



**Date:** June 21, 2018

**Report to:** Board of Directors  
CityHousing Hamilton Corporation

**Submitted by:** Tom Hunter  
Chief Executive  
Officer/Secretary

**Prepared by:** Kate Mannen

**Subject:** **Smoke-Free Living Policy & Odour Mitigation (Report #18011)**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- (i) That Appendix "A" respecting a Smoke-Free Living Policy in New and Retrofitted CityHousing Hamilton (CHH) Buildings attached to Report #18011 be approved.
- (ii) To explore the development of a smoke-free policy for all CHH properties through a resident survey Appendix "B"
- (iii) That Appendix "C" recommended option respecting odour control plan for the inventory of CHH management apartment buildings in preparation of cannabis legalization be approved.
- (iv) To ensure signage as prescribed in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (July 1, 2018) is posted at entrances, exits, common areas.
- (v) To ensure residents are aware of new smoking and vaping prohibitions under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

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Tom Hunter  
Chief Executive Officer/Secretary

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Building on the formative, 2009 engagement work by Public Health Services, CHH proposes that any new acquisitions, building or retrofitting should be smoke-free. This supports the reality that there is no safe level of second-hand smoke; this issue is exacerbated in multi-unit dwellings.

If approved, current residents will be surveyed using a tool reviewed by Public Health Services. Survey methodology including resident engagement, distribution and analysis will be determined in partnership with Healthy and Safe Communities/Public Health. City Councillors will be key stakeholders in resident engagement to determine whether CHH should implement a smoke-free living policy in all residential units.

As recreational cannabis use shifts from illegal activity to a matter of nuisance/substantial interference, odour mitigation within residential units is expected to become a prominent issue. The Odour Control Plan is found in Appendix C.

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 prohibits use of electronic cigarettes and vaping of medical cannabis in areas where tobacco smoking is already banned, including indoor common areas in multi-unit housing. CHH will post signs and educate residents as required under the new legislation.

## **BACKGROUND:**

In 2009, Hamilton Public Health Services investigated the development of a no-smoking policy for CHH with the intent of providing prospective CHH residents with a choice and a focus on health. They conducted focus groups in CHH buildings and all focus group participants indicated support for all new CHH acquisitions being smoke-free.

At the December 2017 Board meeting, Councillor Collins introduced the following motion:

*That City Housing Hamilton staff prepare an odour control plan for the inventory of CHH managed apartment buildings in preparation of the legalization of cannabis and,  
That City Housing staff be directed to present a No Smoking policy to the Board pertaining to new builds and complete retrofits (ie.500 McNabSt. N.) and,  
That the plans and policies be presented to the CHH board no later than the second quarter of 2018.*

CHH apartment buildings fall under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA) and prohibit tobacco smoking in indoor common areas.

#### **RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**

The following City staff were consulted in the development of this report:  
Heidi McGuire, Tobacco Control; Healthy and Safe Communities  
Other municipalities including Ottawa, Toronto, York, Peel, London and Windsor.  
A complete list is included in Appendix “D” Non-Medical Smoking at CHH.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

##### Smoke-Free Housing

Many residents living in non-subsidized housing are able to access smoke-free housing, whereas those living in subsidized housing are not currently able to access a smoke-free place to live in Hamilton. This creates an equity issue whereby those that are most vulnerable are being exposed to second hand smoke (SHS). Seniors and children are two groups that are most impacted by SHS.

There is no safe level of exposure to second hand smoke. The only way to eliminate the health hazards of second hand smoke from tobacco or marijuana is with a smoke-free environment. Health effects are one benefit of providing smoke-free housing, but there are others including reduced cleaning, maintenance and turnover costs; reduced fire risk; and providing cleaner better quality housing.

Costs are substantially higher to rehabilitate a unit that has been smoked in. North American landlords report that turning over a smoking unit can cost two to seven times more than turning over a smoke-free unit. However, in Ontario, social housing landlords do not track turnover costs related to smoking so no data is available. The time required to turn over a smoking unit may be greater than that required for a smoke-free unit, further increasing the wait for housing. During the past three years, CHH has experienced 16 fires; half of which are attributable to careless smoking. Fires impact more than the unit where the fire started; CHH experiences a dramatic increase in transfer requests after a fire. For a more fulsome outline of benefits of smoke-free housing see Appendix “D” Non-Medical Smoking at CityHousing Hamilton (including cannabis)

Offering CHH residents smoke-free options would bring Hamilton in line with many other municipalities in Ontario who already have smoke-free policies in subsidized housing (see Appendix “E” for Municipal Housing Policies). It would

also decrease the inequity between subsidized and non-subsidized housing, and was supported by CHH residents nine years ago for all newly acquired buildings.

### Smoke-Free Policy Survey

CHH has prepared a survey to learn about CHH resident experience with smoking and second-hand smoke in homes and assess the level of support for having the choice to live in a smoke-free environment. City Councillors and the CHH Board can be key stakeholders in the implementation of the survey. CHH will work with PHS to determine specific survey methodology in terms of application and analysis. The survey will be conducted in Q4 2018, post municipal election. (See Appendix “B” for Smoke-Free Policy Survey and Appendix “F” for Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017).

### Odour Mitigation

To date, there is no evidence to suggest that cannabis odours are specifically detrimental to human health. However, exposure to unpleasant odours may affect an individual’s quality of life and sense of well-being.

Health Canada regulates cannabis production facilities and requires HEPA-13 air filtration systems, but no regulations exist pertaining to residential and individual use. Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) suggests installing ventilation fans and air purifiers. The cost of a HEPA-13 air purifier for a bachelor apartment not exceeding 500 ft<sup>2</sup> is \$500 - \$800. Less expensive charcoal air purifiers have limited, positive effects and cost between \$75-\$200 per unit. Sealing units by eliminating spaces under doors can also reduce odours outside of units, but must be comply with the Ontario Fire Code.

U.S. jurisdictions where cannabis is legal such as Colorado and California have prohibited smoking in their buildings and therefore, smoke mitigation is not consistent with their no-smoking policy. However, Colorado has created a Breathe Easy Home program, which is meant to address asthma in addition to smoke-free policies. They use an energy recovery ventilator, which captures 99% of air particulates for their new builds. The system costs approximately \$3,000 per unit.

The Odour Control and Education plan is found as Appendix “E” and outlines three options:

1. Status Quo – respond to resident nuisance complaints
2. Air Filtration System for residents who smoke – approximately \$2 million for the first year
3. Enhanced Status Quo (recommended) – respond to nuisance complaints and improve education and support around both odour mitigation and smoking cessation

## SFOA Updates

The SFOA has been updated and will prohibit smoking and holding of lit medical cannabis and the use of e-cigarettes as of July 1, 2018 in common areas of multi-unit housing, including parking garages, elevators, lobbies, party and entertainment rooms, laundry facilities, stairwells. This is in addition to the current prohibitions on smoking tobacco in the same areas. In addition, owners of multi-unit housing are required to post no-smoking and no-vaping signage and inform residents of the prohibitions. The provincial Cannabis Act, which is awaiting a proclamation date, prohibits smoking of non-medical cannabis in public places, but permits use within private residences. Failure to prohibit cannabis smoking in multi-unit dwellings would perpetuate potential health and safety risks linked to smoking cannabis and second-hand smoke.

## **CONCLUSION:**

CHH will begin the journey to smoke-free living through a multi-pronged approach including:

- a) Prohibiting smoking of any substance including tobacco, shisha and cannabis in new CHH acquisitions, builds and retrofits
- b) Implementing a resident smoking survey in CHH multi-unit dwellings
- c) Educating residents through signage, communication and education sessions on the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 and providing smoking cessation supports through a partnership with Public Health Services

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This report implements:

### **Community Engagement & Participation**

CityHousing Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach in working with its residents to make a positive impact on the community.

### **Healthy and Strong Communities**

CityHousing Hamilton believes that housing is a key influential determinant of health and is strongly tied to the quality of life as it impacts the physical, social, emotional and mental health of all persons.

### **Built Environment and Social Infrastructure**

CityHousing Hamilton is committed to finding new ways to be innovative that will contribute a dynamic City characterized by unique infrastructure, buildings, and public spaces. The maintenance, renewal and new development of our housing stock will ensure that the quality of life, well-being and enjoyment of our residents', influences the design and planning of our homes.

### **Culture and Diversity**

CityHousing Hamilton supports, accepts and celebrates people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. We work together to ensure residents have access to the supports and opportunities they need to succeed.

### **Our People Our Performance**

CityHousing Hamilton aims at delivering consistent and excellent service for all its residents, while searching for ways to increase efficiencies and effectiveness in how we operate. To provide the highest quality of service to our residents within current resources, we work to empower staff to deliver on our service commitments by strengthening staff competencies, standardizing operating processes, streamlining services and technology and holding staff accountable to better respond to the needs of residents.

TH/km

Mission: We provide affordable housing that is safe, well maintained and cost effective and that supports the diverse needs of our many communities.