



The Regional Municipality of Durham

Health & Social Services Committee Agenda

Council Chambers
Regional Headquarters Building
605 Rossland Road East, Whitby

Thursday, April 8, 2021

9:30 AM

Please note: In an effort to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and to generally comply with the directions from the Government of Ontario, it is requested in the strongest terms that Members participate in the meeting electronically. Regional Headquarters is closed to the public, all members of the public may [view the Committee meeting](#) via live streaming, instead of attending the meeting in person. If you wish to register as a delegate regarding an agenda item, you may register in advance of the meeting by noon on the day prior to the meeting by emailing delegations@durham.ca and will be provided with the details to delegate electronically.

1. Roll Call

2. Declarations of Interest

3. Adoption of Minutes

- A) Health & Social Services Committee meeting – March 4, 2021

Pages 4 - 11

4. Statutory Public Meetings

There are no statutory public meetings

5. Delegations

- 5.1 Carion Fenn, Carion Fenn Foundation, and Mike Young, Principal, Durham Catholic Virtual Elementary School, re: Durham Kids Health Week Project in partnership with Durham Catholic Virtual Elementary School

6. Presentations

- 6.1 R.J. Kyle, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health re: COVID-19 Update
- 6.2 E. Valant, Manager, Affordable Housing & Homelessness Initiatives, regarding 2021 Point in Time Count

7. Health

- 7.1 Correspondence
- 7.2 Reports

- A) The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) Call for Board of Health Nominations (2021-MOH-3) 12 - 13

8. Social Services

- 8.1 Correspondence
- 8.2 Reports

- A) Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Program 2020-2021 Take-up Plan (2021-SS-5) 14 - 17
- B) Housing Program Appeals 2020 (2021-SS-6) 18 - 21

9. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There are no advisory committee resolutions to be considered

10. Confidential Matters

There are no confidential matters to be considered

11. Other Business

12. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 9:30 AM

13. Adjournment

Notice regarding collection, use and disclosure of personal information:

Written information (either paper or electronic) that you send to Durham Regional Council or Committees, including home address, phone numbers and email addresses, will become part of the public record. This also includes oral submissions at meetings. If you have any questions about the collection of information, please contact the Regional Clerk/Director of Legislative Services.

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 4, 2021

A regular meeting of the Health & Social Services Committee was held on Thursday, March 4, 2021 in the Lower Level Boardroom (LL-C), Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 9:30 AM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Councillor Chapman, Chair
Councillor Anderson
Councillor Carter
Councillor Dies
Councillor Roy
Councillor Wotten
Regional Chair Henry

***all members of the Committee participated electronically**

Also

Present: Councillor Barton
Councillor Collier
Councillor Drew
Councillor Foster
Councillor Highet
Councillor Kerr
Councillor Leahy
Councillor Mitchell
Councillor Mulcahy
Councillor Nicholson
Councillor Smith
Councillor Yamada

***all visiting Councillors participated electronically**

Absent: Councillor Pickles, Vice-Chair was absent due to municipal business

Staff

Present: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Danos-Papaconstantinou, Commissioner of Social Services
T. Fraser, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
J. Kilgour, Director, Emergency Management
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
R.J. Kyle, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health

P. McTavish, Associate Medical Officer of Health
J. Nesbitt, Director, Population Health and Chief Nursing Officer
V. Olmstead, Manager, Population Health
A. Robins, Director, Housing Services
N. Prasad, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
***all staff except R. Inacio participated electronically**

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Roy, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,
(8) That the minutes of the regular Health & Social Services Committee meeting held on Thursday, February 4, 2021, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Statutory Public Meetings

There were no statutory public meetings.

5. Delegations

5.1 Ben Earle, Executive Director, Feed the Need in Durham, re: The Economic Impacts of Basic Income in Canada

Ben Earle, Executive Director, Feed the Need in Durham, provided a delegation with regards to The Economic Impacts of Basic Income in Canada. A copy of the PowerPoint was provided to members in advance of the meeting.

B. Earle stated that he works with Basic Income Canada network and UBI Works. He advised that the purpose of the research conducted with regards to Basic Income Programs was to look at the economic impacts of two specific basic income programs. He stated that basic income can support the prosperity of the economy in Canada and Ontario and can be thought of as an investment. He also stated that basic income, if designed and funded properly, can speed up Canada's recovery and grow the economy sustainably while ending poverty and growing the middle class.

B. Earle provided an overview of the poverty reduction impacts of basic income. He stated that basic income would raise the disposable income of households, and not just lowest income households. He stated that at a national level, it could lift about 3.2 million Canadian households out of poverty. He also stated that in Durham Region, basic income could potentially lift 16 to 20 thousand households out of the most extreme poverty while improving the disposable income and livelihood of another 75,000 middle income households in the community.

B. Earle also stated that basic income can be good for business and the economy and can be a self-sustaining investment.

B. Earle responded to questions of the committee.

6. Presentations

6.1 R.J. Kyle, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health, re: COVID-19 Vaccination Update

R.J. Kyle, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to a COVID-19 Vaccination Update. A copy of the PowerPoint was provided to members in advance of the meeting.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- COVID-19 Vaccination
- Vaccines – Current State
- Planning Structure
 - Durham Region COVID-19 Vaccine Community Planning Table
 - Durham Region – Health Department
- Provincial Plan
- Local Implementation
- Local Clinics
- Clinic Hours
- Priority Populations
- Communications
- Funding

R.J. Kyle stated that there are three approved vaccines in Canada (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and AstraZeneca) with only the Pfizer vaccine being available in Durham Region. He advised that Durham Region is expected to receive the Moderna vaccine but timelines have not yet been confirmed. All vaccines require two doses and the timing of the second dose is being reviewed by the province. He advised that the vaccine is recommended for use in teenage years and beyond. With regards to the provincial plan, R.J. Kyle advised that Durham Region is in Phase 1 of a three-phase provincial plan. He advised that Phase 1 includes the vaccination of immediate priority groups.

With regards to local implementation, R.J. Kyle advised that general direction is set by the province. He advised that Durham Region was asked to develop an Immunization Playbook which is flexible, adaptive, and responsive. He also advised that currently only Lakeridge Health and the Health Department has responsibility for immunizing clients locally but that other delivery streams are expected, once Durham moves into Phase 2.

R.J. Kyle further advised that a local online booking system has been developed; plans for a Durham specific call centre to register clients unable to book appointments are being finalized; vaccine management and clinic operations plans are in place; and security requirements have been addressed.

R.J. Kyle provided a list of the local clinics, one in each municipality, and advised that when all clinics are fully operational, the plan is to immunize up to 10,000 clients per day at maximum capacity. He advised that the priority populations are set by the government and include: long-term care and high-risk retirement home residents; Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation; priority health care workers, medical first responders, essential caregivers; and residents 80 years of age and older. He further advised that planning for urban indigenous population including non-indigenous household members is underway.

R.J. Kyle advised that Durham Region has developed a communication plan to generate vaccine awareness in the community; provide accurate and evidence-based information regarding vaccines; and provide timely and accurate information regarding the availability of vaccines. He also advised that the Region will continue to incur the necessary costs to protect the residents through the Public Health's response to the COVID-19 pandemic including the roll-out of the vaccine program and that the Ministry of Health has provided assurance that a process for public health units to request reimbursement of 2021 COVID-19 extraordinary costs will be established.

R.J. Kyle, P. McTavish, J. Nesbitt, and V. Olmstead responded to questions with regards to the following: requirements for further vaccination locations in the future; whether there are any concerns with the Pfizer vaccination storage and transportation in northern communities; the hiring of part time vaccinators; what consideration was given to the determination of vaccination locations; any thoughts of having mobile units service rural communities; the communication tool used to reach out to residents to provide information on vaccines; and whether information is sent out to senior centres etc.

R.J. Kyle, P. McTavish, J. Nesbitt, and V. Olmstead also responded to questions with regards to whether residents can travel to vaccination clinics outside of their municipalities; the anticipated timeline between registration and potential vaccination; the process of reviewing vaccine locations in Oshawa and how the vaccination sites were chosen; whether there was any consultation with transit with regards to assistance with transportation for priority populations to access the clinics; whether there is a process where elected officials can offer suggestions; the communication strategy with regards to residents who do not have access to computers; and whether regular information can be sent to council members so they can be better informed on services.

Additional questions responded to were as follows: whether there is technology and personnel in place to avoid the on-line booking system from crashing on March 8 when booking starts for residents 80 and over; possible side effects of not getting the vaccine; thoughts on providing communications to employees and having them share on their social media; thoughts given to the at-risk population that don't meet the regulations as well what is needed to register; whether the telephone lines will be accessible for the hearing impaired; details of the waitlist structure for online bookings; whether residents get the option of choosing a date and time that is more convenient for them; whether there is a mechanism in place to stop double booking; whether physicians that do residential calls will be able to pick up and administer vaccines to residents at home; and the timeline for use of the second transit bus for mobile vaccination or testing.

6.2 A. Robins, Director, Housing Services, regarding Community Housing End of Mortgage (EOM) (2021-SS-3) [Item 8.2 B)]

Alan Robins, Director, Housing Services, provided a PowerPoint Presentation with regards to the Community Housing End of Mortgage.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- End of Operating Agreements Task Force Position Paper
- Service Manager Task Force Position Paper
- Current Framework
- Funding Formula
- End of Mortgage (EOM)
- Task Force Priorities
- Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act
- Moving Forward

A. Robins stated that the purpose of Report #2021-SS-3 of the Commissioner of Social Services is to endorse the recommendations of the Task Force Position Paper: Municipal Recommendations to Continue Investing in Local Housing and Homelessness Systems. He advised that the position paper affirms that:

- Service Managers are best positioned to invest, plan and manage tax funded resources to both sustain community housing and address other local housing priorities;
- Proposed approach to mortgage subsidy savings at End of Mortgage (EOM) differentiates between:
 - current inflexible funding formula under the Housing Services Act;
 - new streamlined framework introduced under the Protecting Tenants and Strengthening Community Housing Act;
- Balances interests of service managers and housing providers; and
- Supports At Home in Durham, the Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024.

A. Robins provided a brief overview of the Current Framework, Funding Formula and End of Mortgage. He stated that the three Priorities of the Task Force are as follows:

1. Capital needs of community housing providers in line with local housing plans, like At Home in Durham;
2. Housing and homelessness pressures identified in local plans, such as redevelopment, supply and homelessness supports; and
3. Other municipal pressures, provided all housing needs are met per local plans.

A. Robins responded to questions with regards to housing provider mortgage payments; clarification of neutrality at end of mortgage; whether the Region will be able meet its obligation of building 1000 units in the next five years, while doing capital repairs of existing units and continuing to invest in new units while moving forward with the Community Housing End of Mortgage (EOM) initiative.

7. Health

7.1 Correspondence

- A) Correspondence dated March 3, 2021 from June Gallagher, Municipal Clerk, Municipality of Clarington, to The Honourable Lindsey Park, MPP, re: Wilmot Creek Vaccinations
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Moved by Councillor Carter, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,

- (9) That the correspondence dated March 3, 2021 from June Gallagher, Municipal Clerk, Municipality of Clarington, to The Honourable Lindsey Park, MPP, re: Wilmot Creek Vaccinations be received for information.

CARRIED

7.2 Reports

There were no Health Reports to consider.

8. Social Services

8.1 Correspondence

There were no communications to consider.

8.2 Reports

- A) 2020 Durham Access to Social Housing (DASH) Wait List Statistics (2021-SS-2)

Report #2021-SS-2 from S. Danos-Papaconstantinou, Commissioner of Social Services, was received.

Moved by Councillor Anderson, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,
(10) That Report #2021-SS-2 of the Commissioner of Social Services be received for information.

CARRIED

B) End of Mortgage Service Manager Task Force Recommendations (2021-SS-3)

Report #2021-SS-3 from S. Danos-Papaconstantinou, Commissioner of Social Services, was received.

Moved by Councillor Anderson, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,
(11) That we recommend to Council:

- A) That Regional Council endorse the End of Mortgage Service Manager Task Force position paper, Municipal Recommendations to Continue Investing in Local Housing and Homelessness System and its recommendations and priorities; and
- B) That a copy of Report #2021-SS-3 of the Commissioner of Social Services be forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs).

CARRIED

C) Recovery and Renewal: Ontario's Vision for Social Assistance Transformation (2021-SS-4)

Report #2021-SS-4 from S. Danos-Papaconstantinou, Commissioner of Social Services, was received.

Moved by Councillor Anderson, Seconded by Councillor Wotten,
(12) That Report #2021-SS-4 of the Commissioner of Social Services be received for information.

9. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

10. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

11. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Health & Social Services Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 9:30 AM in the Lower Level Boardroom (LL-C), Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

13. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Wotten, Seconded by Councillor Anderson,
(13) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 PM

Respectfully submitted,

B. Chapman, Chair

N. Prasad, Committee Clerk



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Health & Social Services Committee
From: Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health
Report: #2021-MOH-3
Date: April 8, 2021

Subject:

The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) Call for Board of Health Nominations

Recommendations:

That the Health & Social Services Committee recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the nomination of Councillor Bob Chapman for election to the alPHA Board of Directors for a two-year term to represent the Central East region is endorsed; and
 - B) That two members of Regional Council are identified to sponsor the nomination and complete the nomination form.
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Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Regional Council's endorsement of the nomination of Councillor Bob Chapman for election to the alPHA Board of Directors for the two-year term of June 2021 to June 2023.

2. Background

- 2.1 alPHA is accepting nominations for a board of health representative from the Central East region for its Board of Directors for the two-year term of June 2021 to June 2023.
- 2.2 An election to determine the representatives will be held at the alPHA Board of Health Section meeting on June 8, 2021, at the alPHA Annual Conference.
- 2.3 The qualifications for the board of health representative include: active member of an Ontario board of health or regional public health committee; knowledge and skills in the areas of not-for-profit governance (i.e., policy, finance, programs and human

resources); strong commitment to public health and the work of the organization; and previous volunteer leadership experience in a not-for-profit is an asset.

- 2.4 Regional Councillor Bob Chapman is the Chair of the Health & Social Services Committee and has expressed an interest in serving on alPHa's Board of Directors for the two-year term.
- 2.5 Regional Councillor David Pickles has served as the Central East board of health representative since June 2016.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 In order to secure the nomination of Regional Councillor Bob Chapman as the Central East board of health representative on the alPHa Board of Directors for 2021 to 2023, the nomination form must be submitted to alPHa by May 28, 2021.
- 3.2 A copy of Regional Council's motion to approve the nomination is required as well as identification of two members to sponsor the nomination. alPHa also requires a biography of Councillor Bob Chapman, outlining his suitability for candidacy.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

R.J. Kyle, BSc, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC, FACPM
Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Health and Social Services Committee
From: Commissioner of Social Services
Report: #2021-SS-5
Date: April 8, 2021

Subject:

Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Program 2020 - 2021 Take-up Plan

Recommendation:

That the Health and Social Services Committee recommends:

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Health and Social Services Committee of the community housing providers that have been selected to receive 2020 - 2021 COCHI federal/provincial funding for urgent capital repairs.

2. Background

- 2.1 On April 17, 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) announced the COCHI program under the Community Housing Renewal Strategy. COCHI was launched in 2019 - 2020 and leverages federal investments under the bilateral agreement between MMAH and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).
- 2.2 An expression of interest was sent to all eligible community housing providers. Providers were requested to review their urgent capital needs against the COCHI eligibility criteria and submit applications by July 3, 2020. Supporting information including alignment with Building Condition Assessments (BCAs), repair estimates and the amount of their current capital reserve was requested to assist Regional Staff in the prioritization of potential capital repair projects.

- 2.3 Regional staff from the Social Services, Works and Finance Departments evaluated and ranked 76 applications. This includes 21 new funding requests and 55 unfunded applications from year-one (2019-2020). The funding requests were evaluated based on:
- a. The housing provider's ability to meet program deadlines.
 - contribution agreement with the Region by January 30, 2021
 - begin project within 120 days of the signed contribution agreement
 - project completion by March 31, 2022
 - b. Meeting program eligibility requirements as an urgent and critical accessibility, health and safety or core building system repair.
 - c. The impact of the repair on the ongoing sustainability of the housing provider/project.
 - d. The housing provider's ability to finance the project through their own capital reserves.
 - e. The cost escalation risk of the proposed repair.
- 2.4 As part of general eligibility, community housing providers are required to ensure that the building will continue to remain affordable housing for a ten-year period after the completion of the funded repair work, including a minimum of five (5) years during which it will operate as social housing under the Housing Services Act, 2011. This requirement applies regardless of any post mortgage maturity obligations.
- 2.5 During the ten-year affordability period housing providers are required to maintain the current RGI Service Level Standard Target established for the project unless otherwise adjusted by mutual agreement between the Service Manager and the housing provider or ensure total rental/occupancy charge revenue for the project is less than 80% of the Average Market Rent (AMR) for Durham Region, as published annually by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 Report #2014-J-16 At Home in Durham, the Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024 – commits to strengthening the community housing sector as part of its goal to promote strong and vibrant neighbourhoods.
- 3.2 Report #2019-COW-25, At Home in Durham, Five Year Review – commits to significant progress in the regeneration of community housing.
- 3.3 Report #2019-COW-13 directs the Region's year-two (2020 - 2021) COCHI funding allocation of \$287,730 to support community housing providers with urgent capital repair needs.
- a. Council authorized staff to issue a Request for Proposal to community housing providers and submit a Project Information Form (PIF) to MMAH for selected repair projects.
 - b. Council authorized the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk to enter into a Contribution Agreement with each housing provider in order to access funding

and establish legal obligations and reporting requirements for the project, as required under the COCHI Program Guidelines.

4. Approved 2020 - 2021 COCHI Funding Allocations

- 4.1 The highest ranked urgent capital repair projects selected for COCHI funding are identified in Attachment 1. The Regional Chair and Regional Clerk have entered into Contribution Agreements with 5 community housing providers.
- 4.2 Any underspent funding will be reallocated at the discretion of the Commissioner of Finance.
- 4.3 Staff will closely monitor the progress of the approved projects to ensure compliance with program guidelines.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 5.1 This report aligns with the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:
 - a. Social Investment - Revitalize community housing and improve housing choice, affordability, and sustainability.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Council directed \$287,730 in COCHI funding to support community housing providers with urgent capital repair needs.
- 6.2 An expression of interest was issued resulting in a fulsome evaluation of 76 funding requests. Staff identified 5 top ranking urgent capital repair projects.
- 6.3 The full 2020 – 2021 COCHI allocation has been committed through executed Contribution Agreements with 5 community housing providers.
- 6.4 For additional information, contact: Alan Robins, Director, Housing Services, at 905-668-7711, extension 2500

Attachment #1: 2020 – 2021 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Take-up Plan

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou
Commissioner of Social Services

2020-2021 Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Take-up Plan

	Provider	Project Address	Project Description/Scope	Allocation (\$)
1	Borelia Co-operative Homes Inc.	10 Borelia Crescent, Port Perry	Replace exterior stairs and fire escape	20,000
2	Duffins Creek Co-operative Homes Inc.	1555 Finch Avenue, Pickering	Removal of interlocking brick walkways and replace with poured concrete Removal of wooden retaining walls and replace with concrete	185,000
3	YWCA Durham Supportive Housing	55 McGrigor Street, Oshawa	Boiler replacement	23,387
4	Maple Glen Housing Co-operative Inc.	777 Wilson Road North, Oshawa	Replace kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans	28,000
5	Ajax Municipal Housing Corporation	132 Kingston Road West, Ajax	Replace main breaker switches	31,343
	TOTAL			287,730
	TOTAL COCHI ALLOCATION			287,730
	BALANCE			0

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2463.



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Health and Social Services Committee
From: Commissioner of Social Services
Report: #2021-SS-6
Date: April 8, 2021

Subject:

Housing Program Appeals 2020

Recommendation:

That the Health and Social Services Committee recommends:

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the decisions of the Regional Review Panel regarding housing and homelessness program appeals in 2020.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Regional Review Process was established in 2002 (Report 2002-SH-11) and was fully compliant with the review body and procedural rules for appeals that was required under the Housing Services Act, 2011. The Regional Review Process was expanded to include reviews related to other housing and homelessness programs in 2015 (Report 2015-J-12).
- 2.2 Under the Regional Review Process, the Regional Review Panel conducts appeals (Regional Reviews) of decisions made under the following programs:
- a. Rent-geared-to-income (RGI)
 - b. Modified housing
 - c. Durham Portable Housing Benefit (Durham PHB)
 - d. Durham Housing Benefit (DHB)
 - e. Housing Stability Program (HSP)

- f. Other housing and homelessness programs that may be established by the Region of Durham.
- 2.3 The Regional Review Panel consists of representatives from the Housing Services Division, the Income and Employment Support Division, community housing providers and other housing and homeliness sector partners. All members of the Regional Review Panel receive training in rent-geared-to-income (RGI).
- 2.4 Although the Statutory Powers Procedures Act does not apply to Regional Review hearings, the Panel makes all attempts to apply procedural fairness to its proceedings.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 Report 2002-SH-11 – established the Regional Review Panel for appeals of decisions under the HSA.
- 3.2 Report 2015-J-12: Annual Review of Regional Housing Programs and Related Financial Analysis for the 2015 Business Plan – expanded Regional Review Process to all housing and homelessness programs.

4. Outcomes of 2020 Regional Reviews

- 4.1 In 2020, the Regional Review Panel heard 39 appeals. This is a very small number of appeals given the thousands of decisions that are made each year across housing and homelessness programs.
- 4.2 There were an additional 6 requests for appeal that were not heard by the Panel: 3 requests that were subsequently withdrawn by the appellant; and 3 requests that the Panel declined to hear because they were requested more than 6 years after the original decision or the tenant had already moved out of the RGI unit.
- 4.3 Almost 45 per cent of Regional Review Panel appeals pertained to decisions made by community housing providers (RGI and modified housing tenants or co-op members), about 31 per cent pertained to Durham Access to Social Housing (DASH) decisions (RGI and modified housing wait list applicants), and about 24 per cent pertained to Housing Stability Program (HSP) decisions. There were no appeal requests related to the Durham PHB or the Durham Housing Benefit.

Table 1: Regional Review Panel Appeals 2020

Type of Decision	Upheld	Overtured	Total
Community housing (RGI and modified housing)	9	10	19
RGI ineligible	1	4	5
RGI calculation	8	6	14
Durham Access to Social Housing (DASH)	9	3	12
Priority on DASH wait list ¹	7	3	10
RGI ineligible	2	0	2
Housing Stability Program (HSP)	1	7	8
HSP eligibility – last month’s rent assistance	0	3	3
HSP eligibility – arrears assistance ²	1	4	5
Total	19	20	39

- 4.4 Almost half of all decisions were overturned on appeal in 2020; however, this was generally due to the complexity of the decision or the Panel’s consideration of hardship than it was errors on the part of the original decision maker.
- 4.5 The very low number of appeals as compared to the thousands of decisions made annually indicates good decision making by community housing providers, DASH and community partners and Regional staff administering housing and homelessness programs.

5. Improved Processes

- 5.1 As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak in the spring of 2020, the Regional Review Panel adapted its processes to conduct reviews without the need for an in-person hearing. This included expedited reviews based on written submissions only, as well as reviews conducted by teleconferencing and videoconferencing. In 2020:
- 14 reviews were held in-person prior to the COVID-19 outbreak
 - 9 reviews were held by teleconference
 - 5 reviews were held by videoconference
 - 11 reviews were expedited reviews based on written submissions only.
- 5.2 This new process has been well received by both appellants, community housing providers and other decision makers and has resulted in more timely resolution of appeals. On average, reviews have taken about 16 days to complete since March

¹ Priority on DASH wait list generally pertains to Special Priority (SPP) status for victims of family violence and human trafficking; only one appeal pertained to the date the applicant was placed on the wait list without SPP status.

² HSP assistance for arrears may pertain to rental arrears or utility arrears.

2020, as compared to an average of 20 days previously. The Regional Review Panel is required to complete reviews within 30 days of receiving a request.

- 5.3 The Housing Services Division continues to monitor and adjust processes to continuously improve efficiency.

6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 6.1 This report aligns with the strategic goal of service excellence in the Durham Region Strategic Plan.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The Regional Review Panel is an independent body that hears appeals of decisions related to rent-geared-to-income (RGI) and other types of housing or homelessness assistance. The Panel continues to work effectively to protect appellants' rights to due process as required under the Housing Services Act, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou
Commissioner of Social Services