



# Progress Report 2023-2024

## Halton Community Housing Corporation Community Development Strategy

## Executive Summary

This update details the progress of the Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) Community Development Strategy for 2023 and 2024. Over the last 18 months, HCHC has continued to work towards the long-term outcomes identified in the Community Development Strategy. This Strategy was approved by the HCHC Board in February 2018 and confirmed again in the 2022 – 2023 Community Development Strategy refresh. These outcomes are:

- well-built and well-maintained communities;
- safe and secure communities;
- residents are supported, where required;
- programming is reflective of residents' needs; and
- effective communication with residents.

This report demonstrates progress made in delivering on all five outcomes over the past year. HCHC remains committed to working with residents and stakeholders on the strategy's implementation and will continue to report back to the Board annually.



Armstrong Terrace, Georgetown



Brant Court, Burlington



John R. Rhodes Residence, Oakville



Lakeview Villa, Acton



## Well-Built and Well-Maintained Communities

### Our commitments:

- HCHC will respond to maintenance requests in an effective and efficient manner.
- HCHC will effectively communicate with tenants about the status of maintenance requests.

### Our current status:

- Energy, Fleet and Facilities is increasing capacity to address the large volume of maintenance requests received for HCHC buildings every day.
- HCHC is making improvements to technology to improve response times and customer service.
- HCHC investing in ongoing maintenance and large-scale capital improvements to ensure buildings are in a good state of repair and improve energy efficiency.

### Our accomplishments so far:

- An on-call/service desk responds to maintenance requests 24 hours a day, seven days a week. From 2023 to 2024, a total of 17,064 maintenance requests were completed across HCHC's portfolio. This represents a 36% increase from the previous reporting period.
- In 2023, HCHC added an additional Maintenance Coordinator staff member to receive and process maintenance requests.
- From 2023 to 2024, HCHC invested over \$10 million in capital improvements to ensure HCHC communities are in a state of good repair. This work includes several large-scale projects including roof replacements at 1300 Maple Crossing in Burlington and window replacements at 1150 Dorval Drive and 2250 Golden Briar in Oakville. Over this time, HCHC also invested \$639,872 to renovate 302 vacated units and prepare them for new tenants.
- HCHC has committed to reducing total greenhouse gas emissions at sites by 25% by the end of 2025. Actions taken in 2023-2024 include replacing older greenhouse gas producing heating systems with heat pumps and improving energy efficiency through building envelope upgrades and window replacements.
- Unit inspections were completed in all units across the portfolio. These inspections help staff to identify required repairs and address any safety issues at the sites.
- HCHC completed building condition assessments in 2023 and 2024 to prioritize capital investments and support the development of the 10-year capital plan.

### Our goals for the next year:

- Continue to respond to maintenance requests within established response timelines: emergency services within one hour during working hours, two hours outside working hours and urgent services within 24 hours.
- Utilize the findings of the Building Condition Assessments to invest on capital projects that maintain a state of good repair across the portfolio.



## Safe and Secure Communities

### Our commitments:

- HCHC will continue to complete security audits of all HCHC communities and make targeted investment in security cameras and access control systems.
- HCHC will establish baseline information related to safety and security, and monitor indicators to measure and report on progress.

### Our current status:

- Community safety and well-being continues to be the highest priority for HCHC residents.
- HCHC continues to expand partnerships with the Halton Region Police Service (HRPS).
- HCHC is working to enhance capacity to gather information, understand community safety issues in our communities and respond to areas in need.

### Our accomplishments so far:

- HCHC and HRPS continue to operationalize the data sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to share information and partner around issues of safety at HCHC sites.
- HCHC and HRPS organized and delivered presentations to residents to discuss security concerns at three sites. These sessions provide opportunities to share information and for tenants to ask questions directly to staff and officers.
- HCHC added security staff to complete patrols, investigations, monitor security camera footage and assist with conflict resolution across the portfolio.
- In 2023 and 2024, HCHC invested \$234,000 in security enhancements at sites. These investments included new security camera installations, increased patrols of sites, audits of access controls and lighting and investigations into tenant security concerns.
- A security audit was undertaken to better understand safety concerns and identify opportunities to enhance security. Results are expected in 2025.

### Our goals for next year:

- Continue to build our partnership with HRPS to share information and collaborate around safety concerns.
- Implement the recommendations of the security audit incrementally.
- Continue to engage residents on matters of community safety and security concerns.
- Finalize and implement an HCHC security strategy that utilizes indicators, data and partnerships to inform long-term investments and actions.





## Residents Are Supported

### Our commitments:

- HCHC will work with community partners to increase the amount of age appropriate programming in both senior and family communities including programming for adults and adolescents, and multicultural programming.
- HCHC will explore expansion of integrated supports for tenants such as the Community Wellness Hub model and Supports for Daily Living.
- HCHC will build upon existing partnerships with local municipalities to expand program offerings and partnership opportunities

### Our current status:

- HCHC and health and social services partners continue to engage residents to improve opportunities for input into programs and services available in communities.
- HCHC is committed to improving the health and quality of life of residents, including supporting residents facing financial hardship and food insecurity.

### Our accomplishments so far:

- Based on feedback from the 2022 tenant engagement, HCHC has expanded programming for youth and older adults. Programming includes a hip hop dance program and youth police academy in partnership with Halton Police, social activities at older adult sites and programming with Halton Heritage Services that allows seniors to interact to discuss local history and artifacts.
- HCHC continues to expand the Community Wellness Hub model to three additional sites - 271 Kerr Street in Oakville, 5252 Pinedale Avenue in Burlington and 8 Durham Street in Georgetown. These sites follow the same approach used at the initial hub model at 410 John Street and will provide on-site health and social services to residents to facilitate independent living and improve quality of life.
- HCHC continues to offer a range of programs to tenants through partnerships with service providers. Programs include food security supports, youth programs, summer barbecues, community gardens, senior's teas, exercise programs and other social activities.
- In partnership with Wesley Urban Ministries, HCHC added case management services to enhance supports to complex tenancies involving issues of mental health.

### Our goals for next year:

- Continue to work with wellness partners to expand programming options and service coordination to facilitate independent living and improved quality of life.
- Continue to grow strategic partnerships and engage tenants to develop program offerings based on tenant feedback.
- Work with partners to improve system navigation and coordination to connect tenants faster to the supports they need.



## Programming is Reflective of Residents' Needs

### Our commitments:

- HCHC will select and support Community Champions to facilitate ongoing feedback at HCHC sites.
- HCHC will establish region wide Youth, Seniors, Newcomers and Family Advisory Groups, to provide strategic advice on population-specific programming needs in HCHC communities.
- HCHC will implement a way to more formally recognize the work of volunteers and partners on an annual basis.
- HCHC will apply an EDI lens to HCHC programs and policy making.

### Our current status:

- Creating opportunities to gather and act upon feedback from tenants remains a priority for HCHC.
- HCHC recognizes that partnerships with service providers and the work of volunteers are crucial to the success of the Community Development Strategy.
- HCHC is committed to principles of diversity, equity and inclusion and will use this to guide the actions of the housing corporation.

### Our accomplishments so far:

- HCHC has initiated Youth and Newcomer Advisory groups with initial meetings held in September 2024. The initial work of these group is to advise HCHC on the experience of these groups in our communities and advise on population-specific programming.
- HCHC is organizing a recognition event for volunteers and community partners to be held in October 2024. This event provides an opportunity to recognize partners and volunteers and to gather input on programming and new community initiatives.
- In partnership with Halton Black Voices and Conservation Halton, HCHC expanded its Healing Gardens to two additional sites. This initiative creates gardens that heal the community and environment and provide a welcoming gathering space for community members and activities.
- In response to resident feedback, HCHC has partnered with the Centre for Education and Training to introduce English as a Second Language classes at two HCHC sites.

### Our goals for next year:

- HCHC will support the work of the Youth and Newcomer Advisory Groups and take steps to develop Seniors and Family Advisory Groups.
- Identify Community Champions at each HCHC site and formalize a process to facilitate and respond to feedback.
- HCHC will continue to apply an EDI lens to community development activities and business practices.





## Improving Communication with Residents

### Our commitments:

- HCHC will operationalize digital signage across multi-residential sites to provide community notices and communicate with tenants in a timelier manner. HCHC will increase opportunities for residents using technology.
- HCHC will look for opportunities to issue important communications to tenants in different languages.

### Our current status:

- One of the key goals of the HCHC Community Development Strategy is improving communication with residents.
- HCHC has operationalized digital signage in all multi-unit buildings.
- HCHC is embarking on a logo redesign ahead of the 25th anniversary of the housing corporation in 2026.

### Our accomplishments so far:

- Digital signage has been introduced at all multi-unit residential properties, with media screens displaying building specific information to tenants in real time.
- HCHC has initiated a pilot project to offer digital signage messaging into languages other than English or French at sites with high numbers of tenants whose first language is not English.
- Where feasible, HCHC is transitioning paper notices to email updates for tenants. This is aligned with the Halton Region Digital Strategy, improves communication with tenants and reduces staff time related to notice delivery.
- HCHC has established satellite offices at locations in all four local municipalities. These allow staff to be more productive at the sites and more accessible to residents.

### Our goals for next year:

- Continue to expand the use of digital channels to enhance communication with residents.
- Continue to review communications templates and existing policies and where required, simplify so they are easier to understand.
- Leverage to work of tenant advisory groups for input into additional improvements related to communication.





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