

DATE: December 12, 2002

SUBJECT: **HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN
TRANSITION**

FROM: Keith Ward, Commissioner of Housing and Property
and General Manager, Peel Living

RECOMMENDATION

That Regional Council approve Capital Project #03-5021, Families in Transition for \$4,282,000 which was presented in the 2003 Capital Budget as a pending project for \$4,116,000;

And further, that funding for Capital Project #03-5021, Families in Transition be provided from Housing Policy and Program Working Fund R1285 for \$3,632,000 and \$650,000 be provided externally from the Federal SCPI program;

And further that Regional Council approve Capital Project # 03-5019 Peel Youth Village for \$7,625,000, which was presented in the 2003 Capital Budget as a pending project for \$6,994,000;

And further, that funding for Capital Project # 03-5019 Peel Youth Village be provided from Housing Policy and Program Working Fund R1285 for \$5,150,182 and \$2,000,000 be provided externally from the Federal SCPI program and \$474,818 be provided externally from the Federal Youth Program;

And further, that Regional Council authorize the procurement, negotiation and execution of all necessary contracts and agreements to proceed with the development of the Families in Transition project and the Peel Youth Village, including the competitive procurement of construction services.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN TRANSITION**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Development of both the Peel Youth Village and the Families in Transition project support the direction of the Final Report of the Peel Regional Task Force on Homelessness.
- Both projects will receive Federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative funding. SCPI funding must be spend by September 30, 2003 or is lost.
- The focus of the Peel Youth Village is to provide affordable housing for young people, unable to secure housing, to develop skills, stabilize their lives and move forward.
- The intent of the Families in Transition project is to provide families an opportunity to leave existing shelters, receive necessary supports from community agencies and once stable, utilize capacity building principles and community economic development experience to maintain stable lives in other long-term housing options in the community.
- Capital funding for both projects, less Federal and Provincial contributions, will come from the Region of Peel Housing Policy and Program Reserve R1285.
- New code requirements imposed by the City of Mississauga were not anticipated during formulation of the 2003 Capital Budget and reflect a significant capital cost increase over the capital construction estimate for the Peel Youth Village. Design changes to reflect an operational framework for the Families in Transition proposal account for the new capital construction estimate that differs from the 2003 Capital Budget figure.
- Upon Council approval to proceed, staff will commence negotiations with the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services for subsidy for the operational budgets. In addition, negotiation with potential service providers is required prior to affirming operational cost estimates.
- The operational costs for both developments will be included in the Social Services 2004 budget.

DISCUSSION**1. Background**

In May 1999, the Final Report of the Peel Regional Task Force on Homelessness was released. Its underlining theme was to support people experiencing homelessness in order that they could regain stable lives. The growing need for housing for young people and families in transition was clear. Following through on recommendations from the Task Force led to the formation of community-based groups that have collaborated with Regional staff toward the development of two projects. Each community-based group developed a wraparound – circle of support continuum approach to the housing being developed.

A housing proposal for Families in Transition was developed by the Family Housing Work Group and the Peel Youth Network developed a proposal for the Peel Youth Village. Both projects were deemed appropriate to receive Federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiatives (SCPI) funding in May 2001 by Regional Council. This decision was endorsed by the Community Advisory Committee.

The intent of the Families in Transition project is not only to provide shelter but to stabilize families through the provision of support services. The project also provides an alternative to emergency use of hostels. In May 2001, Members of the Peel Living Board authorized dedication of surplus land on the Britannia Place property (Ward 5, Mississauga) for the 20-unit proposed project and authorized staff to retain pre-development consultants, as required, and to proceed with required municipal applications. In March 2002, following a

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competitive process, the Board of Directors authorized the retention of an architectural firm to proceed with preliminary mechanical, electrical and structural design.

With previous reports citing evidence of declining affordable housing options for young people (aged 16-30) in Peel, appropriate and innovative housing for young people in transition was developed by the community-based Peel Youth Network. The intent of the Peel Youth Village is to break the cycle of homelessness before it becomes entrenched and provide young people with the potential to stabilize their lives through employment and re-employment skills development, job finding help and assistance to secure permanent housing. In April 2002, Members of the Peel Living Board of Directors authorized the dedication of surplus land on the Weaver's Hill property (Mississauga, Ward 4) for the project, authorized a competitive process to retain an architectural firm to proceed with preliminary mechanical, electrical and structural design, and directed staff to proceed with required municipal applications.

2. Project Development and Design

For almost three years, the Peel Youth Network and the Family Housing Work Group have been working on their respective proposals for young people and families in transition. The community-based groups have devoted significant time and staff resources in their efforts to document and identify service gaps and the need for housing options.

The major flaw in existing shelter, conventional transitional housing approaches, and affordable housing options, are the weak connections amongst them. Consistently, families and individuals can not and do not make the linkages and fall back into more complex cycles of despair. The long-term cost of failing to stabilize families and young people is increased cyclical use of costly emergency housing options. These two housing initiatives offer more than transitional housing support. These projects represent a real alternative that allow people to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness through the provision of short-term transitional housing, long-term housing and innovative program support tailored toward capacity building in young people and families.

Traditional transitional housing approaches often fail to stabilize people because it is often siloed from essential services that are necessary for people to acquire the confidence, skills and relationships to enhance their capacities. Housing developed for families and young people in transition, within a wraparound – circle of support continuum framework, designed on capacity building principles, not only supports people in their endeavours to seek and acquire affordable housing, but also meaningful employment when community economic development initiatives are applied as a component of the continuum.

The guiding principles for the operation of the Families in Transition Housing Project and the Peel Youth Village were developed through months of consensus building and following a lengthy process of developing an operational framework/results matrix.

The wraparound – circle of support continuum approach recommended for both projects will be family/individual-centred. This means that individuals and each member of the family must contribute to both the identification and expression of their needs and goals in order that the appropriate supports and resources are provided. Essentially, what is being achieved through this principle is that the family in one project and the young people in the other project are helped by enhancing their capacity to help themselves. Through co-ordinating resources in areas such as education, employment, counseling and links to

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community services, family and individual well being is enhanced through a greater connectedness to their community and access to comprehensive supports.

The continuum of support approach is in keeping with the thrust of the Region of Peel's Annual Report Cards on Housing and Homeless Initiatives. The approach is to create measurable change in families through the increase in assets and capacity and a decrease in dependencies.

Appendix I provide a description of the rationale for adoption of this approach for both the Peel Youth Village and the Families in Transition project.

a) Peel Youth Village

The Peel Youth Village is being designed to provide more than housing for young people in transition. The focus of the project is to provide affordable housing for young people, unable to secure housing, to stabilize their lives. The project will also assist young people with the potential to develop their skills through a range of development services and community economic development initiatives. The intent is to provide young people, within a continuum framework, an opportunity to leave existing shelters, such as the Mavis Road shelter, or prevent them from resorting to shelters in the first place, and receive necessary supports from community agencies, the local community and regional and municipal services.

Within the Region of Peel, there currently exists a patchwork of service agencies and providers whose mandates may differ or overlap. This has revealed itself following agency presentations to the Peel Youth Network. (Over 40 youth serving agencies have been meeting for approximately 3 years to determine youth service gaps in Peel.) The Network has found that service provision may be uneven, inconsistent, and not meeting client needs. Several structural features of the current social services delivery model may be causing this situation. In order to optimize social service agency goals and program delivery, new models for client-centred supports are required, including changes in case management models. Following the preparation of a operating framework/results matrix, the Peel Youth Network determined that the continuum of support approach is an effective process that should be utilized.

b) Families in Transition Housing Proposal

The Families in Transition Housing Project is being developed with the intent to provide families an opportunity to leave existing shelters, such as the new Peel family shelter and the Family Life Resource Centre, receive necessary supports from external community agencies, and once stable, utilize capacity building principles and community economic development experience to maintain stable lives in other long-term housing options in the community.

The continuum of support model developed by the community-based Family Housing Work Group is designed to ensure the housing provided is supported by an integrated support system that will help stabilize families and enhance their capacities to move forward versus continued reliance on emergency crisis housing. The guiding principles for the operation of the Families in Transition Housing Project were developed following months of consensus building and following a lengthy process of developing an operational framework/results matrix.

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3. Project Status

The Families in Transition project has received approval for a minor parking variance and has accommodated all City of Mississauga site planning concerns. The architect has begun the preparation of working drawings with the goal of working toward a late winter tendering for construction.

The Peel Youth Village has recently completed a protracted set of negotiations with Mississauga building officials to ensure the project conforms to all local building codes and by-laws. Staff is preparing for final site plan approval submission and a hearing with the City Committee of Adjustment to approve Peel Living's reduced parking standard for the Peel Living Weaver's Hill location.

Both these projects were approved by Regional Council in the Spring 2001, to receive federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiatives (SCPI) funding. The date that all SCPI funding is to be spent is September 30, 2003 or the money will be lost. Both projects are planned to begin construction in the late spring.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

a) Capital Costs: Peel Youth Village and Families in Transition Housing

For the projects to be cost effective, various federal, provincial and other funding vehicles are to be used. Federal funding is approved for \$ 650,000 for the Families in Transition project and \$2,474,818 is approved for the Peel Youth Village. To date, previous authorities have allowed predevelopment spending of Federal SCPI funding on both projects totaling approximately \$ 245,000.

	Peel Youth Village	Housing for Families in Transition
Project Number	03-5019	03-5021
Total Budget	\$ 7,625,000	\$ 4,282,000
Funded by:		
Federal SCPI	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 650,000
Federal Youth Pgm.	\$ 474,818	\$ 0
Social Hsg. Reserve	\$ 5,150,182	\$ 3,632,000

Provincial funding in the form of sales tax credits are expected to be available in the amount of \$40,000 for the Families project and \$24,000 for the Peel Youth Village. Municipal recoveries for both projects will be determined through future discussions with respect to the Capital Facilities By-law. The remainder of the funding for both projects will come from the Region of Peel Housing Policy & Program Reserve R1285.

Current capital cost estimates for both projects are greater than those previously provided in the 2003 Capital Budget. To a lesser extent, concept changes associated with program design and implementation for both projects are reflected. Site planning concerns have also added to the costs for both projects. For Peel Youth Village, the new code requirements imposed by the City of Mississauga differed with the information and advice provided by the code consultant hired by the Region. The new design requirements imposed by the City could not have been anticipated and

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reflect a significant capital cost increase over the estimate for the Peel Youth Village provided in the 2003 Capital Budget.

Depending on Council's longer term policy direction, the projects may be eligible for participation in the Federal Affordable Housing Program. Any proceeds received would be directed towards reducing the contribution from the Social Housing Reserve.

b) Operating Costs: Peel Youth Village and Families in Transition Housing

Staff has completed a preliminary review of the operational costs for the Peel Youth Village and Families in Transition Housing. Finalization of the operating budgets will commence pending approval to proceed with these projects. Upon receiving approval to proceed, staff will commence negotiations with the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services for subsidy for the operational budgets. In addition, negotiation with potential service providers is required prior to affirming operational costs. At present, staff estimates the financial impact as follows:

Peel Youth Village	\$2,071,500 (gross)	\$1,464,400 (net)
Families in Transition	\$ 956,000 (gross)	\$ 589,700 (net)

The operational costs for both programs will be included in the Social Services 2004 budget.

It should be noted that while the 2004 Social Services budget may incorporate the operational costs of these two new projects, it is the expectation that there will not be any material impact on the level of tax rates as the funding will be accommodated within the existing budget bases of the Social Services and Social Housing Departments.

Staff has consistently messaged to the Region's Federal and community partners that the form the programming will take in both projects will be based on the funding available at the time operation of the projects commence. The Region of Peel has pledged to ensure that the projects approved for SCPI contribution will be sustainable in their predetermined client use. The goal for both the Peel Youth Village and the Families in Transition development remains to provide a stable and supportive environment in which young people and families can realize their potential and enhance their capacity. Staff believes that the wraparound – circle of supports continuum approach that is being proposed for each development will achieve capacity building at a cost that has less of an impact on Regional finances versus continued reliance on costly emergency approaches.

CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel has made significant contributions toward homelessness initiatives, including the donation of land. Community stakeholders and agency representatives have also made on-going contributions toward the success of Peel's homelessness initiatives. The innovative nature of both developments will no doubt act as a catalyst in terms of providing much needed community supports and capacity to move forward for those housed.

Council will be kept apprised as the operational plans and associated operational costs for both developments are finalized in 2003.

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Attch.