

Toronto Housing and Homelessness Services Planning Forum Meeting Notes

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

10:00am – 12:00pm

Join via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84262356767>

Item	Notes and Action Items
Introduction and Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom functions and etiquette (muting, use chat, etc.) • Review format: Q+A time after each presentation; we will save the chat function and review for any unanswered questions. Introduction of Forum Co-Chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mark Aston, TAEH Chair and ED, Covenant House ○ Ashleigh Dalton, Manager, Strategic Policy and Service Planning, SSHA
1. Welcome and Land Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land recognition • Agenda review and solicitation of other business
2. New and emerging opportunities to increase housing for people experiencing homelessness in Toronto	<p>Presentations and discussions to solicit feedback:</p> <p>2.1 Progress in supportive housing with Valesa Faria, Director, Housing Secretariat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to slide deck for further details. • City council approved minimum of 1248 supportive housing delivered for 2021. • Financial commitments are secured for 2021. <p>2.2 Federal Rapid Housing Initiative II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$203 million funding to create net amount of 540 housing units. <p>Q: Do you have a timeline for coordinating the support arrangements (e.g., recruitment)? We encourage more time allocated for arrangements and other coordination.</p> <p>A: We will be issuing RFPs (in approximately July 2021) for these requirements and ensure timelines are met for occupancy in the modulares. The RFP will be out for approximately 2 months and then time is needed to negotiate City contracts. We should be on track pending any major issues identified that will affect timelines.</p> <p>Q: Regarding RFP process, does this apply to organizations who are already receiving funding from the province, how will funding be aligned? Is there a special process for organizations who are already receive funding?</p> <p>A: Not sure yet. We only received the letter which came directly from the Province, so further clarity will be needed. There will be a meeting in the next coming weeks to clarify with the Province.</p>

Q: When are we reconvening about other existing units up for acquisition?

A: We will be reconvening emergency housing table around mid-May 2021. We also have a report of the outcomes and process of the work to date and will be shared.

Q: Will access to support dollars change the makeup of the group?

A: Not sure yet but we are looking to opening up the group and invite those who have resources to bring to the table.

Q: What is coming in RFI Phase 2 from the Federal government?

A: The Federal government allocated \$1.5 billion nationally, but Toronto hasn't received any details about this. It may be a similar process as Phase 1. Hopefully Toronto will have another \$200 million allocated to help ramp up modulars and acquisition for 2022. We are waiting for more details.

2.3 Multi-tenant Housing Framework with Sherry Hanley, Policy Development Officer, Housing Secretariat

- Provided high level overview of multi-tenant/rooming house consultation and framework
- Consultations launched 2 weeks ago with many different options for consultations.
 - DIY consultation kits where organizations can apply for a grant up to \$1000 to run their own consultations.
 - 17 organizations have expressed interest.
- Virtual public engagement sessions were also conducted (last night, 2nd one next week)
- Interviews with stakeholder groups (e.g., tenants, housing advocacy groups);
 - **ACTION:** Kira to send out meeting details.
- Online and phone surveys also available.
- Consultations wrapping up in mid-May
- Aim is to have everything completed by mid-2021 (end of June?)
- There will be no public consultations asking for it to be legalized
 - We are NOT looking for permissions to expand multi housing units.
 - Asking the public "how we do it?" (Look at neighbourhood fit, safety, etc.)
- There has been concern from neighbourhoods for enforcement (parking, maintenance); complaints received from Councillors.
- We need to talk about enforcement (# of living people, room size, property management plans, pest management plans, required by the owner)
- We have heavy messaging on enforcement but balance that with broader community consultation (adequate housing, affordable)
- Looking at what we can do to assist compliance to help property owners to comply (how to offset costs for them):
 - Are there alternative building standards that can be applied that as not as expensive but still meet standards?
 - How to offset cost of compliance for property owners (looking at existing municipal exemptions in exchange for affordability)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency relocations and displacements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working with partners to look at what happens if there is an emergency in a property, what supports are available on what emergency relocations would look. ○ Look at potential of bigger displacements (risk of owners not be maintained safely because of exemptions); we want to be proactive. ○ ACTION: if anyone has insight or what we can do about system responses on emergency relocations, let Kira and/or Sherry know. <p>Q: There are buildings who are able to operate but not at the capacity to function as a multi housing; will they be increasing caps in areas that have existing buildings?</p> <p>A: We are having consultations about capacity. The caps aren't finalized yet. There is an opportunity to raise those concerns. Organizations are encouraged to vocalize this issue so it can be captured in the consultations. Currently City Planning is looking at 6-25 rooms based on density of neighbourhoods but there may be room for flexibility. No final decisions have been made.</p> <p>Q: Rooming houses are able to operate as low income housing. Regarding compliance and incentives, is this only directed to unlicensed rooming houses? What about current rooming houses?</p> <p>A: No, this will apply to all existing buildings. We can't comment on operating dollars right now but some of the recommendations from Licensing are being considered such as "will they be too burdensome?" There is still opportunity to give feedback and we encourage this group to identify any unintended consequences and share with the larger team.</p>
<p>3. Eviction Prevention</p>	<p>3.1 Update on SSHA Eviction Prevention programs by Don Nichols, Housing Consultant, Grants team, SSHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to slide deck for further details. • www.torontorentbank.ca; 416-397-RENT (7368) <p>Q: Are those that participated in the Rent Bank taxed on the rent relief provided?</p> <p>A: Rent loans are given directly to landlords so the individual applicants are not taxed.</p> <p>Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) update by Leslie Jardine, Manager, EPIC program, SSHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to slide deck for further details. • 11 mobile workers (no public address/store front; only through referrals) • 30 days average length of service <p>Eviction Moratorium and Eviction Prevention Karly Wilson, Case worker and Educator, Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation (CERA)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to slide deck for further details. • CERA's roles: Creative public engagement and education; services for tenants; legal research and law reform initiatives. <p>Q: Can people who are at the last waiting stage, then repay their rent arrears prior to the lifting of the moratorium so that they can avoid the eviction when the sheriff is free to implement evictions?</p> <p>A: Yes, depending on where they are. You still must pay \$350 sheriff's fee and this can only be done once.</p> <p>Q: Can we connect to explore how housing workers can coordinate to best assist clients?</p> <p>A: Email karly@equalityrights.org for more information.</p> <p>Q: We have clients living in the community who misunderstood the moratorium as meaning they were allowed to stop paying rent without consequences and have run up large arrears despite not having lost any income in the pandemic. Are you able to provide any assistance?</p> <p>A: Generally no. Rent Bank is a good resource but there's not a lot we can do. There's no quick fix solution.</p> <p>Q: Is there anything in place for those not able to pay mortgages?</p> <p>A: Not in scope. However this resource may be helpful: https://www.consumerfinance.gov/coronavirus/mortgage-and-housing-assistance/help-for-homeowners/learn-about-forbearance/</p>
<p>4. TAEH updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further details will be shared through a newsletter in the coming weeks. • Kira to share some resources re: Federal funding. • Review of persons of lived experience caucus, understand how to support them, expand to greater diversity of lived experience. • Will come back to this group to share more information.
<p>5. Emerging issues/priorities</p>	<p>Environmental scan with Forum attendees to identify emerging issues and priorities from the community to inform future agendas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at everything at a systems level and how they all intersect; identifying anything that has fallen through the cracks. • Rent simplification is coming July 1 and we still don't have all details for Toronto, more information would be helpful. <p>Q: Do we know if SSHA and TPH have developed short term/emergency mitigation measures to deal with airborne transmission, ventilation, filtration, etc.?</p> <p>A: No but it will be addressed in a future meeting.</p>
<p>6. Other business/close</p>	<p>Next meeting date: Wednesday, June 2 2021</p>