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FACT SHEET 3^a

A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE HOUSING MODEL: HOMESHARE

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WHAT IS HOMESHARE?

- “Homeshare is considered a living arrangement between two or more people, usually unrelated, who reside together in the same residence. Typically, each person has his or her own private space and will share common areas, such as the kitchen and living room. Household responsibilities can be shared, or sometimes services can be exchanged for reduced accommodation expenses. Services might include: cutting the grass, gardening, household cleaning, taking care of pets, and more. It is a living situation that is of mutual benefit to all involved and is about people helping each other” (Burlington Age-Friendly Seniors Council, 2015).
- This living arrangement is a recommended option for older adults, who want to continue living in their own homes and **"age in place"**, but may not have the full physical or mental capacity to live independently (Guelph Wellbeing, 2015).
- Homeshare programs in other Canadian communities have demonstrated success. Therefore, a Homeshare program should be considered as a viable means in Guelph to address the affordable housing needs of older adults in our community.
- Although Homeshare is aligned with the Guelph Wellington 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, Guelph’s Affordable Housing Strategy and its Older Adult Strategy, it is not explicitly identified as an option for alternative affordable housing.
- No existing homeshare program or model currently exists in the City of Guelph.



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BENEFITS OF A HOMESHARE PROGRAM¹

- Home providers:
 - Monthly income from the house seeker
 - An alternative to entering a retirement home or other costlier forms of care
 - Able to age in place due to shared household responsibilities
 - Can feel safer and less isolated
 - May provide a sense of belonging and a supportive environment
- Homeseeker:
 - Reduced monthly accommodation costs
 - Positive alternative to other accommodations
 - May provide a sense of belonging and a supportive environment

NEXT STEPS

- Review applicable zoning and planning bylaws in determining whether unintended barriers exist
- Budget resources and funds needed in implementing such a program
- Review current statistics on demographics of older adults, housing availability and access, to determine how a Homeshare program could fit within existing affordable housing strategies in Guelph
- Continued collaboration between municipal departments in the City of Guelph, community supports, stakeholders and community members themselves

¹ These benefits were determined based on evaluations conducted by Carstein, 2003; Legge, 2014; Sanchez et al., 2011 in addition to feedback from the Age Friendly Leadership Team



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HOMESHARE IN OTHER COMMUNITIES

- The City of Burlington, as part of Halton Region, has developed a valuable resource, Halton Homeshare Tool Kit, which provides information for older adults who wish to learn more about homeshare. Additionally, this tool kit provides guides for Older Adults who wish to become homesharers themselves, including a list of steps in becoming a homesharer and sample homeshare agreements (Burlington Age-Friendly Seniors Council, 2015).
- Although Guelph does not have a homeshare program, other Canadian communities such as Red Deer, Alberta and Gatineau, Quebec have successfully introduced homeshare programs that have helped create more affordable housing options (Burlington Age-Friendly Seniors Council, 2015).
- Please visit these links for more information on successful homeshare programs in Canada:
 - Halton Region <http://torontoist.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-HomeShare-Toolkit-Final.pdf>
 - Red Deer <http://www.homesharecanada.org/AB>

^a Information from this summary sheet is sourced from Burlington Age-Friendly Seniors Council, 2015; Carstein, 2003; Guelph Wellbeing, 2014; Legge, 2014; Lovell, 2016; Sanchez et al., 2001; World Health Organization, 2004). A full list of references can be found in the Project Summary.