

Update on the SHIH Housing Group (Spring 2025)

(Terrance Hunsley, Sheila Bryan, John Anderson, Grace Welch)

The SHIH has been working over the past year to assemble a coalition of organizations interested in the vision of a "seniors' intergenerational village" for nonprofit next stage housing with a community base for the organization of support services. The [Village Canada](#) (VC) proposed location is on the Confederation Heights property owned by the federal government.

Over recent months, we have met with MP Yasir Naqvi, as well as three city councillors, Marty Carr, Theresa Kavanagh and Miles Krauter representing Shawn Menard. We found the politicians to be supportive, although Mr Naqvi's offer to set up a meeting with David McGuinty was lost in the recent political chaos. The Councillors reminded us that there are other sites in the city, some owned by the city, that could also be target sites. They also suggested that we become a formal organization which can potentially seek funding for next steps. This is a question that we will take up with the VC group, perhaps when the master plan exercise is completed next month (see below).

Our proposal is unique and timely. There were recent announcements indicating a desire by the federal government to support nonprofit housing through long-term low-cost land leases of federal properties. Some of those properties and huge expanses of land have been standing vacant for a couple of decades while multiple bureaucracies mull slowly over options. The [Federal Government](#) has apparently asked the Canada Lands Company and Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) to accelerate the planning process, although most indications are that "speed" is still a relative concept (the snail thinks the turtle is really fast!). Consultation is expected to extend into 2027. We are trying to get a message across that responding to the needs of the baby boom generation requires taking action now, as in a few years, this massive population group will be moving into the age of frailty.

At the same time, Carleton University has an opportunity to enable students to take a footbridge across the Rideau River to a multi-generational Village with rental options and restaurants and cafeterias and recreational supports at the RA Centre.

One of our volunteers, Architecture Professor Jerry Hacker, is working with his Carleton U. class to come up with a proposed master plan design, incorporating the various kinds of housing and support services which will be included if we get a go-ahead.

We invite volunteers who think they may be able to help in pushing the agenda forward. People and organizations involved in or interested in supportive housing, nonprofit co-op or rental housing, or other innovative approaches are welcome. The main criteria is a

willingness to put in some time and effort, but experience in development is also much needed.

Feel free to contact me through seniorshealthinnovationshub@gmail.com.

Terrance Hunsley