

Toronto Community Housing



## Tenant Funds for Common Area Projects – Interim Report

Item 7B

June 10, 2024

Tenant Services Committee

**Report:** TSC: 2024-25

**To:** Tenant Services Committee ("TSC")

**From:** Acting Chief Operating Officer

**Date:** April 26, 2024

### **PURPOSE:**

This report provides the Tenant Services Committee with an update on the consultations for Tenant Funds for Common Area Projects<sup>1</sup>.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Tenant Services Committee receive this report for information.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The future direction of the Tenant Funds for Common Area Projects program will be shaped by the input of TCHC's tenants and key stakeholders. The program aims to empower tenants to make decisions about their communities and to address challenges and opportunities in their common areas while upholding principles of community development and equity. A new, permanent name for the program will be developed based on tenant input.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly known as the Participatory Budgeting Program

The redesigned program will maintain its core features, which include:

- Facilitating the allocation of funds to support community-driven projects within common areas of TCHC buildings.
- Involving tenants in the decision-making process related to the allocation of program funding.

The redesign will also incorporate:

- Input and insights from various stakeholders to reposition and align the program with their expectations, needs, and available resources.
- A fair, transparent, and accountable resource distribution process and integration of strengthened financial controls within the program.

### **TENANT CONSULTATIONS:**

The redesign of the Tenant Funds for Common Areas Project is progressing, with a focus on tenant consultations. These consultations include various interactions with tenants, including a survey open to all TCHC tenants, focus group sessions including the Tenant Advisory Committee, targeted sessions for specific tenant groups identified in the survey, members of the former Participatory Budgeting monitoring committee and Tenant Action Fund table members, and a session for youth.

The aim of these consultations is to engage tenants in co-planning the redesigned program, allowing them to inform the vision, program framework and tenant engagement strategies.

A multi-channel communication strategy is being implemented to promote and facilitate engagement in stakeholder consultations.

Ongoing consultation activities include:

#### **Tenant Survey** (End date: May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

- **Participants:** TCHC Tenants
- **Purpose:** Gather input on funding structure; funding priorities; allocation; funding cycle; and funding amount.
- Survey responses as of May 2, 2024: **227 submissions.**

## Five Focus Group Sessions

- **Session 1:** Tenant Advisory Committee
- Date: May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- **Session 2-4:** Self-identified tenants from survey, members of the former Participatory Budgeting Monitoring Committee and Tenant Action Fund Application Table members.
- Date: East: May 28, 2024; Central: May 29, 2024; West: May 30, 2024
- **Session 5:** Youth
- Date: To be determined

## Program Rename Contest

- **Participants:** *TCHC Tenants*
- **Purpose:** Engage tenant input on new program name.
- **Date:** Post-survey close-out

## Tenant Community Action Tables

- **Participants:** *Tenant Leaders*
- **Purpose:** Elicit input on program redesign.
- **Date:** June 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## Tenant Advisory Committee

- **Participants:** *Tenant Advisory Committee members*
- **Purpose:** Present draft program report.
- **Date:** July 10, 2024

## NEXT STEPS

Upon analysis of survey, engagement and focus group results, staff will develop the new program design. The final report on the redesigned program will be presented to the Tenant Services Committee at the September meeting.

**IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The City's Shareholder Direction requires TCHC to maintain a democratic system of active tenant participation and involvement that will provide the following:

- Opportunities for tenant engagement regarding their housing and the complete TCHC housing portfolio.
- Opportunities for tenants to provide input on TCHC corporate decisions, including capital plans, operating budget, service levels, service delivery and Tenant facing policies; and
- Opportunities for tenant input on setting local spending priorities; and
- Information about opportunities for engagement in other City and community initiatives.

In addition, TCHC's approach to tenant engagement will respect the terms of the Shareholder Direction and the financial targets and performance benchmarks established for TCHC by the Service Manager.

**Financial Implications:**

The final program will be required to secure funding among the numerous competing priorities of the TCHC 2025 budget process, considering the ongoing focus on community engagement and support for community development within the business structure. It must also establish a balanced decision-making framework to ensure fair and equitable allocation of funds.

**SIGNATURE:**

*"Nadia Gouveia"*

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