



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Funding

POSITION PAPER

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Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA) Conference

Prepared by:

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board

Prepared for:

Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Brief

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) requests that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) change the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) funding allocation formula to continue to offset the ongoing annual funding decline received by Service Managers from the Canada - Ontario Social Housing Agreement.

Summary

The COCHI funding allocation should remain consistent with the expiry of mortgages to ensure that Service Managers have the appropriate resources to maintain Community Housing stock.

Background

TBDSSAB acknowledges and appreciates the recent one-time investment under COCHI to fund a new 14 unit build in the City of Thunder Bay. However, the sudden and unexpected decline in annual COCHI funding has raised concerns.

On April 30, 2018, Ontario and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation signed a Bilateral Agreement regarding the National Housing Strategy. This Agreement provides an opportunity to align federal funds with Ontario's Community Housing Renewal Strategy priorities.

There are two National Housing Strategy funding streams that are transferred to Ontario Service Managers:

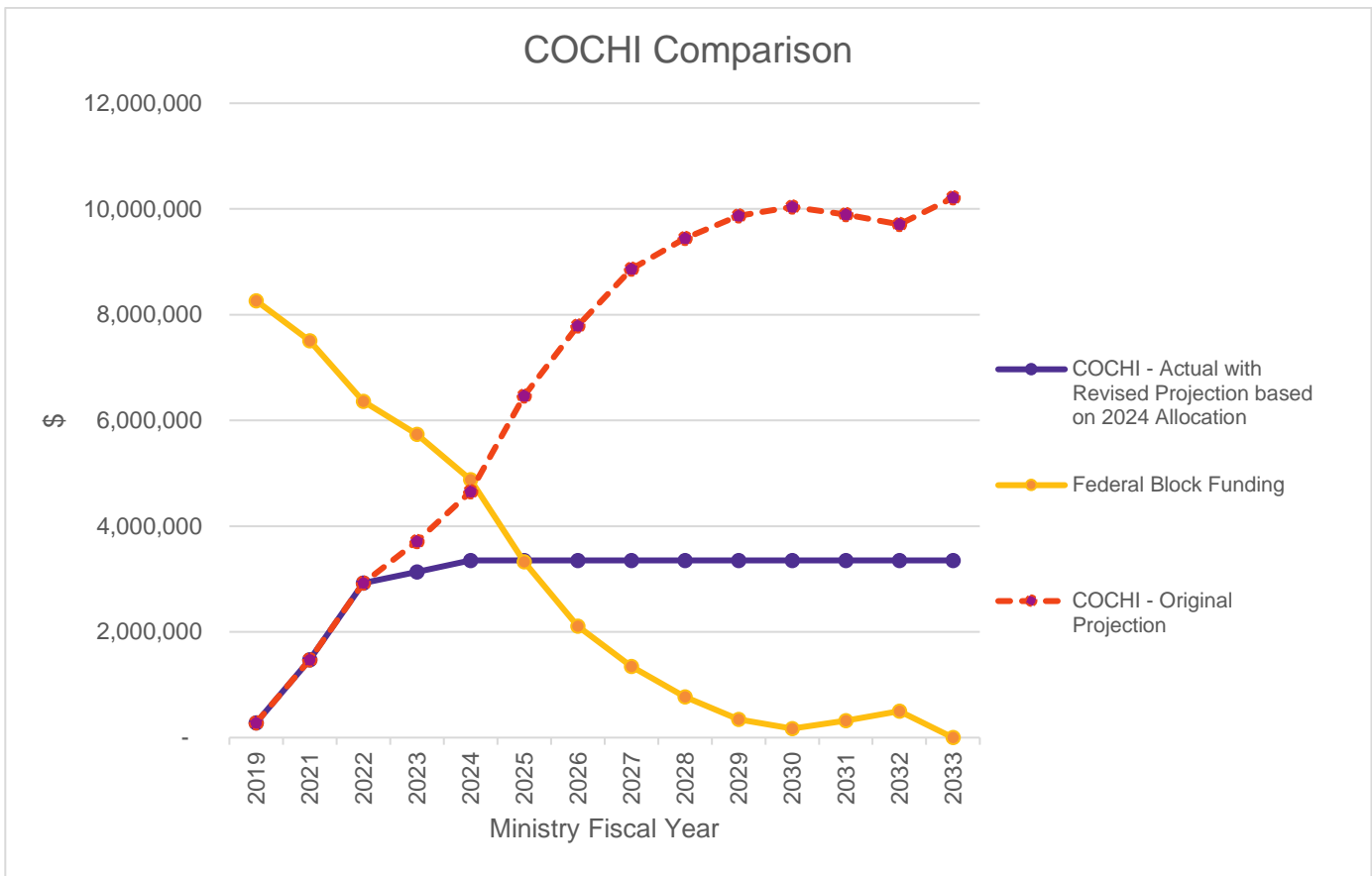
- Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) - to protect affordability for households in social housing, to support the repair and renewal of existing social housing supply, and to expand the supply of community housing over time.

- Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) - to address local housing priorities, including affordability, repair and new construction.

COCHI funding represents a re-investment of federal funding that has been declining under the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Agreement. It provides an opportunity for Service Managers and housing providers to address the challenges associated with projects reaching the end of their operating agreements and/or mortgage maturity.

The annual amount of COCHI funding for Service Managers was primarily determined by the amount required to offset the ongoing annual funding decline from the Canada - Ontario Social Housing Agreement.

However, in 2023/24 the funding formula was altered and TBDSSAB received approximately \$577,000 less than the amount required to offset the funding decline from the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Agreement as demonstrated in the chart below. That shortfall for 2024/25 is \$1,301,000 and this annual gap is expected to widen every year. This funding reduction put additional strain on the TBDSSAB levy to member municipalities.



MMAH has not provided a rationale or any details regarding the new funding formula to Service Managers related to COCHI. Sudden and unexpected changes to funding creates an unstable environment for planning and budgeting purposes.

As a result of the new COCHI allocation formula, TBDSSAB will have less resources available to maintain the existing Community Housing stock in the District of Thunder Bay.

Therefore, TBDSSAB requests that the Minister changes the COCHI funding allocation formula so that Service Managers continue to receive an allocation that will offset the ongoing annual funding decline from the Canada - Ontario Social Housing Agreement.