



Progress Report 2020-2021

Halton Community Housing Corporation Community Development Strategy

Executive Summary

This report is the third-year progress update on the Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) Community Development Strategy. Over the last year, HCHC has continued to work towards the long-term intended outcomes identified in the Community Development Strategy approved by the Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) Board in February 2018. These outcomes are:

- well-built and well-maintained communities;
- safe and secure communities;
- residents are supported, where required;
- programming is reflective of residents' needs; and,
- effective communication with residents.

This report demonstrates progress made in delivering on all five outcomes over the past year. HCHC remains committed to working with residents and stakeholders on the strategy's implementation and will continue to report back to the Board with progress made annually.

2021/22 marks the third and final year of the current Community Development Strategy. HCHC will continue to advance community development priorities in the near-term while engaging residents on the continuation of existing priorities and identification of any new areas of resident interest and concern longer-term. Resident feedback will be used to inform priorities for the next HCHC Community Development Strategy (2023-2026) which will be brought to the HCHC Board for approval early in 2023.



Armstrong Terrace, Georgetown



Martin House, Milton



Pinedale Avenue, Burlington



Golden Briar Heights, Oakville



Well-Built and Well-Maintained Communities

Our commitments:

- HCHC will respond to maintenance requests in an effective and efficient manner.
- HCHC will proactively inform residents about capital work being done in HCHC communities in a timely and effective manner.

Our current status:

- Energy, Fleet and Facilities staff receive a large volume of maintenance requests for HCHC buildings every day.
- HCHC is working to ensure residents receive advanced notification of capital work and have the opportunity to provide input into projects that affect them.

Our accomplishments so far:

- An on-call/service desk responds to maintenance requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week. From August 1, 2020 to July 31, 2021 a total of 12,572 maintenance requests were completed across HCHC's portfolio. This represents a 7.5 per cent increase from the previous reporting period.
- In 2020, HCHC invested \$4.1 million in capital improvements and \$5.6 million in ongoing maintenance activities to ensure HCHC communities are well built and well maintained. Capital work has been preceded by notices issued to all affected residents. These notices provided details of work to be undertaken; informed residents of how they may be affected; and, provided suggestions on readiness activities that residents can do before capital work begins. Direct staff contact information is made available to assist residents with any questions and/or concerns they may have.
- HCHC developed and implemented a new incident reporting process that reduced response times and formalized a follow up process to ensure issues at sites are appropriately addressed in a timely fashion.
- As part of a Regional digital strategy, the HCHC maintenance requests process is being reviewed and digitized over time to improve response times and customer service.
- Through Halton Region's COVID-19 response, HCHC provided ongoing communication related to the closure of common rooms, a process for emergency maintenance requests and enhanced cleaning procedures/protocols. As restrictions have eased, communication regarding the opening of patios, cooling rooms and common rooms for activities have been provided to residents.

Our goals for the next year:

- Use digital signage to enhance notifications to residents regarding capital work.
- Continue to implement an end-to-end digitized maintenance request process.
- Continue to respond to maintenance requests within established response timelines: emergency services within one hour during working hours, two hours outside working hours and urgent services within 24 hours.
- Complete building condition assessments in HCHC communities to identify go-forward required capital repairs.



Safe and Secure Communities

Our commitments:

- HCHC will create more opportunities for residents to provide feedback to staff about community safety concerns.
- HCHC will evaluate community security on an ongoing basis and implement necessary recommendations.

Our current status:

- Community safety and well-being continues to be the highest priority for HCHC residents.
- HCHC continues to expand partnerships opportunities with the Halton Region Police Service (HRPS) through a formalized data and communications sharing Memorandum of Understanding.
- HCHC is working to enhance capacity to gather information, understand community safety issues in HCHC communities and respond to areas in need.

Our accomplishments so far:

- HCHC and HRPS are operationalizing the data sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by both organizations. HCHC completed presentations to platoons in the Burlington and Oakville Districts, the Community Mobilization Bureau (CMB) and the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB). These presentations have raised awareness of HCHC locations among front-line officers and provided an HCHC contact to facilitate increased information sharing.
- The Threat, Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (TRVA) informed strategic investments in 2021, including upgrades to exterior lighting at multiple sites; introduction of closed captioned video equipment at 2300 Walkers Line and 1150 Dorval Drive, upgraded door security at 708/710 Brant Street; and lockbox re-installation across multiple sites.
- Through Halton Region's COVID-19 response, HCHC worked closely with Public Health to implement procedures to minimize transmission of the coronavirus and enhance the safety of residents. This included providing on-site vaccinations to residents of older adult communities.

Our goals for next year:

- Continue to build the partnership with HRPS to share information and collaborate around safety concerns.
- Implement the recommendations of the Threat, Risk and Vulnerability Assessment project incrementally over time.
- Continue to engage residents on matters of community safety and security concerns.
- Continue to ensure HCHC communities are in compliance with the Public Health COVID response guidelines.



Residents Are Supported

Our commitments:

- HCHC will support vulnerable residents to have successful tenancies.
- HCHC will provide opportunities for residents to enhance employability and financial literacy.
- HCHC will give residents opportunities to provide direct input into how they would like to be supported.
- HCHC will work with residents to promote healthy living.

Our current status:

- Older adults face a higher incidence of complex medical conditions, social isolation, and lower income and mobility issues than the general population.
- HCHC is committed to improving the health and quality of life of residents, including supporting residents facing financial hardship and food insecurity.

Our accomplishments so far:

- There are currently 43 residents at 410 John Street receiving wellness hub services and the number is growing. Service providers meet monthly to review resident case plans to provide holistic health and social services to these individuals.
- Wellness hub services were modified and continued through COVID-19 restrictions, as HCHC staff worked with service providers to develop and deliver life enrichment activities using digital channels.
- In partnership with Food for Life, food security programming is available door-to-door during the COVID-19 pandemic to pre-emptively contain potential virus transmission. Between October 2020 and July 2021, a total of 36,692 bags of food were delivered to HCHC residents.
- Between March 5 and June 28, HCHC worked closely with Public Health, Services for Seniors, Paramedics and staff from the CAOs office to offer vaccinations to residents of the 13 HCHC older adult communities in their homes. In total, over 790 doses were administered.
- In September 2020, HCHC implemented a resident survey across the portfolio to identify any internet access issues as well as tenant internet affordability concerns. As a result of the survey findings, HCHC expanded free wifi to the common areas of all multi-unit dwellings in 2021, including older adult properties.

Our goals for next year:

- Continue to work with 410 John Street partners to expand programming options offered through the Wellness Hub.
- Work with the Burlington Ontario Health Team and other PACE partners to expand PACE into other community housing environments in Burlington.
- Continue to work with Food for Life and other community partners to support food insecure residents in HCHC communities.
- Continue to grow strategic partnerships and enter into more Community Partnership Agreements.
- Continue to work proactively with Community Safety and Well-Being partners and the Halton Situation Table to proactively keep HCHC residents at elevated risk housed and supported.



Programming is Reflective of Residents' Needs

Our commitments:

- HCHC will create environments that support sustained community development programming.
- HCHC will explore opportunities for new strategic partnerships with support service agencies to help residents achieve their goals.
- HCHC will promote greater awareness of Regional community programs and services for residents.

Our current status:

- Creating community space in HCHC communities is a key deliverable of the HCHC Community Development Strategy.
- Community space fosters life enrichment activities, health and social services supports to vulnerable residents in their own communities and helps to facilitate safe communities where residents can enjoy a high quality of life.

Our accomplishments so far:

- HCHC is working to replicate the successes of the Our Community Cares community centre with the creation of a new community hub at 2300 Walkers Line, Burlington. Phase one construction has been completed and the balance of the renovations are expected to be completed by November 2021. HCHC staff are working with the Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) to finalize the program that will be delivered at the site and developing a resident engagement strategy.
- With the lifting of pandemic restrictions, community gardens were re-opened in 2021 but with robust physical distancing requirements in place. HCHC has worked with the Halton Environmental Network (HEN) to re-open all nine community gardens. At the 17 Elizabeth Drive location, HEN has connected with the Acton Community Garden (ACG), across the street, to collaborate around growing and distributing food. The food harvested at ACG is delivered to St Alban's Food for Life program, Georgetown Bread Basket or other food security programs across Halton Hills.

Our goals for next year:

- With the investment from the Children's Services Division, ROCK will transition some EarlyON Child and Family Centre programming into the space at 2300 Walkers Line once renovations are completed. Programming will serve residents of the complex and other vulnerable populations from the surrounding community.
- As allotment gardens are re-opened, HCHC will continue to expand and enhance the community garden program into additional HCHC communities over time.
- HCHC will continue to explore additional community partnerships and community hubs over time to address resident needs.



Improving Communication with Residents

Our commitments:

- HCHC will increase opportunities for residents using technology.
- HCHC will provide residents with regular opportunities to provide feedback to HCHC.
- HCHC will provide residents with clear and concise messaging in all communications.

Our current status:

- One of the key goals of the HCHC Community Development Strategy is improving communication with residents.
- HCHC is sharing information with residents by posting notices on bulletin boards located in common areas, however this method can be inefficient as it requires staff to travel to each site to post paper notices on each individual board.

Our accomplishments so far:

- HCHC built upon progress made expanding free wifi access to the common areas of twenty one additional communities.
- Digital signage is being expanded to all multi-unit residential properties.
- Key resident communication/notice templates have been reviewed, simplified and written in plain language.
- Throughout COVID restrictions, HCHC has continued to communicate and engage with residents virtually to ensure issues are addressed and residents are aware of available supports, upcoming events and capital repairs scheduled in their communities.

Our goals for next year:

- Continue to expand the use of digital channels to enhance communication with residents.
- Continue to review communications templates and existing policies and where required, simplify so they are easier to understand.
- Over the next year, HCHC will create satellite space for staff to work from in order to be in communities more regularly, to be accessible to residents, to improve customer service and to provide a great line of sight to capital projects.
- Over the next 12 months, HCHC will again engage residents to identify areas of resident informed focus. Resident feedback will be used to inform priorities for the next HCHC Community Development Strategy (2023-2026) which will be brought to the HCHC Board for approval early in 2023.



SCS-2122134

halton.ca ☎ 311

