

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Advisory committee name:	Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG)
Reporting to:	Committee of the Whole
Date of formation:	Formed February 2018
Meeting frequency:	2 to 8 meetings per year
Staff lead:	Affordable Housing & Development Facilitator
Other staff liaison:	As deemed necessary by lead staff as per Section 4.2.1
Council member:	Councillor Hope Jamieson

**2. PURPOSE**

The Affordable Housing Working Group is primarily responsible for the development and implementation of the new 10 year Affordable Housing Strategy. In implementing the strategy, the Working Group is to consider relevant City policies and activities which impact the strategy and ensure communication with the appropriate parties.

Working Group Relationship to Strategic Plan:

- Neighbourhoods build our city – safe and secure neighbourhoods, increase access to type and range of housing;
- A culture of cooperation – create effective City-community collaboration;
- Responsive and Progressive – become a welcoming and inclusive city, build social and demographic factors into policy-making, identify and deliver on projects, strategies and programs.

Applicable Legislation/City Bylaws:

- National Building Code
- City of St. John’s Development Regulations

Other City Plans, Guides or Strategies:

- Affordable Housing Business Plan, 2014-2017
- Envision (draft) Municipal Plan, 2014

Other Distinct Deliverables and Considerations:

- The WG will be consulted on any city public engagement processes where getting the perspective of the group is identified in the strategy.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION

#### 3.1 COMPOSITION

The Working Group will be comprised of 8 total members from the following stakeholder groups:

##### 3.1.1 Public Members

###### Organizations

The Working Group will be comprised of no more than 8 persons serving as organizational representatives. Each organization may also appoint an alternate representative to attend committee meetings in the event that the primary member is unable to attend. Organizations to appoint a representative include:

1. Canadian Home Builders Association, Newfoundland and Labrador
2. End Homelessness St. Johns
3. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
4. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing
5. Provincial Government Representative
6. Three representatives from the community sector involved in housing solutions
7. The Working Group may from time to time access expertise from other groups as necessary. These would be non-voting members.

**Subcommittees:** When deemed necessary, the Working Group may strike a sub working group to deal with specific issues or deliverables. Sub working groups must have at least one member from the larger Working Group. Sub working groups shall meet independently, reporting to the Working Group on specified meeting dates, or as deemed necessary by the Working Group Chair.

##### 3.1.2 Staff and Council Members (Ex-Officio Members)

###### Lead Staff

A Lead Staff will chair the working group as approved by the appropriate City executive or senior management. Other staff support/attendance may be requested by the Chair where required.

**City Clerk**

The City Clerk will provide support to the Working Group as determined by the Chair and the City Clerk.

**Council**

Given the profile of affordable housing and the City's commitment in its plan, a Council Champion will be assigned to this Working Group.

**3.2 LENGTH OF TERM**

Unless otherwise indicated, the term of appointment is two years. Recognizing the value of experience and the need for continuity, incumbents who are willing to seek reappointment may signify their intent to serve an additional two years for a total of two two-year terms. In some cases members may be encouraged to provide guidance, expertise and attend in a bridging capacity following the end of their term.

**Organizations**

The role of an organization will depend on its relationship with the Working Group and ongoing ability to represent interests of a stakeholder group relevant to the purpose of the Working Group. Where appropriate organizations will be required to alternate appointed representatives following the completion of a two two-year terms.

**Staff**

A review of Staff role will occur every four years.

**Cooling-off Period (Former City Staff and Council)**

There will be a cooling-off period of two years for Council and Staff once they are no longer associated with the City. Setting term lengths with a cooling-off period will promote gradual turnover, ensuring a constant balance between new members and former staff or council.

**Additional Considerations:**

- Public members may not serve on more than one City Working Group at a given time.
- Midterm Appointments: When an appointment is made which does not coincide with the beginning of a term (i.e. to fill vacancy) the partial term (i.e. less than two years) shall not count towards the maximum length of service or number of terms on the Working Group for the appointee.
- Unless otherwise expressed in this Terms of Reference, the limit on length of Working Group membership for any public member is two two-year terms.

Exceptions to the above terms are as follows: when an insufficient number of applications have been received; if a particular area of expertise is indispensable and there are no other suitable replacements; if the Working Group would suffer from a lack of continuity (i.e. more than half of all members are replaced at once); if directly related to the Working Group's purpose as defined in its Terms of Reference.

## 4. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING

### 4.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Working Group roles include:**

- Supporting the implementation of the Working Group's defined Purpose.
- Providing resident and organizational based expertise.
- Working within given resources.

**Shared Member Responsibilities:****Conduct**

Members shall strive to serve the public interest by upholding Federal, Provincial and Municipal laws and policies. Working Group members are to be transparent in their duties to promote public confidence. Members are to respect the rights and opinions of other Working Group members.

**Preparation**

Meeting agenda and accompanying materials will be circulated electronically one week prior to all meetings; members are expected to review all distributed materials prior to meetings. Alternate material distribution methods to be made available upon request.

**Agendas**

- Agendas to require focus with clear parameters for content and alignment with terms of reference/purpose.
- Agendas will be finalized one week before Working Group meetings.
- Items and accompanying material that are received after the agenda has been prepared and distributed (but prior to the meeting) will be moved to the following meeting's agenda at the discretion of the City Clerk.
- All public members are to submit potential agenda items and related material to the Working Group Chair for consideration.

**Attendance and Participation**

Active participation in Working Group meetings is expected of all public members. "Active participation" may refer to both meeting attendance and/or engagement. An effort should be made to attend meetings in person or remotely. Members who do not actively participate in more than 3 consecutive meetings without justified absence may be retired from the Working Group at the discretion of the City Clerk.

Working Group members who wish to request a leave of absence for an extended period of time (3+ months) may submit such a request to the City Clerk. Previously submitted applications may be used to fill temporary vacancies created by approved leaves of absence.

**Voting**

Council members and individuals from City Staff are ex-officio and therefore non-voting.

**4.2 MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4.2.1 City Staff**

**Lead Staff**

- Chair the Working Group
- To act as a liaison between the Working Group and the City; linking across departments on issues relevant to committee work.
- Ensure the Working Group is informed about City policy, procedure and available resources in reference to specific agenda items, and provide procedural and/or technical advice to assist committee where appropriate.
- Lead the Working Group in the establishment of timelines, deadlines, creation of sub working groups.
- Request additional staff support/attendance as needed.
- To develop agendas for distribution.
- Incorporate input from the Working Group into ongoing City work where appropriate (e.g. projects, staff updates, publications)

**Other Staff Liaison**

- The work of Other Staff Liaisons intersects the purpose of the Working Group and therefore they may be required to participate.

**City Clerk**

- To be responsible for governance matters, e.g., establishment, recruitment, review, and term amendments in adherence with the terms of reference, the Office of City Clerk and Lead Staff.
- The Office of the City Clerk will work with Lead Staff to ensure new members receive orientation.

**4.2.2 Organizational Members**

Organizational members are expected to advise the City on how best to deliver on the purpose of the Working Group. Members will apply personal skills, knowledge and experience in carrying out functions commensurate with the defined purpose of the Working Group. Roles to include: active participation in meetings; representing select interests in the community. Organizational members will also be conduits to/from their respective organizations. As such they will be expected to provide insight on behalf of organizational stakeholders, and update their members on the work of the Working Group.

**4.2.3 Council**

Council members have a focused role. One council representative will act as Champion for the Working Group. The Council Champion will be encouraged to attend meetings, and to act as a liaison between the Working Group and council.

In cases where an item of Working Group business (as detailed in a given meeting agenda) would benefit from having more than one council representative attend, it will be the responsibility of the Chair to inform council Champion.

**4.3 REPORTING**

The Affordable Housing Working Group shall report through the Committee of the Whole to City Council.

**Standardized Reporting Process:**

- The Staff Chair and City Clerk will complete a report for the Committee of the Whole
- The Staff, or a designate, will submit a report, along with any other Working Group updates, to its reporting department.

**Notes:**

- Council to be kept informed of Working Group activities through formal reporting and through the appointed Council Champion.
- Organizational representatives will be required to report (i.e. maintain open communication) with their respective organizations regarding the Working Group.

**5. COMMITTEE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

**5.1 RECRUITMENT, VACANCIES, AND APPLICATIONS**

Recruitment practices will be consistent for all Working Groups. When new members are required a “Notice of Vacancy” will be prepared by the City Clerk and distributed through City communication channels. Additional communications opportunities may be identified by relevant departments/ Working Group members. This document will include general information regarding Working Group purpose, the terms of reference and a link to the Application Form.

A vacancy on a Working Group occurs when a member resigns, vacates a position or when their resignation is requested by the Chair. Vacancies may occur at the date of resignation; the date the member ceases to be qualified; the date the Working Group Chair declares the position vacant due to lack of attendance or incapacitation.

All applicants must complete an Application Form which may be downloaded from the City website, or obtained by visiting/calling Access 311. Applications will be made available in large print format upon request and may be submitted electronically, via mail, by phone, or in person to the attention of the City Clerk’s Office.

**5.2 ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION**

**Eligibility**

Appointments to City of St. John’s working groups will be made providing adherence with the following eligibility requirements:

1. Preference will be given to residents of St. John’s. Exceptions may be made by the selecting body.
2. Organizational representatives must be based in or serve/do business within the City of St. John’s.
3. Organizational representatives are not required to be residents of St. John’s.

**Commitment to Equity and Inclusiveness**

The City of St. John’s is strongly committed to equity and inclusiveness. In selecting working group members the City will aim to design processes that are transparent, accessible, and free of discrimination and to seek to remove barriers for disadvantaged groups.

**Selection Criteria**

In addition to eligibility requirements, an applicant’s specific skills and experience will be important factors in committee selection. While all who meet the Eligibility Requirements outlined above are encouraged to apply, applicants with demonstrated participation in groups or initiatives with goals relevant to an advisory committee’s purpose will be preferred. Some other considerations pertaining to general selection criteria include: past professional and volunteer experience, ability to perform required tasks, and complementary skills, or competencies possessed. Those who are selected to serve on City advisory committees will be notified by email. A committee handbook and other relevant information will also be provided to successful applicants.

**6 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

The City of St. John’s recognizes that engagement between the City and its citizens is an essential component of an effective municipal government. The City views public engagement as a process – one that facilitates dialogue with the right people, using the right tools, at the right time, on subject areas of mutual interest.

In accordance with the City of St. John’s [Engage! Policy](#), the role of the Affordable Housing Working Group in the spectrum of engagement will fall within the realm of “Involvement/Collaboration.” This means that the Working Group will play an active role in the development and implementation of the strategy.

Working Groups are only one of the ways to engage with the City. Where applicable the City will consider the use of other tools to gather perspectives and input. For more information on public engagement in the City of St. John's or to find out how to get involved or learn about what's coming up, check out the engagement page on the City’s website. You can also check out the City’s [Engage! St. John’s](#) online engagement platform and connect with us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

**7 OTHER GOVERNANCE**

**7.1 REVIEW OF TERMS**

Taking into account recommendations from the Working Group Chair and Council Champion, the City Clerk and Lead Staff will review the Working Group terms of reference documents every two years. The purpose of this review will be to ensure that the operations and function of the Working Group are still aligned with its defined purpose (i.e. the Working Group remains relevant to City Plans). Through this review process amendments to Working Groups will be proposed and adjustments made to the Terms of Reference as required.

**7.2 MEETING AND SCHEDULES**

Working Groups are to meet as often as required to ensure the development and implementation of their strategy. The exact frequency of Working Group meetings will be determined by the Chair.

To meet the committee meeting quorum, 50% + 1 voting members must be present.

Unless otherwise specified (generally one week prior to a meeting) Working Group meetings shall be held at City Hall and shall be closed to the public.

**7.3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

**Conflicts of Interest**

A conflict of interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational or financial considerations may affect or appear to affect the objectivity or fairness of decisions related to the Working Group activities. A conflict of interest may be real, potential or perceived in nature. Conflict of interest may occur when a Working Group member participates in discussion or decision-making about a matter which may financially benefit that Member or a member of his/her family, or someone with whom the Working Group member has a close personal relationship, directly or indirectly, regardless of the size of the benefit.

In cases where the Working Group agenda or discussions present a conflict of interest for a member, that member is required to declare such conflict; to abstain from discussion; and remove himself/herself from the meeting room until the agenda item has been dealt with by the Working Group.

**Confidentiality:**

All Working Group members are required to refrain from the use or transmission of any confidential or privileged information while serving with the Affordable Housing Working Group.

**Staff Liaison Name:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair Name:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**City Clerk Name:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_