

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement Amendment – 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Acting Director of Human Services

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That County Council authorize the allocation of up to \$465,000 from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) to Woodstock Non-Profit Housing Corporation (WNP), to include four additional affordable rental units within the previously approved 52-unit residential development at 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock;
2. And further, that County Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer and the Acting Director of Human Services to execute an amendment to the existing Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement, and all other necessary documents related to the proposed additional funding, for the affordable housing project at 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to award up to \$465,000 from the 2025-2026 OPHI funding allocation to WNP, to include four additional affordable rental units within the previously approved 52-unit residential development at 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock.
- The proposed project currently includes a total of 52 units, with 29 offered at affordable rental rates. The proposed additional funding would increase the number of affordable units to 33.
- A total of \$2,339,202 in Municipal, Federal/Provincial funding has already been allocated to the project, in addition to the value of the land.
- This proposal will maximize available funding and assist to address the ongoing housing supply shortage.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Upon Council’s approval, staff will amend the existing Municipal Housing Facilities Agreement with WNP and any other legal documents pertaining to such.

Financial Impact

There will be no impact to the 2024 budget as the proposal seeks to allocate up to \$465,000 from the OPHI (2025-2026) provincial funding allocation. As required by the province, these funds will be secured on title as a second mortgage, along with securities that are already in place for the previously allocated funding.

Communications

This report deals with a funding allocation from the provincial government. In light of this, details of this report have been shared with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and WNP.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of “Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future.” These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendations in this report supports the following strategic goals.

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
<p>Goal 1.1 – 100% Housed</p> <p>Goal 1.2 – Sustainable infrastructure and development</p>		<p>Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities</p>

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

On June 8, 2022, County Council approved Report [CAO 2022-06](#), authorizing the allocation of up to \$1,969,096 in capital funding, along with the value of the lands, to WNP for the purpose of supporting a 52-unit residential development, including 24 affordable rental units. The capital allocation included \$1,384,096 from the County Affordable Housing Reserve and up to \$585,000 from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI).

Following this, an additional \$426,000 from the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) became available, to which County Council allocated to WNP to support the creation of five more affordable units within the previously approved housing project, resulting in a total of 29 affordable units. In combination with the previously approved capital allocation, a total funding contribution of \$2,339,202, or approximately \$81,000 per affordable unit, has been provided to WNP.

Subsequently, on October 9, 2024, MMAH confirmed the County's 2025-2026 OPHI funding allocation, which is required to be allocated to a specific project by the end of 2024. Given this tight timeline, staff are recommending that the OPHI funding be allocated to WNP to support the existing project that is currently under construction and expected to be complete by the Spring, 2025.

Comments

Considering the timelines associated with the OPHI funding allocation, the readiness and merits of the project, staff are recommending that the funds be allocated to WNP to support the creation of four additional affordable rental units at 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock.

For Council's information, the proposed residential building will target seniors (generally individuals over the age of 65), single women, and women with children, with annual incomes of \$65,000 or less. The proposed rental units will remain affordable to these target tenants for a minimum of 30 years, which is beyond the typical 25-year expectation for such projects.

In terms of project merits, WNP has partnered with Ingamo and Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO), to provide more stable accommodations and supports services to single women, and women with children who are impacted by domestic violence. Furthermore, the proposed building design includes a common area and meeting room to facilitate daily programs and support services. The meeting room will be available to a variety of interested community groups, to provide tenants with an array of on-site supports.

In terms of need, WNP currently maintains a waitlist, with over 70 individuals seeking affordable accommodations. This waitlist is for the proposed build at 785 Southwood Way, as well as WNP's existing 98-unit affordable housing project at 1231 Nellis Street, Woodstock still outweighs the current and proposed supply.

While the proposed increase in affordable rental units may appear to be minimal, given the non-profits extensive waitlist and the partnerships that are proposed to support the various tenant groups, any additional affordable units would be a significant benefit to this project. Overall, the proposed funding allocation presents an efficient and timely opportunity to create additional affordable rental units in the community.

CONCLUSIONS

The need to develop additional affordable rental housing is identified as a goal in the Oxford County Strategic Plan, County Official Plan, Safe and Well Oxford, Housing for All Plan, Master Housing Strategy and the Zero Poverty Action Plan.

The proposed additional affordable rental units will have a positive impact on the community and will assist to address the current rental supply shortage.

SIGNATURES

Report author:

Original signed by

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Acting Director of Human Services

Approved for submission:

Original signed by

Benjamin R. Addley
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