
REPORT TO: Committee of the Whole

DATE OF MEETING: September 25, 2023

SUBMITTED BY: Rosa Bustamante, Director of Planning, 519-741-2200 ext. 7319

PREPARED BY: Natalie Goss, Manager, Policy & Research, 519-741-2200 ext. 7648
Garett Stevenson, Manager of Development Review, 519-741-2200 ext. 7070

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All

DATE OF REPORT: September 19, 2023

REPORT NO.: DSD-2023-422

SUBJECT: Supplemental Report to DSD-2023-295 Housing for All Strategy
Lived Expertise Working Group

RECOMMENDATION:

That the \$30,000 already committed to the operation of the Lived Expertise Working Group (LEWG) for year 2 from Kitchener's operating budget be allocated as outlined in DSD-2023-295; and,

That the City transfer \$23,600, inclusive of interim funds authorized by resolution of Council on June 26, 2023, to the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region (SDCWR) for year 2 costs in accordance with the Purchase of Services Agreement signed June 13, 2022, extended to August 31, 2023; and,

That staff be authorized to extend the Purchase of Services Agreement, signed June 13, 2022 (and extended to August 31, 2023) to June 30, 2024 to complete the second year of the LEWG pilot; and further,

That staff, together with the facilitator of the Lived Expertise Working Group, report back to Council at the conclusion of the pilot program in 2024 on the outcome of the pilot.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report to provide an update on conversations between Planning staff, the Social Development Center Waterloo Region (facilitator) and the Lived Expertise Working Group.
- Planning staff recommends to continue proceeding with year 2 of the Lived Expertise Working Group with a specific focus on matters outlined in the LEWG Charter and work plan described in this report.
- The financial implications are outlined in report DSD-2023-295.

- This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting. The LEWG year 2 work plan was prepared, discussed and agreed to by members of the LEWG and Kitchener Planning staff.
- This report supports A Caring community through the City's commitment to recognize that stable, secure and affordable housing is a human right. Further, that the City will use equity, diversity and inclusion principles to realize the right to housing.

BACKGROUND:

On June 26, 2023, Council considered report DSD-2023-295 which sought Council support for the continued funding and work of the Lived Expertise Working Group (LEWG). At this meeting Council resolved:

"That the following motion be deferred to the August 28, 2023, Council meeting to allow for an opportunity to further discuss the partnership with the Lived Expertise Working Group (LEWG) and Social Development Centre Waterloo Region (SDCWR) about the preferred approach to establish a City driven Lived Experience Working Group, and during this two month deferral, the City will continue to providing funding to the SDCWR in accordance with the previously approved agreement:

- *That the \$30,000 already committed to the operation of the Lived Expertise Working Group (LEWG) for year 2 from Kitchener's operating budget be allocated as outlined in DSD-2023-295; and,*
- *That the City transfer \$23,600 to the SDCWR (Social Development Centre Waterloo Region) for year 2 costs in accordance with the Purchase of Services Agreement signed June 13, 2022; and further,*
- *That staff, together with the facilitator of the Lived Expertise Working Group, report back to Council at the conclusion of the pilot program in 2024 on next steps for the LEWG."*

On August 28, 2023, Council received a report from Planning staff requesting additional time to confirm a work plan for year 2 with the LEWG, with a commitment to report back to Council on September 25, 2023.

REPORT:

Throughout July and August, City staff and staff from the Social Development Center Waterloo Region (SDCWR) had conversations about opportunities to continue to work together in the space of lived expertise on housing related matters within Kitchener's jurisdiction. These conversations have led to a mutual understanding of the following;

- during year 1, there were some gaps in City staff support,
- consistent City staff resourcing is required to support the LEWG work program and help to guide the work of the LEWG,
- that Planning staff will continue to provide staff support to the LEWG and will attend two evening meetings a month until June 2024,
- a lived expertise lens is irreplaceable and lived experts are valued and bring a diverse perspective to housing related work that is currently underway by the Planning Division,

- that decision making and consultation on encampments and encampment related issues are not within the mandate of LEWG and not part of the year 2 work program,
- that the mandate of the LEWG, as outlined in the Housing For All Strategy is “*A two-year pilot project for staff to work with and learn from a Lived Experience Working Group on addressing housing issues in the city, to gain advice on strategy implementation and monitor progress*”, and
- that stable, secure, affordable housing is a human right and needs to be available for everyone.

Additionally, over these same months staff from Kitchener’s Planning Division continued to attend and participate in dialogue with the LEWG. The result of these collaborative discussions is a Charter that includes a work plan for year 2 of the LEWG that focuses on:

- A re-confirmation of the role/mandate of the LEWG as outlined in the attached Charter and work plan, how its work will advance the implementation of Kitchener’s Housing for All Strategy, and a human rights approach to housing as defined in the Housing For All Strategy.
- Working collaboratively with City Planning staff on housing related policy matters including the Official Plan review; Rental Housing, Eviction and Displacement Study, and; Housing For All Implementation and Monitoring (e.g. housing needs assessment, understanding and unpacking the success and challenges of implementing Housing for All, understanding housing needs for specific communities, and tracking and monitoring renovations).

Planning staff are supportive of the continuation of the second year of the LEWG pilot and the prioritization of work outlined above. The year 2 Charter and work plan for LEWG refocuses on matters that will assist with the continued implementation of the Housing for All Strategy and will also provide the opportunity to understand and consider lived expertise perspectives on housing as Kitchener embarks on a comprehensive review of its Official Plan. Staff, together with the LEWG, will report back to Council on the successes and areas for improvement of applying a lived expertise lens to the Housing For All Strategy implementation including next steps for the LEWG or alternative.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports A Caring community through the City’s commitment to recognize that stable, secure and affordable housing is a human right. Further, that the City will use equity, diversity and inclusion principles to realize the right to housing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

As outlined in report DSD-2023-295, there is no impact on the Capital Budget. Kitchener has committed to contributing up to \$30,000 annually for the term of the 2-year pilot to help remove barriers to participation and to remunerate participants for their time and contributions. The recommended allocation of year 2 funds for the LEWG are outlined in DSD-2023-295. Funds for July and August have not yet been provided. Upon signing an extension agreement to the Purchase of Services Agreement signed June 13, 2022, extended to August 31, 2023, staff will transfer \$23,600, inclusive of interim funds authorized by resolution of Council on June 26, 2023, to the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region (SDCWR) for year 2 costs in accordance with the Purchase of Services Agreement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

COLLABORATION – The LEWG year 2 work plan was prepared, discussed and agreed to by members of the LEWG and Kitchener planning staff.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

- [DSD-20-214 Housing for All – City of Kitchener Housing Strategy](#)
- [COR-2022-104 - Housing for All Program Update – 2022 Year in Review](#)
- [DSD-2023-295 - Housing for All Strategy Lived Expertise Working Group – First Year Review and Rental Housing, Eviction and Displacement Study Update + Year 1 Report](#)
- [DSD-2023-366 - Supplemental Report to DSD-2023-295 Housing for All Strategy Lived Expertise Working Group](#)

APPROVED BY: Justin Readman, General Manager, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Draft LEWG Year 2 Charter and work plan