

Summary

This report outlines the process for reviewing and updating the City of Greater Sudbury Housing and Homelessness Plan (the Plan). Furthermore, this report will summarize how the Plan came into effect in 2014, the six (6) priority areas that formed the basis for the original Plan and how the Plan will be updated in collaboration with various Departments from the City of Greater Sudbury (City) as well as consultations with the public and key stakeholders.

Reviewing and updating the Plan on a five (5) year cycle is a requirement of the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA) and provides an opportunity for the Plan to better reflect the needs of the community.

Once the Plan is updated, a report will be brought back in Q4 2019 and the approved Plan will be sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Ministry). The updated Plan will then be made available on the City's website.

Background

The Ministry's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) was released in November 2010 to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the province and Service Managers with regards to the housing and homelessness system in Ontario and maintain provincial interests that are related to the Plan.

In response to the LTAHS, the HSA came into effect in January 2012. The HSA requires Service Managers to develop and approve Plans, provides a list of provincial interests to be addressed in local plans and authorizes policy statements issued under the HSA to provide further direction to Service Managers. The Ministry released the Ontario Housing Policy Statement in August 2011 to provide policy context and direction to Service Managers in order to support the development of locally relevant Plans.

Plans were initially developed by Service Managers in consultation with local community members, service providers and other stakeholders, and came into effect on January 1, 2014. In 2016, the Ministry released the Policy Statement: Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans to update the 2011 Ontario Housing Policy Statement. The revised policy statement aligns provincial priorities with the 2016 update to the LTAHS and is reflected in the Plan.

The Plan addressed areas of provincial interest while guiding municipalities in creating a flexible, community centered housing and homelessness system. The City's Plan was adopted at the November 18, 2013 Community Services meeting.

The system was to allow for a range of housing options in order to meet a broad range of housing needs. The Plan demonstrated a system of co-ordinated housing and

homelessness services. Under the HSA, the areas of provincial interests included a system of housing and homelessness that:

- focused on achieving positive outcomes for individuals and families;
- addressed the housing needs of individuals and families;
- identified roles for non-profit corporations and non-profit housing cooperatives;
- identified a role for the private market in meeting housing needs;
- provided partnerships among governments and others in the community;
- treated individuals and families with respect and dignity;
- collaborated with other community services;
- related to local circumstances;
- allowed for a range of housing options;
- ensured appropriate accountability for public funding;
- supported economic prosperity; and
- promoted environmental sustainability and energy conservation.

The Plan covered a planning horizon of no less than 10 years. HSA stipulates that, at least once every five (5) years, Service Managers must review their Plans and make amendments as necessary or advisable. As initial Plans were required to be approved on or before January 1, 2014, Service Managers initiated their five (5) year review of their Plans January 1, 2019.

A review of the Plan provides an opportunity to engage the broader community, assess local needs and priorities and identify potential strategies to achieve outcomes. It is important to acknowledge that the Plan is developed in an environment of change and uncertainty. Nonetheless, there is value in the planning process and in updating the Plan to reflect the changing environment.

As part of the review process, Service Managers need to provide a written report of their review to the Ministry to summarize major changes made to the Plan (e.g. changes driven by the update to the policy statement, shifts in local priorities, etc.). Service Managers must submit their review report and revised Plan to the Ministry by June 30, 2019 or provide written notice that their Plan will be forthcoming on a specified date. However, requests have been made by several Service Managers across the province for an extension to the deadline.

The five (5) year review process offers an opportunity for Service Managers to ensure that the Plan continues to reflect local context regarding housing and homelessness and ensure consistency with the HSA and the revised policy statement.

What's New in the Revised Policy Statement

- aligns with the 2016 Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy;
- recognizes the fundamental role of land use planning;
- reflects provincial goals to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness and increase the number of people experiencing housing stability, including the long-term goal of ending homelessness, and the specific goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025;
- links the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy updated vision and long-term goal of ending homelessness in Ontario;
- develops a housing strategy to engage with Indigenous organizations and communities;
- highlights how the Plan is an important tool to support poverty reduction;
- emphasizes the need for strong partnerships and collaboration across sectors and improving client access to services across service systems, including a move to human services integration; and
- the Plan focuses on client-centred, coordinated access to housing and homelessness services.

Greater Sudbury Strategy

Housing Services in collaboration with Planning Services, Social Services, Corporate Communications and NBL Consulting are moving forward to update the current Plan in order to comply with the Ministry guidelines. NBL Consulting will assist with revising the Housing and Homelessness Plan based on their knowledge of working on the City's Social Housing Portfolio Revitalization Plan. Under the direction of the Service Manager, the working group will review the current Plan and identify areas that require revisions, deletions and additions in accordance with HSA and related regulations.

The original Plan identified the following six (6) priority areas, and were used as the basis for the review:

- there is a need to improve the housing options across the housing continuum;

- there is a need to improve housing access and affordability for low income individuals and families;
- there is a need to strengthen approaches to preventing homelessness, increase the diversity of emergency shelters options and support individuals with multiple barriers in obtaining and maintaining housing;
- there is a need for additional supportive services coupled with permanent housing options;
- there is a need to improve co-ordination, collaboration and partnerships among a broad range of stakeholders to address local needs; and
- there is a need to monitor and report on progress towards meeting the community's housing and homelessness objectives and targets.

A complete listing of accomplishments since 2014 as it relates to the six (6) priorities is located in Appendix A – Housing and Homelessness Plan List of Accomplishments 2014 – 2019.

Working together with Planning Services and Social Services incorporates these Divisions current legislation, policies, regulations and studies into the Plan. This ensures that the City is addressing the criteria established by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Community consultation continues to be a driver in updating the Plan with public engagement currently underway utilizing the City's Over to You page. Members of the public are invited to review the current Plan, rank the six (6) priorities in order of importance and provide general feedback . Additionally, engagement sessions with key stakeholders in the community will assist in forming the updated Plan.

NBL Consulting will gather the updated information from Housing Services, Planning Services and Social Services as well as the feedback from the public and engagement sessions to incorporate the information into the updated Plan.

Next Steps

The final updated Plan will be brought forward by the 4th Quarter of 2019. Upon approval, the document will be sent to the Ministry for their endorsement and will be used as the guiding policy for Housing, Social and Planning Services Divisions as it relates to housing and homelessness.

The approved document will be made available on the City's website and both public and private stakeholders will be informed that the Plan is updated and available for

viewing. A Public Service Announcement will inform residents where and how they can access the Plan.

References

Community Services Committee, November 18, 2013 – Housing and Homelessness Plan
<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=3&id=674>

Ministry of Housing, Housing Policy Branch, April 2018 - Five-Year Review of Housing and Homelessness Plans
https://www.msdsb.net/images/ADMIN/correspondence/2018/Five_Year_Review_of_Housing_and_Homelessness_Plans_A_Guide_for_Ontario.pdf

Ministry of Housing Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy -
<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=8590>

Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans -
<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=15090>

Community Services Committee, June 18, 2018 – Social Housing Portfolio Revitalization Update
<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&attachment=24119.pdf>