



Committee Report

HS-24-07

To: Chair and Members of the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee
From: Paul Skinner, Interim Director of Housing Services
Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2024
Subject: Upbuilding! Non-Profit Homes (Guelph) Inc. Pre-Development Funding Request

Background:

Upbuilding! Non-Profit Homes (Guelph) Inc. is a 70-unit non-profit housing provider that has been operating in Guelph since 1990. Governed by the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, Upbuilding! is an active community partner in providing social and affordable housing to families and individuals in need, both through housing applicants from the County's Centralized Waiting List, and directly through affordable market rentals.

In an effort to increase the supply of affordable housing in Guelph, Upbuilding! is pursuing the development of an eighteen-unit affordable housing expansion project located at 50-60 Fife Road in Guelph. The proposed expansion will replace an aging two-storey, four-unit building on their property with two three-storey stacked townhouses, which will provide eighteen one-bedroom units. This represents a net increase of fourteen units to the housing project and signifies a more prudent use of the organizations limited resources, as the existing building would require \$1,400,000 over the next 10 years in order to be maintained in a good state of repair. In addition, six of the ground floor units are proposed as fully accessible and will meet universal design guidelines, improving the stock of accessible units in our affordable housing community.

Upbuilding! is currently pursuing funding from the Federal government through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Fund (formerly National Housing Co-Investment Fund). Applications to the Affordable Housing fund require a Class B Cost Estimate, which will require detailed drawings and specifications for all disciplines (architectural, mechanical, electrical and structural). With limited funding available, it is difficult for Upbuilding! to move forward with their pre-development work, which plays an integral role in ensuring that Upbuilding! can successfully meet the ready start requirements of federal and provincial funding programmes.

Update:

On July 25, 2024, Housing Services received a letter from Tim Welch Consulting on behalf of the Upbuilding! Board of Directors requesting assistance with the project's predevelopment costs as they work to get the project shovel ready for future funding opportunities. This project has progressed over the last year and staff are encouraged to see a proposal for affordable housing development come from our non-profit partners.

Staff recommend assisting with the project's pre-development costs of up to \$50,000, as deemed appropriate by the Housing Services division. Since Upbuilding! is an existing social housing provider,

the recommended funding source for the pre-development soft cost investment is the County's Shared Housing Regeneration Reserve.

Staff will continue working with Upbuilding! towards their goal of providing more affordable housing options for residents in Guelph, including support to obtain capital budget grants from all levels of government.

Attachment:

Letter dated July 25, 2024, from Tim Welch, Principal, TWC Inc.

Financial Implications:

Approval of pre-development soft costs contributions would be a potential maximum investment of \$50,000. This contribution would be funded through the County of Wellington's Shared Housing Regeneration Reserve and would not represent an impact on the County tax levy in the 2024 budget.

Strategic Action Plan:

This report relates to the following objectives and priorities in the County's Strategic Action Plan:

- Tackling a Major Community Opportunity – Housing
- Making the Best Decisions for the Betterment of the Community

Recommendation:

That the Joint Social Services Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council to approve up to \$50,000 from the County of Wellington's Shared Housing Regeneration Reserve to Upbuilding! Non-Profit Homes (Guelph) Inc. to support pre-development costs for 50-60 Fife Road in Guelph, to the satisfaction of the Social Services Administrator and County Solicitor.

Respectfully submitted,



Paul Skinner

Interim Director of Housing Services