

Toronto Developmental Services Alliance Housing Sub-Committee

2017-18 Summary Report



The Toronto Developmental Services Alliance (TDSA)

The Toronto Developmental Services Alliance is a network of 27 not-for-profit organizations that provide a wide range of residential and community-based programs and supports for people with developmental disabilities. Collectively, we serve thousands of individuals and families living in the City of Toronto and the GTA.

TDSA formed a Housing Sub-Committee in 2016 to address the critical shortage of affordable housing (rental and ownership) options available for people with developmental disabilities.

The aim of this sub-committee is to work together with relevant partners to create new and effective housing solutions, to ensure that the needs of this population remains an important focus moving forward.

Our goal is to have both the short and long-term housing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities be addressed through these new and innovative solutions, so that they have the ability to live a full life within their communities.

Members of the TDSA Housing Sub-Committee:

Adam Smith (Vita Community Services), Antonet Orlando (Meta Centre), Arthur Mathews (The Salvation Army Broadview Village), Bryan Keshen (Reena), Frances MacNeil (Community Living Toronto), Paul Bruce (Cota), Raphael Arens (L'Arche), Shay Johnson (TDSA Housing Navigator), Sherry Gautam (Springboard Services), Susan Bisailon (Safehaven) and Tullio Orlando (Montage Support Services)

Overview of Work to Date

TDSA Housing Survey (April 2016)

The Housing Sub-Committee sent out a survey to all TDSA members inquiring about the number of individuals their agency serves as well as any housing services they provide. Here were the results

- 3,400+ individuals are being served by TDSA member agencies within the GTA and beyond
- 190+ owned properties and 400+ units through head leases and referral agreements
- TDSA member organizations are currently partnered with affordable housing developers for 80+ units

Affordable Home Ownership Fact Sheet (July 2016)

- A fact sheet was given to TDSA agencies to disperse to their employees regarding information on what affordable home ownership is and how to access the program
- This fact sheet was made accessible to more than 4,200 full/part-time staff

Inclusionary Zoning Consultation Feedback Form Submission (August 2016)

- TDSA submitted a feedback form to the Ministry of Housing (MOH) regarding the positive impact inclusionary zoning could have for the Developmental Services sector as well as other underserved populations
- 42 organizations, groups, companies across Ontario engaged in this process and their feedback/insight was included in the submission

Affordable and Supportive Housing Information Guide (October 2016)

The Housing Sub-Committee put together a 64 slide presentation providing an overview of affordable and supportive housing while covering a wide scope of resources and topics.

- Provides examples of housing and supportive housing models from a Canadian and international perspectives
- Examines various disability policies from countries around the world

TDSA Affordable and Supportive Housing Forum (October 2016)

The TDSA Housing Sub-Committee hosted its first Housing Forum which covered topics ranging from current affordable housing opportunities within the City of Toronto and innovative ways TDSA agencies are providing supportive housing models to their clients.

- 46 people were in attendance with representation from 18 different agencies/organizations including the City of Toronto's Affordable Housing Office and Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS)
- 100% of the attendees said they would attend another housing forum if one was held in the future

Socially Inclusive Housing Design Session with Build Toronto (May 2017)

In partnership with BUILD Toronto, Kehilla Residential Programme and PooranLaw, the TDSA Housing Sub-Committee hosted a half day session on the importance of designing and building for increased social inclusion spaces in new vertical communities being developed in Toronto.

- Engaged 20+ Planners, Architects, Developers, City of Toronto representatives
- The outcome of the housing design session resulted in the creation of 4 working groups looking at developing more socially inclusive housing designs (Online Guide; Inclusive Design; Planning, Policy & Legislation; Innovative Funding & Financial Frameworks)

TDSA Housing Brochure: Key Issues Affecting our Sector (September 2017)

- TDSA developed a brochure specifically focused on people with a developmental disability and their need for affordable housing
- Meant to be an outreach tool to inform about the issue and what barriers currently exist for people with a developmental disability

TDSA Website made Accessible to the Public (November 2017)

- Launched the public site of tdsa.ca with housing-related information and resources
- All relevant TDSA Housing Sub-Committee documentation can be viewed and downloaded through the website
- Website continues to be updated with relevant housing related information

Geo Mapping of Developmental Services Sector Housing Services & Supports (November 2017)

- 26 Developmental Services agencies in Toronto and the GTA provided housing data of various locations and types of housing services they provide (residential, treatment, respite etc.) across the city
- These locations were mapped and can be used as a tool to inform agencies of existing or potential neighbourhood supports when contemplating new developments

TDSA Second Housing Forum (November 2017)

The TDSA Housing Sub-Committee hosted its second Housing Forum, with speakers and representation from various organizations and levels of government. The day included breakout sessions exploring potential solutions to current housing challenges.

- 83+ attendees including Developmental Services agencies in Toronto, family members and representatives from Housing Task Force, Developmental Services Ontario – Toronto Region (DSOTR), MCSS and MOH

TDSA Meeting with Minister Jaczek's Office (January 2018)

- Updated Minister Jaczek's office on the work TDSA has been doing around affordable housing
- Provided attendees with a briefing note outlining some of the system challenges and recommendations for increased living options for people with a developmental disability
- This briefing note was uploaded to the TDSA website for the public to access and view

Release of the TDSA 2017 Housing Forum Report (February 2018)

The TDSA Housing Sub-Committee released a report outlining the details from Housing Forum that took place in November 2017. This included a summary of the presentations, outcomes from the discussions that were held and recommendations from the TDSA based on these discussions.

- This 21 page document was made available on the TDSA website and sent to relevant Ministry's and the DSO-TR for review.

TDSA Geographic Mapping Report (March 2018)

TDSA used the data collected for the Geographic Mapping and put together a report to display the housing and support locations of Developmental Services agencies across Toronto and the GTA.

- This 22 page report was made available on the TDSA website

Identifying System Challenges & Forming Recommendations

As mentioned in the overview of work to date, members of the TDSA Housing Sub-Committee met with Minister Jaczek's office and outlined some of the system challenges and recommendations for increased living options for people with a developmental disability. The following is a brief overview of what was outlined:

System Challenge: Limited Options for Transitional Aged Youth

- Youth in transition already receiving residential services through Transfer Payment Agencies do not make it on to the prioritization list for adult services.
- There are limited options for youth with complex support needs who are aging out of the children's system.
- There is a need for better flow so children can transition to adult services, creating access to supports for families who are struggling with complex care needs at home

Recommendations:

- Support and enable innovative solutions for transitional aged individuals with developmental and/or medical complexities who require respite or residential services to ensure there is a seamless transition.
- Invest in transitional learning programs focused on increasing an individual's preparedness and family readiness for a living situation that creates a path for positive, healthy and safe living experiences as a starting point into adult living options.
- Learn from examples such as STEPS To Independence, Trying It on For Size (TIFS) and Developmental Services Housing Task Force projects focused on housing innovations for transitional aged youth.

System Challenge: Lack of Residential Options for Individuals/Families

- Families don't see an existing pathway in Developmental Services for them to be aware of and have access to such housing opportunities available through Developmental Services agencies.
- Families who have homes where their family members are living without needed supports; however, their family members are not considered high priority as a result.

Recommendations:

- Utilize the Housing Navigator positions across the DSOs to act as liaisons and help individuals/families connect with new housing opportunities.
- Enable regions to allot new funding for individuals who are at different levels of prioritization and who have varying levels of support needs so that there is greater flexibility to match people to housing options that are conducive to the supports that are needed at that time

System Challenge: Lack of Capital Funds for New Developments

- It is difficult to find new housing developments that are adequately equipped to withstand property damage when individuals with complex needs move in.
- It is difficult to find private developers who are willing to take on the extra costs to create purpose-built housing, or to proceed regardless and risk new partnership opportunities with private housing developers

Recommendations:

- Partner with Developmental Services agencies that are trying to create or access housing opportunities by endorsing them as Transfer Payment Agencies of MCSS
- Reiterate the benefits of community partnerships with service agencies on all RFPs for affordable housing as this will increase supply of new capital, bring supports into the new developments and facilitate partnerships between agencies and property managers

System Challenge: Need for Deeply Affordable Housing Solutions

- Low income capacity and ODSP shelter allowance enhance the stigma against people's viability to be good tenants, which places them at a disadvantage in rental situations
- Even for individuals with a developmental disability who are employed, accessing and affording housing based on Average Market Rent (AMR) prices is still unattainable with other cost of living expenses.

Recommendations:

- Emphasize with Ministry of Housing and City of Toronto (and other regional service managers) the importance of including Depth of Affordability Rental Rates as part of all RFPs for affordable housing.
- Match ODSP rent rates to Average Market Rent (AMR) for the regions so that individuals and their families don't have to continue "cobbling together" funds to afford decent and safe housing.

System Challenge: Lack of Committed Operating Funds to Help Securing Future Housing Opportunities

- Individuals on the residential wait list are not able to access affordable housing through the typical pathways because their access to housing must be accompanied by funded supports for ongoing assistance and stability.
- Without operational funding assurances, agencies supporting people with a developmental disability can face the same stigma regarding ability to ensure rental payments

Recommendations:

- Align Multi Year Residential Planning funding opportunities when Developmental Services agencies have successfully secured future housing
- Commit operating funds in the near term, so that Developmental Services agencies can secure deals, develop sites and have them ready for occupancy 2-5 years from now. 7

Increasing Housing Options, Opportunities and Resources

The TDSA Housing Sub-Committee continues to work to address the short and long-term housing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. One way TDSA member agencies are addressing this issue is by partnering together and creating relationships with developers to gain access to affordable housing units which will/are currently being built.

For example, Community Living Toronto and Vita Community Living Services have partnered together and obtained a number of units in 2 future developments within the City (Madison & Birchmount Green).

Additionally, a few TDSA member agencies are connected to the Intentional Community Consortium with other agencies across Ontario to pilot a series of affordable housing projects for mixed use to be scaled out across Canada, to address the affordable housing crisis nationwide for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The current and upcoming developments through the Intentional Community Consortium are:

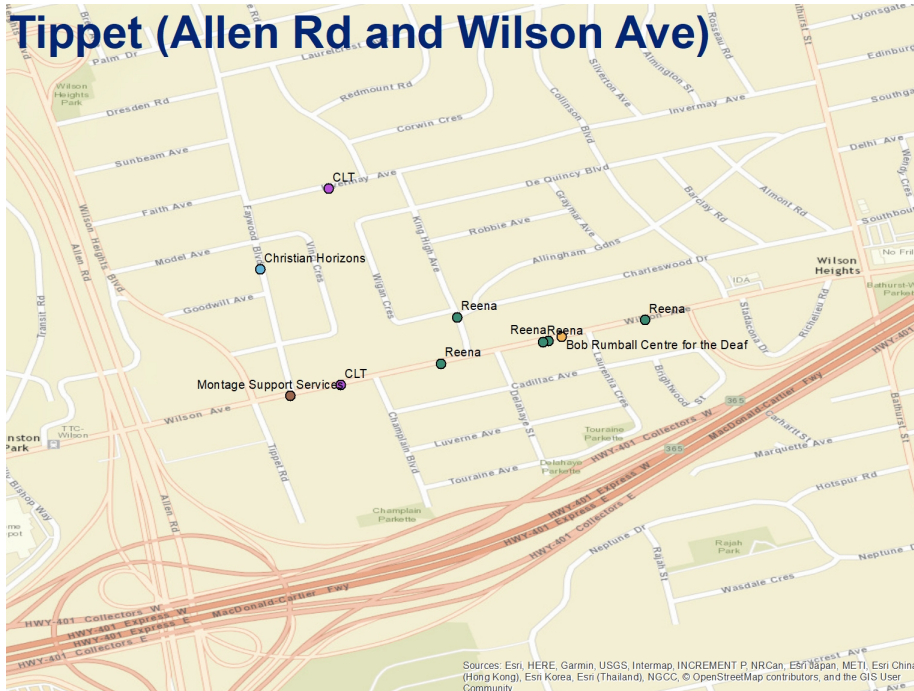
- KW Habilitation in Kitchener, ON
- Reena Residences on Clarke in Vaughan, ON
- Camphill Community Ontario in Angus, ON

Within the City of Toronto, various TDSA member agencies have been working to gain access to housing units to increase housing options and opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. Here are some current areas of interest that are being explored:

- Tippet (Allen Rd and Wilson)
- Mirvish (Bathurst and Bloor)
- Dufferin and Bloor
- Don Mills and Eglinton
- Quarry Lands (Victoria Park and Gerrard)
- Regent Park (Parliament and Dundas St E)
- Downsview (Keele and Sheppard)
- Thistletown (Islington and Albion)

Utilizing the Geo-Map to Access Housing Opportunities

The geographical mapping data collected is useful in providing snapshots highlighting areas of interest within the City and if there are any agencies currently providing service in those areas



Dufferin and Bloor St

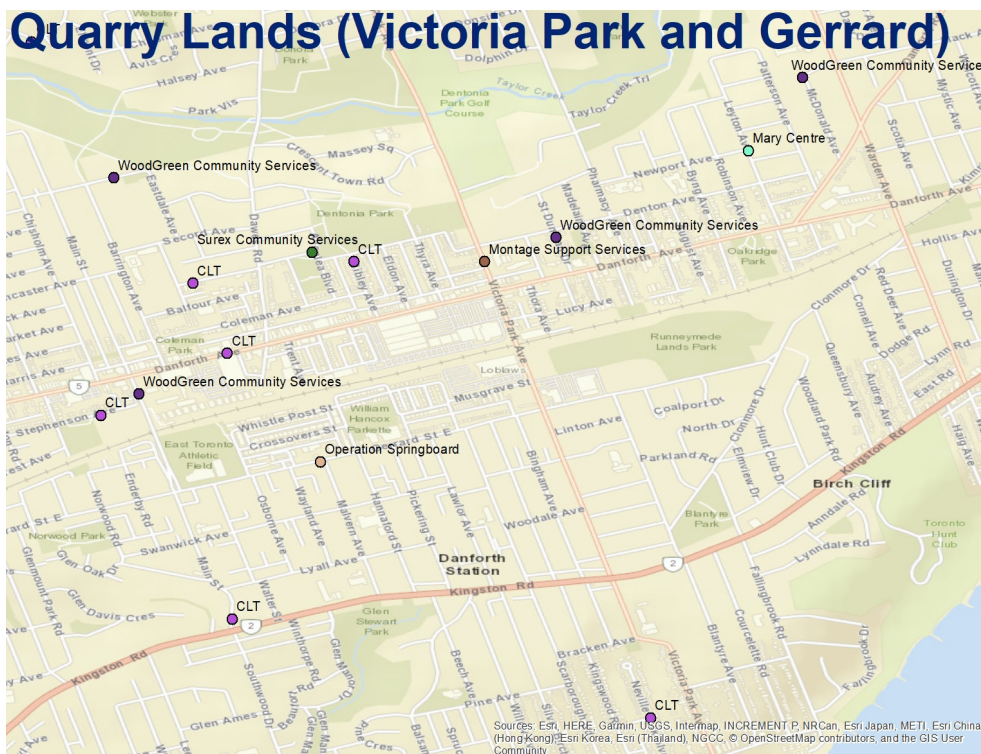
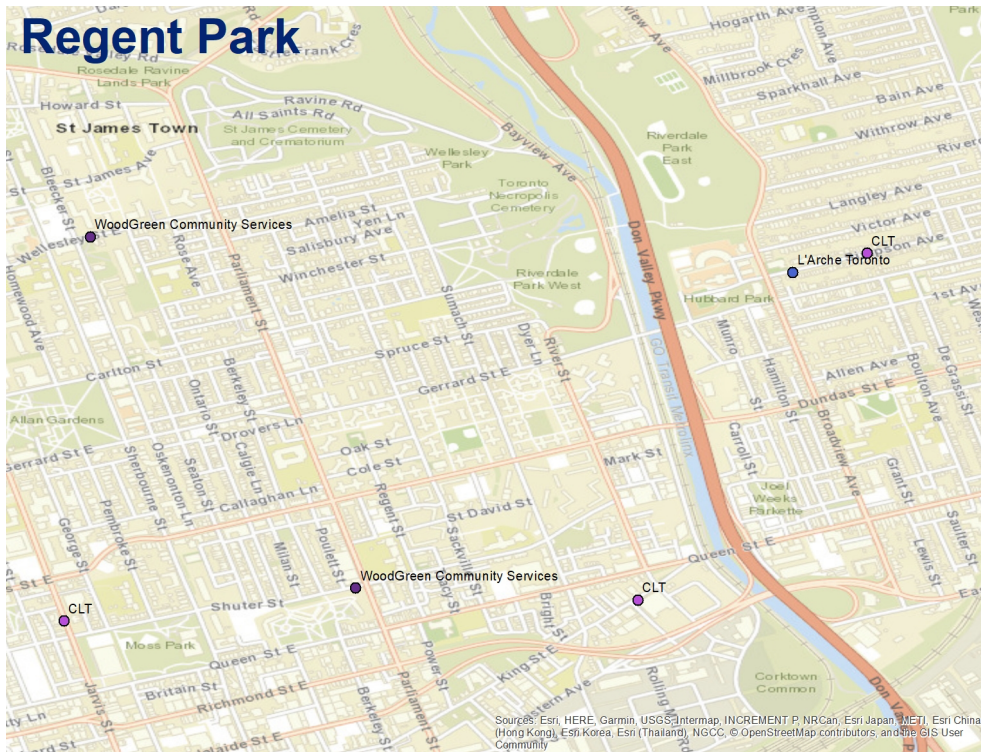


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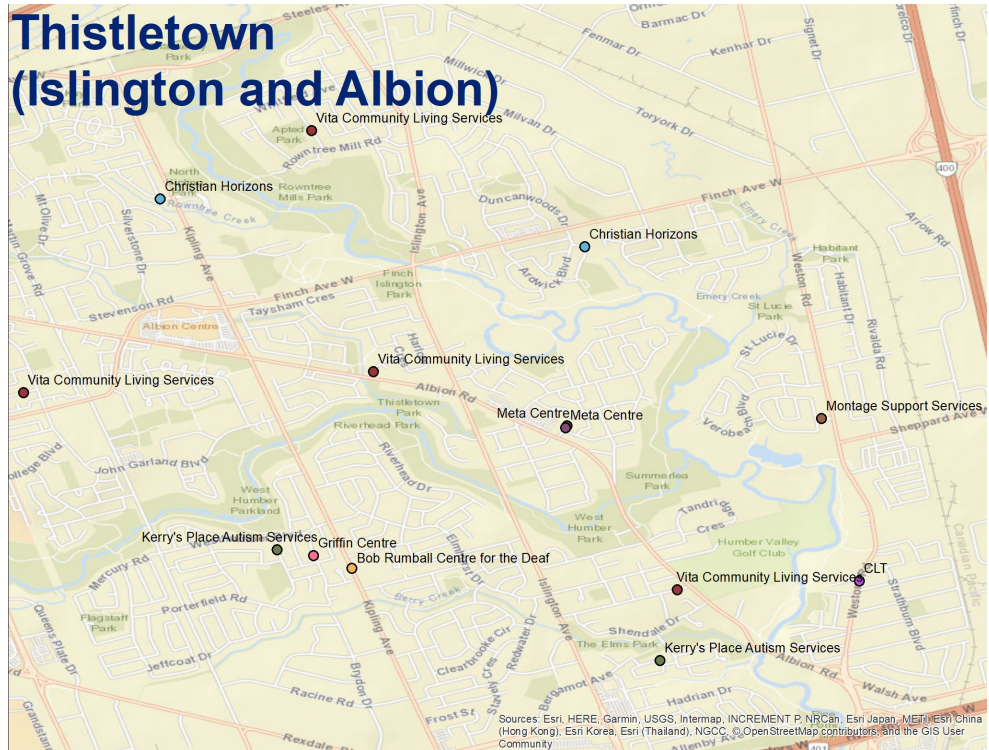
Don Mills and Eglinton



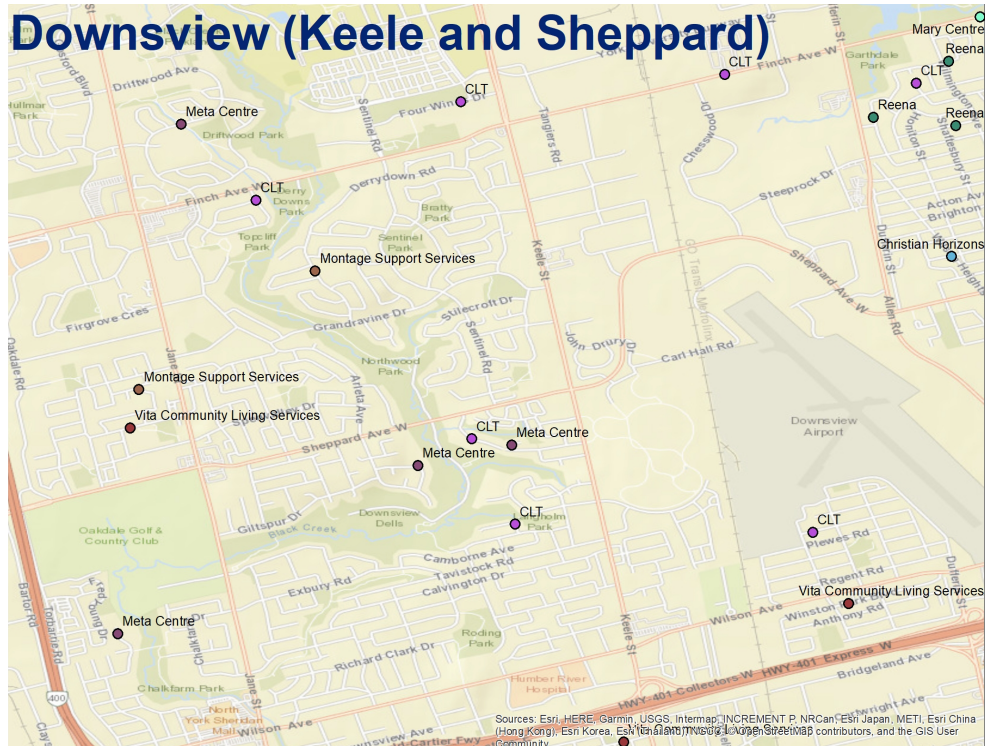
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Thistletown (Islington and Albion)



Downsview (Keele and Sheppard)



TDSA Representation in the Community

Since forming the Housing Sub-Committee in 2016, TDSA members have attended or hosted events on topics related to housing. The Housing Sub-Committee has tried to keep track of these events to ensure that the specific housing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities continue to be emphasized and discussed.

Here is an ongoing list showcasing various events where there has been TDSA representation:

- September 30, 2016: Toronto Housing Summit
- November 30, 2016: Innovative Housing Ideas and Improving Residential Supports
- January 11, 2017: Canada-Ontario Homelessness Summit
- July 19, 2017: Ontario Municipal Social Services Association Presentation
- August 29, 2017: Roundtable on Housing and Homelessness issues for Vulnerable Communities
- September 28, 2017: Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network Presentation
- November 22, 2017: Celebrating Canada's National Housing Strategy
- November 22, 2017: Housing Opportunities Speed-Dating Lunch
- February 20, 2018: Ending Chronic Homelessness – Solutions for People with Complex Needs
- February 26, 2018: Parliament Hill - National Developmental Disabilities Month Reception
- March 8, 2018: OASIS and TDSA Webinar – An Introduction to the Federal Housing Framework: A Place to Call Home
- March 14, 2018: TDSA Presentation to Toronto Developmental Services Housing Task Force

TDSA Housing Sub-Committee

Focus & Current Work

In addition to attending housing related events, TDSA members are also advocating the housing needs of the individuals they serve with local City Councilors, Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) and Ministry representatives (such as Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing).

Within the past year, the TDSA Housing Sub-Committee has achieved the following goals:

- Outreach through 2-3 presentations regarding the affordable housing issues we face in our sector
- Outreach to 5+ City Councilors who are invested in housing-related initiatives in Toronto
- Outreach to 5+ key government officials at the provincial/federal level regarding affordable housing issues

The intention of the TDSA Housing Sub-Committee is to continue engaging with various community members through advocacy and presentations to ensure the housing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities are recognized.

Current Work & Engagement

- March 2018: Connecting with Evergreen Housing Action Lab re: Socially Inclusive Housing Design
- May 14, 2018: TDSA Forum for Agency Board Members

Focus for 2018-19 Year

- Utilize brochure and develop other materials as needed to support outreach to municipalities and government re: key areas related to affordable housing that need to be addressed for this sector
- Enable individual readiness – skill development, rent readiness programs and experiential learning opportunities
- Enable relationship-building with community housing developers, landlords, property managers, and municipalities to create more housing opportunities
- Change the conversation around Multi-Year Residential Planning (MYRP) so that:
 - Funding can be aligned with future housing development opportunities
 - Individuals and families at different priority levels can be matched to new housing
 - There is greater flexibility in applying funding to meet individual and family needs (based on where they are at with their housing and support plans)

