



United Counties of
Leeds and Grenville
25 Central Ave. W., Suite 200
Brockville, ON K6V 4N6
T 613-342-3840
800-267-8146
TTY 800-539-8685
F 613-342-8908
www.leedsgrenville.com

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 13, 2024

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Community and Social Services Division is pleased to announce an upcoming new program, the Leeds and Grenville Affordable Housing Development Lab, "The Lab".

The Lab, will assist non-profit organizations, local municipalities, and community-minded entrepreneurs with no prior housing development experience, to conduct a feasibility assessment and development plan at no cost, to move forward on an affordable housing construction project located in Leeds and Grenville that will provide long-term affordable housing to households in need.

The Lab was created to encourage the development of more long-term affordable housing units in Leeds and Grenville. There are many organizations that have suitable development lands and a desire to help be part of the solution, but lack the experience and expertise to move their project concept forward.

"This initiative began as a result of discussions with non-profit organizations and community groups that aspire to build housing to help people in need, but are unsure of how to move forward. The Lab is intended to move the needle forward to accelerate projects that are being contemplated, by creating a feasible plan to move forward to construction, and ultimately help move people in-need into affordable homes faster", Alison Tutak, Director of Community and Social Services.

Over the past decade, the Community Housing Department has seen a noticeable decrease in the number of new applicants being able to move into subsidized units. This is as a result of a number of factors, including less tenants moving out of community housing units. Tenants that move into subsidized housing units are choosing to reside there longer, because it is much more affordable than the private market. This places a greater demand on the waitlists for subsidized housing units in Leeds and Grenville, and increases wait times for households that need affordable housing.

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The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, has obtained the services of Tim Welch Consulting Inc. (TWC), to provide development expertise for The Leeds and Grenville Affordable Housing Development Lab. TWC brings over 30 years' experience in working on affordable housing developments and housing policy research. Tim Welch Consulting Inc. has had a proven track record over the past seventeen years, in helping affordable housing projects reach the construction and completion stage in Ontario. They helped many new non-profits focus their efforts to create financially viable business plans that can set the stage for a housing development to move forward to help meet the housing needs in their communities.

Applications for The Lab will open on Tuesday August 13th, and close on Friday September 13th, 2024. Applicants can apply for The Lab's services by visiting the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville's website at www.Leedsgrenville.com, and completing an online application form. Applications must be for a project located within Leeds and Grenville that aim to create long-term Affordable Housing. Program eligibility criteria is outlined on the Leeds and Grenville website. Funding for this program is provided by the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and is limited; application proposals will be assessed by a staff committee according to suitability for the program and alignment with program goals.

For further information on The Lab, interested applicants can contact Caroline Rigutto, the Affordable Housing Coordinator for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, at 1 (800) 267-8146 ext. 2327 or (613) 342-3840 ext. 2327.

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