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**REPORT TITLE: Angela's Place – Conversion to Permanent Housing**

**FROM: Janice Sheehy, Commissioner of Human Services**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the change in program delivery model at Angela's Place, City of Mississauga, Ward 5, as outlined in the report from the Commissioner of Human Services, titled "Angela's Place – Conversion to Permanent Housing", be approved.**

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Angela's Place is a twenty-unit building, owned by the Peel Housing Corporation, that provides transitional housing of up to 364 days for families experiencing homelessness.
- The Region of Peel is currently transforming housing and homelessness services to align to a Housing First approach, which has demonstrated through evidence, that transitional housing for families is not ideal.
- Housing First seeks to find permanent affordable housing for families experiencing homelessness as quickly as possible, followed by case management supports.
- Staff therefore sought approval from the Peel Housing Corporation (PHC) Board to use Angela's Place for permanent affordable housing for families experiencing homelessness.
- The PHC Board approved this recommendation on October 7, 2020.
- Under the new model, PHC will continue to manage the property and be responsible for capital planning and asset management.
- The permanent housing units will be available for clients of the Coordinated Access system, a person-centred approach that strives to ensure people get equity of access to the appropriate resources they require, while prioritizing those in highest need.
- PHC will also provide tenant supports such as system navigation, referrals and general residential programming through partnerships with community agencies, responsibilities that are consistent with the mandate of the Peel Housing Corporation.
- The new model, if approved by Regional Council, will be operational as of the end of Q2 2021.

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## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Background**

Angela's Place, which opened in 2005, is a twenty-unit building that provides transitional housing of up to 364 days for families experiencing homelessness. It is located at 45 Glenn Hawthorne Blvd in the City of Mississauga, beside Britannia Place. The building has 3 one-bedroom units, 14 two-bedroom units and 3 three-bedroom units. On the first floor, there is one fully accessible one-bedroom unit.

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The project and property that Angela's Place was built on is owned by the Peel Housing Corporation. Since the project was developed, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Region of Peel and PHC has been in place.

Families living at Angela's Place receive onsite support services designed to overcome the issues that led to their housing instability. These services are currently provided by Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP).

Since 2005, numerous research projects have been conducted nationally and internationally about homelessness. This research has revealed that a Housing First philosophy leads to the best outcomes for families experiencing homelessness. Housing First does not involve transitional housing. Instead, it seeks to find permanent affordable housing for families experiencing homelessness as quickly as possible, followed by case management supports that wrap services around families as required, to maintain housing stability. In our current system, families who move into transitional housing go through a three-step process out of homelessness that includes emergency shelter, transitional housing and then eventually permanent housing. Eliminating transitional housing doesn't create a gap in service, but instead moves families into permanent housing faster. Doing so decreases the upheaval families experience when they are required to move multiple times. By administering needs-based subsidies, which were approved by Council in May 28, 2020, staff can help families experiencing homelessness secure permanent housing more quickly.

Regional Council has endorsed a shift to a Housing First philosophy at Peel. As such, staff recommended to the Peel Housing Corporation Board that Angela's Place be used as permanent affordable housing. The Board approved this recommendation on October 7, 2020.

## **2. Converting Angela's Place to Permanent Housing**

In order to transition Angela's Place to permanent affordable housing for families experiencing homelessness, the existing contract with Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP) will end on June 30, 2021 and will not be renewed.

Under the new model, the Peel Housing Corporation will continue to manage the property and be responsible for capital planning and asset management. As the building will house families that have all experienced homelessness, PHC will also provide tenant supports such as system navigation, referrals and general residential programming through partnerships with community agencies, responsibilities that are consistent with the mandate of the Peel Housing Corporation. PHC will also have the opportunity to develop and capitalize on the use of space in the expansive lower level of the project that currently houses the onsite SHIP offices and some residential support services. The potential exists to utilize the space for tenant programming or to offer it to non-profit agencies seeking space in the community. All options will be explored.

The permanent housing units will be available for clients of the Coordinated Access system, so the original intent of Angela's Place remains – a place that provides affordable housing stability for families who have experienced homelessness.

Coordinated Access is a person-centred approach that strives to ensure people in need of services get equity of access to the appropriate resources they require, while prioritizing

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those in highest need in a more streamlined manner. Implementing Coordinated Access is an integral part of Peel's Service Transformation strategy. It is one of the five strategies within the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, which will represent the first large-scale shift to a needs-based service provision for housing and homelessness supports in Peel. Angela's Place represents an opportunity to provide twenty housing units for this new and innovative systems-based approach that will help decrease time to permanent housing for families that have experienced homelessness.

The families that currently reside at Angela's Place will have completed their transitional housing support by the end of May 2021. SHIP will vacate the project within the following month which will allow PHC staff to complete any necessary repairs or small projects (i.e. painting of common areas) required at this time. The Coordinated Access system will be operational as of the end of Q2 2021 and will be used to fill vacancies at the project.

### **3. Next Steps**

Staff from Housing Services and the Peel Housing Corporation will work together over the next year to create a housing program model that aligns with the goals of Coordinated Access. This model will set future residents up with supports that will ultimately lead to better outcomes and will provide an avenue for the Peel Housing Corporation to demonstrate their ability to deliver innovative operational supports that reflects their mandate as a housing provider with a social conscience.

Within 3 to 5 years, staff recommend that Housing Services, in partnership with the Peel Housing Corporation, evaluate the effectiveness of using Angela's Place for permanent housing for families experiencing homelessness. The evaluation would measure outcomes but would also include a review of the services and supports provided by the Peel Housing Corporation.

## **RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

With any change, including one to a program delivery model, there is inherent risk in the process. Staff from Housing Services and PHC will work together over the next year to ensure the transition is smooth and that all partners are communicated within a timely manner and that existing families, are provided with the appropriate supports.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications to the Peel Housing Corporation or the Region of Peel as a result of this report.

The project will continue to be funded within the existing budget for Angela's Place located in Housing Supports. Should savings be realized as a result of the program model change, they will be used to address growing pressures within the homelessness system.

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### CONCLUSION

Angela's Place, which opened in 2005, is a twenty-unit building that provides transitional housing of up to 364 days for families experiencing homelessness. Through this report, staff is seeking Council approval to convert Angela's Place to permanent affordable rental housing for families experiencing homelessness. This change is being proposed in order to align our practices to a Housing First philosophy and to support the achievement of outcomes within Peel's Housing and Homelessness Plan.

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*For further information regarding this report, please contact Aileen Baird, Director, Housing Services, ext. 1898, [aileen.baird@peelregion.ca](mailto:aileen.baird@peelregion.ca).*

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***Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:***

Department Commissioner and Division Director.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



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N. Polsinelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer