

# Inter-Municipal Housing and Homelessness Taskforce

October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## Meeting Summary Notes

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### Members present:

Councilor Sherry Hamilton (Cramhe), Councilor Claire Holloway Wadhvani (Port Hope), Councilor Mark Loveshin (Hamilton Township), Councilor Mary Catherine O'Neill (Alnwick Haldimand, Councilor Rob Pope (Trent Hills)

### Discussion:

1) Mary Catherine provided an update on the meeting hosted in Grafton to explore the potential of a Community Bonds scheme to fund the development of affordable housing units in Grafton and/or elsewhere in Northumberland County:

- The Community Bonds expert who presented to those gathered outlined a four-stage process being: feasibility; set-up (building the investor package); raise (the live stage), and management of investment bonds.
- It was proposed that to be successful, a Community Bonds scheme would require 2-3 people contributing 15-20 hours per week (especially in the set-up and raise stages)
- It was also suggested that the ideal partner for such a scheme would be an existing charity already building and/or managing affordable housing in the community.
- Among those who attended the meeting there was an individual who has indicated an interest in possible donation of land for such a project as well as a representative of a Church community in Port Hope who is exploring the potential of developing affordable housing units on land owned by the church, as well as representatives from Habitat for Humanity and Northumberland County.

2) Members provided updates on various proposed housing developments in their respective communities that will increase overall housing stock and/or provide some affordable units. Some discussion ensued about the push back from neighbours when these proposals are brought forward through the planning process and the increasing expression of fear by some community members about the current residents of known encampments and whether these new affordable units will be used to relocate them into neighbouring communities.

3) Members discussed [Frontenac County's innovative communal wastewater systems](#) in rural areas:.

- Communal systems provide wastewater treatment to clusters of residences as an alternative to septic tanks.

- These systems act as mini treatment plants that clean the wastewater, leaving 'briquettes' of solid waste which is removed from the site on a regular basis.
- These systems provide the potential for increasing density of residential land use in rural areas, including allowing for development of multi-residential units.

4) Members discussed the event planned with County Social Services "Homelessness 101" for all Councilors in Northumberland:

- Claire shared that Port Hope Council had adopted a resolution at the recommendation of their Clerk that will allow them to attend the meeting and agrees that the Northumberland County Clerk would be the Clerk of record for the meeting and that proceedings would be subject to the Northumberland County procedural by-law.

5) Claire provided an update on the planning for a Northumberland Housing Summit along with Jeff and Anthony Dew from Stalwood Homes:

- Looking at a date for early in the new year for a one day summit with support from the Northumberland Builders and Contractors Association.
- Summit would bring together municipal planners and elected officials, along with select builders, lenders, non-profits, and realtors, to identify 'pain points' in the process of developing new and affordable housing units and to brainstorm opportunities to address challenges and accelerate housing development across the County.

6) Members discussed concerns about the impending clear out of residents currently residing at the encampment at Brookside in Cobourg while the warming room and the County's expanded shelter capacity through Transition House's new location at 310 Division St. is not yet open:

- Members expressed concern about where these residents will relocate given that their numbers exceed current shelter capacity
- Members discussed a recent encampment eviction in a lower tier municipality and the desire for leadership from the County to support lower tiers in navigating these situations in the future and helping lower tiers to ensure that they are coordinating appropriately with County Social Services.
- Members discussed the possibility of bringing forward a common Notice of Motion at their respective lower tiers expressing this need and supporting Mayors in making a request at County Council as follows:

*WHEREAS we recognize that that affordable housing and homelessness is a growing crisis and that a collaborative response is required;*

*NOW BE IT RESOLVED THAT Mayor \_\_\_\_\_be directed to introduce a motion at Northumberland County Council, on behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_ Council, calling for the development of a county-led encampment management plan that:*

- a) provides for the human rights, health, and safety, of all residents; and*
- b) clarifies the complimentary roles and responsibilities of upper and lower tiers*

**Action Items:**

- Claire to circulate proposed wording of motion per discussion
- All members to follow-up within their respective lower tiers and encourage their Council colleagues to attend the Homelessness 101 meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup>.