



Office of the Commissioner
Community and Health Services Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Committee of the Whole

From: Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Date: September 24, 2021

Re: Update on the Federal Rapid Housing Initiative and Provincial Social Services Relief Fund – Phase 2

This memorandum provides Council with information about the status of new capital projects funded by the provincial Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 2, as well as an update on York Region's revised application to the federal Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) Round 2.

In [October](#) and [December](#) of 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing confirmed a total of \$16,554,114 in Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 funding

The SSRF Phase 2 funds have been used to support individuals impacted by COVID-19 by providing a range of programs aimed at preventing homelessness and mitigating risks to vulnerable populations. The SSRF Phase 2 investment is also supporting two housing projects in York Region. The SSRF Program Guidelines require the funds spent by December 31, 2021.

Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2 will support creation of 26 transitional housing units

In the Town of Georgina, eight new transitional housing units are being constructed on the Sutton Youth Services site at 20898 Dalton Road. These units will include high-quality design, sustainable building practices and accessible features throughout the site. Construction began in August 2021 and is on schedule to have the provincial portion of the funding spent by the end of December 2021, with substantial completion in early 2022. The development also proposes new common and private outdoor amenity space to support future residents.

In the Town of East Gwillimbury, 18 new transitional housing units are being constructed on the existing Porter Place/Leeder Place site at 18838 Highway 11. This new building is being constructed using modular construction techniques, including manufacturing prefabricated

panels off-site and assembling them on-site. Construction began off-site in August 2021. On-site construction started in September 2021 and is on schedule to have the provincial portion of the funding spent by the end of December 2021, with substantial completion in early 2022. The new building will include mass timber design elements, high energy efficiency features and common areas for programming and resident enjoyment.

Location maps and renderings for the two SSRF Phase 2 projects are included in Attachment 1.

The federal government is investing an additional \$1.5 billion through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Rapid Housing Initiative

In October 2020, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) released the first round of the RHI, a \$1 billion program to create new affordable rental homes to support vulnerable Canadians.

In [January 2021](#), Council was informed of the Region's initial RHI funding application. York Region submitted an initial RHI application in December 2020 to support 113 affordable housing units across six sites. In March 2021, York Region was notified that none of the submitted projects secured funding in the first round and that the application was placed "on hold" pending additional funding allocation.

In June 2021, CMHC announced the second round of the RHI with an additional investment of \$1.5 billion in new funding, with \$500 million allocated to the major cities stream and \$1 billion to the project stream. The major cities stream was expanded from 15 cities in the first round to 30 cities in the second round. Cities included in the major cities stream were determined based on core housing needs and homelessness counts. York Region was not included in the major cities stream.

York Region's revised Rapid Housing Initiative application includes 124 units across five sites

York Region submitted a revised RHI application to CMHC on August 24, 2021. The Region's revised application consists of five modular housing projects, representing 124 units, on Region- or Housing York Inc. owned lands. The five projects include one each in the Town of Newmarket, the Township of King and the Town of Aurora, and two in the City of Markham. Location maps for the five projects are included in Attachment 2.

The Region's revised application retained the projects originally submitted to CMHC except for the project in the Town of East Gwillimbury which was removed from the revised application as funding has already been secured through the SSRF Phase 2. The revised application also included an increase in the overall number of units applied for and revised estimated project costs.

Two priority projects in the Town of Newmarket and City of Markham were identified to support future housing development

The two priority projects, one in the Town of Newmarket and one in the City of Markham, have been identified based on their excellent locations and the likelihood of prompt planning approvals. Formal pre-consultations have occurred in both municipalities.

Letters of support from the Town of Newmarket and City of Markham were received by the Region, and included in the revised application. Local planning staff in both municipalities are committed to expedited approvals to ensure a 12-month project timeline is achieved. Required planning applications to facilitate the pre-development activities on both sites are anticipated to be submitted in fall 2021.

York Region's revised Rapid Housing Initiative application includes in-kind and capital contributions

The Region's revised RHI application includes a total funding request of \$48,515,000. The funding request has been increased for a number of reasons, including the overall construction cost. Based on escalating industry pricing, and as evidenced by the SSRF-funded projects under development, rapid housing at present is estimated to cost the same or more than conventional housing construction projects. The Region has identified in-kind contributions for each project, including contributing land equity, and waiving of development charges and parkland dedication fees. Additional Regional contribution of approximately \$6.1 million is proposed for the two priority projects.

A detailed comparison of the 2020 and 2021 RHI applications is attached as Attachment 3.

York Region anticipates confirmation of funding on the revised application by December 2021

CMHC has indicated that all applicants should anticipate receiving confirmation on funding for the submitted projects within 45 days, with a target funding agreement in place by December 1, 2021. The 12 month CMHC timeline to complete the projects would begin when the agreements are executed.

Staff continue to coordinate due diligence on all sites, with a focus on preparing the required planning applications on the two priority projects to ensure that land use permissions are secured to support RHI project milestones.



Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services



Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments (3)
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