

Interim Report
Long Term Rental Landlord Supports Initiative – Year I Pilot
The Meeting Place Tobermory

January 2023

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Project Partner: The County of Bruce



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Summary & Recommendations:

Engaging Property Owners

In Year I of the initiative 20 applications for incentive funding were received from a total of 30 property owners in the Municipality of the Northern Bruce Peninsula (NBP). 12 applications met the criteria. 18 of the 20 applications requested the maximum funding of \$25,000 from the \$100,000 pot. Four strong applications were selected and received incentive funding to increase long term rental accommodation in the NBP.

Selection Process

A volunteer advisory group with exceptional landlord, property management and community development experience reviewed applications and selected four projects that had the highest likelihood to succeed. All applications were reviewed by each advisory group member individually then as a group, scoring applications on the measures of accessibility, financial viability, date of occupancy, number of occupants, and property management plan.

While a very modest set of positive outcomes seem within reach, setbacks and roadblocks may arise. Many excellent applications were not funded; many property owners showed innovation and a willingness to be part of the housing solution in the NBP and not without risk.

Next Steps

Now that the successful applicants have been selected, it is up to them to do the work and use the incentive funds as intended. Various checks and balances were put in place to help both property owners and The Meeting Place achieve the goals of the project. It will be mid 2023 before 4 newly renovated long-term accommodations will be ready to come on the market.

Recommendations

Year II – Ensuring Success and Supporting Innovation: LTA Rental Landlord Supports Initiative.

Year II proposed project activities came out of the observations, learnings and outcomes of the Year I pilot:

- Follow the Year I funded projects to completion in 2023 and offer any assistance to landlords in getting these units onto the rental market
- Produce a Landlord & Tenant Win-Win Guide specific to the Northern Bruce Peninsula
- Facilitate education and focus group discussion on less conventional rental options such as garden suites, shared living, subdivided units and tiny homes.
- Design an incentive funding process for LTA with a focus on innovative rental solutions, energy conservation & tenant savings/comfort or target populations.

Interim Report – January 2022

Long Term Rental Landlord Supports Initiative Year I Pilot

Introduction

The Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative, a project of The Meeting Place Tobermory, was designed to address the lack of long-term rental housing stock in the Northern Bruce Peninsula (NBP). This Initiative aimed to incentivize property owners to become long-term landlords through funding to retrofit and renovate existing buildings in the community. The goal was to add 4 new long-term rental options to the NBP housing stock as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Background:

The Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative is the first part (Year I) of the Landlord & Tenants Support pilot project, funded by Bruce County and implemented by The Meeting Place Tobermory in 2022. This is an evidence-based initiative growing out of the SPARK project where resident seasonal workers in the NBP identified local actions and resources that would make their lives better. More and better year-round rental housing options were identified as more than a ‘nice to have’ but a real need, and that addressing housing security on the NBP requires urgent action. Two investigative reports identifying strategies at the local level were completed in 2020/21.¹ An infographic campaign was designed with messages appealing to property owners and landlords to consider community needs and the benefits of being long term rental accommodation landlords.

Process Guiding the Initiative

This process was guided by an accumulation of years of community-based efforts to address the lack of attainable long-term housing. The original goal of the Spark Housing Initiative was to add four long-term housing options to the rental stock in the NBP. This Initiative was modeled based on existing renovation programs, such as the Bruce County Home Repair Program² and is unique in that it provides an incentive to long-term renting through funding for improvements to homes or units that will be

¹ Smith, Hazel. SPARK Housing Report - Growing the Long-term Rental Housing Inventory - PHASE ONE: INVESTIGATION. *The Meeting Place Tobermory*. March 2021. Online:

<https://tobermorymeetingplace.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Long-Term-Housing-Report-Spark-Initiative-2021-.pdf>

Smith, Hazel. SPARK Housing Report - Growing the Long-term Rental Housing Inventory - PHASE TWO: PROBLEMS WITH SOLUTIONS. *The Meeting Place Tobermory*. December 2021. Online:

<https://tobermorymeetingplace.com/spark-housing-initiative-phase-two-problems-with-solutions/>

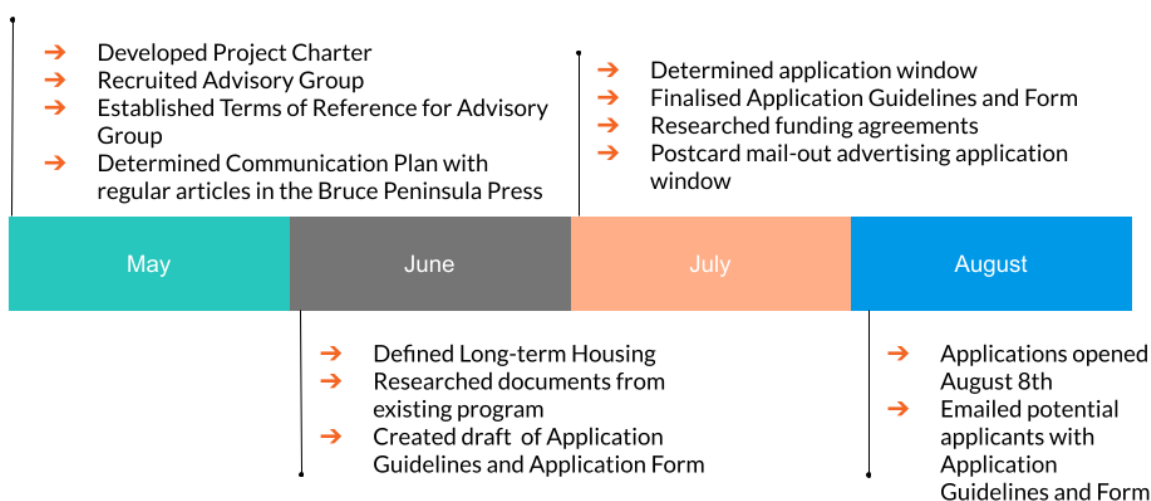
² Bruce County Home Repair - Program Guidelines. *Bruce County*. January 2023:

<https://www.brucecounty.on.ca/sites/default/files/Guidelines%202021%20Home%20Repair.pdf>

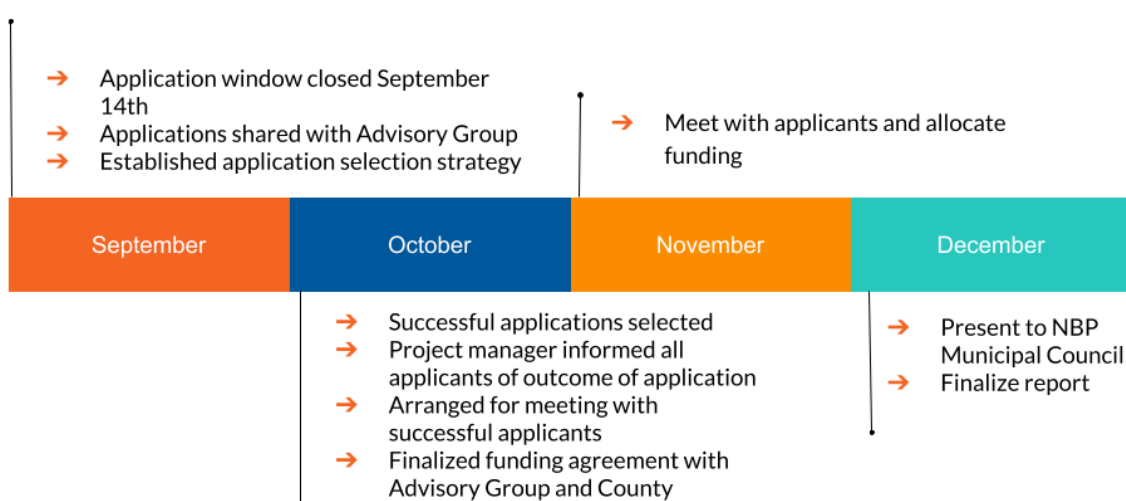
added to the long-term housing stock. Many funding opportunities and grants offered by all levels of government are for primary residences only.

Timeline and Key Actions To Date

May - August 2022



September - December 2022

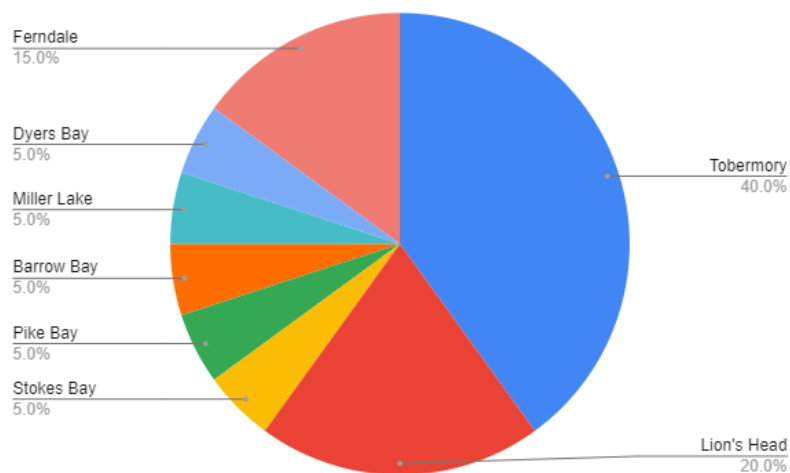


Observations and Learnings

There was a lot to learn by reviewing the applications and the qualitative data was valuable and revealed expanded data, adding to that of previous consultations. What was most encouraging was the number of property owners interested in offering long-term housing as a new business, as well as the number who are already long-term landlords looking to improve or expand options. This suggests that some property owners are committed to this business model, and to increasing and maintaining the long-term rental stock.

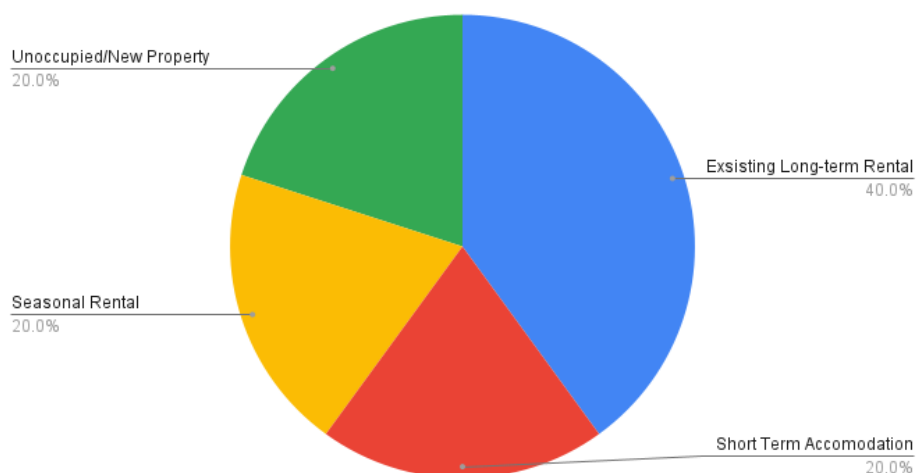
Geographic Distribution of Properties

We received applications for improvement to properties throughout the municipality, showing that there is a fairly consistent interest in long-term renting in different communities in the area. The graph to the right illustrates that the greatest number of applications were for Tobermory properties, but that most of the communities in the NBP were represented.



Status of Properties

The status of properties at the time of application varied. Short Term Accommodations are considered properties that can be rented for periods of time that are less than a month, Season Rentals vary but offer rentals for periods longer than a month, but are not year-round or permanent.



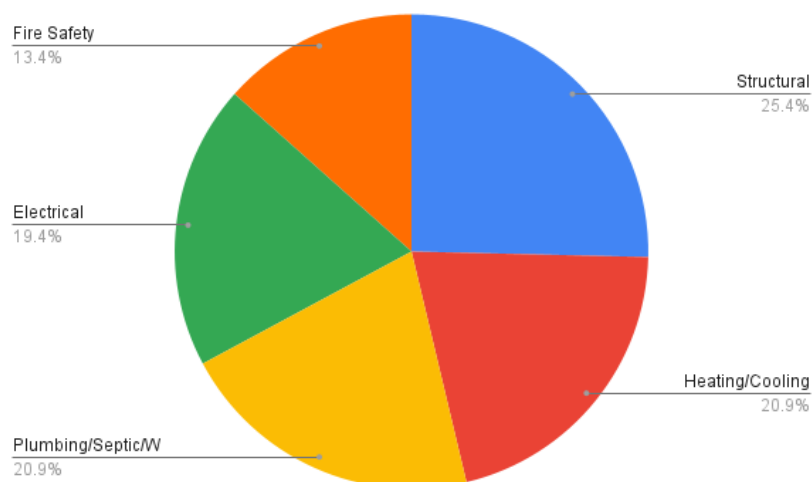
A Long-term Rental is a property that is available year-round and permanently. Of the properties selected for funding, one was a seasonal rental, one was a family seasonal property that had been rented short-term briefly, one had been intended for long-term rental, and one was newly acquired. The intention of this Initiative was to add at least

four new long-term rental units to the housing stock, so we were somewhat surprised that 40% of applications were for existing long-term rental properties.

This means two things; one, perhaps our intention of adding NEW units in this pilot project could have been emphasized more, but more importantly that there are existing long-term landlords that are providing year-round housing to community members who are motivated to improve their rental properties. We did not select any existing long-term rentals for funding as that was not the intention of this pilot, but we see a potential for improvements that would benefit existing tenants and landlords in future rounds of funding through this Initiative. This new intention would have to accompany safeguards against what is referred to as ‘renovictions’ or evictions carried out to repair a unit. Any future initiatives offering funding to landlords for existing long-term rental units would have to be for improvements that can be done without displacing or threatening the housing security of existing tenants.

Types of Upgrades

There was an even distribution of repairs covering five types of improvements identified in the Applications Form; structural, heating/cooling, plumbing/septic/well, electrical, and fire safety. Many applications highlighted that improvements would increase the efficiency of



the home, but this was not quantified as we did not specify it in the application. As the graph illustrates, upgrades to structural, heating/cooling, and electrical were common, and if it can be inferred that these types of upgrades generally improve efficiency and therefore lower utility costs, then we will look at efficiency improvements as an option for future rounds of the Initiative.

From the breadth of project ideas contained in the applications it would appear the community would benefit from a diversification of the initiative. As stated, some landlords with existing long-term tenants expressed interest in improving their rental properties and tenants would benefit from these improvements. There is value in adding to the long-term rental stock, but also in supporting it, and this Initiative has the potential to accomplish both.

Pilot Project Outcomes Achieved

Outcome 1) The Landlord and Tenant Support project manages tangible and meaningful resources that can be easily accessed.

- Initiative documents were available electronically, in paper form for pick-up at The Meeting Place, and were emailed as attachments to anyone who reached out leading up to the Initiative.
- The Application Form was straight forward, and questions were addressed by phone and email by the Project Manager.
- Applications were open for six weeks.

Outcome 2) The project resources provide a range of financial incentives for landlords to invest in long-term rental accommodation.

- Property owners could list a variety of renovations and improvements they wanted to make and could specify the amount of funding to a maximum.
- Investments in properties enhance the quality of housing for tenants.
- Property owners benefit from long-term investment in their property from a grant that might otherwise be difficult to make from revenue.

Outcome 3) Up to four rental properties receive upgrades contributing to safe and secure long-term rentals

- Four projects selected and funded.
- Number of applications and funding requested reflects rental housing potential beyond what can be provided by the pilot.

Outcome 4) Landlord and tenant relationships are strengthened as an indirect outcome of the project.

- Funding benefits both the landlord and tenant.
- Conversations around the benefits of being a long-term landlord were started with our funding recipients and applicants are sources of this information.

Outcome 5) Begin to change the narrative around short-term rentals as the only rental business that is viable or that landlords are interested in.

- On-going conversations with successful applicants reveal the incentives and disincentives considered when choosing to provide long-term housing.
- The choice to provide long-term housing reflects what the applicants want to see for their own community.

- Applicants have weighed the benefits, costs, and risks associated with long-term rentals, short-term rentals, and seasonal rentals.
- All applicants are potential sources of knowledge; in order to increase the long-term rental stock, we need to understand the motivations behind providing different rental types, and the role they all play in supporting community social and economic sustainability.

Interconnections with other Initiatives

- Northern Bruce Peninsula Attainable Housing Committee
- Golden Dawn Senior Citizen Home Redevelopment
- Community Foundation Grey Bruce Vital Focus on Housing
- Rent Safe Owen Sound - Tenant Survey
- Grey and Bruce County Housing Services

Timeline of Activities for 2023

2023

- On-going communication with successful applicants to track progress of project
- Visit property to confirm 'move-in' ready, and allocate second half of funding
- Continue to track 5-year commitment to long-term housing

Conclusions & Recommendations

The whole experience left us, the TMP board, staff and advisory group, with a better understanding of long-term rental issues in the NBP and the project undertaking, leading to the development of recommendations for a Year II round of actions. Preliminary consultations on the pilot and its outcomes suggest a Year II initiative would be justified. A second year would focus on ensuring success on use of incentives and supporting more innovation. LTA Rental Landlord Supports Initiative Year II project activities could include a combination of the following activities:

- Follow the Year I funded projects to completion in 2023 and offer any assistance to landlords in getting these units onto the rental market.
- Produce a Landlord & Tenant Win-Win Guide specific to the Northern Bruce
- Facilitate education and focus group discussion on less conventional rental options such as garden suites, shared living, subdivided units and tiny homes.
- Design an incentive funding process for LTA with a focus on innovative rental solutions, energy conservation & tenant savings/comfort or target populations.
- Look into the generalizability of this Initiative for application in other communities.

The process has also highlighted some improvements that could be made to the application process and documents to help clarify the purpose and intent of the Initiative for applicants. This Initiative also has the potential for a more intentional research component that could be explored in Year II, as there is qualitative data to explore around motivations of long-term landlords choosing this business model that impacts rental housing stock. In the end, this is an Initiative developed by people in the NBP for the NBP; the modest goal of four new long-term rental options will have an impact on housing security in our community, an additional year would allow for a greater and more diversified impact.

Appendix A: Initiative Documents



20 Centennial Drive
Tobermory ON NOH 1R0
519-596-3213

Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative Charter

25th May 2022

Project Manager: Karla Trudgen

Program Partner(s): Bruce County

Purpose

The Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative is a pilot project aimed at incentivising long-term landlords to increase the long-term rental housing stock on the Northern Bruce Peninsula. Funds are available for renovations and other rental property costs. This project draws on findings from The Meeting Place's SPARK Project Housing Initiative.

Will entail:

- The development of the project timeline, and terms of reference for Advisory Group
- Recruitment and selection of Advisory Group that will meet monthly
- Defining long-term housing
- Develop innovative criteria and framework for accessing funds
- Call for project applications and selection of projects
- Allocation of funds
- Evaluation of projects and follow-up with project applicants

Budget

\$ 110,000 (10,000 for administration, 100,000 to be allocated to projects)

Goal

To engage more property owners interested in long-term rental and contribute to growing the stable long-term rental accommodation market amidst the unique housing challenges in the Northern Bruce Peninsula.

Deliverables/Outcomes

1. The project manages tangible and meaningful resources that can be easily accessed
2. The project resources provide a range of financial incentives for landlords to invest in long-term rental accommodations.
3. Up to four rental properties receive upgrades contributing to safe and secure long long-term rentals.
4. Landlord and tenant relationships are strengthened as an indirect outcome of the project.
5. Begin to change the narrative around the risks and benefits of long-term tenants.

Scope, Risks, and Constraints

Within scope: Assess and select projects and allocate funds to long-term landlords of units within the boundaries of the Northern Bruce Peninsula

Outside scope: Execution of projects selected

Risks:

- Applicants are unable to complete projects
- Funds are not utilized as intended by project
- Lack of appropriate/suitable applications
- Manage public perception of the project with clear communication and transparency

Constraints:

- Municipal zoning by-laws may limit projects that are possible

- Projects limited to funds available
- Delay of fund allocation to project completion due to supply/labor issues

Team Roles & Responsibilities

Karla Trudgen - Project Manager

- **To direct the project and support the advisory group**
- **Establish charter and draft Terms of Reference**
- **Establish timeline and milestones**
- **Engage with partners and applicants**
- **Chair Advisory Group meetings**

Advisory Group Members:

Noreen Steinacher

Tanis Henderson

Mike Brown

Dominik Franken

Karen Phillips

- **Establish criteria and eligibility of projects**
- **Reviewing and selecting project applications**
- **Attending monthly meetings**
- **Guide and inform project development**



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Long-term Housing Initiative Application Guide



Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative - Overview

The Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative is a pilot project aimed at incentivising property owners to increase the long-term rental housing stock on the Northern Bruce Peninsula. Funds are available for renovations and other rental property costs to be put towards properties/units that will be available for long-term renting.

For the purposes of this initiative long-term rental housing is defined as: Permanent, safe, year-round housing that provides all amenities needed. Located in the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula.

This project is administered through The Meeting Place Tobermory and funded by Bruce County. Increasing the affordable housing stock is a key strategy in Bruce County's Housing and Homelessness Plan.

Applicants can apply for up to \$25,000, selection of projects will be based on the greatest impact on the long-term rental housing shortage.

Outcomes

Projects should contribute to one or more of the following community outcomes:

- Increasing housing stock through the addition of new long-term rental units.
- Contribute to community sustainability through creating long-term stable housing.
- Support co-helping relationships between tenants and landlords.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible if you own a property that you will be renting long-term or you are creating rental space in your home. You will have rental properties or rental space occupied by tenant(s) for a minimum of 5 years in the Northern Bruce Peninsula, with a focus on attainability for current Northern Bruce Peninsula residents.

Criteria

Improving a property to add to the long-term rental housing stock on the Northern Bruce Peninsula. Long-term housing is considered permanent and safe year - round housing. There is an expectation that the unit will not exceed Bruce County Housing market and affordable rental rates.

What type of costs are eligible?

Eligible expenses under the Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative may include repairs, alterations, and renovations required to create a new safe, year-round residential unit. Applicants must own both the home and the land it is situated on.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Structural alterations/improvements
- Heating/cooling system upgrading/replacement
- Septic improvements/replacement
- Plumbing, toilet replacement, water heater replacement
- Well drilling/water infrastructure
- Electrical system upgrades
- Bringing units to building code compliance
- Energy efficiency improvements
- Converting seasonal dwelling to a year-round rental unit

Application form will require detailed description of project, breakdown of costs, and timeline.

What costs are not eligible?

- Any improvements to a home/unit that becomes a short-term rental, seasonal cottage rental, or non-rental home/unit
- Improvements that are strictly aesthetic

Other Related Eligible Costs

In addition to repairs other eligible costs include labour and applicable taxes, building permits, certificates, appraisal fees, inspection fees, drawings and specifications and other costs that the Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative Advisory Board may deem reasonable.

Funding Agreement

The Meeting Place will provide a sign-back letter of agreement to each homeowner/landlord outlining the scope of work, funding commitment and roles and responsibilities of both the homeowner/landlord and The Meeting Place. The homeowner/landlord must return the letter of agreement along with the provided promissory note to The Meeting Place. A full or prorated repayment will be required if:

- Misrepresentation by the homeowner related to eligibility for the program

- The homeowner ceases to have the unit occupied as a long-term rental for at least 5 years from date of project completion

Payment Process

Funding allocation will be determined upon review of the approved project.



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Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative 2022

Application Form

Applications Open: August 8th, 2022

Applications Close: September 14th, 2022

Submit electronically to:

housing@tobermorymeetingplace.com

Or mail/drop off:

The Meeting Place - Tobermory

20 Centennial Drive

Tobermory ON N0H 2R0

Phone: 519-596-2313

Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative

Application Form - Property Owner

Please ensure you read the Application Guidelines document for the Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative before completing this application.

Part 1. Property Owner Information

Name(s):	
Home Address:	
Work Phone:	Cell Number:
Email:	Existing Landlord Yes No

Part 2. Property Information

Address:	
Number of Potential Occupants:	Number of Bedrooms:
Current Unit Type: Proposed Unit Type: (apartment, primary unit, secondary unit, duplex)	Current or Past Rental Property: Yes No If Yes: STA LTA Owner Occupied

Part 3. Project Information

Please provide a description of your project and how it meets the purpose

and outcomes of the Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative. Please refer to the 'Overview' and 'Outcomes' sections of the Application Guidelines:

Part 4. Repair/Renovation Information for Funds

Describe the home repairs or renovation that you would be using the funds toward.	Cost of Improvements
Structural:	Materials:

	Labour:
Heating/Cooling:	Materials: Labour:
Plumbing/Septic/Well:	Materials: Labour:
Electrical:	Materials: Labour:
Fire Safety:	Materials: Labour:
Other:	Materials: Labour:

Total Request:	
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Part 5. Timeline (subject to supply and labour availability)

Please provide an approximate timeline of project, including expected start and completion date (not all fields need to be filled):

Project Stage	Date

Part 6. Terms and Conditions

- 1. The Meeting Place may carry out the necessary inquiries for the purpose of confirming the information provided in this application form.**
- 2. Any work should be carried out after the written Final Approval from The Meeting Place.**
- 3. The entire amount of funding may only be used to finance the approved home repair/renovation for the property identified in Part 4 of this application form.**
- 4. The funding will be subject to the terms and conditions set out in the sign-back letter of agreement between the property owner and The Meeting Place.**
- 5. By signing below you are acknowledging that all information in this application form is accurate, you have read the Application Guidelines, and if selected all funding will be used for the intended purposes of the Long-term Landlord Housing Initiative.**

Applicant Signature

Property Owner Applying	
Signature: _____	
Print Name:	Date:
Co-Owner (if applicable)	
Signature: _____	
Print Name:	Date:

Promotional Postcard



SPARK
Seasonal Workers & Entrepreneurs

The Meeting Place LONG-TERM LANDLORD HOUSING INITIATIVE

**INTERESTED IN CREATING LONG-TERM HOUSING
ON THE NORTHERN BRUCE PENINSULA?**

Apply for up to \$25,000 for renovations, alterations, and/or improvements to a home or unit that will be made available for long-term renting.

Applications Open August 8th
Contact the Project Manager at
housing@tobermorymeetingplace.com or
call 519-596-2313 for application information

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Tobermory

<https://tobermorymeetingplace.com>



**THE LANDLORD WHO CREATES LONG-TERM HOUSING IS DOING MORE THAN
RUNNING A BUSINESS. THEY ARE ALSO PROVIDING A NEEDED RESOURCE.
IT'S ABOUT BUILDING A COMMUNITY THAT WORKS, WHERE EVERYONE HAS
A PLACE TO LIVE.**

LANDLORD, TENANT, AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS:

- A stable and predictable income for landlords
- Landlords and tenants can create co-helping relationships
- Long-term housing provides a sense of belonging for tenants
- Housing for the year-round workforce supports a sustainable community

 **The Meeting Place**
Tobermory

<https://tobermorymeetingplace.com>

Appendix B: Acknowledgements

The Meeting Place Tobermory would like to express gratitude to the following individuals and organizations:

- Advisory Group Members: Noreen Steinacher, Dominik Franken, Tanis Henderson, Mike Brown, Karen Phillips, and Karla Trudgen.
- Hazel Smith - SPARK Project Coordinator
- Marty Oblak, graphic designer for Landlord Campaign infographic
- Tania Early, The Bruce Peninsula Press, graphic designer for the Post Card promotion
- The County of Bruce
- The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula
- Everyone who submitted applications
- Everyone who reached out in interest or with questions
- All community members who have contributed time and shared knowledge through community consultation processes

Appendix C: Resources

Bruce County Home Repair - Program Guidelines. *Bruce County*. Online: <https://www.brucecounty.on.ca/sites/default/files/Guidelines%202021%20Home%20Repair.pdf>

Library of Parliament Research Publications. *Defining and Enumerating Homelessness in Canada*. Publication No. 2020-41-E 2020-12-18. Online: https://lop.parl.ca/sites/PublicWebsite/default/en_CA/ResearchPublications/202041E

Attainable Housing Strategy - Final Report. *Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula*. SHS Consulting. August 2022. Online: <https://www.northbrucepeninsula.ca/en/municipal-services/resources/MunicipalStrategiesandPlans/NBP01S---Attainable-Housing-Strategy---Revised-Final-Report---2022-08-26.pdf>

Smith, Hazel. SPARK Housing Report - Growing the Long-term Rental Housing Inventory - PHASE ONE: INVESTIGATION. *The Meeting Place Tobermory*. March 2021. Online: <https://tobermorymeetingplace.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Long-Term-Housing-Report-Spark-Initiative-2021-.pdf>

Smith, Hazel. SPARK Housing Report - Growing the Long-term Rental Housing Inventory - PHASE TWO: PROBLEMS WITH SOLUTIONS. *The Meeting Place Tobermory*. December 2021. Online: <https://tobermorymeetingplace.com/spark-housing-initiative-phase-two-problems-with-solutions/>

“Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy Directives” *Government of Canada*. Accessed December 7th, 2022. Online: <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/directives-eng.html#h2.2>