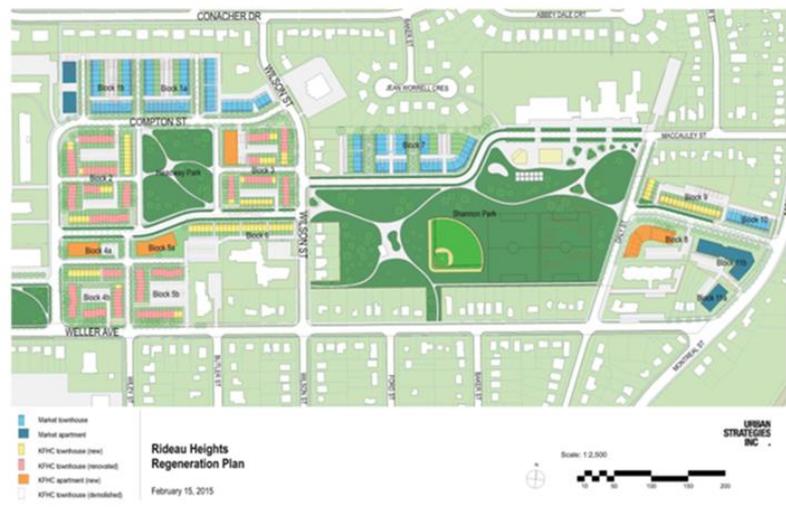




## 'The Change Curve: Using a Tenant Engagement Process when Redeveloping'

### Rideau Heights Regeneration Plan



Rideau Heights Regeneration Plan is a partnership between the City of Kingston and Kingston & Frontenac Housing Corporation. The area consists of 501 RGI units consisting of 347 townhouses and 154 apartments. Goals: Improve housing through building and renovation, decrease tenant utility costs, improve streets, pathways and community facilities, right size units according to community need and increase KFHC's sustainability.

**Tenant Engagement:** KFHC viewed the tenant engagement process for redevelopment planning as a spectrum which encompassed a wide range of actions from distributing information to encouraging tenants to plan and implement community events. The type of method used during the process depended on the overall goal of the event, the capacities of the tenants and the communities and the available resources.

The tenant engagement actions taken by KFHC included:

**Informing:** providing meaningful factual information to raise awareness and promote communication.

**Consulting:** offering options and listening to the feedback from tenants.

**Involving:** providing a two- way flow of information and joint decision making.

**Collaborating:** working together with tenants to develop a plan, and initiating activities with tenants having some ownership.

Activities undertaken to engage the tenants and the community on the overall regeneration plan:

- ✓ 2 public meetings/open houses
- ✓ Service provider and community partner meeting
- ✓ Hiring of Community Animators (6 tenants) who reached out to residents to find out their thoughts through interviews and a questionnaire
- ✓ KFHC hosted 8 interactive sessions for residents which encouraged tenant participation by providing dinner and child care.
- ✓ Comment boxes were made available at several locations to gather input over several months.

## Engagement and Relocation Process:

1. Letter sent to Tenants notifying them of phase one and a planned meeting.
2. Meeting with 80 Daly Street tenants and families over a dinner where child care was provided. Tenants were informed that they would have to move, and hopefully to an area in KFHC of their preference and that the unit will meet occupancy standards which could be smaller than current unit. The move would be permanent and tenants would not be relocated back to the area when new units were built.
3. Four Managers including the CEO met with 21 out of the 30 families and developed individual housing relocation plans based on a tenant/family interview and survey. There were 27 adults and 65 children in the 21 units of which 9 families requested to remain in the community.
4. 8 Families were unwilling to participate in the process. They received an official letter notifying them of their date to relocate and address. These families were not accepting of the supports offered by KFHC to cover expenses.
5. KFHC managers met weekly as units within the housing portfolio became available and the tenants were placed based on their individual housing relocation plans.
6. Tenants were shown the new unit and tenants signed a new lease with the Property Manager. Tenants had only one option.
7. Tenants' moving costs (not packing) and expenses to reconnect services were paid for by KFHC upon request either arranged by the tenant or KFHC.
8. Tenants were notified in May and relocation began in August with the last family being relocated in January.
9. As units became vacant they were boarded up to eliminate safety concerns and security guards were placed on the property from 6 pm to 6 am every day. When there were only two families remaining on the property security and surveillance was around the clock.

The relocation very successful and no concerns or complaints were brought forward by the tenants.

The following **principles** were established to guide the redevelopment strategy:

1. Create an affordable, safe and healthy community
2. Connect the community with local services
3. Support the community by sharing information and promoting activities and programs
4. Enhance parks and public spaces.
5. Get the little things right such as cleanliness and property maintenance
6. Build trust through visible success
7. Be realistic and have achievable plans



Phase One was eliminating 80 Daly Street by decommissioning 30 townhouses in 7 buildings, eliminating large 4 and 5 bedroom units. The land was sold to the City for \$500k to rejuvenate an adjoining park and to allow for the creation of a new community centre and library attached to the local public school. City compensated KFHC by providing \$1 million to build 10 new RGI one bedroom units in a new KFHC affordable housing development in another area of Kingston.