



Office of the Commissioner  
Housing York Inc.  
Community and Health Services Department

## MEMORANDUM

To: Directors of Housing York Inc. Board  
From: Kerry Hobbs, (A) General Manager  
Date: September 20, 2019  
Re: Housing York Inc. Activity Update

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### **Housing York Inc.'s Summer Student Employment Program Comes to a Close**

Over the last two years, Housing York Inc. (HYI) has implemented a summer employment program for youth living in HYI communities. The program is designed to provide work experience in a supportive environment where participating youth can develop transferrable employment skills. Youth are supported through the interview process and provided with coaching as needed to strengthen their interview skills. Staff support the student team in planning and completing a project that engages HYI communities. Last year's student team successfully launched HYI Alerts, an electronic mass notification system for residents, helping more than 700 residents sign up to receive texts, email or voicemail messages from HYI.

This year, HYI recruited four high school students and one university student living in HYI family properties to deliver a resident survey throughout the housing portfolio. A university student was hired in May and under the guidance of staff, the student supported development of training, marketing, and implementation materials to promote and deliver the resident survey. The university student acts as a peer mentor and project lead for the four high school students who started their work term in early July. Throughout the summer months, the summer student crew travelled to each HYI community to promote resident participation in the survey and to assist residents in completing the survey.

Students' language skills in Arabic, Tagalog, Mandarin, Russian and French encouraged residents to complete the survey. Students gained valuable work experience in customer service, market, survey design and pretesting, communications, and teamwork. By the students' last day of work on August 30<sup>th</sup>, over 30% of HYI residents had completed the resident survey.

The survey asked residents for feedback on a range of topics, such as how HYI can best communicate with them, their levels of satisfaction with building services and capital repairs, and their experience with administrative processes like rent payments and rent subsidy calculations.

The resident survey closed on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Housing staff will be working with translation services and the Region’s data analysis team to bring the survey results to the Board in early 2020.

**Resident Inclusion in Action in HYI Communities**

York Region’s Inclusion Charter embraces all dimensions of diversity and is grounded in the belief that our greatest strength is the ability to build communities that celebrate and value differences. The HYI Board endorsed the Charter in [September 2018](#) and in [May 2019](#), approved a Resident Inclusion Plan that commits HYI and encourages residents to Ask, Listen and Adapt to foster inclusion in HYI communities, as illustrated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1  
Resident Inclusion Plan Approach**

**Our Approach:**

Housing York and its residents all have a role to play in maintaining inclusive communities that everyone would be proud to call home.

	<b>ASK</b>	<b>LISTEN</b>	<b>ADAPT</b>
<b>HYI'S COMMITMENT</b>	We make it easy for residents to request our services and to tell us what’s important to them	We value resident perspectives when we are making decisions that affect them	We do our best to adjust our services and our buildings to be inclusive for all residents
<b>RESIDENT'S ROLES</b>	Tell us if you have a concern with our services, your home or your community	Be considerate of your neighbours and remember it is their home too	Do your part to ensure that everyone is welcome in your community

Sometimes resident communities benefit from help from HYI or partners by encouraging neighbours to respect each other’s differences and to ensure that all members of the community are welcome. One strategy that HYI has successfully employed is to bring people together around food by holding a Master Chef style event where residents are invited to share a traditional dish with their neighbours in a pot-luck setting. These Master Chef style events were first launched in 2015 and have been held in four communities over the past several years.

At a recent Master Chef event in an HYI seniors’ building, residents proudly presented their culinary creations and introduced new aromas, tastes and cooking techniques to one another.

Residents prepared dishes reflecting their Persian, Jamaican, Russian and Italian backgrounds. This event brought residents together and helped build positive connections for a resident who had approached HYI for help around her experience of exclusion in her community.

HYI will continue to develop and connect HYI residents to programs, services, and initiatives that support inclusive and respectful communities.

## **HYI Hosts Rooftops Canada Study Visit**

Rooftops Canada is the international development program of co-operative and social housing organizations in Canada. Rooftops Canada works with partner organizations to improve housing conditions, build sustainable communities and develop a shared vision of equitable global development.

Over the past two years, Rooftops has been working with social housing stakeholders in South Africa to implement a Gender Equality Strategy. As part of this project, Rooftops organized a study visit to Ontario for four women housing managers from South African Social Housing Institutions. The intent of the initiative is to enhance social housing management skills and strengthen women's leadership in the social housing sector.

HYI hosted Zanele Mofokeng, Administration Manager, Yeast City Housing, Pretoria, one of the first social housing companies in South Africa. Zanele is responsible for new tenancy intake, tenant management and communications, compliance with social housing regulations, general office and Board meeting administration, and organizing all company events.

The study visit occurred throughout the week of September 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> and included tours of HYI properties and information sharing meetings with housing staff, Regional and community partners. HYI was pleased to have the opportunity to support the Rooftops initiative.

## **Capital Updates**

### **Hadley Grange, Town of Aurora – Makeup Air Unit Replacement and New Roof Screen**

Construction to replace the Makeup Air Unit (MAU) at Hadley Grange in the Town of Aurora was completed in September 2019. The new MAU included a cooling component which would provide cooling to the common areas of the facility. The scope of work included demolition and removal of the existing MAU located in the mechanical penthouse. The new unit was installed on the flat roof of the mechanical penthouse. The installation of new roof screens concealed the equipment providing a clean roof line appearance. Tenant notices were delivered and posted in advance of the construction activity. The new MAU will provide conditioned air to the common areas ensuring tenant comfort for all seasons.

## **Mapleglen Residences, City of Vaughan – Building Envelope Modifications and Roof Replacement**

Construction to replace the roof at Mapleglen Residences in the City of Vaughan began in October 2019. The work will include the removal of existing roofing material including wet insulation. The new roof construction will consist of new insulation including a two-ply membrane application. Parapet replacement and new metal flashing will complete the project. The roofing application will be completed in November 2019 with all metal flashings completed in January 2020. Tenant notices were delivered and posted in advance of the construction activity providing project information and schedules.

## **Lakeside Residences, Town of Georgina – Window Replacements and Parking Deck Rehabilitation**

Lakeside Residence is a 97 unit building in the Town of Georgina that was completed in 2014. This property has experienced some maintenance challenges related to building issues from the initial construction. In order to address these issues and mitigate further impact to the building, the Region is funding replacement of the windows and parking lot membrane from the underspent funds from the original capital budget.

The replacement of all existing vinyl windows with new energy efficient aluminum windows will begin in October. Each tenant received advance notice prior to any work starting in their unit, allowing them time to make alternate arrangements during construction. Work within each unit will take approximately three days, with each individual window replacement taking approximately 30 minutes. The new windows are a better product that will last longer than the original windows and improve the comfort level for residents while reducing energy costs. A resident information session was held to provide residents with a project overview including timelines, construction activities and schedules. The window replacements are expected to be completed in the spring of 2020.

Restoration of the parking lot membrane will begin in October 2019, with a project completion planned early December 2019. The work includes removal of the existing membrane, concrete slab preparation and a new water proof membrane with a bonded asphalt pavement top coat.

During construction the upper parking level will be closed with resident provided parking elsewhere on the site. A resident information session was held to provide residents with a project overview including construction activities and schedules.

## **Woodbridge Lane, City of Vaughan – Development Update**

Construction is 99 per cent complete, and the builder, VanMar has reached substantial performance of the project. Some small interior and landscaping projects are still underway, and include items such as fixture installation, furniture placement, and final landscaping elements. Occupancy permits have been granted by the City of Vaughan, and the project is on track to turn over to Housing York Inc. in November for their rent up process to begin.

## **Unionville Seniors Affordable Housing Development, City of Markham – Development Update**

Onsite construction activity around the campus is underway. The temporary community centre parking lot is complete, and work on the main spine road and associated improvements have begun. The builder, Martinway, has made an application to the City of Markham for the building permits on the site, and approval is expected by end of October. The project is anticipated to be completed by end of 2022.

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