



	REPORT No.: 2020-57
MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 18, 2020	DATE PREPARED: OCTOBER 30, 2020
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF TBDSSAB'S SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS	

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

REPORT SUMMARY

To present information to The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) on the progress made towards meeting the Service Level Standards (SLS) established by the province, and direction for the future.

BACKGROUND

At the May 17, 2018 meeting, the Board received information (Report No.: 2018-32) regarding the establishment of the Service Level Standards for TBDSSAB and a strategy to reduce the gap between the current level of housing provision and the province's requirements.

The established SLS for TBDSSAB is 3,601 units, with a mix of target areas including income levels at or below the set Household Income Limit, the number of High Needs Households served and the number of Modified Units. At the time of the report, TBDSSAB had 3,341 units that met the target areas for SLS, a shortfall of 260 units.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) requested a plan on how TBDSSAB would meet its SLS obligations. A plan was submitted to the MMAH in October of 2019 and a response was received from the Director of the Housing Policy Branch (attached) accepting the plan as presented.

The report outlined proposed actions that Administration would take to meet the target SLS, including an increase in the Private Landlord Rent Supplement/Portable Housing Benefit budget of an estimated \$217,000 per year for the next 5 years (2019 through 2023) to support the addition of approximately 35 new units in each year. The proposal also recommended the construction of approximately 20 new RGI units, as a part of a larger project that would include market, affordable and RGI units. This proposal was approved by the Board (Resolution No.: 18/56) which also included a requirement for Administration to provide a Report to the Board annually to outline the progress made

towards meeting the Service Level Standards. As the MMAH approval of the SLS attainment plan was received in October 2020, this report is the first follow-up to the Board.

COMMENTS

Over the past 3 years, Administration has been working towards reaching the targets established in the 2018 report. Through the use of rent supplements and portable benefits, TBDSSAB has grown 28 units in 2018, 41 units in 2019 and 21 units in 2020 as of September. There were some losses in units, through the sale of TBDSSAB properties and the elimination of some rent supplement units, totaling 38 units, leaving a net growth of 52 units. Should TBDSSAB continue to track according to the plan, the gap in SLS should be reduced to approximately 80 units by 2023.

TBDSSAB continues to pursue expansion of the rent supplement program where the units are most in need (1 & 2 bedroom units) and eliminate current rent supplement units where the need is low (3+ bedroom units). This strategy aligns with the overall goal of meeting housing need throughout the District and using funding resources to the best advantage. The expansion of portable housing benefits is beneficial as in many cases Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits can be maximized, reducing the overall financial impact to TBDSSAB on a per unit basis. This then allows for more housing supports being offered for the same funding.

Occasionally there are external initiatives that arise that could have an impact on overall growth of units for TBDSSAB and related impact on the SLS. Where these initiatives arise, Administration reviews the opportunity and determines if the opportunity would have a positive impact on the organization. One such opportunity is the Salvation Army's new Journey to Life program, where housing and supports are offered to individuals leaving emergency shelter living. Though TBDSSAB did provide some capital funding to the Salvation Army for the creation of their new building, under the Investment in Affordable Housing initiative, there were no initial rent supports in place. Through the use of the growth strategy in rent supplements and portable housing benefits, Administration realized that providing applicants for the Journey to Life program with a portable housing benefit, they would be able to meet the financial requirements for housing in the program and TBDSSAB would add units to its SLS.

A current external initiative that was recently announced is the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Rapid Housing Initiative. Under this program, up to \$500 million is being made available across Canada to support construction for permanent affordable, supportive or transitional housing. This fund provides capital funding only, with no provision for operating funding, and all projects must commence by March 31, 2021 and be completed within 12 months. The proposed projects must meet energy efficiency and accessibility targets. TBDSSAB's strategy to provide increased rent supplements and portable housing benefits would fit well with this program, should we be able to engage a partner to undertake the development of the project. It is not recommended that TBDSSAB pursue the project as the primary developer.

Under the Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2, TBDSSAB proposed the inclusion of several capital projects in its business case, including the addition of a project developed by Matawa First Nations Management that would provide new youth shelter spaces in the City of Thunder Bay. Though these spaces would not count towards the SLS target, they do fill a noted need in the community and were seen as a positive project to support. Phase 2 of the funding also includes the potential for further development of housing projects, that provide long-term housing solutions. There is funding being held back by the MMAH to meet pressing need based on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. TBDSSAB included additional capital projects to be considered under this hold-back funding consideration. The release of this hold-back funding is expected early in 2021.

Administration will continue to work towards the strategy identified in Report No.: 2018-32 and will provide an annual Report to the Board as required by Resolution No. 18/56.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS



There are no specific financial implications related to this report.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that this report provides information to the Board on the progress made towards meeting the Service Level Standards and outlines the strategy for continuing to close the gap over the coming years.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ATTACHED

Attachment #1 [Letter from MMAH regarding SLS Action Plan](#)

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APPROVED / SIGNATURE:	 Ken Ranta, Director, Integrated Social Services Division The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
SUBMITTED / SIGNATURE:	 William (Bill) Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

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October 1, 2020

Ken Ranta, Director, Integrated Social Services, Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board
ken.ranta@tbdssab.ca

Re: 2019 Service Level Standards Action Plan

Dear Ken Ranta,

In June of 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing sent a letter notifying you that the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board was not fully meeting its legislated service level standard based on your 2018 Service Manager Annual Information Return (SMAIR). The same letter contained a request for you to submit an action plan containing strategies about how you plan to incrementally work towards meeting the service level standard in your area.

The ministry would like to confirm that your plan has been reviewed and was found to be satisfactory. Thank you for the time and effort put into your action plan. The ministry is reviewing 2019 SMAIR data for progress made on achieving your service level standard and will contact you if further action is necessary.

Service Manager Service Level Standard Action Plans are an important part of implementing the Auditor General of Ontario's recommendation regarding service level standards found in the 2017 Value for Money Audit on Social and Affordable Housing.

As part of your action plan, you mentioned your intention to implement portable housing benefits in your service area. Promoting the use of the portable housing benefit framework under the *Housing Services Act, 2011* across Ontario is of great interest to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. A representative from your regional Municipal Service Office may contact you in the future to discuss any barriers or successes you have experienced in implementing the use of the portable housing benefit framework.

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In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact Neshalia Mohindra by email at neshalia.mohindra@ontario.ca, with any concerns or follow-up questions on the Service Level Standard Action Plan.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to meeting housing needs in your community. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you.

Yours truly,



Peter Kiatipis
Director

c: William Bradica, Chief Administrative Officer, Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board
Joshua Paul, Assistant Deputy Minister
Neshalia Mohindra, Manager