



STRATFORD, PERTH COUNTY, AND ST. MARYS • 2014-2024

Housing and Homelessness Plan

The 2019 Annual Report highlights the achievements made in Year 6 of the *10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys (2014 –2024)*. In 2019, the Service Manager area saw the implementation of activities to promote housing stability locally including:

- Creating more housing options for low to moderate income families through new construction and rent supports;
- Engaging community housing providers; and
- Coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

This year also marked an important milestone in the implementation of the Plan. In order to ensure it continued to reflect local needs and address local challenges, while also aligning with the work being done provincially and nationally, a comprehensive review was completed. From this review, an updated Housing and Homelessness Plan was developed for the next five years (2020 – 2024).

A New Housing and Homelessness Plan¹



Engaged 100+ community stakeholders:

- Individuals with lived experience of housing instability and homelessness
- Local service providers
- Municipal planning departments
- Economic development partners
- Community housing providers



Used a variety of consultation methods to review and update the Plan:

- Public meetings
- Key interviews
- Digital engagement platform



Introduced a new vision to guide the community in its work to address homelessness and housing stability locally:



2020 VISION STATEMENT

Everyone has the right to a home that is safe, suitable, and affordable, and to supports that help them keep their home.

2014 VISION STATEMENT

All people will have access to housing that is safe and suitable for their needs, and will have supports that enable them to remain stable in their homes. People may become homeless, or face the possibility of losing their homes, but supports will be in place to help them remain in their housing or to locate to a permanent alternative as quickly as possible, in the community of their choice.



Developed a new framework to better reflect local priorities and activities and updated provincial policy directions:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (2020-2024)



Ending Homelessness



Creating Attainable Housing Options



Sustaining Community Housing



Addressing a Diversity of Needs

IMPLEMENTATION DRIVERS

Collaborating with partners

Providing education and training

Collecting and using reliable data

Measuring success through outcomes



Conducted an assessment of current demographic, socio-economic, housing, and homelessness data.

PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

- Coordination & Collaboration
- Data Gathering & Sharing
- Affordable Housing Options
- Eviction & Homelessness Prevention
- Homelessness Reduction

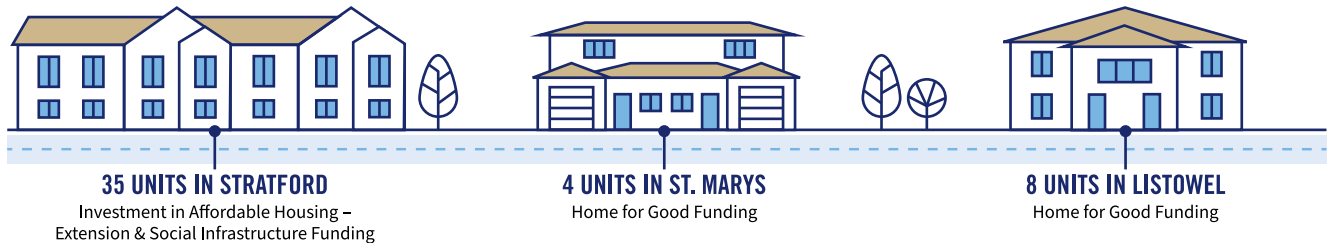
1. The updated Plan—Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys Housing and Homelessness Plan—Five Year Update (2020-2024)—can be found on the City of Stratford's website.

Our Accomplishments in 2019

NEW CONSTRUCTION

- ✓ Completed the construction of 3 affordable housing builds, creating 47 new affordable units.

96% of the units were occupied by the end of 2019, providing homes for 93 individuals.



COMMUNITY HOUSING AND RENT SUPPORTS

- ✓ Presented results of the 2018 Operational Reviews with all 10 community housing providers and offered recommendations for strengthening their projects in the areas of governance, asset management, resident management, and administrative systems.

- ✓ Distributed over \$100,000 through the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) to support 3 community housing providers with urgent capital needs and life cycle repairs.

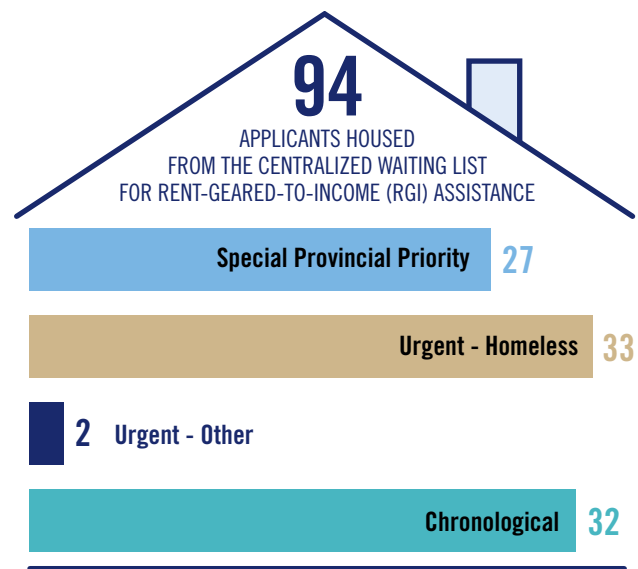
Funding provided improvements to 99 units.

- ✓ Hosted a Landlord Appreciation Dinner to celebrate local landlords, acknowledge their vital role in creating stable and affordable housing, and provide strategies for establishing and maintaining positive tenancies for the long-term.

44 individuals attended the event; 2 new landlords offered units to local rent support programs as a result of this event.

- ✓ Hosted a four-day RentSmart Educator professional development course to a select group of community agencies to build local capacity for the delivery of RentSmart workshops that support tenants, landlords, and community champions in forming successful tenancies.

15 attendees from 7 agencies became certified as RentSmart trainers.



- ✓ Achieved Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) approval for an alternate average market rent (AMR) that was higher than Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) published rate. This resulted in increased housing allowance limits and created more affordable housing options for low-income households locally.

- ✓ Supported 7 new households with rent supports through Investment in Affordable Housing – Extension (IAH-E) federal/provincial funding.

- ✓ Referred 5 new households to the provincial Special Provincial Priority-Portable Housing Benefit (SPP-PHB) program which were all approved by the Ministry of Finance.



Our Accomplishments in 2019

HOUSING STABILITY AND HOMELESSNESS RESPONSE

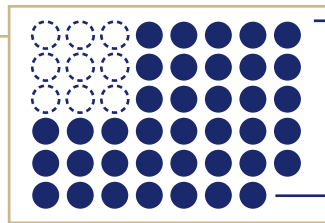
- Achieved a Quality By-Name-List (BNL) in November of 2019, the first key milestone towards ending homelessness. As of December 31, 2019, 120 households were actively experiencing homelessness locally and:



- The Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) continued to provide wraparound services to individuals experiencing homelessness and assist them with finding and maintaining permanent housing. As of December 31, 2019:

47 HOUSEHOLDS
(86 individuals) were participating in SHOPP*

*SHOPP draws its intake from the BNL, meaning that this program accounted for 31.4% of the 89 households on the BNL that were housed in 2019.



38 HOUSEHOLDS
(77 individuals) had found permanent housing

17 private market landlords provided rental units to program participants.

- 251 households were provided with emergency accommodation in 2019, a 2.3% decrease from 2018.

On average, each household accessed 11.8 nights of emergency accommodation, up from 7.5 nights in 2018.

- The City of Stratford Social Services Department continued to offer **financial assistance** to households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness to find and maintain housing.

97 households with moving costs

118 households with last month's rent deposit

93 households with utility arrears

107 households with rent arrears

Moving Forward into 2020

2020 marks the first year of the updated *Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys (2020-2024)*. Moving forward, this Service Manager area will continue the work of ending homelessness, creating attainable housing options, sustaining community housing, and addressing a diversity of needs. Strong collaborative partnerships, evidence-based decision-making, capacity-building through education and training, and a focus on outcomes to measure success will be the framework by which our communities ensure that all residents have a safe, suitable, and affordable place to call home.