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DATE: June 3, 2009

REPORT TITLE: **CANADA-ONTARIO SOCIAL HOUSING REPAIR AND RETROFIT PROGRAM UPDATE**

FROM: Keith Ward, Commissioner of Human Services

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## OBJECTIVE

To update Council on the status of the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Repair and Retrofit Program in Peel.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The federal and provincial governments have matched funding to create economic stimulus through infrastructure investment.
- \$704 million is being invested in social housing repair and retrofit in Ontario.
- The first submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) for “quick start” construction ready projects was submitted on behalf of social housing providers in Peel, on May 8, 2009: \$29,721,404 for the social housing providers (excluding Peel Living) and \$21,010,075 for Peel Living, for a total of \$50,731,479.
- The submitted plan reflects extensive consultation within the Region of Peel relevant departments and the social housing provider network.
- Projects meet one or more criteria within the priority areas of: health and safety, reduced operating costs, energy efficiency, increase accessibility and regeneration.
- Staffing for project management and administrative support has been established as part of the submission.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Background

As a stimulus strategy for the economy, the federal and provincial governments have invested in over \$1.2 billion in social housing Ontario. Of this amount, \$704 million will be invested in social housing renovation and retrofit projects. This funding will be split into two components: year 1 and year 2 (each year ends with the fiscal year March 31<sup>st</sup>.) There is no flexibility to move unspent or uncommitted funding from year 1 to year 2. This program fulfills the commitment of both the federal and provincial governments to put Canadians back to work and provide necessary repairs to social housing.

The federal component of the funding can only be used for housing projects originally built with federal or federal/provincial funding. However, the province worked with their federal partners to confirm funding eligibility for unilateral provincially funded projects. As such, all

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social housing in Peel will benefit from the funding. In order to be approved, each request must meet one of the priorities, in addition to creating jobs. Priorities under this project include:

- Health and safety
- Enhanced energy efficiency
- Reduced operating costs, and/or
- Enhanced accessibility

Funding is not available for routine maintenance and cannot exceed \$28,000 per unit. Once a contribution agreement is approved, a 90 day mandatory "commencement" period begins. Work does not technically have to be completed by the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2010) but must begin within 90 days of the signing of the contribution agreement.

At the end of each fiscal year, uncommitted allocations will be returned to the federal government.

**2. Current Status****a) Peel Submission for Funding**

As per the provincial requirement, to be considered for "quick start" funding, projects were submitted by the Region of Peel on May 8<sup>th</sup> for consideration. All work must be initiated in the summer (subject to provincial approval, which has yet to be received). Projects not started within three months of approval, risk losing their funding, which may be reallocated to other projects in other areas.

The submission to the Ministry on May 8<sup>th</sup> is not likely to be Peel's only submission; it is however a list of projects that we are confident can be initiated during the summer of 2009. The submission was developed in consultation with the 46 social housing providers in Peel, including Peel Living

Peel's request is for \$29,721,404 for the social housing providers (excluding Peel Living) and \$21,010,075 for Peel Living, for a total of \$50,731,479. Projects include a range of external and internal repairs and energy related retrofits. The submission was based on existing capital plans, Building Condition Assessments (BCA) and the priorities of each of the housing providers. Considerable support was offered in identifying priority areas, costs and the feasibility of completing the work within the required time lines. (Fine tuning of this submission will occur with the Ministry.)

**b) Project Team**

To coordinate the information necessary to complete submissions to the province and to ensure that approved projects can be executed to maximize available funding, a project team has been established. The executive sponsor is the Interim Commissioner of Social Services and the project team includes representatives from a broad cross-section of Region of Peel departments. The Project Team encompasses an impressive roster of specialized expertise that includes Finance, Purchasing, Internal Audit, Legal and Risk, Facilities Management, Asset Management, Energy and Communications. Team members are experienced, motivated and prepared to move into action.

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Successful delivery of this program depends on the availability of resources to undertake the work. Resources are currently being recruited for the project team and to manage the construction projects. As well, administrative funding was sought with the submission to offset staffing costs directly attributed to this initiative. This includes:

- 2 project managers (integrated approach for managing the project)
- 1 administrative assistant
- 1 project manager (energy audits, energy retrofit)
- 3 project managers from Real Property Asset Management to guide work execution
- 1 specialist (contract administration)
- 1 analyst (asset protection)
- 1 analyst (purchasing)

These resource requirements were based on the said submission and they may vary depending on the number of projects approved by the Ministry. For this reason the costing of required positions will be submitted at a later date.

### 3. Next Steps

Work is already well underway to identify the next opportunities and projects more suited for year 2 funding, using existing BCA reports, energy audits and priority needs. Results and recommendations from energy audits will be a focus for a next submission along with planning "per unit" upgrades to maximize the funding allotment across the Region.

All social housing providers have been actively engaged and will be updated directly and through Peel's social housing Stakeholder Advisory Committee (STAC) which meets regularly.

An extensive data base is being compiled so that project work can be tracked, costs recorded and compliance with ministry guidelines ensured.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No Regional cost sharing is required for projects funded under the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Repair and Retrofit Program and administrative costs are eligible for funding. It is therefore anticipated that all costs will be covered and there will be no financial implication for the Region of Peel.

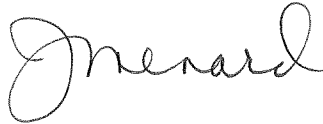
### CONCLUSION

The preservation, retrofit and enhancement of Peel's social housing stock is a priority for the Region. Funding available under the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Repair and Retrofit Program is an excellent and unique opportunity to stimulate the economy and strengthen our social housing stock through repair and retrofit.

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Collaboration with social housing providers in Peel in addition to the collaboration and team work of cross departmental expertise and enthusiasm will ensure that Peel maximizes the opportunity available through this program. Council will be updated on the progress as appropriate and the Chief Financial Officer will report back with a summary of all awards issued under the Infrastructure funding as previously committed.



for  
Keith Ward  
Commissioner of Human Services

**Approved for Submission:**



D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

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c. Legislative Services