
REPORT TITLE: **Affordable Housing Project – Rapid Housing Initiative 5 Rutherford Road South, Brampton, Ward 3 – Accessibility Features**

FROM: Janice Sheehy, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the site plan for the Rapid Housing Initiative Affordable Housing Project identified in the report of the Commissioner of Human Services, listed on the November 18, 2021 Region of Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee agenda titled “Affordable Housing Project – Rapid Housing Initiative 5 Rutherford Road South, Brampton, Ward 3 – Accessibility Features”, be approved.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Project funding through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Cities Stream of the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) is a forgivable loan conditional on creating new affordable rental or transitional housing units that is completed within 12 months.
- The two-storey building consists of 67 residential units comprised of 50 rental units (bachelor and 1-bedroom) and 17 units for youth (bachelor).
- 11 units (six 1-bedroom and five bachelor units) will be fully barrier free units.
- All common spaces including the multi-purpose room, laundry room, and corridors will be barrier free.
- The accessibility features of the building and site will meet or exceed applicable accessibility legislation and municipal requirements.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

a) Project Funding and Timelines

The federal government, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) established a \$1 billion program to create 3,000 new affordable rental or transitional housing units across the country in 12 months or less. In the Fall of 2020, \$30.4M was allocated to the Region of Peel to create at least 61 units of affordable rental housing through the Cities Stream of the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI). The built form of the housing was limited to modular / prefabricated construction as well as the conversion of non-residential buildings to residential use. The funding is a 20-year forgivable loan conditional on achieving units ready for occupancy in 12 months.

Staff assessed over 35 sites and in November 2020 identified an existing hotel

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property in Brampton that would successfully meet the criteria of the program. In April 2021, the owner accepted the Regional offer per an Agreement of Purchase and Sale. In August 2021, due diligence activities were completed, and the Region waived conditions to start the 3-month Owner Closing Period. The Region of Peel will take ownership of the property on November 1, 2021. With innovative approaches to design and planning as well as significant collaboration with the City of Brampton, the conversion remains on track to begin partial occupancy in March 2022.

b) Proposed Use

The CMHC RHI funding requires that all units must serve and be affordable to targeted populations who are vulnerable and who are also, or otherwise would be, in severe housing need, or people experiencing or at high risk of homelessness. The affordable housing units must be rented at a maximum of 30 per cent of the tenants' gross income and must remain affordable for 20 years.

The existing hotel building is located on 5 Rutherford Road South, on the west side of the road, north of Clark Boulevard, south of Queen Street East and approximately 2 km east of Downtown Brampton in Ward 3. It is located on a major transit corridor nearby to amenities, services and employment opportunities. With the funding, the Region intends to convert the existing two-storey, 3,846 m² hotel building to provide 67 residential units:

- 50 affordable rental units (bachelor and 1-bedroom); and
- 17 residential units for youth (bachelor).

The Region will operate the affordable rental units and units for youth as two separate and self-contained entities. The 17 units for youth will be located in the north wing and the 50 affordable rental units across the south of the building. Each wing will have dedicated entrances and lobbies, laundry rooms, and outdoor amenity areas. The Youth Housing will provide additional programming and service supports that will enable residents aged 16 to 24 years with life skills to live fully independently.

The following were referenced for best practice during various points of the design process including:

- Ontario Building Code 2017, Section 3.8, accessibility, barrier-free and universal design code requirements;
- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards, Part IV.1 Design of Public Spaces Standards;
- Region of Peel Affordable Housing Design Guidelines 2020

2. Accessibility Features

a) Site

- An existing covered Drop Off Area for passengers provides a safe space for loading and unloading while protecting individuals from vehicular traffic. This area is directly in front of the main entrance of the building and is provided with a curb ramp for ease of access for persons with mobility impairments or devices.

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- Accessible ramps are placed at the Youth Rental entrance and at the North entrance in Block B for ease of transition from the parking area into the building level. The ramp at Block B also provides connection to the outdoor amenity space. The ramps provide safe and easy access point for persons with mobility impairments or devices to the building from secondary access points.
- A sidewalk is provided around the building as a safe path of travel for pedestrians away from vehicular traffic, with landscape areas at the turning corners of the building to provide more separation between vehicular and pedestrians at critical points.
- Bollards are provided between the vehicular traffic and the Outdoor Amenity Area to protect users from vehicles.

b) Parking

- A total of four designated barrier free parking spaces are provided as per zoning requirements. This is broken down into two Type A parking spaces and two Type B parking spaces for visitors and residents.
- These parking spaces are evenly distributed and located on Ground Level near two access points at the main entrance to the Rental Units and at the Youth Rental entrance.

c) Common Areas

Entrances and Lobby Areas

- Both the Rental and the Youth Rental entrances are designed with large vestibules to allow for mobility devices to turn easily.
- Both entrances are also provided with power operated doors with push buttons or motion sensors.
- Proper signage is also provided.
- Lobby areas are provided with seating for visitors and residents to wait safely and comfortably inside the building.
- Interior and exterior colours have been selected to provide contrast throughout the space and define different elements and surfaces.

Corridors

- Corridors are provided with even and consistent level and stable surfaces throughout the inside of the building, without transitions or gaps.
- Interior common pathways vary between 1400mm and 1900mm for ease and comfort of circulation for all users, including large groups of people, people with service animals or mobility devices. Wider areas would allow for turning areas for individuals in a wheelchair.
- Handrails are provided on one side of the main corridors at 900mm above finished floor to assist people with low mobility, the elderly and to assist in the case of an accidental fall.
- Power operated doors are provided at all common or public spaces doors, such as the Laundry Room, Garbage Room, Multipurpose Room, Program Space, and Universal Washroom. This is beneficial to people with mobility impairments and / or devices and everyone else for ease of access.

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Elevators

- The conversion includes two new elevators with ample cabin size to provide access to the Second Floor for people with mobility impairments or devices as well as comfort to all other users.
- Elevator cabins also accommodate and provide adequate access for a stretcher of 2010 mm long and 610 mm wide in the prone position as per Ontario Building Code requirements.
- The Elevator waiting areas have design features to highlight the area.
- Elevators are provided with auditory signals during use.

Public Universal Washroom

- A Universal Washroom is provided adjacent to the Multipurpose Room for public access. This space features power operated door, grab bars, accessible lavatory and sink, space for a future adult size change table, and floor space for 360 degree turn and adequate requirements for transfer space.

Fire Alarm System

- The fire alarm system includes auditory and visual signals around the building in all occupied areas to provide additional sensory indicators in case of an emergency.

Doors

- Doors with Vision Panels included are provided with the lower panel for accessibility purposes.
- Door hardware is selected for ease of use with minimal physical effort required to operate, including door levers and panic hardware.

Signage

- Tactile signage and pictograms are installed throughout the building to help identify key areas, such as units, universal washroom, offices, and program spaces through the use of braille.
- Vision strips are provided in glazing to ensure that glazed panes of glass are not completely transparent.
- New tactile indicators will be installed at the top of all stairs to signal all users of the change in floor level.

d) Units

- The two-storey building contains 67 residential units with a mix of One Bedroom units and Bachelor Units. Eleven of these units are designed to be Barrier Free as required by the Ontario Building Code. These are divided between the Rental Units and the Youth Rental Units.

LOCATION	UNIT TYPE	TOTAL OF EACH UNIT TYPE	NUMBER OF BARRIER FREE UNITS
Rental	One Bedroom	31	6
	Bachelor	19	4
Youth Rental	One Bedroom	-	-
	Bachelor	17	1
TOTAL		67	11

Table 1 - Unit Mix Breakdown

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- All Barrier Free Accessible Units are designed with interior pathways of 1100 mm, power door operator at entry door, large space at entrance and bathrooms with space for a 360-degree turn.
- Bathrooms are equipped with grab bars.
- All the millwork included in these units are designed for barrier free accessibility, including the following features:
 - Lower kitchen counters to Accessibility Standards of 30” high and lower open shelving within upper cabinets.
 - Barrier free kitchen sinks with underside clear room.
 - Accessible drop-in stove in barrier free kitchens.
 - Barrier free vanities and curb-less shower bases in bathrooms for wheelchair roll-in accessibility.
 - Countertop location for microwave and refrigerator with bottom freezer for ease of access.

CONCLUSION

The Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) Rutherford Affordable Housing Project as reflected in the attached presentation meets or exceeds all applicable legislative and municipal accessibility requirements. As such, the project is well equipped to accommodate tenants and visitors with accessibility requirements.

Authored By: Gordon Anderson, Sr Project Manager, Housing Development Office