

Toronto Community Housing

Relocation processes and engagement strategies

HSC Regeneration Forum

March 26, 2019

Toronto Community Housing has made a clear commitment to tenants of revitalization communities: any tenant who is relocated as part of a revitalization project has the right to return to a new unit being built as part of that revitalization.

Before revitalization starts, we develop **Community Planning Principles**.

1. Renew the neighbourhood
2. Re-introduce pedestrian-friendly streets and park spaces
3. Design a safe and accessible neighbourhood
4. Involve the community throughout the process
5. Build on cultural diversity, youth, skills and energy
6. Create a diverse neighbourhood with a mix of uses, including a range of housing, employment, institutions and services
7. Design a clean, healthy and environmentally responsible neighbourhood
8. Keep the same number of RGI units that existed before the revitalization began (this is mandated by the City)
9. Minimize disruption for households during relocation
10. Develop a financially responsible strategy
11. Create a successful Toronto neighbourhood
12. Improve the remainder of the community during the redevelopment

Pre-development and relocation stage

Relocation

This is the time when the preparations are done for the up-coming redevelopment. Here are some of the steps that TCHC takes at this time:

- Create an **Integrated Team** made of representatives from each stakeholder including a representative from all TCHC departments involved: Development, Asset Management, Legal, Tenant and Community Services, Facility Management, ITSetc. In some cases stakeholders from outside of TCHC are regular participants or are brought in as necessary.
- Develop **Relocation Policy or Procedure.**
- Identify **vulnerable households** and households with potential issues (hoarders, in arrears, under eviction for anti-social etc.) ahead of time (one to two years before the tenant relocation is planned to take place.) Have a plan how to deal with each situation and do regular follow ups.
- Establish the unit size required by each household
- Start **collecting vacancies** to be used for relocation ahead of time based on the need and the City Occupancy Standards
- Have the **moving company** in place
- Establish different ways of **communication** with the community, however, messaging of the revitalization, redevelopment and relocation **must be the same.**

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Social Development Planning and Consultation

Each community is approached slightly differently as circumstances vary throughout communities. The scale of Social Development Planning can range from Community Action Plans to full-scale Social Development Plans.

In the case of Regent Park, residents were substantially engaged by Toronto Community Housing and by a third party community engagement consultant in the initial development of a Social Development Plan.

Tenants were provided with the opportunity to prioritize the needs of the community and to offer suggestions and recommendations for course of action to address those social needs.

Social development may focus on a variety of areas including:

- Safety
- Employment
- Community spaces
- and developing social cohesion and inclusion

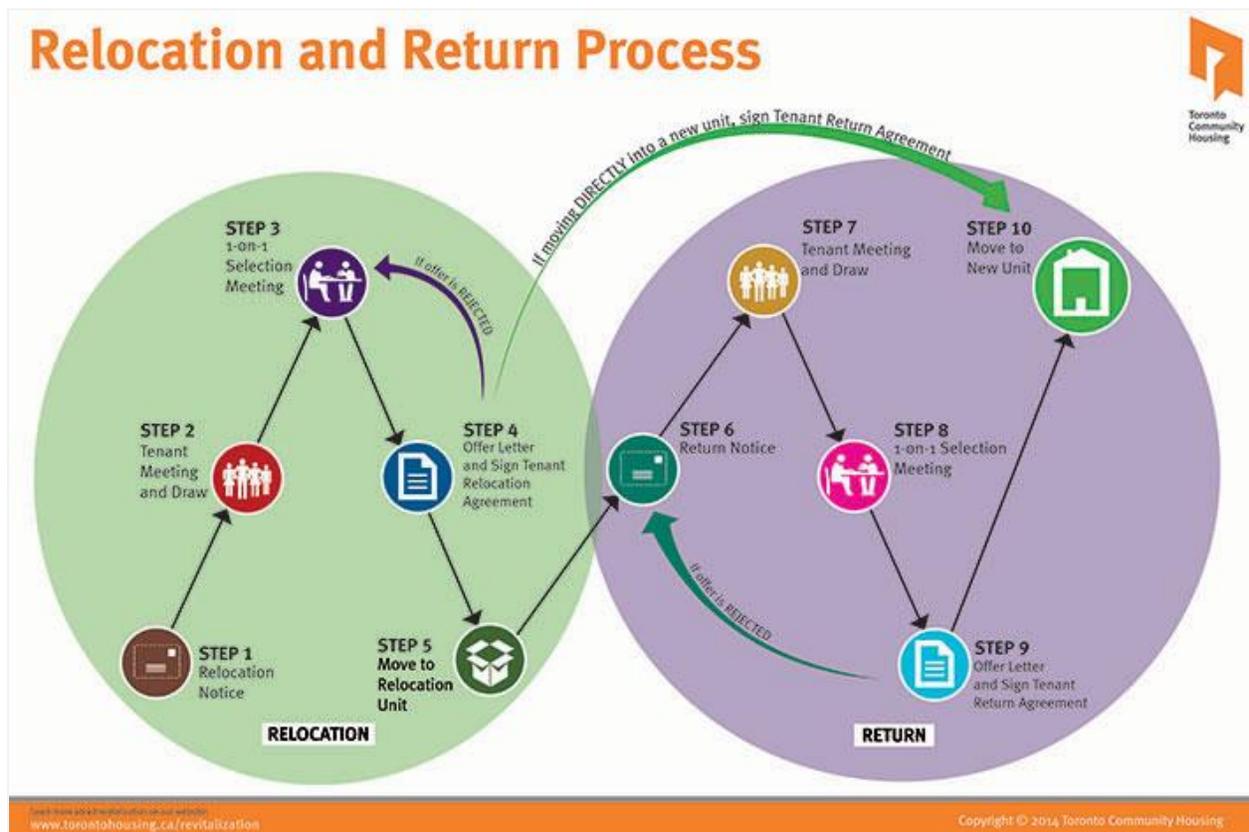
Finally, as pre-development and pre-relocation planning proceeds, in some cases Toronto Community Housing has been required to present its Social Development Plan both to the TCHC board of directors and to Toronto City Council for approval and endorsement. In this way, the social development holds the same weight as the master plan for the community.

Relocation and Return Time

We provide tenants with significant notice in situations where relocation is necessary, including intensive education and engagement before the process even gets underway. As per the TCHC Relocation Policy, we will give at least five months' notice to the tenants. This notice is a part of the N13 Package (Notice to End your Tenancy Because the Landlord Wants to Demolish the Rental Unit, Repair it or Convert it to Another Use).

We also start the return process five months prior to getting occupancy of the new development. Tenants then select new units from the floor plans.

In some cases, tenants are able to move directly from their old unit into a new one built as part of the revitalization. In other cases, tenants may need to move more than once to a relocation unit in the same community or in another Toronto Community Housing building.



The image above shows **the relocation and return process**. As part of the process, we work to ensure that:

- Tenants understand their rights and their options
- The whole process is transparent
- We hold regular meetings to keep tenants up to date on progress
- Matching of the household with the relocation or return unit is based on the random draw number (no priorities)
- We *right size* the households at the relocation and return time
- We work one-on-one with each household to help them select a unit that meets their needs.

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- We pay for moving and related costs, provide packing materials and arrange for the move.
- We provide extra help to households with special needs

Social Development Plan implementation and engagement

Tenant and Community Services Division at Toronto Community Housing is responsible for the ongoing evaluation, monitoring and implementation of the Social Development Plan. This work involves:

- Developing partnerships with agencies and governmental organizations in the community
- Consultation with the community to establish action plans and make the plans more fulsome and responsive
- Engagement of the community to respond to changing needs
- Regular reporting to the community on progress in the Social Development Plan

Furthermore, Tenant and Community Services works with all relevant divisions at TCHC to create the engagement strategies for:

- Engagement related to the official planning processes (for example, street naming, rezoning, RFP, etc.)
- Supporting engagement related to tenant relocation (this varies across communities with differing levels of engagement)
- Ensuring tenants are updated about progress related to both physical build and social planning
- Community development work
