

Regional council approves Peel's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan

Peel Regional council has approved a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

This is a community strategy aimed at improving the availability of safe, affordable, accessible and appropriate housing in Peel. With implementation beginning in 2014, the Plan will design an integrated housing system that adapts to changing needs at every stage or circumstance in a resident's life.

This community plan builds on the Ontario government's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy, which aims to transform the housing system and put people first. Ontario's strategy means more flexible funding for local housing and homelessness programs so they can target the specific needs of the community. It also recognizes the importance of strong partnerships between all levels of government, the private sector, non-profit and co-operative housing providers, and the people who require housing support to build healthy, sustainable and inclusive neighbourhoods.

The Plan will be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to fulfill Peel's requirements of Ontario's Housing Services Act, 2011.

"Peel's Housing and Homelessness Plan is a wonderful step towards providing a strong foundation on which to secure employment, raise families and build strong communities," said Regional Chair Emil Kolb.

He added it ties in with council's recent endorsement of a resolution with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to advocate for a national housing strategy.

"In order to implement this Plan, our provincial and federal partners need to be at the table to ensure for its success, which includes making critical investments for housing in our communities," he said. "While council continues to advocate for Peel's needs, we also look to our community partners and residents to help spread the word and let our senior level governments know that affordable housing is a priority to you as a constituent."

The Plan is a first step in integrating the planning of housing and homelessness systems. Unlike previous plans and strategies, the Peel Housing and Homelessness Plan focuses on the entire housing continuum and sets a strategic vision for Peel by articulating the aspirational goal, everyone has a home and homelessness is eliminated.

Based on input from nearly 700 community members, the Plan identifies three key objectives around housing stock, individual and family capacity and an integrated system.

The Plan focusses on putting people first and providing stable housing solutions to individuals and families and the first step to improve their quality of life and achieve social and economic outcomes. The Plan reinforces the importance of partnership among orders of government, non-profit, co-operative and private sectors to meet housing and support service needs. The Plan encourages innovation, cost saving measures and environmental sustainability.

"The community identified challenges and offered solutions to help meet the diverse housing needs that exist in Peel," said Peel's Commissioner of Human Services Janet Menard. "I would like to thank all our participants, our community reference group and the many agencies who collectively informed the plan. As we move forward with implementation, we will continue to need the community's help to execute the plan. By building on each other's strengths and assets, this will help inform investment priorities to meet housing needs across the continuum ? from homelessness to rental to homeownership."

To download a copy of Peel's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, visit peelregion.ca/housing/housinghomelessness