

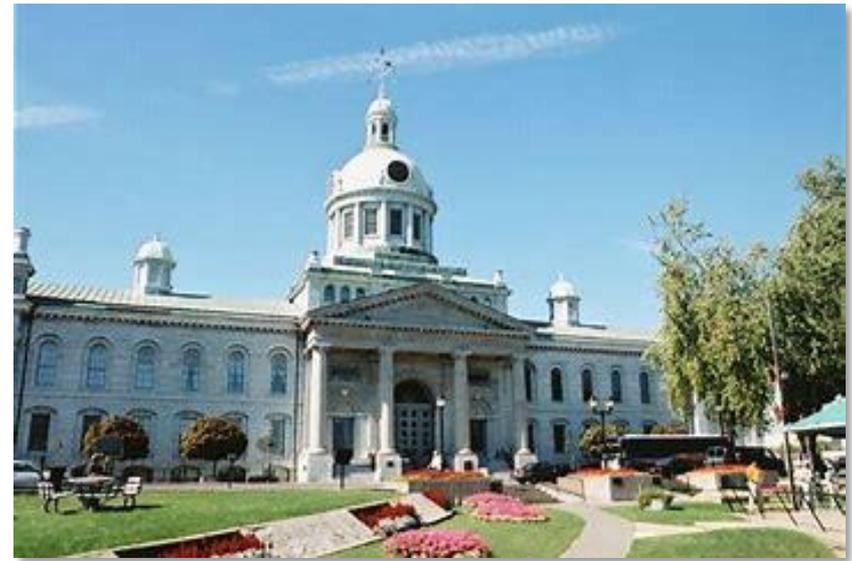
Transforming Our Thinking on the Portable Housing Benefit

City of Kingston

Speaker: Sheldon Laidman

Director, Housing and Social Services Department, City of Kingston

September 12, 2018



About Sustainable Housing Asset Resource Exchange

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING ASSET RESOURCE EXCHANGE

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Spurring Affordable Housing Development: New Ideas, Approaches and Tools

11 Sep 2018

Date: October 30, 2018 Time: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. EST. (breakfast from 8am to 9am)
Location: XQ, Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel & Suites, 17 North Cumberland Street, Thunder Bay, ON P7A...

WHAT'S NEW

Spurring Affordable Housing Development: New Ideas, Approaches and Tools

11 SEP 2018

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Rethinking Housing for Better Outcomes in Northern Ontario

10 MAR 2018

Date: June 12, 2018 EVENT DESCRIPTION: The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA), the Cochrane...

Transforming Our Thinking on the Portable Housing Benefit

05 MAR 2018

Date: September 12, 2018 Time: 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. EST
Speakers: Sheldon Laidman, Director...

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Innovation Forum (in-person event)



© 11 SEP 2018

Spurring Affordable Housing Development: New Ideas, Approaches and Tools

Date: October 30, 2018

Location: Thunder Bay, Northern Ontario

HSC Regeneration Forum (2019)



Date: March 25th & 26th, 2019

Location: Downtown Toronto

About this Webinar

PHB is one of many tools introduced to housing administrators as an alternative to existing social housing programs to support meeting local housing needs.

Webinar will cover:

- How they got started- the rationale(PHB)
- Approach and considerations
- Framework for the pilot program
- Preliminary observations
- Lessons learned

Speaker

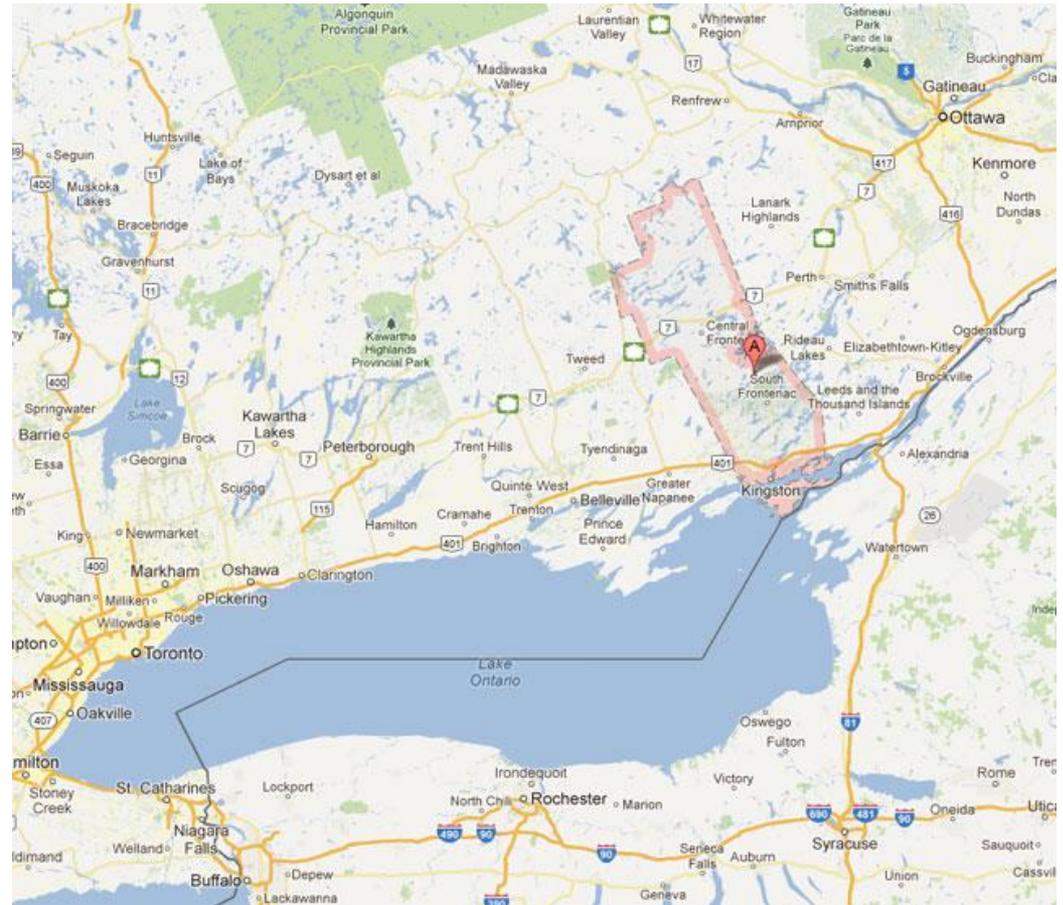


Sheldon Laidman, Director
Housing and Social Services
Department, City of Kingston



Background

- Service Manager for both **City of Kingston & County of Frontenac**
- Approximately 160,000 total population (125K in Kingston)
- **Service level standard of 2003 RGI housing units**
- Wait list that is between 1150 and 1250



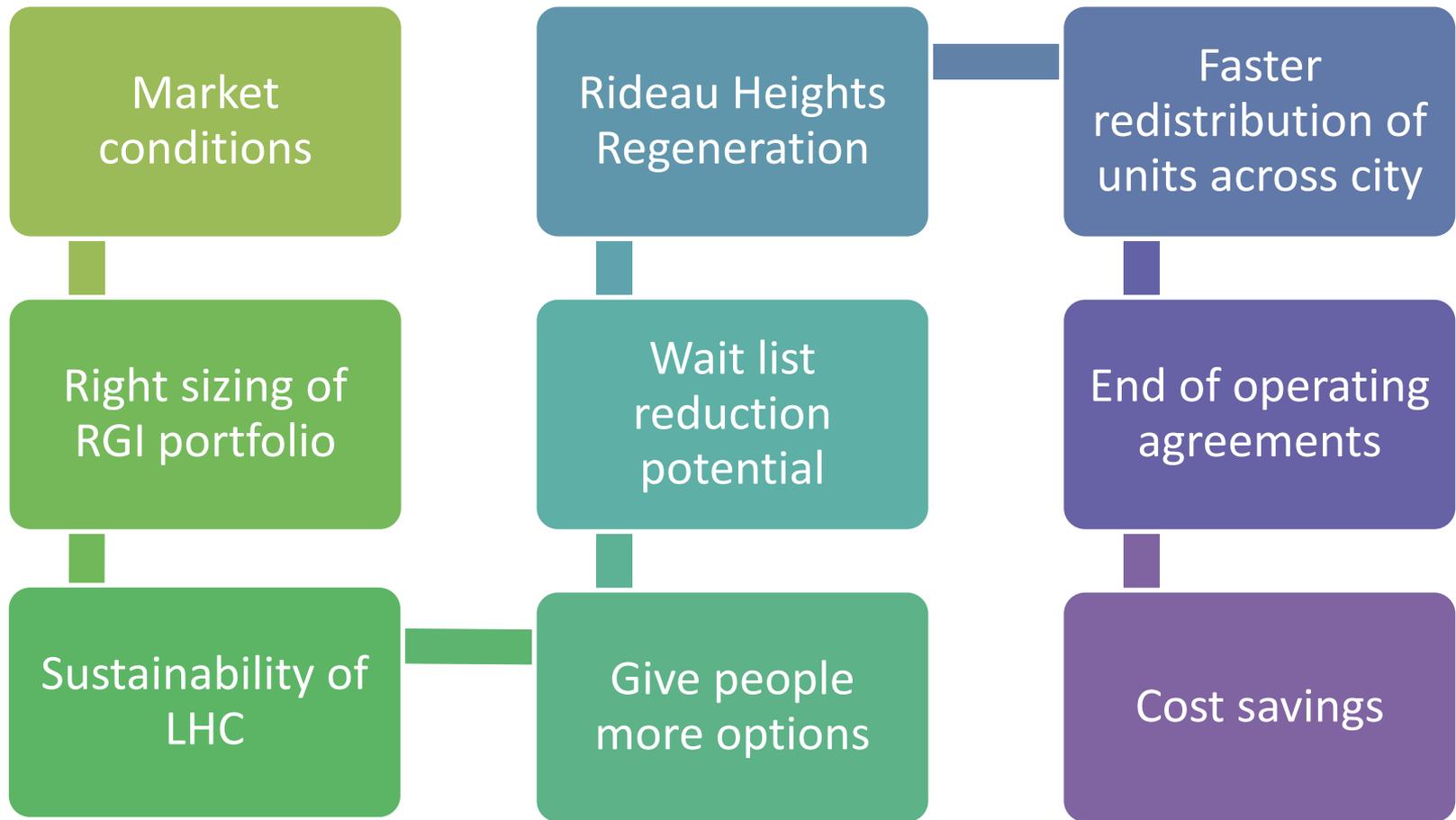
Background

- Lowest vacancy rate in the Province
- Third highest market rents of any city in Ontario
- Have approximately 25,000 students from outside Kingston needing housing (Queen's, RMC, and St Lawrence College)
- Regional hub for hospitals and mental health services
- 5 federal or provincial prisons and ancillary uses eg halfway houses, transitional housing
- Only fully serviced homelessness system between GTA and Montreal or Ottawa

Portable Housing Benefit Program- Pilot

- Reasons for pursuing a PHB
- Framework for our PHB program
- Details of the program
- Major Decision Points and Considerations
- Other Issues (culture change, province, risk areas)
- Outcomes

Reasons for Pursuing a PHB- Factors



Reasons for Pursuing a PHB

➤ Market Conditions

- Rent supplement contracts expiring and cannot be replaced
- May be easier to continue to meet service standard

➤ Cost savings

- Average rent supplement costs \$7,200/yr
- Original calculations PHB will cost \$3800 to \$5500 per year depending on income source **as designed**

➤ End of Operating Agreements

- Greater flexibility when negotiating EOA by knowing there is another viable option for unit replacement

Reasons for Pursuing a PHB

➤ Sustainability of LHC

- More revenue, better mixture of RGI v market units

➤ Faster right sizing of RGI portfolio

- 70% of wait list is 1 bedrooms
- Almost all housed under PHB will be 1 bedroom

➤ Faster redistribution of units across City

Reasons for Pursuing a PHB

➤ Rideau Heights Regeneration

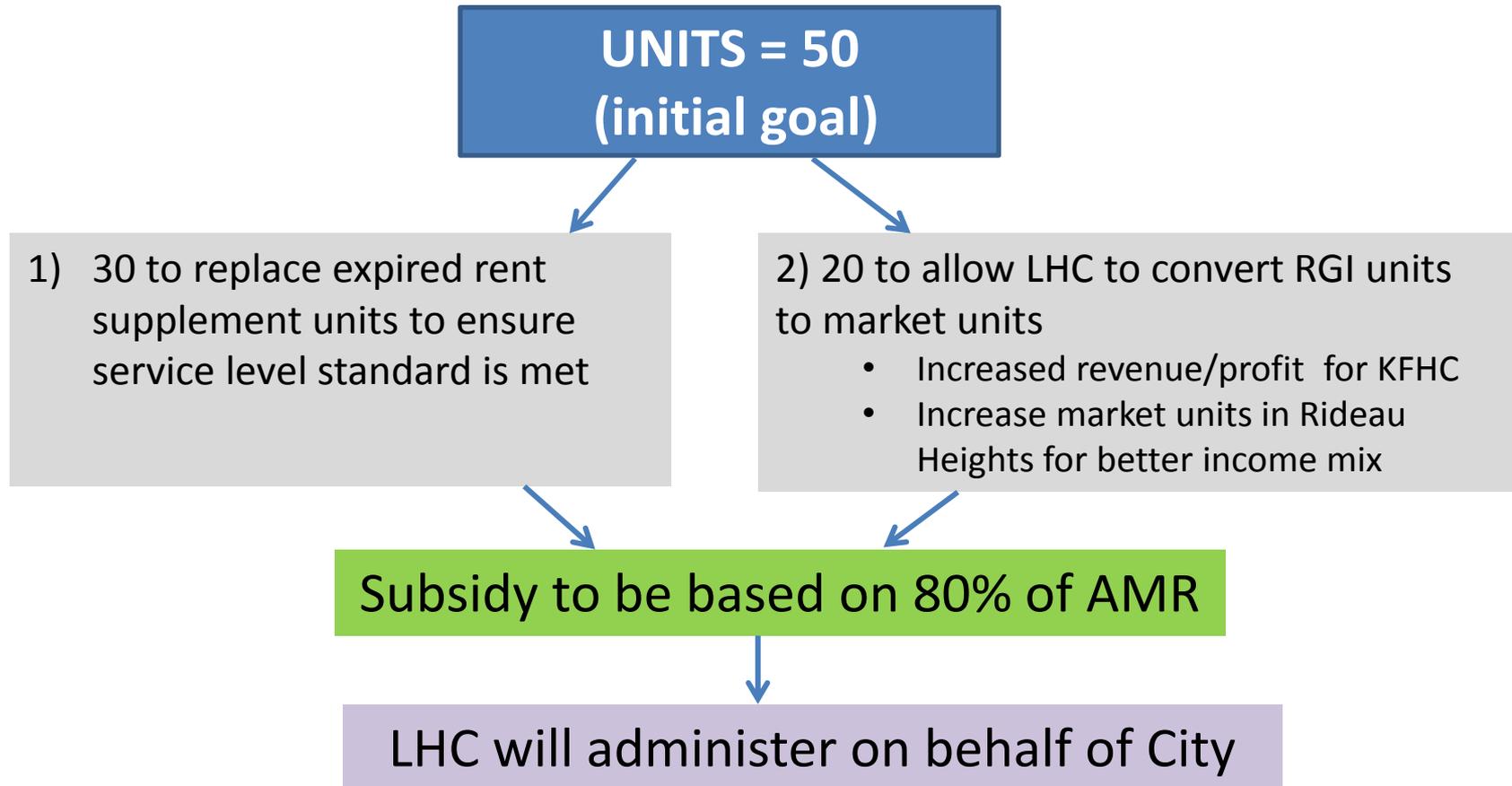
- Goal to move 100 units out of neighbourhood

➤ Give people more options

➤ Wait list reduction potential

- People are already housed somewhere just paying rent beyond their means

Framework of PHB Pilot



Time length- 1 year minimum to determine outcomes

Process Details

- Will use the Ministry calculator tool
- Will use the occupancy standard to calculate subsidy
- Calculator tool will be used as an 'estimator' for individuals on social assistance and recalculated when actual market rent is confirmed using actual market rent minus maximum shelter allowance
- Creating a dummy PHB property in Yardi to keep proper statistics on usage
- Person will be put on "pending" during the 60 day time period to find a unit
- Will come off the wait list once they accept the subsidy

Policy Considerations

- What % of AMR should be used?
 - 80%, 90%, 100%?
 - Cost savings vs whether the subsidy will work for our market and will it be enough of an incentive for persons to accept the subsidy?
- Should we set different rates to study the affect and outcomes of each % of AMR rate?
 - Not enough PHB to be statistically relevant
 - Is it even ethical to give different subsidies to different households?

Policy Considerations

➤ How much checking should be done?

- Should we care what type, size, or condition of the unit the person chooses? What if they rent out bedrooms?
- Should we care whether they continue to live in this unit?
- Conclusion was “no”. The households need the subsidy and we shouldn’t care how they are using it for them to access the subsidy

➤ Must the household come off the wait list to accept the PHB?

- We expect this will affect who decides to take the PHB

➤ Will we pay first and last month’s rent?

- Currently do guarantee last months rent for rent supp landlords
- Without it essentially guaranteeing it will be “in situ” only
- Have not made a final decision on this aspect of the program yet

Policy Considerations

- Will we adjust subsidy based on actual unit being lived in?
 - Decided that subsidy calculated on occupancy standard but what size of unit is rented will make no difference to subsidy
- Should we have a relationship with the landlord?
 - Do not want to have any formal agreement
 - Will agree to do direct payments to landlord

Issues & Questions

➤ Culture Change for staff

- All the “what if” questions arose
- A new way to interact with clients as essentially once they are eligible there are no rules

➤ Provincial PHB confusion



Issues & Questions

➤ Risk Areas

- Will those on wait list understand the PHB option
- Will anyone choose to accept what is essentially a smaller subsidy immediately vs wait for a full social housing unit later
- Will it just perpetuate people living in substandard units
- Will everyone simply end up living in the same low income areas of Kingston?
- Will people become homeless at a higher rate as subsidy is not high enough to cover full cost of rent?
- Communications – not providing a full subsidy to clients

Outcomes

- Will track where households choose to live
- Will track if staying in existing rental unit
- Prevalence of homelessness
- Prevalence of accessing City's
Discretionary Residency Benefits program
- Costs of program
- Costs/benefits to LHC



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