021, an overloaded extension cord caused a fire at Founders Place, 540 Timothy Street in the Town of Newmarket. Thanks to the building superintendent's quick action to extinguish the fire, there were no injuries and only minimal damage.
- On August 23, 2021, an elevator component failed at Fairy Lake Gardens located at 468 Eagle Street in the Town of Newmarket, triggering the fire safety system. While there was no fire, there was smoke in the penthouse mechanical room. Many residents chose to evacuate when the alarm sounded. All residents were able to return to their homes within two hours. One elevator was in service until September 8<sup>th</sup>, when the damaged component of the other elevator was replaced.
- On August 25, 2021, the building superintendent working at Trinity Square in the City of Markham heard a smoke alarm sounding in a townhouse unit and saw smoke through a kitchen window. As no one was home, he entered the unit and was able to extinguish a stovetop fire before any significant damage occurred.
- On August 27, 2021, a bar fridge caught fire in a townhouse unit bedroom at Mulock Village in the Town of Newmarket. Central York Fire Services responded quickly and was able to prevent damage to the adjoining units. Although the source unit will require extensive remediation with a preliminary cost estimate of over \$350,000, there were no injuries, and the HYI team was able to relocate the resident to another HYI property.

In every instance, the fire safety systems worked as designed, and the responsiveness of the HYI team minimized resident impact. Most importantly, there were no injuries to residents or employees.

## **Central York Fire Services delivers smoking fire safety campaign**

Central York Fire Services collaborated with HYI to educate and remind residents of the importance of properly disposing of smoking materials. The goal of the campaign was to educate residents in multi-unit and high-rise buildings on the safe disposal of cigarette butts and other smoking material.

Due to COVID-19, Central York Fire Services was not able to do a typical campaign that includes knocking on residents' doors and engaging with residents. To safely educate residents this year, Central York Fire Services distributed door hangers to units and encouraged residents to call with any questions.

## **Provincial government launches an online tool to help provide tenants and landlords with information about their rights and responsibilities**

Tribunals Ontario launched [Navigate Tribunals Ontario](#) in July 2021 to provide easy to understand Landlord and Tenant Board information on the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords. The tool guides landlords and tenants through a series of questions, and provides options and next steps for specific question and concern. The tool is designed to help tenants and landlords navigate the processes required to file applications, participate in hearings and other related matters.

## ***Residential Tenancies Act* amendments came into effect in September 2021 and include changes to collecting arrears from former residents**

On September 1, 2021, the following [amendments](#) under the *Residential Tenancies Act* came into effect:

- A landlord can now file claims against former tenants through the Landlord and Tenant Board for rent arrears and compensation up to one year after the tenant moved out, provided that the tenancy ended on or after September 1, 2021.
- A landlord can now file a claim through the Landlord and Tenant Board for compensation for expenses incurred as a result of a current tenant's failure to pay utilities and costs incurred from the tenant's conduct that substantially interfered with the landlord's reasonable enjoyment or lawful right, privilege or interest.

The changes with respect to unpaid tenant utility costs will be particularly helpful for HYI properties where the lease agreement requires the tenant to pay the municipal water bill for the unit. Unpaid water bills can be added to the property tax bill. Prior to the regulatory changes, HYI was responsible for the cost of unpaid tenant water bills but could not pursue recovery of these funds from the tenant through the Landlord and Tenant Board processes.

## **Housing York Inc. supports residents in voting safely**

Elections Canada posters were delivered door-to-door to all HYI units in early September. Recognizing that some residents may not be comfortable going to polling stations this year, the posters provided information on voting options, including instructions on how to vote by mail. Delivering printed posters supports HYI's goal to provide inclusive communications, recognizing that some residents have technology limitations.

HYI also supported Elections Canada in holding advanced mobile and election day polling stations in seniors' buildings. COVID-19 safety measures were strictly observed. In total, residents in 12 buildings had the opportunity to cast their vote without leaving their building.

## **Residents participate in Transportation Master Plan survey**

York Region Transportation Services is updating its 30-year Transportation Master Plan and enlisted HYI residents for feedback. The plan considers the Region's requirements to support the transportation needs of everyone living in York Region. The survey was advertised on resident notice boards in HYI buildings across the portfolio. Residents were asked to complete a survey on how transportation contributes to their quality of life and experience in their communities. The data collected will help inform an update to the Transportation Master Plan.

## **Housing development updates**

### **Founders Place, 540 Timothy Street, Town Newmarket – emergency power generator**

Built in 1978, Founders Place is a nine storey, 100 unit seniors apartment building, located at 540 Timothy Street in the Town Newmarket. Through a conditional assessment, the existing 30 kilowatt diesel generator was recommended for replacement. This project will instal a 150 kilowatt natural gas generator. The new generator will provide backup power for the fire pump, lighting panel and add new backup capability for the public spaces, elevators and the building's heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. This project is scheduled to commence in October 2021, and is expected to be completed by May 2022.

### **Unionville Commons, City of Markham – ongoing construction work**

The general contractor for the project continues to progress with work on the eighth and ninth floors of the 12-storey building. Masonry work has been completed in the underground levels and is underway on the ground floor. The project is progressing as planned and is scheduled to be completed in 2023.

**Stouffville Affordable Housing Development, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville – public procurement process to select the builder has started**

The public procurement process to select a builder has started and the tender closes in November 2021. Construction is scheduled to commence late 2021 or early 2022. Construction is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy Milsom', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left.

Kathy Milsom  
General Manager

Attachment (1)

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