

Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee

Meeting held November 25, 2020 via Zoom video conference

A meeting of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee is held this day commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

Marina Clemens, Chair
Councillor Kieran McKenzie
Anna Angelidis (arrives at 10:06 a.m.)
Jessica Brunet
Fiona Coughlin
Phil Dorner
Kathy Hay
Mayor Gary McNamara
Leigh Vachon (arrives at 9:57 a.m.)
Angela Yakonich
Joyce Zuk

Regrets received from:

Judith Binder
Jim Steele

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Jelena Payne, Commissioner Community Development & Health Services
Debbie Cercone, Executive Director of Housing & Children's Services
Chris Aspila, Planner III
Jeannie Diamond Francis, County of Essex
Kelly Goz, Manager (A), Homelessness & Housing Support
Tina Moore, Coordinator, Housing Administration & Development
Jennifer Tanner, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Support
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 9:34 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Disclosure of Interest

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Mayor McNamara, seconded by Councillor McKenzie,
That the minutes of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee of its
meeting held September 23, 2020 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1 COVID-19 Update

J. Tanner advises that there have been no COVID outbreaks at emergency shelters or Housing with Supports homes since the last update provided to HHAC in September 2020.

The COVID Isolation & Recovery Centre for people experiencing homelessness has served 46 people since April 1 with numbers increasing recently. See chart below for more details.

The average length of stay is just over 7 nights. To date, there has only been one confirmed COVID positive case.

Referrals to the IRC come mostly from the 3 main shelters (58%) and the health sector (35%). See chart below for more details.

In November 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) required that the City of Windsor work with the Windsor Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) to review and assess COVID prevention and outbreak management plans of congregate living facilities including emergency shelters and Housing with Supports Homes. The review found that most of these organizations had good plans in place, but there were areas for improvement particularly around ensuring that back-up staffing plans are in place and that an outbreak supports system, including the health sector, be established prior to a COVID outbreak. Administration will continue to work with WECHU to help these organizations improve their plans and ability to prevent and manage outbreaks.

J. Tanner advises that information was recently received regarding a resident who tested positive for COVID at one of their housing support homes. She adds they are working with the Executive Director of that home along with the Windsor Essex County Health Unit.

Councillor McKenzie questions if there has been any capacity reduction relating to individuals accessing services at this time and what best practices have been implemented to manage COVID in congregate living spaces.

J. Tanner responds that there has been a natural reduction in the number of people accessing emergency shelters. The shelters and housing with support homes have been provided with additional funding from the provincial and federal governments since April 2020. This funding has allowed them to increase their vigilance and ability to adhere to the public health guidelines.

J. Payne adds that anyone who presented with symptoms in the shelter system was immediately removed and placed in the recovery and isolation centre. The Health Unit and the health care sector were engaged for testing which is another measure that assisted in reducing the possibility of spread within that system.

4.2 Housing & Homelessness Master Plan

Goal 1: Sustain and expand social housing and affordable housing supply

Canada Ontario Housing Benefits and Windsor Essex Housing Benefit Update

T. Moore provides an update as follows:

Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

As of November 16, 2020, the take up in COHB in Windsor Essex is as follows:

- Approved Ministry of Finance (MOF) applications, plus pending applications equal 124 applications in total.
- Estimated projections confirm full take up of the 2020-21 COHB allocation could be achieved by December 31, 2020.

Interest in the program continues to be high and while the COHB benefit is a welcome addition to our housing program meeting the needs of many residents in our community, we have found the calculation for the COHB results in a more shallow subsidy (average benefit of \$270 per month) when compared to RGI housing and Windsor-Essex rent supplement programs. This means staff have to work through many enquiries in which individuals decline the COHB benefit (choosing to stay on the centralized waitlist for geared-to-income rent) in order to find those that are interested in proceeding with the COHB.

Communication with MMAH continues as they monitor take up for COHB allocations in all communities in Ontario. MMAH advised in October that given the need to deliver funding as early in the fiscal year as possible, the Ministry would be assessing take up in all communities to assess whether reallocating from Service Managers who have uncommitted funding will be required. Housing Services has provided MMAH with projections confirming full take up in Windsor Essex by December 31st and is strongly advocating to retain our full 2020-21 COHB allocation.

Windsor Essex Housing Benefit (WEHB)

WEHB offers must be made in order of priority on the Central Housing Registry Windsor Essex waitlist as these benefits count towards our legislated service level standard. WEHB offers to Priority I and Priority II applicants have been issued, addressed and processed. To date 17 households from our centralized waitlist in priority categories I and II, have been deemed eligible and approved for the WEHB. The next round of offers to Priority III (chronological) applicants will be issued in early December. It is expected that take up by chronological applicants on the CHR-WEC will be higher due to the length of time they would likely wait for an offer of rent geared to income housing.

CHC staff will be working to provide further information, guidance to interested applicants, as well as, confirming program eligibility, providing assistance and direction in terms of completing the application process for individuals who are deemed eligible and subsequently processing applications and issuing payments to eligible applicants.

Goal 2 – Capital Funding Opportunities

D. Cercone provides the following as it relates to capital funding opportunities:

Since the last HHAC meeting in September, there have been a number of funding announcements from the provincial and federal government to help shift the focus from emergency response to long-term solutions. Updates are provided in the table below.

Funding Stream	Funding Ministry	Amount	Month Allocation Received	Notes
Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF Phase I)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$3.7 million	April 2020	No changes
Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF Phase II)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$4.5 million	August 2020	Business case approved allowing for \$4 million in capital investments and the remainder to continue to support COVID related measures at emergency shelters and Housing with Supports homes. Plan included capital investments to long term shelter options that include options for isolation and recovery and that align with our recommendations from the emergency shelter review; renovations to existing shelters to better adhere to COVID protocols and create new affordable supportive housing units.
Canada’s COVID Economic Response Plan	Employment & Social Development Canada (ESDC)	\$3.6 million	April, July, October 2020	Additional \$1.8 million planning allocation provided. Administration will work with the Community Advisory Board (CAB) to develop an investment plan to submit to ESDC within 30 days of receiving the Amending Agreement. Housing Services is anticipating receiving the Amending Agreement in the coming weeks. Communities are encouraged to use these additional Reaching Home funds to: 1. Extend emergency COVID-19 measures

				<p>2. Invest in activities that promote housing stability</p> <p>3. Undertake activities to prevent future inflows into homelessness</p> <p>As part of the business case communities must clearly describe planned investments in housing placements / stability as well as activities that will help prevent homelessness, given their importance in containing the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>Funds must be fully spent by March 31, 2021</p>
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)	n/a	\$34,000	June 2020	No changes
COVID 19: Temporary Pandemic Pay (TPP)	MMAH	\$837,000	June 2020	Wage top up payments issued to 25 eligible employers with over 300 employees, including eligible City staff, for the period of April 24 to August 13, 2020.
Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI)	Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC)	TBD – Application based	TBD	<p>The Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) provides funding to expedite the delivery of affordable housing units to vulnerable people in severe housing need specifically people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, or living in temporary shelters because of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>\$1 billion funding is available through two separate streams 1) Major Cities and 2) Project. Windsor and Essex falls under the project stream with access to \$500M, an application portal now open to governments, Indigenous governing bodies and organizations, and non-profit organizations where applications will be prioritized based on the strength of the application and due by December 31, 2020. Funds must be committed by March 31, 2021 with the initiative to target rapid housing and delivery of units within 12 months.</p>

				<p>CMHC will contribute up to 100% of funding to cover eligible residential construction costs. Modular construction or conversions/Rehabilitations</p>
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Mayor McNamara refers to the \$500M as alluded to by D. Cercone and he adds that the project timelines are extremely tight and that people will miss those targets. He expresses concern with the government’s initiatives to put funding up front with so many barriers to be met. He asks if a modular build would be acceptable as it relates to this funding.

D. Cercone responds that modular builds would be acceptable; however, there are things that would have to be addressed in the application process, which would include zoning and adds that the time frame for completion is not flexible. The Federal Government wants to ensure that the populations that are being supported through this initiative addresses people experiencing homelessness. The idea is to reduce the amount of people living in congregate settings and to address their needs through permanent housing.

D. Cercone indicates that a recent meeting was held with our Member of Parliament regarding the issue of zoning. We were advised that in the City of Toronto, there are fifteen projects that were subject to zoning and that under the *Planning Act*, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is able to assign zoning. The precedent was set in Toronto with those fifteen projects. There has to be a request to the Minister to make that declaration under the Act.

A. Yakonich asks if there will be any operating dollars attached with this so we are not setting people up in a high-risk population for failure.

D. Cercone responds that the simple answer is no. There is no commitment at this time to supportive housing dollars to match their capital dollars. The Province is doing a review on their supportive housing programs funded through numerous ministries and it is hoped that more funding will be allocated.

A. Angelidis notes that the timelines are very tight, however, we need to be strategic because as a community we want to take advantage of this funding. She expresses concern that if a lockdown occurs due to COVID, will we be able to meet those timelines. She asks if any discussions are taking place with the Ministry.

D. Cercone responds no discussions are taking place at this time. She adds they will endeavor to advocate for revisiting those timeframes and will continue to communicate with our local Federal representative.

Goal 3: Ending Homelessness

K. Goz provides an overview of Goal 3: Ending Homelessness as follows:

BNPL current data

- Beginning in early fall, Ontario Works began cross referencing the people who were at risk of becoming inactive on the BNPL due to not having received an update in the past 90 days. This has contributed to a significant number of people who are remaining active on the BNPL and are able to receive supports and services including but not limited to housing.
- As of October 2020, we are beginning to see a slight reduction in the number of people experiencing active homelessness in the community and an increase in the number of people housed in the month of October.
- Table 1 below indicates in the month of October 2020, 401 people were currently experiencing some form of homelessness and 52 people were housed in the month.
- Table 2 below indicates in the month of October of those 401 – 323 people are currently experiencing chronic homelessness and of the 52 housed, 32 people housed were experiencing chronic homelessness.

Table 1: Represents All Populations Experiencing Homelessness (Chronic, Episodic, all Acuity)

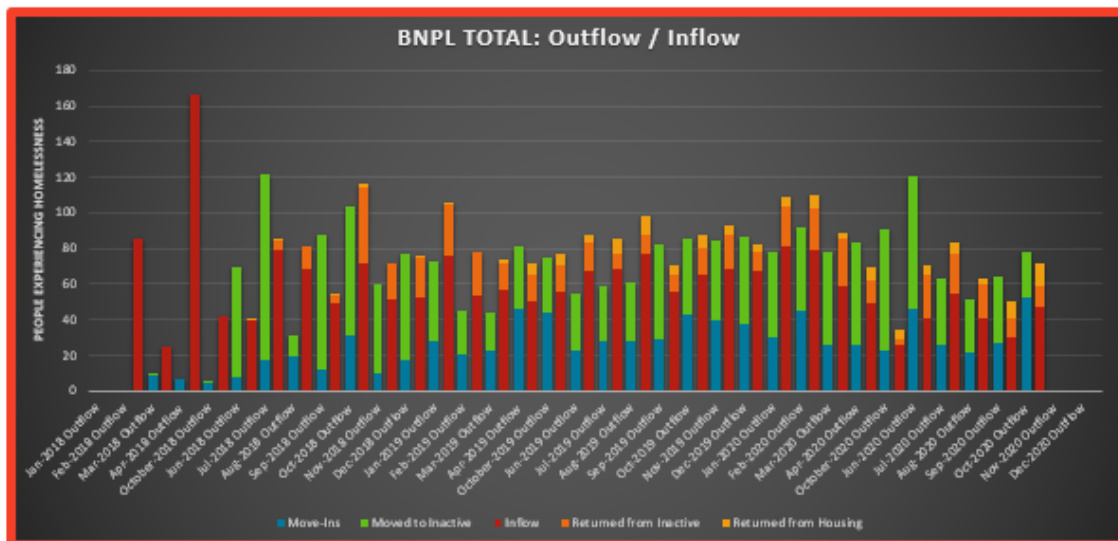
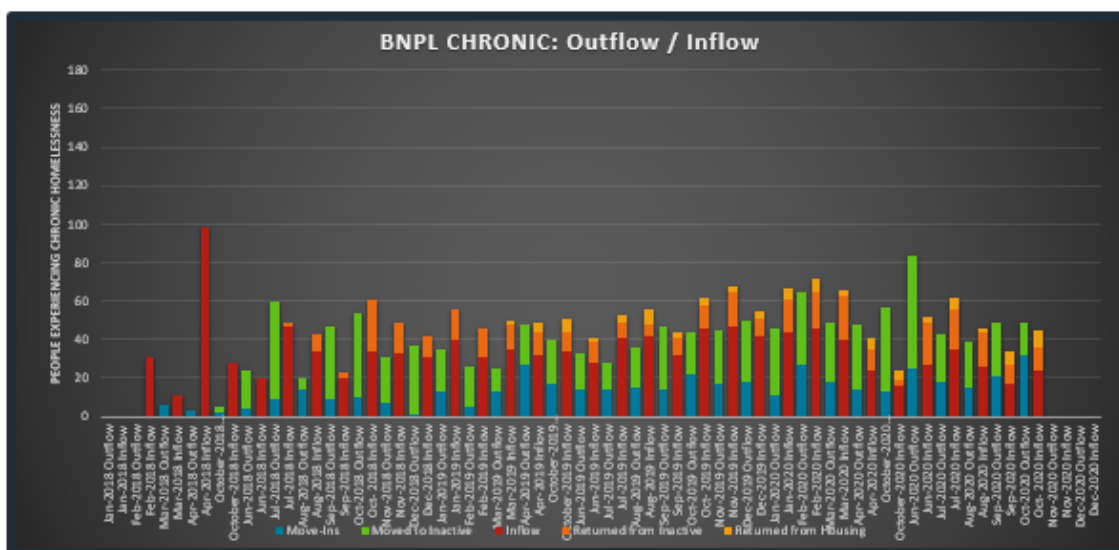


Table 2: Represents People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness



Homelessness and Housing Help Hub: Transition and Outcomes

- In September, Housing Services had begun working with Housing Information Services to assume the role of project lead at the Homelessness & Housing Help Hub in collaboration with Family Services Windsor-Essex, Canadian Mental Health Association, and CommUnity Partnerships. Housing Information Services was selected due to their previous experience under the federal homelessness portfolio as well as their organizations mandate in meeting the goals identified under the Government of Canada’s Reaching Home: Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Funding.
- Canadian Mental Health Association is currently on site supporting persons who have been identified as requiring mental health supports through Ontario Works. Ontario Works is providing funding to the 2 CMHA support staff onsite. This contract began in October 2020.
- Effective Monday November 9th, the remaining reassigned City staff were called back to their home positions. I would like to take this moment to thank all of the reassigned City staff who in collaboration with community agencies have been vital in providing supports to persons experiencing homelessness from April – November.
- As of November 13, 2020 there have been 455 unique visitors with 6160 cumulative visits to the site.
- weCHC conducted a flu clinic at the site on Tuesday November 17th
- As stated above in the BNPL stats, staff are beginning to see an increase in housing move-ins. This is in part to the concentrated work being conducted at the site with all partners. We have begun to see a decrease in the amount of time it takes to collect documents and receive the appropriate approvals needed to facilitate moves into housing.

- Housing Services continues to have conversations to ensure that the needs of participants are being met primarily through the mental health and addiction sector, as well as with the justice sector.
- Currently there is an MSW student through Housing Services who is doing a review of services. In addition, other evaluation opportunities are being explored.

J. Brunet states she is pleased that fifty-two people have been housed in the last month. She asks if anything unique has been found in the data that may or may not be different as it relates to people moving in.

K. Goz reports they are beginning to see an increase in collaboration across sectoral work that is happening through that site.

Councillor McKenzie states that creating the space at the former Waterworld facility has assisted people in making that transition to housing. He asks if discussion has taken place regarding having that level of service exhibited at Waterworld remain in place over the long term.

J. Zuk concurs that people come to Waterworld because they know they will receive help with housing – people do not want to live on the street. This needs to be continued after COVID, as our community has never had this.

K. Hay suggests the successes at Waterworld be shared with other municipalities.

K. Goz responds that they are currently looking to see if the space can be supported in the long term. At this time we are using additional COVID funding, so the services currently supported by the provincial and federal governments will have to be reviewed and a report will be provided to Council.

K. Goz acknowledges the leadership of HHAC members A. Angelidis and J. Zuk who have been integral to the growth and iterative changes at the Homelessness & Housing Help Hub (Waterworld) that continues to support our community's most vulnerable. I also wish to commend A. Yakonich whose staff were present in the early days, who supported the site and contributed to make it what it has become. At the end of the day, their staff is doing the hard work in easing homelessness for Windsor-Essex.

Goal 6 – RentSmart

K. Goz reports in October 2020, Housing Services and Pathway to Potential (P2P), in collaboration with RentSmart Ontario, sent out Expressions of Interest to community agencies to apply for one of three free RentSmart Educator (Train the Trainer) training spots at the upcoming virtual training in November.

RentSmart offers education and support services to tenants and landlords with one goal: Successful Tenancies. The RentSmart model is designed to build a common understanding between tenants and landlords, leading to a conflict-free tenancy.

Housing Services and P2P are excited to strengthen our existing partnership with RentSmart Ontario by adding new trainers to our region as part of the goals and strategies identified under the Home Together: Housing and Homelessness Master Plan. RentSmart education has helped thousands of renters across the country navigate the rental market, find housing and maintain tenancy. The education covers: finding suitable housing; tenant rights and responsibilities; property owner responsibilities and expectations; maintenance do's and don'ts; communicating effectively; and budgeting and planning for affordable housing.

The Train-the-Trainer session will take place on November 23, 24 and 26. The agencies selected to participate are the Welcome Centre Shelter for Women and Families, YMCA and Multicultural Council.

Goal 7 – Update on HIFIS

J. Tanner remarks that the Homelessness Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS 4.0) is now live and is being utilized by the Welcome Centre to track and manage client files. One hundred and seven clients have been added into the system since October. Training is scheduled for the Downtown Mission and Salvation Army in November and December and all three shelters will be fully onboard by January 2021. We are working toward the goal of having 30+ homelessness serving agencies utilizing HIFIS by 2022.

She adds that with only one agency in HIFIS right now, we can see what a powerful tool this will be to consolidate and analyze data across the homelessness system. For example, the Daily Shelter Summary report (sample depicted below) provides information about the occupancy at the Welcome Centre (89% on Nov 13) including how many new intakes (5), how many discharges/housing placements (1), basic demographic info (14 adults, 2 youth) and the total number of clients (16). This type of reporting will be utilized to monitor and manage daily shelter usage and analyze trends over time.



Daily Shelter Summary

Reporting Period: 11/1/2020 to 11/13/2020

Welcome Centre WOMEN

2020 - November

Date	Stays	Occupancy	In	Out	Youth	Adult	Males	Females	Other
2020-11-12	12	66.7%	2	0	2	10	0	0	12
2020-11-13	16	88.9%	5	1	2	14	0	0	16

More detailed and customized reports are also available through HIFIS. For example, there is a Case Management report (sample depicted below) which shows the types of and number of interactions with clients as well as the total time spent on each type of interaction. For example, in the first two weeks of November, Welcome Centre staff accompanied one family to an appointment or apartment viewing and we know this took 2.5 hours. Such reports will tell us more details about the types of supports being provided to clients as well as help us analyze and identify areas for efficiency improvements and/or the need for additional resources.

Case Management Goals & Activities - Summary

List of the Case Management sessions in progress or completed during the reporting period.



Dates: 2020/11/01 - 2020/11/13

Welcome Centre FAMILIES

Grouped by Goal

Goal: Shelter Case Management

Activity	Total	With Client Present	With Family Present	Time Spent (HH:MM)
Accompaniment to Appointments / Services	1	1	0	2:30
Application for Income Assistance	1	1	0	0:00
CHR Application	10	9	1	1:55
Community Referral / Connection	8	6	0	0:45
Discharge	3	3	0	1:00
Housing Search Support	13	11	1	1:59
Identification Support	3	3	0	0:40
Income / Banking Verified	10	10	2	2:04
Intake	10	10	2	4:00
Shelter Contract	1	1	0	0:15
VI-SPDAT Complete	11	11	2	21:55
Total for Goal	71	66	8	37:03

4.3 HHAC Subcommittee

The Chair asks how the number of affordable builds are tracked.

In an e-mail from Michael Cooke, Manager Planning Policy/Deputy City Planner, he provides the following information:

- Administrative staff will be able to track and periodically report on the number of new dwelling units that are being created through Council's new Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU's) policies and by-law amendments.
- These dwelling units all require Building Permits so they can be tracked.
- Administration also has the ability to record the number of other types of new dwelling units, i.e. detached, townhouses, apartments, that are created throughout the City as a way of monitoring the supply of all housing units that are created.
- The current challenge is how we can obtain reliable affordability information. This would need to apply to both the rental and ownership market with the understanding that affordable rental accommodation is where the greatest need and urgency exists within our community.

- We are currently researching how other municipalities are tracking and recording affordability beyond what CMHC does.

Mayor McNamara suggests a template be created that provides where we are, what is required and what is projected for the future. We know there is a need in the community; however, we do not know what the plan is for the future. It would be gratifying to know in terms of the municipalities, who is doing what in terms of affordable housing. CMHC has provided the capital for Valente's project (260 affordable housing units) and Skyline is building two new units. If we had a template to put together, we would do a better job in projecting what requirements would be needed in the future.

J. Zuk leaves the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

K. Goz adds they are looking internally to develop some type of reporting form that can be used to send out to a variety of community partners and to different County municipalities to try to collect that information annually to be able to inform the 10 Year Annual Report. A draft form will be provided for HHAC and the CAB once developed.

C. Aspila states that one of the challenges we have found has been obtaining information from the private sector. The best source for information that we have been able to obtain is CMHC on an annual basis.

In response to a question asked by J. Brunet regarding if HIFIS could be used to track vacant units and housing stock, K. Goz responds yes but only for existing units. What we are trying to track is the construction or repurposing of existing buildings for new stock. We know and acknowledge that any kind of tracking that we are trying to do will not be perfect and capture one hundred per cent of the capital coming on line.

P. Dorner indicates that the Real Estate Board receives very little in terms of information relating to affordable housing. There is nothing available for multiple zoning and if something comes available, then it is the land cost.

Councillor McKenzie states that collecting data is a challenge but it exists.

K. Goz remarks that we need to capture the new construction, but the target under the Plan focuses on folks that are moving into either RGI assisted or other types of affordable housing. This is not isolated to new bricks and mortar. She adds that new stock is one piece of what the tracking is aiming to capture.

The Chair reports that modular units for students will be built on the St. Clair College Campus. She adds this may free up some rental units if students live on campus.

Councillor McKenzie proposes wording for a motion for consideration by HHAC as follows:

That the City of Windsor develop debenture models including but not limited to loans and bond issuances for Council to consider adopting in order to raise revenues required to achieve the affordable housing stock targets articulated in the unanimously adopted Housing and Homelessness Master Plan.

Funds raised through such models could be deployed in collaboration with community partners and/or senior levels of government.

That the City of Windsor Real Estate Services Department be Directed to review the City's existing real estate portfolio to identify opportunities to develop land to increase the supply of affordable housing in the community.

Councillor McKenzie states that the motion specifically looks at bricks and mortar and how the affordable housing stock can be addressed from a new build perspective. Administration will be asked to bring back information to Council regarding different debt financing models. The way the City of Windsor funds capital projects is through the "Pay As You Go" model. When we put affordable housing in competition with the City of Windsor capital projects, housing falls to a certain level on that prioritization list. This would provide an opportunity to create another separate funding mechanism (non-taxpayer funded) and would be meant specifically to address this critical need in our community.

A. Angelidis adds that this motion is timely when we look at the funding that is available. We are working with strict timelines to have land zoned for affordable housing.

J. Tanner asks if HHAC is interested in receiving information relating to various loan options. She wonders if non-profit agencies would be challenged in paying back loans.

Councillor McKenzie states he is looking for the city to have some sort of a capital pool to be able to leverage opportunities as they come forward.

Mayor McNamara advises that we have to be bold in raising capital to improve housing stock. If we are going to be dependent on waiting for special grants, we will never fulfill the requirements in our community. We need to be innovative in how we leverage existing properties to get better stock than we have. We should exhaust every opportunity to raise capital because at the end of the day, that will be the chance to whittle down the waiting list and put people in homes.

Moved by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Mayor McNamara,

i) That the City of Windsor **BE REQUESTED** to develop debenture models including but not limited to loans and bond issuances for Council to consider adopting in order to raise revenues required to achieve the affordable housing stock targets articulated in the unanimously adopted Housing and Homelessness Master Plan.

ii) That funds raised through such models **COULD BE DEPLOYED** in collaboration with community partners and/or senior levels of government.

iii) That the City of Windsor Real Estate Services Department **BE DIRECTED** to review the City of Windsor's existing real estate portfolio to identify opportunities to develop land to increase the supply of affordable housing in the community.

Carried.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:14 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR