



Employment Opportunities for Tenants at TCHC

Item 4D

January 25, 2021

Tenant Services Committee

Report: TSC:2021-08

To: Tenant Services Committee (“TSC”)

From: Chief Operating Officer

Date: January 4, 2021

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the TSC with a summary of employment opportunities and job portals available to Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) tenants.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the TSC receive this report for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

At its November 20, 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors (the “Board”) requested that Management report back to the TSC with a summary of employment opportunities and job portals available to TCHC tenants.

BACKGROUND

In 2006, TCHC’s Board of Directors approved the Community Economic Development (“CED”) strategy. The goal of the strategy was to promote economic resiliency in TCHC as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty and contributing to the creation of healthy communities.

TCHC has since taken steps to implement programs and initiatives in support of the strategy. While some were informal and community based, such as

local teams hiring tenants to complete common area painting, others were large-scale and formalized with contractual agreements (e.g. agreements with subsidiaries to support tenant hires).

Given that 35% of tenants are youth under the age of 25, emphasis has been placed on the creation of youth economic development opportunities. In 2007, TCHC engaged consultants to assist with the development of a sustainable livelihoods initiative for youth and to explore possibilities for advancing youth employment opportunities. As a result, youth engagement initiatives (e.g. a sustainable livelihoods model, creation of a youth internship, scholarship programs) and summer employment programs have been implemented. In 2009, an increased emphasis was placed on four key areas: youth engagement, improvement of financial literacy, tenant entrepreneurship and integration of CED in revitalization.

UPDATE

Currently, the Economic Development and Resident Employment strategy focuses on tenant employment and business skills development, as well as creating employment opportunities for tenants both internally and externally. It is supported by three Community Services Coordinators (“CSC”) aligned to the Community Safety and Support pillar across the regions, with additional support from the Programs and Partnerships team.

Through CED, we support tenant employment through the following:

- 1. Internal Opportunities:** We offer tenants pre-employment and career exploration opportunities through our internship and YouthWorx programs. Specifically, the internship allows TCHC tenants to obtain paid 12 week placements with various divisions across the organization. In doing so, tenants participate in skills development workshops provided by our partners, such as the City’s Toronto Employment and Social Services (“TESS”). As a result, tenants are able to:
 - Strengthen personal and professional development;
 - Gain cross functional and public sector work experience;
 - Develop effective work relationships and networks; and
 - Adopt a solutions-focused approach to business challenges.

Since 2018, we have hired over 100 tenants to participate in our internship program, with a 30% post-internship hire rate. Currently, we continue to employ staff members from the internship program.

In addition, our Youthworx summer hiring program provides pre-employment support and hands-on experience for some of TCHC's most hard to serve youth tenants. YouthWorx was designed to reduce barriers to employment by helping youth tenants attain their first job. While in the program, they receive support with resume writing and interview skills. Since 2013, our YouthWorx program has employed over 700 youths from across all three regions.

Lastly, the CED team has an email list serve of over 1,000 individuals with whom we share job opportunities on a regular basis.

- 2. External Opportunities:** We encourage tenants to attend job fairs through various outreach methods, and in some instances, we have been able to get them access to certain jobs by working with entities such as TTC, Starbucks and UPS. Currently, we are working with TTC to promote the "Women in Transit" initiative and will be having a TCHC focused session to provide one-on-one support for tenants who want to apply to these opportunities. Through this partnership, TCHC tenants interested in this opportunity will be provided an alternative application and review process.
- 3. Social Enterprise Development:** We support tenants to develop and scale social enterprises. The support is provided directly to tenants or in partnership with community agencies. Currently, the social enterprise development program includes the following:
 - A. B3 Program:** This program focuses on supporting tenants to develop, scale or start social enterprises and has successfully supported 63 youths with their small businesses; and
 - B. Reel6:** This program is in development in partnership with Stratagem, who has made a commitment to providing space for this initiative for the next five years to support with incubation. The focus of this initiative is to help diversify all aspects of the film and television industry.

- 4. Facilities Management:** The Community Engagement and Capital Planning (“CECP”) team employs tenants throughout the year to support outreach and engagement of tenants in the implementation of capital repair and large scale capital projects. A new regional alignment staffing model will be implemented to further engage tenants at the local level.
- 5. Human Resources:** Human Resources actively participates in promoting TCHC jobs in TCHC communities and across Toronto. In the past, they have partnered with agencies such as TESS and Ontario Works (“OW”), to connect with their TCHC tenant clients that are seeking job opportunities.
- 6. Tenant Benefit Agreements:** TCHC has prioritized community economic development opportunities in all of the revitalization projects, with developers providing funding and/or employment opportunities. Scholarship opportunities are administered in accordance with the Scholarship Policy and Scholarship Procedure (2015).

NEXT STEPS:

Currently, external applicants can apply for TCHC job opportunities through the external website. Applicants are required to create a profile and through a separate section, applicants have the ability to share their knowledge of TCHC by indicating that they are a current or former tenant. Moving forward, this can be leveraged by Human Resources to ensure that tenants are being considered for opportunities they are qualified for.

In 2021, Human Resources will be partnering with Local 416 to promote job opportunities to tenants through a job fair. This will involve attending TCHC communities and providing laptops to help tenants apply for opportunities, create profiles, and/or gather resumes and/or schedule interviews for vacancies, while adhering to COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

Lastly, an inter-divisional TCHC team recently reviewed the possibility of re-implementing a Social Procurement Policy at TCHC, under the umbrella of a new Community Benefits Framework. The framework will allow for TCHC tenants, small businesses and social enterprises to benefit from the financial

and capital investments into our communities. In 2021, the inter-divisional team will provide oversight to ensure the full implementation of the framework.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

While TCHC implemented numerous programs and activities to advance economic development for tenants, a more targeted approach to increase tenant hiring will require more effective data management and oversight.

As well, with the implementation of the Community Benefits Framework, TCHC is bound by the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (“CFTA”) and Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (“CEUCATA”). These agreements contain restrictions on local preference unless the preference is related to the scope of work. Further review will be required whether the policy would constitute local preference in violation of the above-noted Agreements and whether there are any necessary restrictions that must be addressed to ensure compliance with the Agreements.

SIGNATURE:

“Sheila Penny”

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