
REPORT TITLE: **Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee**

FROM: Sean Baird, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee not be reinstated for the reasons outlined in the report from the Commissioner of Human Services, listed on the March 21, 2024 Regional Council agenda titled, “Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee (SHHC) was created in 2018, to coincide with the development of the renewed 10-year Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan.
- As annually reported to Regional Council, many of the actions in the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan are completed or underway.
- During the last term of Council, several reports with significant policy and financial implications were brought directly to Regional Council for a variety of reasons, as opposed to the SHHC.
- In 2022, Regional Council approved the disbandment of the Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee.
- The housing crisis is a top priority for our community and for all levels of government, including the Region of Peel, Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga which requires the awareness and involvement of all members of Regional Council.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

The Region of Peel is the Service Manager for the affordable housing system in Peel. As Service Manager, the Region is accountable for system planning and oversight, managing and increasing the supply of community and supportive housing, and overseeing or directly delivering services to clients who have a housing need.

The housing crisis is a complex and growing issue for our community. It is a priority at both the regional and local levels of government in Peel. More recently, the unprecedented surge of persons experiencing homelessness and asylum claimants coming to Peel Region has placed extraordinary pressures on Peel’s emergency shelter and affordable housing system not witnessed before. The nature of these crises necessitates flexible and urgent responses.

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2. Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee

The Strategic Housing and Homelessness Committee (SHHC) was created in 2018, with the mandate to advise and provide strategic recommendations regarding the implementation of the five strategies of the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan.

As annually reported to Regional Council, many of the actions in the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan are completed or underway. These actions are making a difference in the lives of the clients we serve. Unfortunately, the number of households in core housing need and those requiring supports and services is growing, which demands intentionally nimble action, often requiring time sensitive approvals with programmatic and financial implications.

In December 2022, Regional Council approved disbanding the SHHC given the growing profile and strategic significance of housing needs in our community. The SHHC meeting schedule did not enable recommendations to be brought to Regional Council's attention for immediate approval because of the Committee meeting schedule.

3. Proposed Direction

To ensure all members of Regional Council are aware and involved in all housing and homelessness related discussions and decisions, staff recommends not reinstating the SHHC.

Presenting all housing related reports and delegations to Regional Council ensures all members are engaged to support advocacy, policy and funding changes required to better meet housing need in Peel. The absence of an additional committee structure lets staff focus on implementing required supports and services for clients, while also allowing for the often irregular and sporadic nature of housing funding announcements, and subsequent approval timelines, from the upper levels of government. Any additional level of scheduled approvals required through additional committee meetings may slow down or delay critical decisions from being made in a timely manner.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term underfunding of the housing sector by upper levels of government, post-pandemic rise in homelessness, increased inflation and surge of asylum claimants coming to Peel has created an extraordinary increase in need, resulting in pressure never before felt by the community housing system.

As noted above, these matters are of importance for all members of Regional Council. With this in mind, staff believes that Regional Council is the appropriate venue to bring all housing and homelessness related matters forward.

BILL 112 RISKS AND IMPLICATIONS

The passing of the *Hazel McCallion Act (Peel Dissolution)*, 2023 on June 8, 2023, formalized a plan to dissolve the Region of Peel effective January 1, 2025. On December 13, 2023, the provincial government announced that Peel will not be dissolved, and that new legislation will be

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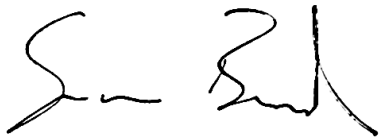
passed in 2024 to repeal or amend Bill 112. Until new legislation is passed, no implications can be determined.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The recommendation in this report has no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that our community's housing needs are increasing at exponential rates. All members of Regional Council need to be given the opportunity to champion housing issues and be involved in decisions to support advocacy, policy and funding changes required to better meet housing need in Peel.



Sean Baird, Commissioner of Human Services

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