



# 2022 Housing and Homelessness Annual Report

# Table of Contents

- 2022 Housing and Homelessness Annual Report..... 1
- Message from the Warden ..... 3
- Introduction: The Northumberland Context ..... 5
  - About the 10-year plan ..... 5
  - A Home for Everyone..... 5
- COVID-19 Impact and Response ..... 7
  - Homelessness System ..... 7
  - Housing System..... 8
- Measuring against our 10-year strategies (2022)..... 8
  - Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options..... 8
    - Progress toward action items ..... 8
  - Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services ..... 9
    - Progress toward action items ..... 9
  - Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability ..... 10
    - Progress toward action items ..... 10
  - Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports ..... 11
    - Progress toward action items ..... 11
  - Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply ..... 12
    - Progress toward action items ..... 12
  - Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock..... 12
    - Progress toward action items ..... 12
- Reporting on Progress ..... 14
  - Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options..... 14
  - Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services ..... 14
  - Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability ..... 15
  - Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports ..... 15
  - Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply ..... 16
  - Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock..... 16
- Continuing Forward ..... 16
- Appendix A: List of Action Items..... 18

## Message from the Warden



Northumberland County believes every resident deserves access to safe, reliable, and affordable housing. This report highlights our efforts in 2022 to address local need. This includes efforts to combat systemic challenges facing communities, as well as positive action in alignment with our 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan and our Affordable Housing Strategy. Each outlines measures to support individuals experiencing homelessness through the delivery of coordinated supports and services, and to increase the supply of housing throughout Northumberland at various levels of affordability.

Our community is currently facing a housing crisis that is unprecedented. The average cost of homes in Northumberland remains significantly above the average household's level of affordability, making home ownership an unobtainable goal for many households in our community. Adding to these challenges, local rental markets continue to experience high demand and low vacancy rates, making it even more challenging to find affordable, stable, long-term housing options.

This is the challenging reality many communities are facing across the province with the current housing market in Ontario. In the face of this challenge, County Council, staff, and community partners are more committed than ever to developing innovative strategies, collaborative partnerships, and supportive services that will offer housing solutions and support individuals experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

Over the past year, the County has supported enhanced emergency shelter services to respond to the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in our community. Through funding received from the provincial Social Service Relief Fund, we once again invested in Transition House's coordination – in partnership with St. Peter's Anglican Church – of an overnight winter warming room, to provide respite from the cold. In addition, with funding from the United Way Simcoe Muskoka's Reaching Home Rural and Remote initiative, we were able to fund Transition House's expansion of emergency shelter services through overflow accommodations at local motels. During this period, the County also directed funding to Northumberland Hills Hospital to increase resources for people experiencing homelessness who have mental health concerns. These services have helped connect individuals to much-needed supports.

With respect to housing stabilization for our community, in 2022, the County partnered with Northumberland County Housing Corporation (NCHC) to advance construction or acquisition of multiple affordable units. Together, we progressed the first stage of construction for the Elgin Park Affordable Housing Redevelopment in Cobourg, which will ultimately increase the number of subsidized and market rental housing units at this location from 18 to 40. Pre-construction work also moved forward for an affordable

housing development on Ontario Street in Cobourg; a partnership between the County, NCHC, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) and Habitat for Humanity Northumberland, which will see 62 new units of affordable housing at this location. Also in 2022, the County acquired and renovated a five-bedroom unit on Cockburn Street in Campbellford to be managed by the NCHC. We will be engaging a community agency to offer supportive housing at this location.

In addition to creating new units, we continued to support affordable rental costs for existing rental units in our community through the distribution of benefits and subsidies. In 2022, we issued benefits to 181 unique at-risk households to ensure they were able to remain housed. Our Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program was expanded to support more residents, and we also continued coordination of the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit to assist households with rental costs.

All of this reflects progress achieved – and intentions for the future, as we move forward with additional goals and priorities for 2023.

As our community continues to grow and services evolve, it's important we stay abreast of trends to ensure we're prepared to meet the changing needs of residents. Based on reported municipal data, our local housing market continues to grow, with the number of additional dwelling units added increasing from 16 in 2021 to 136 in 2022. This substantial increase in new homes is a great step toward managing high demand for housing in our community; however, we continue to focus our attention on ensuring a diverse range of affordability and housing types to support the needs of all residents.

Northumberland County aims to make strides in research and strategy related to housing as we move into 2023. This includes development of a Community Housing Master Plan, and the creation of an Affordable Housing Table which will bring together housing providers and agencies offering housing support services to share research and create opportunities for collaboration. In April 2023, we introduced a housing stabilization subsidy to help individuals achieve affordability in stable permanent housing. And a review of the homelessness system, currently being finalized, will support the establishment of a modernized homelessness shelter system.

As we continue to enhance supports for our neighbours and to take action to address the challenges we face, I encourage our partners and community members to follow our progress by viewing our monthly performance metrics available online at [Northumberland.ca/CSSspotlight](https://Northumberland.ca/CSSspotlight). I look forward to all we will accomplish together in 2023 to make Northumberland an ever-more livable and affordable community.



Mandy Martin  
Warden, Northumberland County

# Introduction: The Northumberland Context

## About the 10-year plan

Northumberland County is entering year 5 of our 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2019-2029. The County's vision for Northumberland that "[b]y 2029, the Northumberland housing and homelessness system is responsive to the needs of all residents, providing safe, appropriate and affordable housing options within healthy and inclusive communities."

With this plan, the County has established six strategies required to support improved outcomes in the system. These strategies include:

1. Increase Affordable Housing Options
2. Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services
3. Support Housing Stability
4. Increase Supportive Housing and Supports
5. Build a Diverse Housing Supply
6. Optimize the Existing Housing Stock

These six strategies are well aligned with Northumberland County's Affordable Housing Strategy, Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan and the forthcoming Community Housing Master Plan. This annual report will deep dive into each one of these strategies and provide concrete actions that have been taken, present data (where available), identify gaps where future attention will be required.

## A Home for Everyone...

Northumberland County continues to raise awareness of key housing realities facing our community. Even though many of these realities have existed for several years, these challenges continue to become more acute, and continue to persist despite the cooling of the housing market:

Some key realities include:

- The average market rent in Northumberland for a one-bedroom unit is more expensive than neighbouring communities, including the City of Peterborough, the City of Kawartha Lakes, Hastings County, the City of Kingston and is in line with the Region of Durham.
- The year-to-date average house resale price as of March 2022 was over \$1,000,000. As of March 2023, the average house resale price dropped to \$753,780. Despite this drop in resale prices, it remains unaffordable for all households in Northumberland except for the top decile of income earners.

- The waitlist for social housing continues to be 10 years in some communities and has grown more than 300% in the last 10 years, with over 1,000 households on the waitlist.
- The vacancy rate remains low and there have been limited new primary market rent units built since 2016.
- In 2022, the living wage for Northumberland County was \$19.05. This means that a single earner household earning a living wage in Northumberland County is unable to afford any rental unit at the CMHC AMR regardless of unit size.

Access to rental housing in Northumberland is limited across both urban and rural areas. The weekly rental listings compiled by the Help Centre have demonstrated the lack of availability week over week. It is notable that all three municipalities where data is available for vacancy rates are lower than the 2022 provincial average (1.8%). Northumberland's vacancy rate is calculated using available data from CMHC, which is limited in its reliability and in 2022, the availability of data for Northumberland is also limited. Based on available data, the vacancy rate in 2022 was 1%.

# COVID-19 Impact and Response

Northumberland's COVID-19 response continued into 2022. The pandemic has greatly impacted both housing and homelessness systems, programs and services. The COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted the vulnerability of the individuals supported by the housing and homelessness sector in Northumberland, particularly for people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Northumberland County has continued to respond to the pandemic and has seen success in adjusting services and programming to serve the changing needs and requirements throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some key milestones in the COVID-19 response include:

## Homelessness System

- Roll out of phases 4 and 5 of Social Service Relief funding to enhance services throughout pandemic including;
  - Set up of a warming room in a local school church as a measure to ensure access to a warm, safe space throughout the winter months while social distancing and other Covid safety requirements could be met.
  - Overflow and emergency accommodation provided at local motels. Quarantine spaces for homeless individuals were supported in January (8), February (10), March (6), and April (2).
    - Eligibility determined through health screening and diversion conversations
  - Supply of PPE to organizations working with people experiencing homelessness
  - Piloted an extension of the shelter benefit for providers with 2 agencies allowing more flexibility to act outside of regular office hours to both prevent at risk households from entering homelessness as well as help households who are experiencing homelessness increase their housing stability. A total of 281 benefits were issued in support by this initiative.
  - Continuation of homelessness Leadership Table (HLT) to provide ongoing leadership support to HCRT and for ongoing monitoring of the homelessness system to identify and address gaps. This group consists of senior staff from local organizations providing direct support to people experiencing homelessness
  - Added second mental health worker position to conduct outreach with clients who are experiencing homelessness and who are identifying with mental health related concerns. There is an intensive case management component for those clients needing housing outcomes (e.g. to remain housed, obtain housing, in shelter, to a diversion option, etc.).
- Additional financial investment in staff recruitment and training within the emergency shelter system based on high staff turnover

## Housing System

The housing services team continued to provide high-quality services to clients in a remote and in-person environment over 2022. Many of the actions implemented earlier in the pandemic evolved in 2022 and began to return to a pre-pandemic service delivery model. Some of these include:

- Rollout of SSRF to support community housing providers and tenants prepare for, and respond to, the pandemic.
- Continued providing access to SSRF funding for community housing providers to support enhanced cleaning protocols and other key public health measures.
- Supported NCHC tenants in the distribution of fresh food and cleaning supplies to support increased cost of living.

## Measuring against our 10-year strategies (2022)

In the development of the renewed 10-year housing and homelessness plan, engagement with community stakeholders was completed which supported the County in prioritizing the various action items under each strategy (for a full list of action items, please see Appendix A).

### Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options

This strategy focuses on work required to increase the supply of rental housing which is affordable to households with low and moderate incomes and achieving a functional zero end to homelessness. This is a key strategy that supports not only the Housing and Homelessness Plan but also the Affordable Housing Strategy.

### Progress toward action items

Over 2022, progress has been made to support this strategy and the 13 identified action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Committed to funding of 18 new units of affordable rental housing through the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Grant Program to support the creation of additional affordable rental units across the County. (Action item 1.1)
- Obtained County Council approval to continue the phase in of County-funded rent supplement units and develop a housing stability program to support households on the by-name list and others experiencing homelessness with rent subsidies (Action item 1.4.)



- Worked with member municipalities with Affordable Housing Community Improvement Programs to support implementation. (Action item 1.1)
- Continued chairing the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Working Group with representatives from all member municipalities focusing on the Strategy's implementation from a municipal perspective. (Action item 1.1)
- Continued discussions with member municipalities, provincial governments and other landlords on land acquisition opportunities in order to identify shovel-ready and funding-ready projects. (Action item 1.2)
- Continued the expansion of the County-funded Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program, with a budget that grows annually. Seeking rent supplement units in up to 50% of all affordable units created under the Affordable and Rental Housing Program. (Action item 1.4)
- Initiated the construction of the first phase of the Elgin Park Redevelopment. (Action Item 1.6)
- Continued progressing toward the construction of 62 units of affordable and attainable rental housing at 473 Ontario Street with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, Habitat for Humanity Northumberland and the NCHC. (Action Item 1.6)
- Participated in local, regional and provincial housing tables to support advocacy efforts to improve outcomes of programs and policies. (Action Items 1.9 – 1.13)

## Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services

This strategy focuses on developing a 'no wrong door' approach for accessing all housing and homelessness related support services in Northumberland. This strategy supports the development of a person-centred coordinated system supporting members of our community that are the most vulnerable.

### Progress toward action items

Over 2022, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 6 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Obtained access to HIFIS as a method of sharing real time information with participating agencies and to enhance coordinated access to the homelessness system. Implementation planning process currently underway. Full implementation expected late fall 2023. (Action item 2.2)
- Completed a successful application to Employment and Social Development Canada and United Way Simcoe Muskoka's Reaching Home Rural and Remote project, to enhance emergency shelter system capacity in Northumberland County working in partnership with a community agency and with a letter of support from the Homelessness Leadership Table. (Action 2.4)

- Quality By-Name List established as per BFZ-C and provincial requirements and updated at least monthly. (Action 2.3)
- Worked with consulting firm through the RFP process to complete a review of the homelessness system with recommendations towards establishing a modernized shelter system with equitable funding models and core service levels that fit well with other community services to address homelessness. (Action 2.4)
- Worked within the homelessness leadership table structure to coordinate service delivery for the day-time warming room space. (Action item 2.4)
- Implemented SharePoint as a means of working collaboratively with partners. This platform has been used both internally (cross divisions) and externally with key stakeholders in the community. The implementation of SharePoint has allowed groups to work together on different projects, communicate effectively and share resources using a common tool. (Action 2.4)

### Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability

This strategy focuses on creating a system of support service providers and landlords to enable successful transitions into housing stability for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. This strategy is also supported by the goals outlined in the Affordable Housing Strategy.

This strategy also includes work to ensure people that are housed are able to remain housed, including those with affordable rents in the private sector and community housing sector.

#### **Progress toward action items**

Over 2022, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 13 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Conducted a survey targeting people with lived/living experience of homelessness to assess need for support services/programming for the day-time warming space. (Action 3.12.)
- Continued implementing the COHB, including working with internal department stakeholders, community partners and the broader housing and homelessness systems to refer eligible households, including the Homelessness Coordinated Response Team. (Action item 3.6.)
- Continued the expansion and implementation of the Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program, to support households obtain rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing. (Action item 3.6.)

- Began developing a housing stabilization subsidy program to support households experiencing homelessness achieve affordability in permanent housing, with funding available beginning April 1, 2023. (Action item 3.6)
- Continued the implementation of eviction prevention policies and processes for the NCHC. (Action item 3.10)
- Continued the delivery of tenant programming during COVID-19 at NCHC buildings, including ongoing partnerships with the Northumberland Community Health Centres, and a partnership with Food4All for fresh produce delivery and PPE/disinfecting kits to all NCHC tenants, and initiated a partnership with Northumberland County Community Paramedicine.
- Ongoing work with the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, and partners on the development of affordable housing at 473 Ontario Street, based on the principles of reconciliation. (Action item 3.4. and 3.11.)

#### Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports

This strategy focuses on expanding the supply of housing with supports in appropriate locations throughout Northumberland. This goal is relevant to not only the Housing and Homelessness Plan, but also the Affordable Housing Strategy.

#### **Progress toward action items**

Over 2022, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 4 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Continued offering training opportunities for Housing Services and Facilities staff to support a consistent approach to tenant relations, training included: mental health first aid. (Action Item 4.1.)
- Coordinated two Bridges Out of Poverty training for local community agencies. Attendance for the two days was over 120 people. Bridges out of Poverty is a framework for understanding poverty and helps identify the “Hidden Rules” of economic class in our society. (4.1)
- Using SSRF 4 and 5 funding continued construction on 152 Cockburn Street, Campbellford, with the intent of creating supportive housing in Campbellford through a partnership with a partnering agency. (Action item 4.2.)
- With COCHI/OPHI Year 4 funding, identified community housing providers with similar capital repair needs and supported capacity building through partnering with HSC for project management and bulk procurement initiatives. Supported a non-profit housing provider who was in difficulty to stabilize and achieve good governance. (Action item 4.4.)

## Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply

This strategy focuses on encouraging and supporting the development of a diverse housing stock, including the need for more purpose built rental, smaller units, accessible housing options, and differing tenures and other ways to support a strong, robust and diverse housing supply across the County. This strategy also supports the goals of the Affordable Housing Strategy.

### **Progress toward action items**

Over 2022, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 3 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Coordinating with member municipalities through the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Working Group to review recommended action items and report on progress made. (Action Items 5.1 and 5.2)
- Working with the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Working Group to share best practices in policy development and implementation to support the creation of affordable housing. (Action items 5.1. – 5 .2.)

## Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock

This strategy focuses on existing housing stock and ensuring that dwellings are well-maintained and in good condition. It includes the considerations of finding new uses for existing dwellings and non-residential uses which are vacant or under-utilized. This goal also corresponds to the Affordable Housing Strategy.

### **Progress toward action items**

Over 2022, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 6 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Through the Affordable Rental Housing Grant Program, committed funding to support 18 new units of affordable housing in Northumberland. (Action item 6.1.)
- Purchased 152 Cockburn Street, Campbellford Ontario and retrofitted this house for use as supportive housing in a shared living environment. This was done using SSRF 4 and 5 funding. The NCHC will be the landlord and property owner and will work with a community agency to provide support services to individuals experiencing homelessness in our community (Action item 6.1.).
- Initiate construction of Elgin Park Redevelopment is anticipated to receive a LEED Silver designation with incorporation of energy efficient design principles and elements. (Action item 6.5)

- Continuation of Northumberland Renovates and providing supports to low-income homeowners to make critical renovations to their homes to enable aging in place and affordable accommodations.

# Reporting on Progress

## Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options

- At the time of this report, 4 affordable rental housing units have been occupied (i.e., have an occupancy permit as per the Ontario Building Code). 59 affordable housing units are currently in the planning process with funding applications granted in 2022. Member municipalities also reported a total of 136 additional dwelling units (any legal secondary dwelling, such as a secondary suite) that were built and occupied.
- As of 2022, there are 66 permanent rent supplement units, and this has remained relatively consistent since 2018.
- In 2021, 1006 households were reported to be on the waitlist with 50 of these households housed. In 2022, the waitlist consisted of 1067 households, with 50 housed off the list. Of these, 30 households were in receipt of the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), which provides a Portable Housing Benefit to assist with rental costs.

## Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services

- The Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT) is a consent-based case conferencing group of local agencies who share knowledge and resources to support people experiencing homelessness in Northumberland County. This group has continued to meet every two weeks for formal meetings, with breakaway case conferences and discussions around individualized support taking place between meetings on an as needed basis.
- HCRT agencies work to provide support to people who have consented to be on the By Name List (BNL). The BNL is a list of all people experiencing homelessness who have consented to provide their information so that agencies can best coordinate a way to provide individualized support based on each person's specific needs.
- In 2020 the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) extended an invitation to join the Built For Zero – Canada (BFZ-C) campaign with full member status based on the work and ongoing improvement efforts underway to develop a quality By-Name List and a coordinated access system in Northumberland County.
- There are currently 11 member organizations who regularly attend HCRT meetings.
- In 2022, 11 agencies continued to use common intake processes, as well as sharing tools and data. This has remained stable since the previous year.

### Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability

- In 2021, benefits were issued to 172 unique at-risk households to support them in remaining housed. An additional 181 households were supported by these benefits in 2022.
- Via the NCHC, there were 27 households at risk of experiencing homelessness that were stabilized in 2022. Community housing partners reported an additional 17 households for which eviction was prevented. These are households with current arrears but active payment plans.
- In 2022, 131 households were reported to move from homelessness or temporary housing into permanent or long-term housing. 39 individuals/families provided consent to be added to the BNL in 2022 and 137 were active on the list at any given time during the year.
- RentSmart Training was offered to tenants and landlords. This training provides information on tenant rights and responsibilities, in addition to building capacity in financial management and communication skills. In 2022, 17 tenants and 2 landlords participated in this training.

### Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports

- In 2022, 5 transitional housing beds were made available through the Next Step Program. There were also 158 supportive or shared housing beds (including long-term care, senior housing, emergency spaces, transitional housing) either available or in the planning process with funding applications granted in 2022.
- Emergency spaces were available throughout 2022. These include:
  - Emergency Shelter (i.e., overnight)
    - January to April: 13 spaces
    - May to December: 18 spaces
  - Motel Overflow
    - January to March: 10 spaces
    - April: 2 spaces
    - May to July: 6 spaces
    - September to November: 11 spaces
    - December: 12 spaces
  - Warming Room
    - January to April: 18 spaces
    - December: 20 spaces
- Training was offered to community agencies to support them in facilitating client involvement (i.e., encouraging clients to have a say in how they receive services). In 2022, Bridges Out of Poverty was offered, with 128 participants completing the training over two days.
- The Community Training and Development Centre provided consent training for 12 participants and self-care training for 8 participants.

## Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply

- In 2022, a total of 510 residential building permits were issued across Northumberland County, which represents a decrease of 29% over the previous year. Most permits were issued for detached structures (326). The number of permits issued for townhouse and semi-detached structures increased by 8% and 29%, respectively.
- At the time of this report, 4 new affordable housing units were built and occupied.
- Nearly all member municipalities have indicated they are actively working towards implementing the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, including updating zoning bylaws to allow for a more diverse housing supply.

## Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock

- The Renovate Northumberland program supported 11 households in 2022. An additional 2 households received support from ReNew It in 2022.

## Continuing Forward

Continuing forward to 2023, Northumberland County will seek to stabilize the housing and homelessness system into a post COVID-19 society in the wrap-up of intensive funding supports.

In 2023, housing and homelessness leads will review the implementation plan in detail and develop key goals over the next several years to further progress on the critical strategies and action items identified in the housing and homelessness plan. In addition, leads will review the current plan and identify areas in need of revision to more closely align with the needs in Northumberland.

Some key goals in 2023 include:

- Continue working with member municipalities and other sources to develop a land bank of shovel-ready and funding-ready projects.
- Complete the Community Housing Master Plan/NCHC Strategic Asset Management Plan.
- Continue construction on Elgin Park Redevelopment, a mixed development, RGI redevelopment project with the NCHC.
- Initiate design work, including net zero feasibility studies for the construction at 473 Ontario Street with project partners.
- Continue to support community housing providers in meeting goals and priorities of the Service Manager, and preparing for end of mortgages, including the entering into service agreements.
- Continue to expand the Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program.
- Launch supportive housing in Trent Hills in partnership with local community agency.



- Develop and launch a new housing support program utilizing HPP funding to support households at risk of or experiencing homelessness to achieve permanent stable housing.
- Create an Affordable Housing Table that brings together deliverers of affordable housing and agencies offering housing support services.
- Continue opportunities for shelter benefit programs to be operated through community partners.
- Develop a workplan for the homelessness leadership table for opportunities to work collaboratively to further develop and enhance homelessness system planning.
- Full HIFIS implementation with community partners trained and adding real time updates to the system for better tracking of the homelessness population in Northumberland.
- Analyze and plan implementation of recommendations from the homelessness system review.
- Develop housing stability program to support individuals and households to obtain and maintain housing.

For a list of housing and homelessness resources available, visit our website:

<https://www.northumberland.ca/en/living-here/housing-and-shelter.aspx>

Information is also available on the Housing Help website at:

<https://housinghelp.northumberland.ca/>

Alternative Forms of this report are available upon request.

# Appendix A: List of Action Items

## Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options

- 1.1 **PRIORITY** Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with member municipalities to implement the recommended Northumberland Affordable and Rental Housing Program.
- 1.2 **PRIORITY** Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with member municipalities to develop a County-wide approach to securing land for affordable housing development, including exploring a policy to give priority to affordable housing development in the disposition of surplus land, land banking, and land sharing.
- 1.3 Consider waiving interest charges on the deferred development charges for market-rate rental housing developments.
- 1.4 **PRIORITY** Consider the feasibility of a County-funded rent supplement program to support households with incomes in the first and second income deciles.
- 1.5 **PRIORITY** Consider developing County-wide design guidelines and alternative standards for affordable housing to encourage the development of more innovative housing options.
- 1.6 **PRIORITY** Explore the feasibility of expanding Northumberland County Housing Corporation's (NCHC) role to developing mixed income buildings (including market rental and affordable rental units) to increase supply of affordable housing while maintaining financial viability.
- 1.7 Support non-profit organizations who are applying for federal and/or provincial funding to build affordable housing.
- 1.8 Explore the feasibility of building container or modular homes and/or tiny homes as affordable housing units.
- 1.9 Advocate to community partners, such as school boards and faith groups, to contribute to the development of affordable housing in Northumberland. Contributions can be in-kind, such as land, or financial.
- 1.10 Advocate to the federal government to expand the Co-Investment Fund, or similar future programs, to provide increased capital funding for affordable housing projects, including increased funding to allow for deeper levels of affordability.
- 1.11 Advocate to the federal government to improve timelines for approvals and execution of agreements, including the release of funds, for the Co-Investment Fund.

- 1.12 Advocate to the federal and provincial governments to fully exempt charitable non-profit organizations from HST for new affordable housing projects.
- 1.13 Advocate to the provincial government to expand the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative program, or similar future programs, to provide increased capital funding to build new affordable housing projects. Funding amounts should be reflective of the needs of Service Managers, including increased building costs in small, rural communities.

#### Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services

- 2.1 **PRIORITY** Building on the Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT) work, design and implement a coordinated access system for housing and homelessness services to better help people needing assistance.
- 2.2 Ensure all housing and homelessness service providers use a common approach to collecting and sharing data, including a common intake assessment process using the VI-SPDAT tool and a cloud-based database.
- 2.3 **PRIORITY** Work on developing a quality By-Name List based on the Built for Zero scorecard and update this list on a monthly basis at a minimum.
- 2.4 **PRIORITY** Convene a table of community agencies providing housing and homelessness services to examine current services to determine how each contributes to the housing and homelessness system and identify opportunities to coordinate service delivery.
- 2.5 Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, increase awareness of all housing and homelessness services available for Northumberland residents through a common website, mobile app, brochures, and monthly e-newsletters to all community agencies. This should include the weekly rental listings.
- 2.6 Building on the recommended action in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, engage and work with private landlords to facilitate access to private rental units, even for the population who may be considered 'hard to house'.

#### Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability

- 3.1 Continue to work with community agencies to provide education on basic life skills, such as being 'rent ready' and budgeting, as a standard part of the process for people who are moving from homelessness to permanent housing.
- 3.2 Work with community agencies and high schools to develop a training module to provide basic life skills training, including budgeting and being 'rent ready'.

- 3.3 Consider implementing the Host Homes Program as a shelter-diversion strategy for youth.
- 3.4 Consider implementing the Homeward Bound Program for female-led lone-parent families.
- 3.5 Building on the recommendations in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, encourage and support social enterprises which provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities, mental health issues, addictions, youth, and people who are currently receiving Ontario Works benefits.
- 3.6 **PRIORITY** Building on the recommended actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, provide County-funded and County-administered housing allowances and rent supplements, such as the Canada Housing Benefit, to individuals and families who are chronically homeless and those who have low acuity scores and only need affordable housing.
- 3.7 Develop and enhance partnerships with other sectors, such as hospitals, the LHIN, and the correctional system, to ensure people leaving institutions are connected to the appropriate housing and supports they need to live independently in the community.
- 3.8 **PRIORITY** Encourage community agencies to examine current practices in providing supports to ensure they are person-centred and flexible enough to meet each individual client's own goals rather than the goals of the support provider.
- 3.9 **PRIORITY** Building on the landlord engagement strategy identified in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with community agencies to provide education on discrimination and the human rights code as it applies to tenants and vulnerable groups.
- 3.10 **PRIORITY** Building on the eviction prevention model implemented in 2018, ensure all community housing providers, including Northumberland County Housing Corporation, are using the tools and processes developed to guide tenant relations and support eviction prevention goals.
- 3.11 Building on current relationship-building initiatives, work with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services and the Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre to develop culturally-appropriate tools and processes to prevent evictions.
- 3.12 **PRIORITY** Identify opportunities to bring people with living or lived experience into the decision-making process regarding the support services they need.
- 3.13 Advocate to the federal and provincial governments to increase funding for the Canada Housing Benefit, or other similar future program.

#### Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports

- 4.1 Encourage and support community agencies to provide training to frontline staff to ensure supports provided are culturally-appropriate and trauma-informed. This may include facilitating peer mentorship opportunities among staff of different organizations.
- 4.2 Work with community agencies to explore opportunities to submit joint funding bids, pool funding among housing partners to build supportive housing, and combine resources to develop common tools.
- 4.3 Work with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services to explore opportunities to develop culturally-appropriate supportive housing options for Indigenous peoples in Northumberland County who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- 4.4 **PRIORITY** Encourage and support non-profit housing providers to explore options for a shared services model to build capacity in the sector.

#### Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply

- 5.1 **PRIORITY** Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, encourage member municipalities to revise zoning by-laws to ensure cohousing, co-living, and shared housing arrangements (with or without supports) are permitted in all communities throughout Northumberland.
- 5.2 Keep member municipalities accountable to ensure their Official Plans and zoning by-laws do not act as barriers to the development of a more diverse housing supply in all communities.
- 5.3 Work with member municipalities to explore options to make zoning by-laws and other local regulations more flexible to allow culturally-appropriate housing.

#### Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock

- 6.1 Facilitate partnerships among community agencies, private developers, member municipalities, and property owners to identify opportunities to renovate vacant or underutilized properties into affordable and/or supportive housing.
- 6.2 Explore the feasibility of offering a property tax discount for property owners who donate or lease their property at below-market value to non-profit housing providers to increase the supply of affordable housing.
- 6.3 Explore the feasibility of supporting a pilot project which would renovate a vacant or underutilized property into cohousing/shared housing for people on the By-Name List with low acuity scores (i.e. those who only need affordable housing).
- 6.4 Facilitate partnerships with faith groups and non-profit and for-profit residential developers to redevelop vacant or underutilized church-owned property to increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing.

- 6.5 Encourage private and not-for-profit residential builders to meet Passive House, LEED (even if they do not obtain certification), or similar standards in renovations of existing dwellings as well as the development of new dwellings, particularly affordable housing projects.
- 6.6 Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with municipal staff and other housing partners to develop fact sheets on considering climate change in the renovation of existing homes as well as the building of new dwellings by incorporating energy efficient and environmentally sustainable features.