

Executive Directors Report

For the month of July/August 2020

1. Administration

The months of July and August have included discussions and planning for the marketing of units to address vacancy concerns and further incorporate a mixed income model as per our Business Plan; continuing to navigate through the pandemic, specifically CMOH Order 29-2020 and the changes to visitation in our Lodges; the continuation of North Zone CAO calls to discuss COVID-19 concerns and challenges, as well as the Affordable Housing Strategy, Rent Supplement and other operational issues; the continuation of ASCHA Zoom calls touching on advocacy for Housing Providers, COVID-19 issues and other operational concerns; teleconference call and business review sessions with Yardi in preparation of our transition to 7S; and interviews for the Manager position for the Hines Creek/Worsley portfolio.

Affordable Housing Strategy

On July 9, the Honorable Josephine Pon, Minister of Seniors and Housing, announced the launch of the Affordable Housing Review. The review moves forward on this government's commitment to Albertans that it will make housing more affordable and accessible.

A review panel was established and reached out to receive input on a series of key topics to help inform its recommendations to the Minister of Seniors and Housing. The panel was looking for written submissions on ways to:

- make affordable housing more available and accessible;
- provide Albertans with more return on the government's investment in housing;
- promote partnerships between the public, not for profit and private sectors, and housing operators;
- increase capacity of affordable housing operators and simplify administration;
- build more affordable housing and redevelop existing affordable housing properties;
- support Albertans with specific needs (for example, seniors, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness);
- encourage innovation in design, construction, and delivery; and
- introduce innovative approaches from other jurisdictions to Alberta.

Written submissions were requested and will be reviewed by the panel. Because we are on the front lines of providing housing to Albertans in need, a number of CAO's throughout the Province came together on several calls and worked together to develop a submission to provide our perspectives.

On August 17, I took part in a Zoom meeting with the Chair of the Expert Panel, MLA Amery, who was interested in hearing from a mix of urban and rural organizations, and particular geographies and our insights into the Affordable Housing Review.

Yardi 7S

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our original implementation and go-live date originally scheduled for September, has been pushed to March 15, 2021. In preparation of the transition, I along with Ashli Champeau, Director of Housing Operations and Special Projects, and Clayton Bober, Director of Finance, have been on calls with Yardi to review North Peace Housing's business processes, as well as to receive an overview in general navigation, business process set-up, and social housing set-up in the upgraded system. There will be months of preparation, testing and validating, and training before the go-live date, but we feel that the upgrade is necessary and are looking forward to the end result.

Hines Creek/Worsley Portfolio

We are very happy to report that we have hired the new Manager for the Hines Creek/Worsley portfolio. Tracey Riewe has been cooking at the Homesteader Lodge since March of this year and brings a strong background in Health and Safety, as well as administrative experience that complements her willingness to learn the new role. Her first day in the Management position is September 1; we wish Tracey all the best!

2. Resident and Tenant Levels

As of July 2020, we had a total of 188 lodge residents, down 1 from the month of June. Our lodge unit occupancy at the end of July was 82% of the 224 lodge units occupied.

We had 114 occupied Senior Self-Contained units at the end of July, consistent with the month of June. Our occupancy rate at the end of July was 88%.

Garden Court Seniors Apartments had 57 out of 63 units occupied at the end of July, consistent with the month of June; our occupancy rate was 90%. We had 4 out of the 8 trailers in Cadotte occupied at the end of July, consistent with the month of June.

The Family Housing program had 81 of the 123 units occupied, up 3 from the month of June, and 20 of the 40 R&N units occupied, down 1 from the month of June, with an overall occupancy of 62%.

We had 38 Rent Supplement recipients in the month of July, consistent with the month of June. No new applications for rent supplements are being accepted at this time while the existing programs are being reviewed for consistency of benefits and to ensure households that need assistance most are prioritized.

Tammy Menssa
Executive Director