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**MEMORANDUM**

**COM-C 9-2022**

**Subject:** Activities related to Niagara's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan for March, April, May 2022

**Date:** June 14, 2022

**To:** Public Health & Social Services Committee

**From:** Adrienne Jugley, Commissioner, Community Services

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Further to Council's direction in October 2019 (Report [COM 40-2019 Five-Year Review of Niagara's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan](https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=6025) <https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=6025>), staff continue to provide updates about activities, local targets, outcomes and challenges related to Niagara's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan (HHAP).

- By mid-May, 13 clients had moved into the new Permanent Supportive Housing property (PSH) on Buchanan Street in Niagara Falls. This PSH site will provide up to 25 people who have experienced chronic homelessness (homeless for 365+ days) with housing and daytime community programming, with on-site staffing available 24/7. Coordinated access into the program prioritized youth, seniors, and Indigenous persons on Niagara's By-Name List (BNL).
- The coordinated access process for Bridge Housing intake started in May. Bridge Housing will provide people experiencing chronic homelessness who are unsheltered (street or encampment) with short-term housing and support to assist them to return to permanent housing. The program is also accessed through the BNL and will be prioritizing youth, seniors and Indigenous persons.
- Niagara Regional staff have been working closely with Gateway Community Services, Niagara Assertive Street Outreach (NASO) team to explore supporting individuals experiencing homeless to move to longer term housing through a NASO Hub pilot. The pilot is intended to offer dedicated space during the day to provide NASO staff and other partners to meet with clients who are engaged in housing activities (e.g. housing searches, preparing for meeting with landlords, identification and documentation). With the seasonal shelter program (formerly known as Out of the Cold) and associated day programming coming to an end for the season, this pilot is an opportunity to test best practices in new housing-focused approaches that

support individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are unsheltered (street or encampment).

- Niagara had 8,637 community housing units at the end of December 2021, including existing NRH-owned, non-profit / co-op, rent supplement units, Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) and new development. A breakdown by municipality and program is provided in the following table.

Municipality	NRH Owned	Non-Profit / Co-op	Rent Supplement	COHB	New Development	Total
Fort Erie	116	354	27	14	-	511
Grimsby	55	-	18	2	-	75
Lincoln	61	41	11	4	-	117
Niagara Falls	872	788	223	81	213	2,177
Niagara-on-the-Lake	40	-	12	-	-	52
Pelham	-	-	16	4	-	20
Port Colborne	88	109	58	11	43	309
St. Catharines	1,087	1,494	714	114	370	3,779
Thorold	29	85	66	12	46	238
Welland	394	427	238	60	167	1,286
West Lincoln	-	56	17	-	-	73
Wainfleet	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Niagara	2,742	3,354	1,400	302	839	8,637

- The COHB is a portable rent benefit that helps applicants on the centralized waiting list pay their rent to their current landlord in the private market. From March to May of 2022, 138 COHB applications were submitted to the province. Housing Services

continues to support applications for COHB, and there are a total of 350 COHB spaces to fill for the 2022 year.

- In response to public review and comment on a consolidated draft of the new Niagara Official Plan in January 2021, Planning and Development Services staff released a revised draft of the Official Plan. The revised draft includes additional policy language clarifying the use of “inclusionary zoning” within protected major transit station areas. Following a virtual open house session in early April, a Statutory Public Meeting for the Niagara Official Plan was held at a special meeting of Regional Council on April 28, 2022, wherein a number of delegations expressed their support, concerns, and criticisms with the draft document. The final Niagara Official Plan, which will respond to the additional comments received at the Statutory Public Meeting, will be brought forward to the Planning and Economic Development Committee for adoption on June 15, 2022.
  
- New housing development highlights:
  - Hawkins Street, Niagara Falls – 73 units. Obtained 100% occupancy as of March.
  - Buchanan Street, Niagara Falls – 25 Units. 100% Complete.
  - Victoria Avenue, Niagara Falls – 21 Units. 75% Complete – on track for substantial completion May 2022. Contribution of provincial SSRF Phase 2 funding, Social Housing Development, and land and building donation from the City of Niagara Falls.
  - Ormond/St. David’s, Thorold – 11 NRH units. 6 units occupied, 5 units 75% complete.
  - York Street, Welland – 43 units. 10% complete. On track for completion December 2022. Contribution of Region levy/DC and federal Rapid Housing Initiative.
  - Crescent Road, Fort Erie – 18 Units. 1% Complete. \$6.4M is being sought in an application to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Women and Children’s Transitional Housing Initiative.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

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Adrienne Jugley, MSW, RSW, CHE  
Commissioner