

10-Year Municipal **Housing &** **Homelessness Plan**

in the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac



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Introduction

In 2011, the new Housing Services Act came into effect, requiring all Service Managers in Ontario to develop a ten-year plan to identify objectives and targets related to housing and homelessness, as well as actions proposed to meet those objectives.

The City of Kingston, as the Service Manager for the City and the County of Frontenac, had a Municipal Housing Strategy approved by Council in July 2011 but it did not include an official plan to address homelessness. Thus, in summer 2012, OrgCode Consulting, Inc. was retained to commence development on a local plan to end homelessness, which would be used to guide future funding and service orientation related to homelessness services. Concurrently, the Municipal Housing Strategy was updated to extend the projections to a ten-year horizon and to bring it into alignment with the homelessness strategies.

The result of this effort is the updated 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan which was approved by City Council on December 17th 2013. This Plan recognizes and builds on the existing Municipal Housing Strategy (2011). The original MHS is not required to read, understand, or implement the strategies and recommendations identified in this document. However, the Municipal Housing Strategy includes a needs assessment and other important background information useful for understanding how the recommendations in this document were developed.

Executive Summary

Development of the Housing & Homelessness Plan

In 2011, the *Housing Services Act* was created, requiring all Consolidated Municipal Service Managers to create and adopt a plan to address the community's housing and homelessness needs. Locally, the City of Kingston's Housing Department acts as the Service Manager for the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac. In 2010-2011, a *Municipal Housing Strategy* was developed and adopted in Kingston, but there was no plan to address homelessness. Therefore, in 2012-2013, this Plan was developed to update the existing *Municipal Housing Strategy*, adhere to new provincial requirements, and include a plan to address homelessness.

The strategies to end homelessness were developed using best practices and research in the field of homelessness and housing while considering the local environment. These strategies were presented for extensive community consultation, including interviews with city staff from several departments and over two dozen agencies within the community that work directly with homeless or precariously housed individuals and have been traditionally funded through the Service Manager. In addition, four public consultation sessions were conducted, with good participation. Agencies within the community were given the opportunity to review and comment on draft versions of this Plan.

Relationship to the Municipal Housing Strategy

This Plan is intended to build on the Municipal Housing Strategy. The majority of the recommendations from the original Municipal Housing Strategy (2011) are also found within this document, however some have been updated, others have been completed, and some additional housing-related recommendations have been included in this Plan. The recommendations found within this Plan, therefore, should be understood as replacing the recommendations from the Municipal Housing Strategy. For a deeper understanding of the housing needs within Kingston and Frontenac, refer to the Municipal Housing Strategy and its related documents.

Overview of Kingston and Frontenac

Geographically, this Plan serves the entirety of the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac. Together, the region had a 2011 population of 149,738, with just over 80% of that located within Kingston itself. Despite this level of concentration, the region comprises over 3,700 km², which poses a logistical challenge in terms of implementing the recommendations across such a geographically large region.

As the halfway point between Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal, Kingston has a number of characteristics in common with large cities. Kingston General Hospital, for instance, serves as the regional hospital for an even larger geographic region, serving a population of over 500,000.

Kingston's three post-secondary institutions – Queen's University, St. Lawrence College, and Royal Military College – play a significant role on the local economy, especially the rental housing market. In addition, Kingston is home to several federal prisons and a Canadian Forces Base, all of which add additional pressures on the housing market. This creates a unique situation wherein the rental market is tight and increasingly unaffordable.

Municipal Housing Strategy

The Municipal Housing Strategy includes extensive research into the housing stock, housing tenure, population demographics, and income of the residents of Kingston and Frontenac. While the entirety of the research has not been reproduced in this document, the Municipal Housing Strategy found that:

- The population in Kingston and Frontenac is aging, which will have an increasing impact on local housing demand.
- Housing stock in Kingston and Frontenac is predominately single detached homes and is not diverse enough to accommodate changing household needs.
- While the proportion of households that own rather than rent has been increasing, this trend is not expected to continue for much longer given the increasing cost of housing
- The absolute number of rental housing units in the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac actually decreased from 1996 to 2006. While this trend has reversed somewhat in recent years, the City Kingston has a long history of very low vacancy rates and high rental prices.
- There is a shortage of student housing which also has an impact on the overall rental market.
- Household incomes are polarized, with an increasing incidence of households below the low-income cut off (LICO index) in Kingston.
- There are very few opportunities for affordable rental or ownership housing.
- A very high proportion of renter households (47.8% in 2011) are paying more than 30% of their income on rent.
- Housing affordability is a bigger challenge for youth-led households and single-parent households.
- There is a shortage of social housing units, especially for families and single-person households.

Municipal Housing Strategy Update

In 2011, the new *Housing Services Act* came into effect, requiring all Service Managers in Ontario to develop a ten-year plan to identify objectives and targets related to housing and homelessness, as well as actions proposed to meet those objectives. The City of Kingston, as the Service Manager for the City and the County of Frontenac, updated the existing Municipal Housing Strategy to extend the projections to a ten-year horizon and to bring it into alignment with the strategies to end homelessness.

This update provides greater detail and expands the targets set for housing affordability identified in the Municipal Housing Strategy; to provide guidance on issues that have emerged since the Municipal Housing Strategy was created; to clarify recommendations in the Municipal Housing Strategy that were proving difficult to implement; and to connect and align with the Plan's strategy to end homelessness with the MHS.

The Housing Continuum

Central to this Plan is the idea of a "housing continuum." This refers to the need for a wide range of housing options across a number of dimensions in a given geographic region. Life stage is one such dimension. For example, it is logical that the housing needs of a young adult would be different from a family with children, which would again be distinct from a senior citizen. Income is a second dimension, which requires that housing should be available for persons of all income brackets in Kingston and the County of Frontenac. A third dimension is needs and supports. While many Kingston residents are able to live independently, others require some sort of assistance to maintain their housing. Influencing the three dimensions of the housing continuum are considerations such as personal preference, needs, life circumstances and access to resources.

This Plan reinforces the idea of the housing continuum and personal preferences by encouraging a wide variety of housing options available in terms of tenure, location, built form, and cost, so that there is the highest likelihood that the housing needs of every resident of the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac can be met.

Housing Affordability

Affordable housing is defined by the City of Kingston's Official Plan as the least expensive of two options: either housing is affordable when it costs less than 30% of a household's income, or if the cost is below the average market rate (for rental housing) or 10% below the average resale price (for ownership housing), whichever is least expensive. This definition is consistent with Ontario's Provincial Policy Statement, and is the one adopted in this Plan.

There still remains, however, some confusion as to what constitutes housing affordability. From a policy perspective, it can be difficult to define affordable housing relative to the income of the residents, considering the variable nature of income. Thus, some affordable housing programs, such as the Affordable Housing Program and the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario Program instead define affordable housing as 80% of average market rent to reduce the difficulties in implementation.

Affordability Scenarios for Low Income Groups

In order to better illustrate what affordability means to those households with the lowest incomes, a scenario-based approach was implemented.

For example, a family of four with one wage-earner working full time and earning minimum wage would earn a monthly total income of \$2639. For this group, 30% of their total monthly income is \$791.70, and this household would most likely require a three-bedroom apartment. However, as of 2013 the average price of a three-bedroom apartment is \$1,230.00, which is almost 50% higher than the affordable price for this household.

Similarly, a single person receiving an Ontario Works allowance would receive a total monthly income of \$649, including a shelter allowance of \$376, which must be spent on rent. This household can therefore afford to pay up to \$376 per month on rent, even though this figure is higher than 30% of this household's income. However, the average price of a bachelor apartment in Kingston is \$661.00, which is unaffordable for this household.

Based on the current rental rates in Kingston and Frontenac, it is extremely unlikely for these and other low-income households to be able to find a suitable and adequate rental unit for an affordable price.

Units Based on Levels of Affordability

The Municipal Housing Strategy set targets for new affordable housing units built over the next ten years as follows: 1700 new units in the City of Kingston, and 410 new units in the County of Frontenac. These initial projections in the Municipal Housing Strategy indicated an average of 170 units per year for the next ten years for the City of Kingston, and an average of 41 units per year for the County of Frontenac. However, these targets did not provide any more detail as to the level of affordability or the type of housing needed.

This Plan breaks down these existing affordability targets to four specific income brackets. Using this approach, it is recognized that over the next ten years a total of 2,110 affordable units would need to be created in Kingston and Frontenac to address the

need for those in deepest need. Achieving these targets is not fiscally manageable by the Municipality alone. Considerable change in policies and practices at Provincial and Federal levels of government would need to be made to meet the housing targets based on deepest need.

Level of Affordability	City of Kingston	County of Frontenac	TOTAL
Units affordable to persons making \$649 or less per month	678	159	837
Units affordable to persons making \$650 to \$1,149 per month	387	89	476
Units affordable to persons making \$1,150 to \$1,541 per month	499	129	628
Units affordable to persons making \$1,542 to \$2,639 per month	136	33	169
Total Affordable Dwellings	1700	410	2110

Permanent Supportive Housing

Supportive housing refers to housing that comes with various supports designed to assist the tenant in successfully maintaining their housing. This type of housing is exclusively for individuals that have been assessed as having higher needs, arising from complex, co-occurring disorders that present serious challenges to living independently. This might include mental health or addiction issues along with chronic physical health challenges. Using the affordable housing targets as a reference, 299 units of permanent supportive housing would be required to be in place over the next ten years in the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac to meet the need.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) usually provides Rent-Geared-to-Income units with ongoing supports that use a harm reduction approach and the housing is permanent as long as the tenant meets some basic tenancy requirements such as paying rent and not doing harm to others.

Transitional housing may also provide supports to residents but it is expected that they leave once they have completed the program and the stay is often less than one year. Transitional housing is not optimal since there is no evidence that transitional housing achieves better outcomes than PSH and the artificial time limit imposed with transitional housing does not make sense to all tenants, who may work towards life improvements at different rates of time.

Inclusionary Zoning

One method identified in the Municipal Housing Strategy for the provision of more affordable housing is what is known as inclusionary zoning. Simply put, inclusionary zoning requires the inclusion of a certain number of affordable housing units when a new housing development is approved, such as a new subdivision, condominium, or rental apartment building. Unfortunately, inclusionary zoning is not specifically permitted in Ontario at present.

Similar principles can be implemented, however, through what are more broadly referred to as “inclusionary policies.” For instance, instead of requiring a certain number of units to be affordable, a voluntary program could be instituted granting various incentives to developers who include affordable units. This is similar to existing policies within Kingston that permit height and/or density “bonuses” for developers that provide some sort of social good.

Housing Sustainability

Kingston has recently adopted a Sustainability Plan and is working towards becoming Canada’s most sustainable city. Thus, it is important to consider affordable housing from the perspective of sustainability.

For affordable housing to be financially sustainable, there must be some discussion as to cost recovery. Rent supplements (when the government assists a low income household to “supplement” the amount of rent they pay to the landlord) are a simpler and faster way to increase the amount of affordable housing options within a municipality compared to building new, but this option is unsustainable in the long term. In contrast, acquiring and maintaining more housing for the municipality’s portfolio is sustainable because some of the units can be rented out in the private market, offsetting the costs associated with providing affordable units.

Housing Affordability in Frontenac

In the County of Frontenac, housing needs are quite different than in urban Kingston. In particular, housing stock is older, and in greater need of repair. Because the housing stock is older, often utility and maintenance costs are higher, leading to decreased affordability.

A greater proportion of households in Frontenac are homeowners than in Kingston, but for those households in the County that are unable to afford owning a house, this means that there are very few rental options due to the small market.

In the County of Frontenac, there is a high and increasing proportion of seniors, which has a number of implications for the housing market within the region. Many seniors may require housing that is accessible due to mobility challenges. Similarly, healthcare becomes increasingly important, and some parts of Frontenac are 100km away or more from the nearest hospital. Finally, from an affordability perspective, housing specifically for seniors can be quite costly, particularly for households that have no income at all.

Opportunities for Affordable Housing Development in Frontenac

While retaining the rural character that has attracted many to living in Frontenac County, there are a number of opportunities to develop affordable housing within the region. First, a number of large, older buildings can be converted into multiple, smaller units. Second, the municipality or the region can encourage developers to build more affordable housing by providing incentives such as expediting the development approval process. Third, alternative housing types can be investigated, such as mobile homes and prefabricated dwellings. Fourth, intensification can be pursued in some circumstances.

Intensification refers to building more densely rather than sprawling outwards, and can be seen as undesirable in rural areas. However, it is quite possible to pursue intensification while maintaining the rural character of the area. Secondary suites can be quite unobtrusive, as can shared housing arrangements. In addition, permitting a second house on an existing property or reducing lot sizes somewhat can also encourage intensification without having a major impact on the character of the region.

Addressing Homelessness in the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac

For those Kingston residents at extreme ends of the housing continuum, homelessness may be a reality. People experiencing homelessness are a disparate group, ranging in age, gender, ethnicity, level of education, state of health, and mental wellbeing. What they have in common is that they all lack housing.

This Plan focuses on housing provision with the appropriate level of supports as the key to reducing, and ultimately ending chronic homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac.

“Ending homelessness” means that there will be an effective system in place such that absence of housing in the future will be short-term and rare and people will no longer experience chronic homelessness or repeated episodes of homelessness.

This Plan outlines a number of evidence-based and evidence-informed practices, including ‘Housing First’ and ‘Rapid Re-Housing’ that are designed to assist persons experiencing homelessness access housing quickly and maintain their housing. Using these approaches, homeless individuals with co-occurring needs are matched with the

most appropriate level of supports relative to their individual needs. These individuals and families are given priority in accessing housing, and are provided with other “wrap-around” supports and services (such as attending to mental health issues or addiction issues) only after they have moved into their new residence and achieved some level of housing stability.

Measuring the Scope of Homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac

At present, it is impossible to state with certainty how many people experience homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac. What is known is that, in 2012, 818 unique individuals and families stayed in shelters over the course of the year.

Further, it is estimated, based on population size, that there are 400 persons experiencing homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac at any given point in time. A “Point In Time” Homeless Count is scheduled for the fall of 2013, which will provide a much more accurate picture of the scope of homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac, and additionally will allow the Service Manager to track progress towards ending homelessness as the recommendations to end homelessness are implemented.

Homeless Subpopulations

It is inaccurate to assume that the homeless population is homogenous. There are many distinct subpopulations, each with their own distinct needs. For instance, persons who are chronically homeless typically comprise 15%-20% of the total homeless population; veterans are often disproportionately represented among those who are homeless; seniors who become homeless are particularly vulnerable; persons who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, can comprise up to 40% of the homeless youth subpopulation; and newcomers to Canada often have culturally specific needs, such as language barriers.

In Kingston, homeless youth have been identified as a priority area, and in fact is one of two communities in Canada to be selected for a pilot initiative of the Federal Government called Mobilizing Local Capacity to End Youth Homelessness. In Kingston, approximately 1 in 4 homeless shelter users are youth (under age 25). This group is particularly vulnerable since they are highly susceptible to outside influence, and are still in a formative part of their lives. Youth are best served by services specific to their situation – a rapid response designed to immediately assist youth regain their footing and return to some sort of stable housing.

Homeless families are another particularly vulnerable group, and in Kingston, 18% of shelter users are part of a family. These families can include children as young as newborns. Fortunately, the majority of families are able to regain housing very quickly, and

tend to have shorter durations of homelessness, but some families require further assistance or risk exposing their children to long episodes of homelessness.

While the majority of homeless individuals are men, women constitute about 29% of shelter users, and have needs that are quite different from men. Homeless women tend to be younger than men, and often have experienced abuse, whether in their childhood or more recently.

Aboriginal people are typically overrepresented within the homeless population in any city in Canada. It is estimated that in Kingston, as many as 25% of homeless individuals may be of aboriginal descent. However, one of the significant limitations in the homeless service sector in Kingston at present is the lack of data available, including the lack of data about aboriginal persons.

Victims of domestic violence are another distinct group who are often found within the homeless population. While they may not consider themselves to be homeless, this group can be any age or gender and can come from any socio-economic background. The government of Ontario has identified Victims of Domestic Violence to be a special priority group.

Available Services for Homeless Persons

In 2012, the City of Kingston funded 78 shelter beds, of which, on average, 57 were full every night. This suggests an average occupancy rate of 75% over the course of the year, which indicates that Kingston is presently over-served by shelter beds or perhaps Kingston does not have the right mix of shelter beds. The average length of time people are staying in shelters has increased from 22 days in 2010 to 28 days in 2012.

In Kingston and Frontenac, there are also at least nine meal programs available and five food banks, though the majority are not funded by the Service Manager. It does not appear that there is a gap in food availability, though it is unclear if all nutritional needs are met through available food.

Persons who are homeless tend to have poorer health than people who are housed. One study found that homeless individuals visit the emergency room at least 2.1 times per year, on average, a rate ten times higher than the housed population. While Kingston has adequate emergency health care services to tend to the needs of the homeless population, more cost-effective, non-emergency services such as those offered by Street Health, a community based health centre, could be expanded to reduce the burden on the emergency system.

It is estimated that close to 2/3 of people experiencing homelessness have a mental illness or have experienced one in their lives, though the percentage that experiences a serious and persistent mental illness is much lower.

As previously discussed, the lack of affordable housing is a major issue within Kingston. The most recent data indicates that an average two-bedroom apartment in Kingston is \$1,005 per month, which is a 4.1% increase from the previous year. Since 2008, the average rate of rent increase in Kingston has been significantly higher than the rate of inflation, suggesting that rents are becoming increasingly unaffordable for many but particularly so for those in the lowest incomes.

Cost of Homelessness

Homelessness imposes a number of costs – at the individual level, relationship level, and societal level. It is estimated that the total cost of homelessness in Kingston is approximately \$20 million per year, although this cost is shared between federal, provincial, and municipal governments.

This cost is disproportionately accrued across the homeless population, however. On one end of the spectrum of homelessness are persons who are homeless very briefly, and barely use any services and impose minimal costs. However, on the opposite end of the spectrum are persons who are chronically homeless, and are high frequency users of health and justice services as well as emergency shelter and meal program users. In Kingston, 20% of the unique individuals who stayed in shelters in 2012 accounted for 60% of the shelter bed-nights used.

Focusing on improved strategies to assist the population that consume the most resources can result in a substantial reduction in homelessness and of the associated costs. In fact, a Canada-wide study found that investing in supportive housing programs that specifically target chronically homeless individuals with the highest needs resulted in savings of \$1.54 for every dollar spent.

Instead of allowing these individuals to continue using high-cost services, this Plan recommends refocusing those funds that would have been spent on managing homelessness to a concerted effort towards ending homelessness. For instance, it costs far less to provide a person with a safe and secure apartment for a year than it does to maintain a shelter bed for a year.

Ending Chronic Homelessness

Because the homeless population is not a homogenous group, different approaches focused on different portions of this population are required. Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing are two such approaches which provide permanent housing with supports

to those most in need. Diversion and Prevention focus on those with less acute needs.

Housing first

A housing first philosophy refers to the general approach to ending homelessness that focuses on helping homeless individuals find housing as quickly as possible, regardless of all their other life needs. After the person has moved into stable housing, case managers work to support that individual or family to address other issues that may impact long term housing tenure.

This approach is grounded in evidence and backed by several national and international organizations such as the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and the National Alliance to End Homelessness in Washington, DC. Studies have shown that formerly homeless individuals are more receptive to health, mental health and addiction treatment programs after being housed and get much better outcomes with those services as well once they have achieved housing stability.

The Housing First Intervention

Beyond simply a philosophy, Housing First (with a capital H and a capital F) describes a specific type of service intervention, commonly delivered through Intensive Case Management or Assertive Community Treatment. It specifically targets those homeless persons with the highest acuity – often those who have been homeless the longest, with complex, co-occurring disorders. Supports are often provided 24/7 to address the acuity of persons living in the units. Some clients will require a Housing First intervention for the duration of their housing.

Housing First involves prioritizing clients. Unlike many existing programs, Housing First is not a first-come, first-served approach with a lengthy waiting list. The people who are served first are the ones who need it the most. Because of this, there is no expectation that clients must demonstrate a “readiness” to enter the program, such as being sober or seeking treatment. In Housing First, the only expectation is that clients pay their rent on time and comply with the terms of a standard lease (such as not damaging the unit or interfering with the reasonable enjoyment of other tenants). If a client fails to comply with these requirements and is evicted, he or she keeps their existing supports and are re-housed as quickly as possible.

In Housing First, clients are not expected to stay sober or drug-free. Instead, there is a harm reduction approach. Clients are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with meaningful choices as much as possible – in what part of the city they would like to live, whether they would like to stay with roommates or by themselves, whether they would like to live in a “dry” (i.e. alcohol-free) building or not, and so on. Importantly, the person’s participation in the program is completely voluntary.

Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid Re-Housing is a similar intervention to Housing First, but is less intense, and is intended for individuals and households with moderate acuity. Supports are delivered through Intensive Case Management for a time-limited period. There is the general expectation that at some point in the future, the household will be stably housed and be able to live without supports. Where this is not the case, a Housing First Intervention may be required.

The vast majority of the time, Rapid Re-Housing is delivered through scattered-site apartments – Rapid Re-Housing households are mixed in with regular private market households, they are not clustered in one building. However, the types of supports each household receives can vary widely, and are tailored to the needs of that household.

Hostel to Homes

In 2007, Kingston was selected as one of six Ontario municipalities to participate in a pilot project called Hostel to Homes, which used many housing first principles. The program was successful; after 18 months the housing retention rate was 80.9% in one group and 88.5% in the second group. It is possible to build on the existing knowledge and experiences within Kingston to successfully implement and/or expand a Housing First program in this municipality.

Diversion and Prevention

Most people who experience homelessness do not require intensive interventions such as Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing. In fact, close to 80% of people who become homeless are able to quickly gain or regain their housing with little to no assistance. This suggests that for the majority of people who become homeless, few services are required.

The reason for this has to do with natural supports. Most individuals are well connected to a network of natural supports, including relatives and friends. Many also have some money saved up, so that if they do become evicted, they would be able to stay at a hotel, or with a friend or relative.

Shelter diversion is the name of a practice that involves “diverting” people who come to emergency shelters for the first time away from shelters and towards natural supports. The goal of diversion is to ensure that an individual or household has exhausted all of their existing resources before they enter a shelter.

Since it is actually quite difficult to predict which households will become homeless in the future, it does not make good sense to spend scarce resources trying to predict and

prevent an unlikely occurrence. It makes more sense to target homelessness prevention initiatives towards those precariously housed individual who have the most characteristics in common with the existing chronically homeless population. That way, other households may become homeless but are unlikely to be homeless for long, but chronic homelessness is prevented.

Data Collection & Assessment

The importance of reliable and comprehensive data cannot be understated. In order to end homelessness, it is essential to be able to collect data and track progress towards goals, making adjustments as required. In addition, it is important to understand the needs of the population being served.

A Point In Time (PIT) Homeless Count is one of the best ways to measure the whole of a homeless population. It consists of counting and surveying everyone who is homeless during a specific window, such as one night. This method can provide good aggregate data about the population as a whole.

On a day-to-day basis, however, it is important that different data is collected in a common language so that all service providers can communicate effectively and develop coordinated systems to ensure everyone is working together towards common goals with the greatest possible efficiency.

Co-ordinated access and a common assessment protocol combined with a robust homeless management information system come together to form a coordinated system with different approaches geared to specific subgroups of the whole homeless population. Those with the highest needs are served by a Housing First intervention, while those with moderate needs are served by Rapid Re-Housing. For those with lower needs, the existing shelter response is the most appropriate, but we enhance the housing help available at shelters to minimize length of stays. Those with the lowest needs ideally never become homeless due to targeted prevention and shelter diversion strategies.

When all elements of this coordinated system are in place, by 2023:

- 80% of former chronically homeless individuals will be stably housed;
- There will be a 50% reduction in shelter bed nights from 2013 levels;
- The average length of stay in shelters will be reduced to 7 days; and,
- No one will be homeless for longer than 30 days.

Priority Areas of Investment

The strategies to end chronic homelessness can be achieved through four priority areas of investment with identified funding envelopes. They are:

- Homelessness Prevention and Diversion
- Housing Assistance and Emergency Shelters
- Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing
- Basic Needs Supports

The plan identifies a shift of funding dollars from services and programs that manage homelessness to services that end homelessness.

Strategic Directions

This Plan has identified twelve strategic directions. Five of these are consistent with the strategic directions identified in the Municipal Housing Strategy (2011) and relate to housing. They are:

Strategic Direction #1: Managing the Housing Agenda

This strategic direction relates to creating a clear, visible direction for housing that aligns efforts.

Strategic Direction #2: Creating a Complementary Regulatory Environment.

These recommendations involve establishing a conducive environment that creates opportunities and minimizes barriers.

Strategic Direction #3: Leveraging Resources and Tools

These recommendations encourage using and maximizing available resources to help generate positive housing-related outcomes.

Strategic Direction #4: Building Housing Capacity

This strategic direction seeks to increase knowledge, resources and support to better respond to the needs of the community.

Strategic Direction #5: Cultivating Partnerships

These recommendations involve building and harnessing the strengths of stakeholders.

To end homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac by 2023, this Plan has identified 7 strategic directions related to ending homelessness, in addition to the 5 strategic directions related to housing, as follows:

Strategic Direction #6: Systems Reorientation: Leadership, Integration & Coordination

This strategic direction focuses on aligning the efforts of homeless serving agencies, the Service Manager, and other community partners.

Strategic Direction #7: Strengthening Homelessness Prevention & Diversion

These recommendations relate to improving the effectiveness of existing homelessness prevention efforts and implementing shelter diversion policies where applicable.

Strategic Direction #8: Redefining the Role of Emergency Shelters

This strategic direction includes recommendations that reframe emergency shelters as “Housing Assistance and Emergency Shelter Services” which assist clients to quickly obtain housing assistance.

Strategic Direction #9: Increasing Housing Options for Those with Highest Needs

This set of recommendations focuses on increasing the quantity and range of housing units available for individuals and households with higher needs.

Strategic Direction #10: Improving Housing Stability for the Most in Need

This strategic direction focuses on implementing Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing programs within the Kingston and Frontenac area.

Strategic Direction # 11: Developing a Rural Homelessness Strategy

These recommendations revolve around providing more affordable housing in rural areas and improving access to services.

Strategic Direction # 12: Measuring Outcomes & Report Successes of the Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness

These recommendations encourage effective data collection and analysis in order to provide more effective, targeted services and track progress towards ending homelessness.

Overview of Recommendations

The 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan identifies twelve Strategic Directions each with identified activities, responsibilities, timeframes and current status. The Directions and goals are summarized here.

Strategic Direction #1: Managing the Housing Agenda

1. That the City and County establish the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan as the primary strategic plan to help guide and align local housing efforts.
2. That the City develop a tactical plan concerning the acquisition of new units of affordable housing to address the needs of the homeless population.
3. That the City and County use the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan as an alignment tool across areas of municipal responsibility.
4. That the Housing Department of the City take lead responsibility for advancing the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, including the County.
5. That the City recognize and support the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee as a primary vehicle for engaging stakeholders and providing advice on matters related to housing.
6. That the City report on 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan progress regularly and publish an annual report card identifying key indicator status including indicators relating to homelessness.
7. That the City gather, maintain and monitor data to support housing and homelessness accountability practices, both internally and in support of provincial requirements.

Strategic Direction #2: Creating a Complementary Regulatory Environment

8. That the City encourage social capital initiatives.
9. That the City consider Official Plan policies that promote inclusive, sustainable and flexible communities.
10. That the City pursue inclusionary zoning opportunities while it completes the comprehensive Zoning By-Law (ZBL) review. Further opportunities could be explored at the time of any Official Plan updates.
11. That the City seek opportunities to appropriately integrate student housing.

12. That the City continue to analyze and monitor housing form, tenure, and affordability to ensure that the housing affordability, intensification, and density goals of the Official Plan.
13. That the County establish an Official Plan to help guide land use planning which has consistent housing policies among the four constituent Townships and which establishes targets for units to be added to the current housing stock over the next 10 years as follows:
 - Housing Form – 92% singles, 4% multiples and 4% apartments
 - Housing Tenure – 90% ownership, 10% rental
 - Housing Affordability – 25% of units at rates up to the affordability threshold
14. That the City and Council continue their support for second suites as an affordable rental housing alternative.
15. That the City consider key affordable housing provisions from the Official Plan as a part of the comprehensive ZBL review.
16. That the County undertake a review with local Townships to identify zoning anomalies that may be acting as barriers, especially when it comes to supporting seniors housing options.
17. That the City continue to support timely land use approvals through the Implementation and Service Improvement Plan developed as a result of the 2013 Mayor's Task Force on Development.

Strategic Direction #3: Leveraging Resources and Tools

18. That the City maximize available funding.
19. That the City and County advocate for additional funding from senior governments on a 'fair share' basis, particularly with regards to addressing capital shortfalls and affordability gaps.
20. That the City evaluate local opportunities to increase sustained resources that could be made available to address local housing needs.
21. That in recognition of the Council's decision to invest \$2M per year for 5 years towards the Capital Investment in Affordable Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Land Acquisition and Disposition Fund, the City consider extending the investment for the full 10-year duration of the Plan.
22. That the City continue partnering with private and non-profit housing providers to enable leveraging of available resources in order to maximize the provision of affordable housing.

23. That the City pursue opportunities to utilize inclusionary zoning and density bonusing to achieve negotiated agreements for the provision of affordable housing in new developments.
24. That the County consider establishing appropriate authorities/incentives in support of affordable housing to help prepare for development opportunities that may arise.
25. That the City expand the current inventory of suitable lands or properties for affordable housing to include opportunities from other public sector agencies, other levels of government (including the County) and privately held lands.
26. That the City continue to regularly monitor the condition of the social housing portfolio and actively seek alternate funding to assist with major capital repairs.
27. That the City explore opportunities to review services and asset management planning to ensure sharing of resources between the City's two municipal housing providers, and to then expand these resources to other local housing providers.
28. That the City research and develop options for the continuation of social housing post End of Operating Agreements to meet its legislated and financial obligations in conjunction with the Step Down Funding planning study.
29. That the City establish a strategic asset management plan using existing tools to help guide decisions regarding asset renewal/ redevelopment in the social housing portfolio.
30. That the City use Rideau Heights as an initial pilot community for testing asset renewal strategies that can be applied elsewhere.
31. That the City and County continue to advocate for additional senior government funding to address the increasing support service needs of residents (Ontario Disability Support Program, Ministry of Community & Social Services, etc.)
32. That the City and County pursue linkages with support service funders and coordinators in the health and community service fields (Local Health Integration Network, Children's Aid Society, etc.) as a means of expanding support service opportunities in the community.
33. That the City arrange for housing workers to support persons who are precariously housed in social housing to gain greater housing stability.

Strategic Direction #4: Building Housing Capacity

34. That the City continue the consolidation of the municipal housing function.
35. That the City in collaboration with the County implement the Service Manager's Communications Plan developed as part of the MHS.
36. That the City in collaboration with the County use community forums and theme-based workshops as vehicles for bringing partners together, expanding knowledge of housing development practices, and sharing community ideas, programs and policy.
37. That the City, in concert with sector organizations where possible, help support community agency renewal through workshops geared to social housing practitioners.

Strategic Direction #5: Cultivating Partnerships

38. That the City encourage the homelessness service sector and housing sector to collaborate on finding solutions to end chronic homelessness
39. That the City continue to actively engage the private sector.
40. That the City establish and maintain a housing information e-centre on the City's web-site to provide housing information and establish a virtual contact point for inquiries.
41. That the City include community-based housing innovation awards as part of the Liveable City Program as a means of acknowledging community partners and raising the profile of affordable housing.

Strategic Direction #6: Systems Reorientation: Leadership, Integration & Coordination

42. The Service Manager will take a leadership role in setting standards for service delivery and reporting outcomes.
43. Implement a new funding model, with existing funds, to reflect the Plan's priorities and implement the Plan's strategies.
44. Adopt a housing first approach across the system.
45. Implement common intake and assessment protocols and practices.
46. Adopt a common Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
47. Implement a new professional development agenda to support implementation of

the plan targeted to service providers while building on existing competencies.

48. Monitor the on-going alignment of the homelessness strategies with the housing strategies.
49. Continue to foster and support the homeless service providers and other interested parties, such as health, mental health, legal, corrections, police and so forth.

Strategic Direction #7: Strengthening Homelessness Prevention & Diversion

50. Place a strong emphasis on diversion from emergency shelter resources.
51. Develop and adopt a tool to identify which individuals and families are eligible for targeted homelessness prevention assistance.
52. Develop a discharge protocol for the region so no-one is discharged from an institution into the streets.
53. Increase access to and awareness of services available to individuals and households at risk of homelessness.

Strategic Direction #8: Redefining The Role of Emergency Shelters

54. Reframe emergency shelters as “Housing Assistance and Emergency Shelter Services” that are one of the entry points to the housing system.
55. Establish housing worker functions within shelters.
56. Right-size the shelter system.
57. As appropriate, introduce shelter specialization within Kingston’s shelter system.

Strategic Direction #9: Increasing Housing Options for Those with Highest Needs

58. Work towards the rental housing targets in Recommendations 12 and 13.
59. Prioritize access to available housing for those with the deepest and most chronic needs first.
60. Remove the homeless priority policy from the social housing waitlist.
61. Create more permanent supportive housing (PSH) units to house those with complex co-occurring issues.
62. Develop and maintain an inventory of scattered-site rental units that can be used for Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing clients.

Strategic Direction #10: Improving Housing Stability for the Most in Need

63. Reallocate existing resources towards providing support to clients after being housed.
64. Expand the municipality's existing Ontario Works Pay Direct Policy to allow for amounts to exceed the monthly shelter allowance.
65. Implement a Housing First program.
66. Implement a Rapid Re-Housing program.

Strategic Direction #11: Developing a Rural Homelessness Strategy

67. Expand housing options for low-income and homeless individuals in rural areas.
68. Improve access to services in rural areas.
69. Enhance targeted prevention in rural areas.
70. Promote local leadership in ending homelessness.

Strategic Direction #12: Measuring Outcomes & Report Successes of the Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness

71. Conduct a Point-In-Time (PIT) Homeless Count every 2 years using a valid, reliable, and consistent methodology.
72. Publish HMIS reports of aggregate data and circulate to service providers quarterly.
73. Publish an annual report card for public consumption.
74. Track performance of funded agencies compared to performance targets on a quarterly basis.
75. The City monitors the effectiveness of its prioritization strategy for Rapid Re-housing and Housing First which targets persons most in need.

Each of the recommendations will guide the development of a more detailed implementation plan that will be implemented and reviewed over the next decade.

Key Terms

Adequate Housing – Housing that is acceptable (see *Acceptable Housing*), affordable (see *Affordable Housing*), and suitable (see *Suitable Housing*). Housing that is not adequate is *Below Housing Standards*.

Affordable Housing – The City’s Official Plan defines affordable housing as housing that,

- in the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:
 - Housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or,
 - Housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area.
- In the case of rental housing, for which the total monthly shelter cost is the gross monthly rent that includes utilities, heat, hydro and hot water, but excludes parking and cable television, the least expensive of:
 - A unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or,
 - A unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) – a model of case management where a multidisciplinary team of professionals is responsible for providing services to clients. Case loads are small and shared among the team (typically staff to client ratio of 1:10). Most services are delivered on an outreach basis and there is often 24-hour coverage. Since there are psychiatrists on the Team and nurses, ACT teams can prescribe and administer medications.

Congregate Housing – refers to persons, usually unrelated, sharing a house. Often tenants rent their individual room and share the common spaces such as kitchen, bathrooms and living rooms.

Core Housing Need – Households whose housing is below standards (see *Housing Below Standards*) and who would have to pay 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local accommodation that is *Adequate Housing*.

Harm Reduction – an approach aimed at reducing the risks and harmful effects associated with substance abuse, and addictive behaviours, for the person, the community, and society as a whole, without requiring abstinence.

Dedicated Sites – refers to housing that is located on a single site and is usually dedicated to housing persons with special needs. Housing First programs often exist in a dedicated site so that 24/7 supports can be located in the residential complex.

Homelessness – when an individual/family lacks a safe, fixed, regular and adequate place to sleep, or who regularly spends the night in an emergency shelter, similar institution, or a place not intended for human habitation.

Homelessness can be further broken down into the following categories:

- **Absolute Homelessness** - When an individual/family is without a residence and sleeps in indoor or outdoor public places not intended for habitation (e.g. streets, parks, abandoned buildings, stairwells, doorways, cars, or under bridges).
- **Sheltered Homelessness** – When an individual/family is without a residence and spends the night in an emergency shelter or similar institution, including having no fixed address and staying overnight in a hospital, jail or prison.
- **At-risk of Homelessness** – When an individual/family is spending 50% or more of its gross monthly income on housing or when the condition of the housing, either because of state of repair or number of occupants, is inadequate for ongoing habitation.
- **Chronic homelessness** – When an individual/family experiences continuous homelessness for a period of one year or greater; or, four or more episodes of homelessness within a three-year period. Most often chronically homeless persons also have complex, co-occurring and frequently disabling conditions.
- **Episodic homelessness** – When an individual/family experiences homelessness for less than a year and no more than three instances of homelessness within a three-year period.
- **Cyclical homelessness** – When an individual/family moves in and out of various states of homelessness and housing such as moving from a motel to a low-cost rental to a point of incarceration to a shelter to a hospital stay, and so on. The cycle suggests that this is a pattern of housing status that can have some consistency in the movement between a homeless and housed state, even though the exact types of housing or homelessness may change.
- **Invisible Homelessness (Hidden Homelessness)** - When an individual/family does not access emergency shelters or sleep in visible public areas, usually because they are temporarily staying with friends or family.
- **Homeless Family** – A unit comprising one or more adults accompanying at least one minor, usually but not always a blood relative, who are *Homeless*.
- **Homeless Youth** – A youth who is between the ages of 16-24, without adult supervision, and is *Homeless*.

Housing Below Standards – Housing that does not meet all three standards of affordability (see *Affordable Housing*), adequacy (see *Adequate Housing*), and suitability (see *Suitable Housing*). Housing that is not below standards is *Acceptable Housing*.

housing first – as a philosophy (lower case “h”/ lower case “f”), housing first focuses on any attempt to help people who have experienced homelessness to access housing before providing support for other life issues.

Housing First (upper case “H” and upper case “F”) is a specific type of intervention which seeks out homeless people that have complex and co-occurring issues, and serves those with the highest acuity first with minimal pre-conditions, such as “housing readiness”. The only real expectation that the person agrees to before starting the program is to have their support workers visit them in the home, to pay rent on time, and to work hard to avoid disrupting others that might lead to eviction.

Housing Readiness – refers to standards and expectations of housing providers before independent housing is offered. Expectations can include psychiatric treatment, sobriety and/or life skills such as cooking.

Intensive Case Management – Similar to ACT, this model also provides outreach services, lower caseload ratios and coverage outside of regular working hours. The main difference from ACT is that services are not delivered by multidisciplinary teams and ratios are higher, usually 1 staff to 20 clients.

Interim Housing – Temporary housing that is available immediately to households who are *Homeless*, available on a short-term basis while the household searches for a more permanent solution. See also *Transitional Housing*.

Low Barrier – refers to removing traditional barriers to programs and services to make it possible for as many clients as possible to participate. This could include removing barriers to treatment that insist on a commitment to abstinence as a requirement of admission and is the only acceptable goal/ outcome.

Permanent Housing – Any housing arrangement where the tenant can continue to live at the same address indefinitely, as long as the tenant pays the rent on time, follows the lease, and doesn’t disrupt the reasonable enjoyment of others.

Rapid Re-Housing – is a support intervention intended to serve homeless persons with mid-range acuity often with co-occurring issues. Persons and families in a Rapid Re-Housing program usually receive supports for a period of six-months with possibilities for renewal in 3-month increments. Supports are usually case management supports but less intense than offered in a Housing First intervention.

Rent Geared to Income (RGI) Assistance – RGI assistance is a form of social housing which is based on a tenant’s income and in accordance with provincial legislation where generally a tenant pays no more than 30% of their gross monthly income.

Service Manager – The agency responsible for delivering and administering social and affordable housing, other social services programs such as Ontario Works and child-care, and in many cases delivering homelessness initiatives. The City of Kingston is the Service Manager for Kingston and the County of Frontenac.

Scattered Site Housing - refers to housing that is “scattered” throughout the community in which some units in a residential complex are independent, private, market rate housing, and other units are designated as supportive housing or Rent Geared to Income. Participants often use rent subsidies to afford housing from private landlord and supportive services may be provided through home visits.

Suitable Housing – Suitable housing that does not require major repairs and has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, which means one bedroom for each:

- cohabiting adult couple;
- unattached household member 18 years of age and over;
- same-sex pair of children under age 18;
- additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite sex children under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom.

A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e. a unit with no bedroom).

Supportive Housing - is “housing + supports” for those who face the most complex challenges such as individuals and families confronted with homelessness and who also have very low incomes and/or serious, persistent issues that may include substance abuse, addiction or alcoholism, mental illness, HIV/AIDS, or other serious challenges.

Transitional Housing – Similar to *Interim Housing*, but most often with a specified time limit for how long tenants can stay, and often with requirements of complying with additional rules such as sobriety and/or curfew.

Development of the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan

In Kingston and Frontenac, a comprehensive *Municipal Housing Strategy* was developed in 2010-2011 with extensive public engagement and received the approval of Kingston City Council. When the *Housing Services Act* came into effect requiring a housing and homelessness plan, it seemed logical to build on the Municipal Housing Strategy previously approved by City Council in 2011.

The first task was to develop a homelessness plan that was compatible with the provincial requirements set out in the *Housing Services Act*, a project for which OrgCode Consulting, Inc. was retained. Building on the research already conducted in the development of the Municipal Housing Strategy, OrgCode Consulting, Inc. also compiled data related to homelessness and emergency shelter usage, social housing and social assistance rates, and updated data on rental prices in Kingston and Frontenac. Key stakeholder interviews were conducted with a number of city staff as well as representatives from over two dozen homeless service delivery agencies, including all agencies that receive funding directly from the Service Manager. Four public consultation sessions were conducted in late 2012 and early 2013 in Kingston and Frontenac, with more than 100 citizens attending.

Best practices from jurisdictions across Canada and the United States were reviewed and heavily emphasized within the development of the strategies to end homelessness including Housing First, Rapid Re-Housing, targeted prevention, and diversion from emergency resources. These practices have been implemented in various jurisdictions, small and large, across North America, and have been scrutinized in numerous prestigious, peer-reviewed academic journals.

Once the outline of the strategies to end homelessness were developed, the draft themes and strategies were presented to service providers in order to obtain feedback and ensure that agencies understood that changes to the homeless service system would be required. Feedback received was incorporated into the Plan with the addition, modification, and removal of a number of strategies.

With a clear set of recommendations and strategies to end Homelessness complete, OrgCode Consulting, Inc. was retained to update the Municipal Housing Strategy to ensure alignment with the homeless strategies.

The basis for the analysis on the depth of affordability stems from the background research and targets completed by SHS Consulting for the 2011 Municipal Housing Strategy. Data was collected, published and used for the municipal housing strategy,

which comes from multiple sources and which was manipulated in various ways consistent with the development of a municipal housing strategy. OrgCode Consulting did not, therefore, run independent analysis on the housing targets. The targets, as established in the Municipal Housing Strategy, were accepted as accurate.

The housing affordability model, like the Municipal Housing Strategy targets, projects housing demands and affordability over the next 10 years. There are a range of indicators, based upon trends, that most impact the conclusions reached by the affordability model, including, but not limited to:

- City and County population
- Understanding anticipated population changes and characteristics of population change (in-migration, age, participation in labour force, income levels, gender, birth and death rates, etc.)
- Incidence of low-income, and characteristics of low-income households
- Mean and median household income, and characteristics of households by income brackets
- Breakdown of industries, with attention paid to propensity of lower-wage industry sectors
- Rates of unemployment, as well as length of unemployment and other unemployment trends
- Rates of income assistance (Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Canada Pension Plan, etc.) relative to rental market affordability
- Minimum wage income relative to rental market affordability
- Availability of affordable rental units within current and historic rental market by type of unit and range of affordability
- Trends in household composition
- Mobility of households
- Service use patterns within homeless shelters (occupancy rates, average lengths of stay, household characteristics of shelter users, etc.)
- Development patterns
- Loss and changes in composition of rental market housing stock

Like any forward-looking projection, both current and historic data, as well as an understanding of current initiatives to address known issues become important factors in breaking down anticipated levels and types of affordability within affordable housing.

Kingston and the County of Frontenac – An Overview

The City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac encompass an area of 3,787.79 km², situated 200 km from Ottawa, 250 km from Toronto, and only 50 km from the border to the US. In total, the geographic region is home to 149,738 individuals, an increase of 4.1% from 2006.

The region is split into five municipalities: the City of Kingston, which comprises the bulk of the region’s population, and the Townships of North Frontenac, Central Frontenac, South Frontenac, and Frontenac Islands, which together comprise the County of Frontenac.

Table 1: Population by Municipality, 2006-2011

Municipality	Population (2011)	Population (2006)	% Change (2006-2011)	% of Total
City of Kingston	123,363	117,207	5.3%	82.4%
Township of North Frontenac	1,842	1,904	-3.3%	1.2%
Township of Central Frontenac	4,556	4,665	-2.3%	3.0%
Township of South Frontenac	18,113	18,227	-0.6%	12.1%
Township of Frontenac Islands	1,864	1,862	0.1%	1.2%
Total	149,738	143,865	4.1%	100%

Kingston in particular has several unique characteristics that define the local landscape. As the largest city between Ottawa and Toronto, Kingston provides services to a large geographic area. For instance, Kingston General Hospital is the regional hospital for the Counties of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville, Lennox & Addington, Hastings and Prince Edward, as well as Kingston and Frontenac – serving a total population of over 500,000. Weeneebayko Patient Services, which operates out of Hotel Dieu Hospital, provides medical services for those from all over the Province including the most northern regions.

Kingston has three post-secondary institutions, Queen’s University, St. Lawrence College, and The Royal Military Academy (RMC). While 23.4% of Kingston’s adult population have a university-level education (average for Ontario), 10.9% of Kingston’s adults have a Master’s degree or higher, compared to only 8.9% of adults across Ontario, and 7.5% across Canada.

In addition, the median income of Kingston residents was \$32,415, which was higher than either Ontario average (\$30,526) or Canadian average (\$29,878). Despite this, 47.8% of renter households in Kingston were spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs, compared to 40.1% of Canadians and 42.3% of Ontarians. Approximately 13% of Kingston residents were considered to be in “low income” (below the poverty line). Table 2 indicates what income level counts as “low income” based on household size for a region the size of Kingston.

Table 2: LICO for Kingston CMA, 2000-2011

Family Size	2000	2005	2009	2011
1 person	\$12,991	\$14,571	\$15,579	\$16,328
2 persons	\$15,811	\$17,734	\$18,960	\$19,872
3 persons	\$19,689	\$22,083	\$23,610	\$24,745
4 persons	\$24,563	\$27,550	\$29,455	\$30,871
5 persons	\$27,970	\$31,371	\$33,541	\$35,154
6 persons	\$31,020	\$34,792	\$37,198	\$38,986
7 or more persons	\$34,069	\$38,212	\$40,854	\$42,819

Kingston and its surrounding environs is also host to 6 prisons, which house approximately 2,000 inmates at a given point in time. While the correctional system provides steady employment for over 4,000 employees and is the third largest employer in the region, there is a perception that more Kingston residents have a history of involvement with the law than other similarly sized communities.

Kingston is also home to a Canadian Forces Base (CFB), one of the few in the country to station Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel in the same location. In total, approximately 8,000 individuals are employed by CFB Kingston, of which approximately 5,000 are military personnel.

Another challenge identified in the City is the pressure exerted on the rental market by students attending Kingston’s three post-secondary institutions. In particular, many students who attend Queen’s University reside in a concentrated area in close proximity to the downtown of Kingston. Many of the housing units occupied by students are older, converted single detached homes, which were not originally intended to house a group of students. Kingston is continuing to work with the post-secondary institutions to address concerns regarding student housing.

Municipal Housing Strategy Update

Housing is vital to the creation of healthy, sustainable and complete communities. Residents of all ages, income levels, abilities, and family types rely on housing to offer a meaningful place to grow and a safe and secure place to live. Having a full range of housing options to meet the needs of all residents is a key contributor to maintaining a high quality of life, a vibrant local economy, and a healthy community.

Recognizing the importance of housing to all members of society and the benefits that adequate housing can provide for the community as a whole, in 2010 the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac undertook the development of a Municipal Housing Strategy (MHS) which was approved by City Council in July 2011.

2011 Municipal Housing Strategy

The *Municipal Housing Strategy* (2011) identified several trends that continue to have a bearing on the local housing stock in Kingston and Frontenac. These trends are summarized below.

The aging population will have an increasing influence on local housing demand.

The proportion of the population of Kingston and Frontenac aged 65 years and older is projected to increase from 15.7% in 2006 to 27.1% in 2036. An adequate range of housing choices for seniors is needed in order to ensure seniors can remain in their communities and to live independently for as long as possible.

Housing stock in Kingston and Frontenac is not very diverse. While the number of households continues to increase, the composition of households is changing with more one- and two-person households as well as an aging population with changing housing needs. In contrast to the diversification of households, the housing stock in Kingston and especially Frontenac remains predominantly single detached homes. In 2006, single detached homes represented 49.0% of the housing stock in Kingston and 93.1% of the stock in Frontenac.

Ownership tenure has been increasing but impact of low interest rates is diminishing. Home ownership rates have increased from 1996 to 2006 in Kingston and Frontenac; increasing by 6.2% in Kingston and 4.3% in Frontenac. The increasing prices of homes may have an impact on this trend as the average sale prices of homes in the City of Kingston have increased steadily from 2005 to 2010, with prices of semi-detached homes increasing by 32.0% and prices of single detached homes increasing by 27.3% by 2010.

The rental housing supply in Kingston and Frontenac is declining despite sustained demand. The number of rental dwellings in Kingston decreased from 19,545 in 1996 to 18,475 in 2006. This is largely due to individual units, previously used as income properties, being sold to owner-occupier households. In Frontenac, rental dwellings decreased from 1,175 in 1996 to only 970 in 2006. In addition, average market rents in Kingston CMA are increasing at a higher rate than the Provincial average while vacancy rates are among the lowest in Ontario, pointing to the difficulty in securing rental accommodation in the area.

The shortage of student housing is having an impact on the overall market availability of affordable housing. Kingston is home to two major post-secondary educational institutions (Queen's University and St. Lawrence College) as well as to the Royal Military College and the Canadian Forces School of Communications and Electronics. Approximately 12,000 Queen's University students live off-campus and one of the issues of off-campus housing is that it is generally more expensive than on-campus housing. In addition, landlords normally require 12-month leases, which presents a problem for international and co-op students who usually do not require the accommodation for a whole year. The demand for student housing also impacts lower income households within the permanent population who have to compete for many of the same types of units and reduces the options available to these households. In addition, students may be seen by landlords as more attractive tenants compared to lower income households since they may be able to provide parental guarantees.

Household incomes are polarized and there is a clear contrast between renters and owners. In 2005, 22.0% of renter households in Kingston and Frontenac fell within the first income decile (\$15,337 or less in 2005) compared to only 4.1% of all owner households. On the other hand, only 1.3% of all renter households and 14.3% of all owner households fell within the highest income decile during the same time period.

There is an increasing incidence of low-income households in Kingston, unlike the County where it is declining. The incidence of low income in private households in Kingston increased from 14.0% in 1995 to 15.4% in 2005. In contrast, the prevalence of low income in private households in Frontenac decreased from 12.8% to 8.7% in the same time period, following the trend seen for the Province as a whole. The City of Kingston also had a higher incidence of low-income households (15.4%) compared to the Province as a whole (14.7%) in 2005.

There is a lack of affordable ownership and rental housing in Kingston and Frontenac. Overall, the home ownership market in Kingston CMA is not affordable to households earning \$49,037 or less while the private rental housing market would not be affordable to households earning \$28,658 or less. At least 20% of all households would not be able to afford rental units in the private rental market and would require some form of rental assistance.

Overall, affordability is a bigger issue in the City of Kingston as compared to the County of Frontenac but affordability for renter households is a significant issue for both. In 2006, 48.4% of renter households in Kingston spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs compared to only 16.5% of owner households. In addition, during the same time period, 12.0% of renter households spent 70.0% or more of their income on housing costs compared to only 3.4% of owner households. In the County of Frontenac in 2006, 39.6% of renter households spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs. This proportion increased from 37.0% in 1996. This is also significantly larger than the proportion of owner households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs in 2006 (18.0% of all owner households).

Housing affordability challenges are most acute for youth-led households and lone-parent households. In 2005 in Kingston, 74.3% of all youth-led households spent 30% or more of their income on housing costs. In Frontenac, lone-parent households had the largest proportion of households (36.0%) spending 30% or more of their household income on housing costs.

There is a lack of social housing units, particularly for families and single-person households. There were a total of 1,133 applicants on the centralized wait list for social housing in Kingston and Frontenac as of July 31, 2010. This included 62 senior applicants (5.5% of total) and 1,071 family / mixed applicants (94.5%), which include single individuals, couples, and families. In addition, family / mixed units comprise 88.0% of the social housing stock whereas they comprise 94.5% of the applicants on the wait list.

2013 Update

In 2011, the new *Housing Services Act* came into effect, requiring all Service Managers in Ontario to develop a ten-year plan to identify objectives and targets related to housing and homelessness, as well as actions proposed to meet those objectives. The City of Kingston, as the Service Manager for the City and the County of Frontenac, updated the existing Municipal Housing Strategy to extend the projections to a ten-year horizon and to bring it into alignment with the strategies to end homelessness.

The result of this effort is this document, which is the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan. This Plan recognizes and builds on the existing Municipal Housing Strategy. Ultimately, the recommendations found in this 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan are the most up-to-date, although many recommendations found in the MHS are also found within this Plan. The MHS is not required to read, understand, or implement the strategies and recommendations identified in this document. However, the Municipal Housing Strategy includes a needs assessment and other background information useful for understanding how the recommendations in both the original and

this document were obtained. Thus, going forward, the Municipal Housing Strategy (2011) should be understood as a background document, while this Plan identifies the most current issues and recommendations.

This Municipal Housing Strategy update serves five purposes:

1. To improve and expand the targets for housing affordability identified in the Municipal Housing Strategy;
2. To provide guidance on issues that have emerged since the Municipal Housing Strategy was created;
3. To clarify some recommendations in the Municipal Housing Strategy that were proving difficult to implement;
4. To adhere to the requirements of the provincial Housing Services Act; and,
5. To connect and align with the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness.

A central concept in the updated housing strategy is the idea of a housing continuum. There is no “one size fits all” type of housing that is appropriate to everyone in Kingston and Frontenac. Instead, each household has distinct needs based on such factors as stage of life, income, and level of needs. In order to ensure adequate housing stock for all households, it is essential to understand the housing continuum and ensure that every point within the continuum is represented in the housing stock within the region.

Another central concept in the housing strategy is the definition of affordability. While the Kingston Official Plan defines affordable housing as that which costs no more than 30% of the tenant’s monthly income, other policies exist within the municipality which are inconsistent with this definition. Moreover, this definition of affordability relative to income rather than rental price causes difficulty in implementation.

Both of these concepts, housing continuum and affordability, and their challenges are more fully explored in the sections that follow.

The Housing Continuum

When developing a strategy to ensure a sufficient supply of housing within a particular geographic region, it is essential to look at housing along a continuum. Not every household has the same requirements when it comes to housing provision – in fact, a given housing unit is more likely to be *unsuitable* for a household selected at random than appropriate. Factors such as household income, family size, and stage of life all affect the type of housing that best suits that family.

A housing continuum, therefore, describes a range of housing options across a spectrum, illustrating the need for a variety of different approaches to housing provision in

order to meet demand. There are several dimensions to the housing continuum, as illustrated in Figure 1 –The Housing Continuum.

Figure 1: The Housing Continuum



The types of housing and shelter accommodation have a range of diversity not just across the categories, but within each category as well. For example, shelters have different designs and numbers of beds just like apartment buildings; ownership housing may have different square footage and land around the house; long-term care housing has a variety of services and payment structures. The types of housing and shelter accommodation necessary in the continuum are further influenced by where people are at in the life cycle and their needs and supports, if any. The continuum seeks to ensure there is an appropriate range and quantity of different types of housing and shelter accommodation within the community to meet the needs of its residents.

Life Stage

A household’s needs change depending on the stage of life members of the household are at. For instance, as a child and youth, a person lives with a parent or guardian until he or she is legally able to live on his or her own, if not longer. Most young people move out of their parents’ house at some point and into rental accommodation – some with roommates, others with a romantic partner, still others alone. Eventually, most – but not all – households buy a house. Even after a house is purchased, however, needs change: with the addition of children, having an older parent or relative move in to an accessory suite, or having older children move out. Nearing the end of one’s life, persons develop special needs, such as requiring accessible features like ramps, or possibly the assistance of a caregiver. Thus, depending on where a person is at in his or her life, that person will likely have very specific housing needs.

The previous description applies to what is considered “normal” for a statistically average household. There can be wide variation, however, as many households do not conform to the norm. This further highlights the need for a variety of types of housing to accommodate the variety in types of households.

A range of approaches to housing are required to meet housing needs throughout the continuum. The range of approaches needs to accommodate the ways in which households can be formed, re-constituted and permanently altered over time. The variation in households impacts the approaches to housing that are required. A range of needs and supports, as well as a range of different types of housing and accommodation are both necessary to meet housing needs throughout the life cycle outlined above. Lastly, there must be balance in the approach to addressing the housing needs within the continuum and, at the same time, determining the specific needs that are present. It’s important not to allow one element of the life cycle to trump the needs across the continuum.

Income

Income can also play a role in the type of housing appropriate for a household. For persons with very low income, it is unlikely that they can afford even the most inexpensive of rents. For instance, currently a single person receiving Ontario Works gets only \$376 per month to pay for rent – slightly more than half of the average cost of a bachelor apartment in Kingston. Households at the extremely low end of the income spectrum have few housing options – either double- or triple-up with roommates or family members, or live in social housing that is geared to income (RGI) with the latter option having long wait lists

For households with slightly higher incomes, some rental units are provided that are “affordable,” meaning that the housing provider has entered into an agreement that in exchange for capital funding, the housing provider will offer rents below what would normally be asked for in the private rental market. These providers can be public or private, and collect rent based on an agreement. In Ontario, it is typical for such units to be offered at 80% of the average rent in the area.

For those with still higher incomes, housing needs are provided through the private rental market. The price of rent depends highly on the going rate in a municipality, location, size, and quality. Currently, in Kingston, an average two-bedroom apartment rents for \$1005 per month.

Households with above average income are likely to pursue home ownership at some stage. For lower-income households pursuing home ownership, a municipal program exists to assist families to obtain a down payment known as the Municipal Home Ownership Program in Kingston.

Finally, for those with the highest income, home ownership is the preferred type of housing, whether through a mortgage or not.

Needs and Supports

At one end of the spectrum, there are persons with very high needs, who require 24-hour supports. These individuals include people with severe medical problems, developmental and cognitive disabilities, aging adults, and youth who have been removed from their parents' care. The most extreme of these cases might require institutional care.

For persons with slightly lower needs, supportive housing provides a high level of supports provided in a home environment. Supportive housing is a residence with on-site dedicated professional supports to tenants for most or all of the day. There can be supports with life-skills, daily living, psycho-social supports or accompaniment to appointments in the community. In most situations, each tenant has their own lockable bedroom or unit with some shared common space. In Kingston, the City currently funds two supportive housing providers – Kingston Home Base Housing and Elizabeth Fry/Kaye Healey Homes. Both agencies provide housing with supports attached.

Housing with supports is for individuals with moderate needs, who do not require constant supports but require assistance with some activities. Housing with supports is provided in the community (rather than in a dedicated/single site setting) and is staffed by support workers who visit on a regular basis but are not there all the time. Often supports are provided by a third party, such as a mental health agency, and not the housing provider.

In both supportive housing and housing with supports, there can be a range in the intensity and type of supports provided.

Finally, at the opposite end of the housing continuum is independent living, which is a situation that the majority of Canadians are familiar with.

Understanding needs and supports must be balanced throughout the housing continuum. It is not just the polar extremes of independence and institutional care. The variations and nuances in independence and support throughout the continuum must be taken into consideration. Where an individual is at in their life cycle, as well as the type of housing or other type of accommodation they are in, will inform specific activities related to the provision of supports, if required.

INFLUENCES ON THE HOUSING CONTINUUM

Influencing the three continuum concepts above are considerations such as personal preferences, needs, life circumstances, and access to resources. Some examples include:

- not everyone with a larger income will choose to own the place where they live,
- availability or lack of available supports impacting a person's ability to remain housed in a specific type of housing such as needing ramps in a rental unit,
- people moving into or out of the City such as a student who lives in Kingston for three or four years while attending college or university,
- a family with three children moving to Kingston for a job,
- a homeless person from a neighbouring community who needs access to shelter,
- inter-generational housing such as children, adults and grandparents who share housing,
- immigration and newcomers,
- job interruption or access to the labour market,
- special needs, etc.

Housing Affordability

What is housing affordability? The City of Kingston in their Official Plan uses the following definition, which is derived from Ontario's *Provincial Policy Statement*:

Figure 2: City of Kingston and County of Frontenac's Definition of Housing Affordability

In the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of:

- *Housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or,*
- *Housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 percent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area.*

In the case of rental housing, for which the total monthly shelter cost is the gross monthly rent that includes utilities, heat, hydro and hot water, but excludes parking and cable television, the least expensive of:

- *A unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 percent of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households; or,*
- *A unit for which the rent is at or below the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area.*

This type of definition of affordability has the drawback of being variable and dependent on the resident's level of income, and is generally believed to require a fair amount of verification. Thus, in some cases, a more simplistic, fixed definition of affordability is used that is easier to implement.

For instance, under the Affordable Housing Program (AHP) and the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario Program (IAH), the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing requires that rental units receiving provincial funding must have a maximum rent set at or below 80% of the Average Market Rent as defined by the CMHC.

Figure 3: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Definition of Affordability to be Eligible for Funding

Affordability is defined as having rents for the project that are at or below 80% of CMHC Average Market Rent (AMR) at the time of occupancy.

In addition, the Kingston Municipal Housing Facilities By-Law (No. 2011-79) has yet another definition of housing affordability; however, it is not recommended that this definition change as it allows flexibility to fund a variety of housing programs.

Figure 4: Definition of Affordable Housing in City of Kingston's Municipal Housing Facilities By-Law

Housing with monthly occupancy costs at or below the average market rents in Kingston and area as defined annually by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Thus, with such varying definitions, it is easy to lose sight of what is affordable. Also without a clear and consistent definition of affordability, tracking the number of affordable units needed is challenging. To date neither, the City of Kingston or County of Frontenac routinely tracks the number of affordable units.

CONSOLIDATING POLICIES RELATING TO HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

At present, the ability of parties within the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac to develop affordable housing is partially hampered by not having a clear and consistent definition of housing affordability, although the more intractable barrier is funding.

In the Ontario planning environment, policies are hierarchical. The provincial government may dictate certain standards, to which upper-tier municipalities (i.e. the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac) are required to adhere through documents such as the Official Plan. Lower-tier municipalities (i.e. the Townships of North, Central, and South Frontenac, and the Township of Frontenac Islands) must adhere to policies identified by upper-tier municipalities. Finally, municipal by-laws must be consistent with policies set out in a municipality's Official Plan.

In Kingston and Frontenac, not all plans and policy are consistent with the higher-level plans and policies. The following table identifies and summarizes these inconsistencies.

Table 3: Consistency in Affordable Housing Definitions by Policy Documents

Plan, Policy, or By-Law	Status
Provincial Policy Statement	Reference
City of Kingston Official Plan	Consistent
Municipal Housing Strategy	Consistent
County of Frontenac Official Plan	N/A
Township of North Frontenac Official Plan	Consistent
Township of Central Frontenac Official Plan	No definition
Township of South Frontenac Official Plan	No definition
Township of Frontenac Islands Official Plan	No definition

It is recommended that, beginning at the top level and working down, each plan or policy be revisited to ensure consistency with the higher-level policies. Further, it is recommended that policies related to housing affordability are strengthened to further promote the development of affordable housing.

DEFINING AFFORDABILITY FOR LOW INCOME GROUPS

In Kingston, for persons with very low income (such as recipients of Ontario Works), the 30% of a household’s monthly income, which defines affordability in the City’s Official Plan, is lower than half of the average market rent in the area. The rent is not affordable unless persons are willing to double up and share housing, which is often not feasible. The following section will clarify what affordability means to specific low-income groups.

AFFORDABILITY SCENARIOS

In order to illustrate what constitutes an affordable housing unit, this section will identify several living scenarios that are common among persons with low income. The scenarios used will be:

Scenario 1: A family of four (two adults, two children), with one wage-earner working full-time and earning minimum wage.

Scenario 2: A family of four (two adults, two children), receiving an allowance from Ontario Works.

Scenario 3: A family of three (one adult, two children), receiving an allowance from Ontario Works.

Scenario 4: A one-person household (one adult), receiving Old Age Security or a Guaranteed Income Supplement.

Scenario 5: A one-person household (one adult), receiving an allowance from the Ontario Disability Support Program.

Scenario 6: A one-person household (one adult), receiving an allowance from Ontario Works.

First, the approximate average monthly income of each of these households is identified.

Table 4: Scenario-Based Monthly Income Calculations

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5	Scenario 6
Income from Employment	\$1,777.00					
Basic Allowance		\$453.00	\$350.00		\$596.00	\$230.00
Maximum Shelter Allowance		\$695.00	\$641.00		\$479.00	\$376.00
OAS/GIS				\$1,272.00		
Child/Family Benefits	\$743.00	\$744.00	\$744.00			
GST/HST Credits	\$64.00	\$64.00	\$64.00	\$32.00	\$29.00	\$21.00
Ontario Sales Tax Credit	\$88.00	\$88.00	\$66.00	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$22.00
Employment Insurance Paid	(\$33.00)					
Canada Pension Plan Paid	(\$74.00)					
Working Income Tax Benefits	\$74.00					
Total Income	\$2,639.00	\$2,044.00	\$1,865.00	\$1,326.00	\$1,126.00	\$649.00

Next, the housing needs of each scenario household, as well as the rental prices based on various levels of affordability are identified. The following table identifies the percentage of income required to pay for rent at each of two rent levels: average market rent (as identified by CMHC) and 80% of average market rent. The table also identifies the amount of income left over in each scenario for all other non-rent expenses for the month.

Table 5: Scenario-Based Levels of Affordability Calculations

		Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5	Scenario 6
		3 bed	3 bed	2 bed	1 bed	1 bed	studio
Market Average	Rent	\$1,230.00	\$1,230.00	\$1,005.00	\$850.00	\$850.00	\$661.00
	% of Income	47%	60%	54%	64%	75%	102%
	Remainder	\$1,409.00	\$814.00	\$860.00	\$476.00	\$276.00	(\$12.00)
80% of Market Average	Rent	\$984.00	\$984.00	\$804.00	\$680.00	\$680.00	\$528.80
	% of Income	37%	48%	43%	51%	60%	81%
	Remainder	\$1,655.00	\$1,060.00	\$1,061.00	\$646.00	\$446.00	\$120.20

In the preceding table, it was demonstrated that a single person receiving Ontario Works benefits cannot pay for an apartment – even a bachelor or studio apartment – at average market rates, as the rental cost is higher than that person’s total monthly income.

For all of the scenarios, the cost of rent is above the 30% of income threshold for affordability as defined in the City’s Official Plan. This is true even if rent is equal to 80% of the average market rate. In fact, for most scenarios, households are paying 50% or more of their income on rent.

In reality, the 30% of income rule is somewhat flexible. Most sources suggest that 30%-35% is an acceptable range to be spent on housing costs. In particular, households with higher income are able to spend more on their housing costs due to simply having more money to begin with. It has been proposed that, as income rises, the amount spent on housing increases at a lower rate. To put it differently, lower-income households must spend a higher proportion of their income to cover their basic needs (i.e. shelter and food) than those with higher incomes. This is reflected in the *Provincial Policy Statement*, which states that definitions of affordability only apply to the 60% of households with the lowest income.

However, there are very few instances where spending less than 30% of a household’s income is unaffordable. Thus, to consider what level of rent is affordable, it is useful to use the 30% of income as a benchmark.

Table 6: Scenario-Based Affordable Rent Prices

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5	Scenario 6
Income	\$2,639.00	\$2,044.00	\$1,865.00	\$1,326.00	\$1,126.00	\$649.00
30% of Income	\$791.70	\$613.20	\$559.50	\$397.80	\$337.80	\$194.70
Max Shelter Allowance	-	\$695.00	\$641.00	-	\$479.00	\$376.00
Affordable Rent	\$791.70	\$695.00	\$641.00	\$397.80	\$479.00	\$376.00

The Table above shows the affordable level of rent for each of the scenario households. For Scenario 1, a family of four with one full-time minimum wage earner, and Scenario 4, a one person household on a fixed income, “affordable rent” is defined as 30% of household income. Other scenario households are provided with a shelter allowance with a fixed upper limit and can only be spent on housing. If those households find a situation where they pay less than the maximum shelter allowance on rent, they do not receive the remainder of the shelter allowance. Thus, as long as the rental price is less than or equal to the maximum shelter allowance, the cost of rent does not impact total household income.

A benefit of the rental price being less than or equal to maximum shelter allowance is that a tenant can instruct his OW or ODSP shelter allowance be paid directly to the landlord. This is attractive to landlords who are guaranteed that rent is paid on time and in full while this consent is in effect.

However, the scenarios above illustrated only six hypothetical household situations with a maximum annual household income of \$31,668, which is less than half of the median household income. For a two-bedroom apartment at average market rent to be affordable, the total annual household income must be \$40,200. However, the most recent data available indicates that in Kingston, nearly 70% of renter households have an income below this threshold.

In fact, approximately 13% of renter households have a total annual income between \$31,668 and \$40,200 – suggesting that while market rate apartments are still unaffordable for this group, they may be able to pay for an apartment at 80% of average market rent.

LEVELS OF AFFORDABILITY

Units affordable to persons making \$649 per month or less

A single person, with no dependents, receiving Ontario Works (OW) benefits will have an income of \$649 per month, as described in Scenario 6. For a person in this Scenario, the affordable level of rent is \$376 is the maximum shelter allowance provided by Ontario Works.

From a gross monthly income perspective, it is preferable that these units cost the tenant no more than the Shelter Allowance component of his/her Ontario Works. Housing at this rate will not take the individual out of a state of rather significant economic poverty, but alleviates housing cost as a risk factor for their month-to-month budgeting.

It is also possible that some persons making minimum wage do not have enough hours to exceed \$649 on a monthly basis. These individuals would also need housing that is affordable to their lower income status. For consistency and equity, it is recommended that these units also are priced at \$376 or less per month, appreciating that this will exceed 30% of gross monthly income for some individuals, but also appreciating that his/her income is also more likely to fluctuate on a month to month basis given the nature of their employment.

Units affordable to persons making \$650 to \$1,125 per month

In between the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefit ranges, these units account for those individuals and families that are relying on the likes of part-time employment, partial benefits, some forms of disability payments, Ontario Works with additional discretionary benefits added – and other comparable situations.

The minimum cost for these units shall be \$376 to be consistent with the Shelter Allowance component of Ontario Works, when that is applicable. It is expected, however, that the units will rent across an entire range for this income cohort, from \$376 right up to \$479 per month, especially for those at the upper end of the income range within the classification.

Units affordable to persons making \$1,126 to \$1,541 per month

These units are intended to be affordable to persons on Ontario Disability Support Program, Older Adults that rely on Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement, and lower-wage earners.

A single person on the Ontario Disability Support Program can receive \$1,126 per month, as described in Scenario 5. For these persons, an affordable monthly rent is \$479 or less, so as to be consistent with the Shelter Allowance.

These units are also intended to especially be affordable to single person households that rely on Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement, as described in Scenario 4. Units intended for persons in Scenario 4 should not rent for more than \$398 per month.

Lower wage earners in this affordability cohort can be expected to pay up to \$462 per month on her/his rent, depending on their total monthly income.

Therefore, to meet the affordability needs with this cohort rents would need to range from \$398 up to \$479.

Units affordable to persons making \$1,542 to \$2,639 per month

This affordability cohort encompasses a range of lower income earners, as well as a range of different household compositions relying on income supports. Some examples:

- A family of four with one wage earner making minimum wage, as in Scenario 1.
- A family of four on Ontario Works, as in Scenario 2.
- A single parent household with two children on Ontario Works, as in Scenario 3.
- An individual working 40 hours per week making minimum wage will earn approximately \$1777 per month.

This affordability cohort also takes into consideration those households that make more than \$10.25 per hour, but still struggle with overall affordability either because of the amount of their wage or the number of hours of work that they receive.

Within this cohort rents will need to range from a minimum of \$533 for lower-income earners that are single and live on minimum wage, through to \$792 for the higher income earners in this bracket. The benefit of this affordability cohort is that it allows the City and County to address the needs of some multi-child households relying on income supports, as well as addressing housing needs amongst the “working poor”.

THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR THOSE IN DEEPEST NEED

Recommendations #10 and #11 of the original Municipal Housing Strategy 2011 suggest that the City and the County, respectively, adopt refined targets for units to be added to the current housing stock over the next 10 years. One of the identified targets was that 25% of new units be affordable.

The Municipal Housing Strategy sets a target for new affordable housing units built over the next ten years as follows: 1700 new units in the City of Kingston, and 410 new units in the County of Frontenac. The initial projections in the Municipal Housing Strategy indicated an average of 170 units per year up to 2021 for the City of Kingston, and an

average of 41 units per year up to 2021 for the County of Frontenac. Based upon available data, it is prudent to extend these projections through to 2023 still assuming annualized figures of 170 and 41 for the City and County respectfully as it pertains to affordable dwellings. There is no compelling reason based upon available data and evidence to alter the 170 and 41 targets for the 2022 and 2023 calendar years.

Using its proprietary housing affordability model, OrgCode used data from the original Municipal Housing Strategy and the development of the Homelessness Plan to investigate further the range of affordability within the affordability targets.

The housing affordability model projects housing demands and affordability over the next 10 years. There are a range of indicators, based upon trends, that most impact the conclusions reached by the affordability model, including, but not limited to:

- City and County population
- Understanding anticipated population changes and characteristics of population change (in-migration, age, participation in labour force, income levels, gender, birth and death rates, etc.)
- Incidence of low-income, and characteristics of low-income households
- Mean and median household income, and characteristics of households by income brackets
- Breakdown of industries, with attention paid to propensity of lower-wage industry sectors
- Rates of unemployment, as well as length of unemployment and other unemployment trends
- Rates of income assistance (Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Canada Pension Plan, etc.) relative to rental market affordability
- Minimum wage income relative to rental market affordability
- Availability of affordable rental units within current and historic rental market by type of unit and range of affordability
- Trends in household composition
- Mobility of households
- Service use patterns within homeless shelters (occupancy rates, average lengths of stay, household characteristics of shelter users, etc.)
- Development patterns
- Loss and changes in composition of rental market housing stock

Like any forward-looking projection, both current and historic data, as well as an understanding of current initiatives to address known issues become important factors in breaking down anticipated levels and types of affordability within affordable housing. For example, because the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan places strong emphasis on helping homeless people achieve housing with supports based upon presenting issues and acuity, there will be an emphasis placed on units that are deeply affordable.

Using this approach, it is recognized that over the next ten years, a total of 2110 affordable units would need to be created in Kingston and Frontenac to fully address the need. These units would be targeted for the following income cohorts, as described in Table 6: Number of Units Based on Affordability.

Although the Service Manager recognizes the need for these units, it is not fiscally achievable by the Municipality alone. Considerable change in policies and practices at the Provincial and Federal government would need to occur to meet the requirements based on need.

Table 7: Number of Units Based on Level of Affordability:

Level of Affordability	City of Kingston	County of Frontenac	TOTAL
Units Affordable to Persons Making \$649 or less per month	678	159	837
Units Affordable to Persons Making \$650 to \$1,149 per month	387	89	476
Units Affordable to Persons Making \$1,150 to \$1,541 per month	499	129	628
Units Affordable to Persons Making \$1,542 to \$2,639 per month	136	33	169
Total Affordable Dwellings	1700	410	2110

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

In addition to the 2110 recommended units to respond to the persons in the lowest income brackets, the region has a need for 299 additional permanent supportive housing units – housing that is not only affordable but also has supports attached to help tenants most in need stabilize their housing and maintain housing tenure. Permanent supportive housing is key to the success of ending chronic homelessness.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is characterized and understood as follows:

- It is a housing option that can be considered by a subset of the population. No one is forced, coerced or placed in the units by housing workers, the courts or mental health professionals without the willing consent, participation and choice of the occupant.
- It is a housing option that has rent geared to income. This should be understood as no more than 40% of gross monthly income. The higher income threshold (40% instead of a more common 30%) takes into account that in addition to rental services, residents are also contributing in a small way to the costs of the extra support provision that they are receiving while in the Permanent Supportive Housing.
- PSH is exclusively for individuals that are assessed as having a higher acuity. PSH deliberately seeks to serve those that have complex, co-occurring issues. Many of these individuals are likely to have demonstrated behaviour in other housing or homeless shelters that was considered to be problematic or disruptive by other residents and/or the service provider.
- PSH is not time limited. Occupants, because of their acuity and presenting issues, may stay in the housing as long as they desire, so long as they meet the most basic requirements of the tenancy (e.g., paying rent; not committing egregious criminal offences, etc.).
- PSH is grounded in a harm reduction philosophy, covering all four pillars of the harm reduction approach. While some occupants may choose decreased substance use and participation in other risky behaviour in his/her life, it is not a requirement for participating in the housing.
- In the event that an individual must leave the PSH they will be immediately assisted in accessing another Permanent Supportive Housing unit. They do not get kicked out of the overall support program, nor do they go to the bottom of a waiting list.
- The service model goes to great lengths to focus on positive change for residents while maintaining a service delivery model that is not focused on compliance

based residency where the likes of sobriety, taking of medications, addressing existing physical health issues, and/or accessing mental health supports are a requirement of tenancy.

Table 8: 10-Year Permanent Supportive Housing Requirements Based on Affordable Units

Type of Unit	City of Kingston	County of Frontenac	TOTAL
Affordable Dwellings as per MSH 2011	1700	410	2110
Permanent Supportive Housing	261	38	299
Total New Units	1,961	448	2,409

Between now and 2023, it is projected that the City of Kingston will require 261 more units of Permanent Supportive Housing, and the County of Frontenac will require 38. This works out to approximately 26 affordable PSH units per year in the City, and 4 affordable PSH units per year in the County. One strategy to make the units affordable would be to offer a subsidy through the rent supplement program so that rents would be based on income. However, the current rent subsidy funding would not be sufficient to support these number of PSH units. Although the Service Manager supports the need for these units, there will need to be the cooperation of other levels of government to fully achieve these targets.

The Permanent Supportive Housing, as outlined in the projections, can be in scattered sites (existing apartment buildings), as a specialized component of new construction or acquisition, or stand-alone dedicated/single site facilities made possible through new construction or acquisition. There is no compelling evidence in any of the academic literature proving that one approach (scattered vs. dedicated/single site) out performs the other in service outcomes, though dedicated/single site housing is determined to be more efficient and affordable. Consumer preference, however, is shown to be a strong predictor of housing stability, and therefore, having a mix of scattered site and congregate approaches to PSH are preferred.

PERMANENT HOUSING VERSUS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

This Plan places strong emphasis on Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and to some, it may appear that Transitional Housing (TH) has been overlooked and is conspicuously absent from the Plan.

A “typical” Transitional Housing program (there is a large degree of variation from case to case) is seen as an intermediate step between homelessness and independent living. A homeless person may transition from living on the streets or in shelters to Transitional

Housing and from there move on to a place of his or her own. In most cases, supports are provided in the TH, such as life skills classes, addictions treatment, etc. Usually, but not always, Transitional Housing is seen as a program that has rules by which clients must abide. Almost always, TH is time-limited, although the length of time may be anywhere between six months and two years.

However, there are many things that make this model problematic:

- **There is no evidence to suggest that Transitional Housing achieves better outcomes than Permanent Supportive Housing.** In fact, there are some studies finding that PSH outperforms TH, many that suggest equal outcomes, and none that prove conclusively that Transitional Housing results in higher outcomes than Permanent Supportive Housing.
- **If clients succeed, they are rewarded by being evicted.** Because the programs are time-limited, at the end of the program, clients are required to leave, regardless of whether they want to or not. This is disruptive to a client's well-being and stability, since they may have formed attachments to the area or neighbours, and may not be interested in leaving.
- **If the clients fail, they return to homelessness.** Most TH programs have rules, such as requiring a client's attendance at AA meetings, or working towards some life improvement. If a client does not comply with these requirements, they are removed from the program, and more often than not, return to the very homeless shelters from which they came.
- **When is a client ready for housing?** Arguably, everyone is ready for permanent housing. Requiring a client to participate in a program and demonstrate their ability to be self-sufficient is not only condescending (and thus, the opposite of empowering) but also counterproductive as it prolongs the amount of time for which a person lacks stable and permanent housing. Moreover, because all individuals are unique, it is impossible to say whether a finite amount of time (for instance, one year) is sufficient for all clients to become "ready" to live independently – some may quickly progress through the program while others may need a slower pace. An artificial deadline does not work.
- **It makes more sense to help a person learn life skills in his or her own home.** If a person learns how to cook, clean, go grocery shopping, and take the bus while in Transitional Housing, and successfully graduates from the program, then moves to a new residence, he or she has to re-learn everything including where the bus stop and grocery store are, how the new kitchen works, etc. Moreover, the client may not feel confident in his or her new home and become homeless again due to an easily averted difficulty. From an efficiency standpoint,

it makes more sense to help a client learn these skills while they are in a permanent housing arrangement rather than a temporary one.

- **Transitional Housing is far more expensive than Permanent Supportive Housing.** Usually, TH comes with more intensive supports than PSH – the idea is that clients are being transitioned to independence, thus more life skills are taught in a shorter period of time. In contrast, PSH does not have the intensive emphasis on getting clients “ready” to move on. In addition, TH requires twice as much administration – once moving a client from a shelter to Transitional Housing and second from Transitional Housing to a permanent housing option. Because of the high turnover (with maximum stays of 6 months, 1 year, or 2 years), support workers (and clients) are spending more time getting to know new clients and helping them transition rather than working on long-term relationships.

The main benefits of Transitional Housing are the supports that are provided, and indeed many clients thrive in a supportive environment. However, this is an argument for *supportive* housing rather than *transitional* housing. The same supports can be provided in a permanent environment.

It is true that many persons living in PSH will eventually want to move on, and that a supportive housing environment may in fact be a temporary or transitional arrangement as there is nothing stopping a tenant from exiting PSH. In fact, although most Canadians live in what would be termed permanent housing, on average, a Canadian household moves every five years or so due to changing needs and stage of life. Thus, instead of thinking of permanent housing as fixed housing arrangement that will last forever, it is best to understand permanent housing as a residence from which the tenant is never required to move out as so long as they continue to pay rent on time and adhere to the terms of a standard lease.

Thus, instead of encouraging any new or existing Transitional Housing in Kingston or Frontenac, the philosophies of this Plan suggest that, instead, Transitional Housing be converted into Permanent Supportive Housing or other type of permanent housing arrangement.

It is possible however, that from a pragmatic approach, the Service Manager may need to consider Transitional Housing when PSH cannot be arranged or funded to meet demand.

INCLUSIONARY ZONING

Recommendation #9 in the original Municipal Housing Strategy (Appendix E) suggested that the City begin “Pursuing **inclusionary zoning** opportunities as part of the comprehensive Zoning By-law (ZBL) review.” Inclusionary zoning was a possible method for increasing the supply of affordable housing. However, at the time of writing, such policies are not permitted within the Ontario planning framework. The updated strategy explores alternative methods that can be described more broadly as inclusionary *policies* that use similar principles but are permitted in Ontario.

Similarly, recommendation #22 suggests “that the City pursue opportunities to utilize **inclusionary zoning** and density bonusing to achieve negotiated agreements for the provision of affordable housing in new developments.” In order to address this recommendation, a more in-depth understanding of inclusionary zoning is required.

Inclusionary zoning is a specific type of policy that was originally enacted by ordinance in Fairfax County, Virginia, and has since become widely used in the United States. Essentially, inclusionary zoning requires that in new residential developments, a certain proportion of the units must be affordable. However, this type of by-law is not permitted under the *Planning Act* in Ontario. More broadly, however, is a collection of policies referred to as “inclusionary policies,” which share the same intent as inclusionary zoning but use a wide range of planning tools and methods, and have a number of components:

- **Threshold:** how large does the development need to be before some units must be affordable? The threshold could be anywhere between 10 units to over 200 units, while Boulder, Colorado applies the inclusionary policy to any new residential development.
- **Set-Aside Requirement:** how many units must be affordable? Most US communities require 10%-15% to be affordable, while Vancouver requires 20%.
- **Level of Affordability:** who is eligible to live in the affordable units? Usually, a household must demonstrate that their income is 80% or lower of Area Median Income (AMI), though there are a variety of methods used.
- **Duration of Affordability:** for how long must a unit be affordable? The period of time is usually sometime between 10 to 30 years, though some programs are indefinite. For affordable home ownership, the affordability requirement is often registered on title, preventing families from purchasing a house at a discount and then selling at a large profit a few months later – in some cases, resale profit is split between the household and the municipality.
- **Mandatory, Hybrid or Voluntary:** is the inclusionary policy a requirement of

developments or is it voluntary (presumably with incentives)? In most of the US, the policy is mandatory, though in Ontario, a mandatory policy would not be legal. A hybrid approach is when affordable housing development is mandatory in certain circumstances, such as in Chicago, where the policy comes into effect only when development is occurring on city-owned land or with a municipal subsidy.

- **Incentives:** what, if any, incentives are provided to developers who build affordable units? Some commonly used incentives include: height and density increases, fast track for development approvals, reduced parking requirements, waiver or reduction of development fees, reduced parking requirements, or subsidies such as tax increment financing (TIF)
- **In-Lieu Concessions:** are developers allowed to provide some other concession in lieu of building affordable housing? Developers may prefer to pay a cash amount or provide some land to the municipality rather than actually building and selling affordable buildings. Whether or not this is permitted, and when, is another component of inclusionary policies.

The promise of inclusionary zoning is alluring for many reasons. Primarily, it appears to be a simple policy fix to increase the supply of affordable housing: require that 10% of all new developments are affordable, and watch as the supply of affordable housing in an area increases with little effort. However, the reality is not quite so simple.

HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY

As Kingston strives to become Canada's most sustainable City and pursues the Sustainable Kingston Plan and Kingston's Strategic Plan, it is important to discuss sustainability with relation to affordable housing provision. In this context, sustainable housing has two distinct meanings.

The first concern is financial. The cost of building new dedicated affordable housing is capital-intensive, and it can be difficult to dedicate that amount of funds to an affordable housing initiative. However, by building or purchasing a new building, that building is in the municipality's inventory for as long as the municipality maintains it and is considered an asset. Conversely, rent supplements (the practice of "supplementing" the amount of rent a tenant is required to pay to a landlord, allowing the tenant to pay lower rent and having the municipality cover the difference) require a monthly expenditure with no acquisition of assets. While rent supplements are often necessary when there is insufficient funding for capital expenditures, they are not a sustainable way to increase the affordable housing stock. Thus, this Plan recommends that at least 60% of new affordable units be acquired through purchasing or purpose-building housing, rather than providing rent supplements. This will ensure long-term financial sustainability.

The second concern is environmental. It is desirable for new buildings to be constructed using environmentally-friendly materials and with energy efficiency in mind, and affordable housing is no different. Therefore, Kingston has implemented several policies related to housing sustainability.

In calls for proposals for new builds utilizing provincial and municipal funding, there is a requirement to meet at minimum the energy efficiency requirements of the Ontario Building Code with preference given to developments with additional energy efficiency measures incorporated in the building design and/or operation of the building. All appliances must be Energy star rated. As well, additional points are given for units individually metered with rents exclusive of utilities to promote energy efficiency amongst tenants. Smart meters are required.

In 2009 MMAH introduced the Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit Program (SHRRP) and the City of Kingston received \$5.4M for renovations and repairs to social housing units. One of the eligible priorities in the City was to fund energy upgrades which included appliances, furnaces, bathroom and plumbing upgrades, windows and doors. The Renewable Energy Initiative was a specific segment of the SHRRP Program in which the City funded 8 projects for a total cost of \$573,000.

Under the IAH the City of Kingston has committed \$200K annually towards the Kingston-Frontenac Renovates Program (KFRP). Eligibility for the KFRP is on a needs basis and only certain projects are eligible for funding including: Health and Safety; Accessibility; Structural; and Energy Efficiency.

Housing Affordability in Frontenac

Geographically, an enormous proportion of the area overseen by the Service Manager is rural. These rural areas have distinct housing needs as compared to urban areas of Kingston.

HOUSING SITUATION IN FRONTENAC

The housing situation in Frontenac County has several distinct characteristics:

- The housing stock is older in Frontenac than Kingston, particularly the rental housing stock, of which more than one third was built before 1946.
- Partially due to the age of the housing stock, housing in Frontenac is in greater need of repair than in Kingston.
- Lower-income households in rural areas tend to live in older housing, which often is poorly insulated and therefore has higher heating and utility costs.
- It is more expensive to build housing in rural and remote areas due to lack of infrastructure, small population, and lower demand. Due to the smaller market, fewer units are constructed over time, leading to a contraction in supply of individuals and companies who build housing. The fewer number who remain are comparatively more expensive due to low competition, and must pay higher costs for shipping materials longer distances, and building infrastructure.
- Far more homes in Frontenac are owner-occupied than in Kingston; in Frontenac, 90.5% of households own their home while only 62% do in Kingston.

HOUSING TENURE IN FRONTENAC

The high proportion of home ownership (90%) in Frontenac has both positive and negative impacts. Homeowners tend to have higher or even moderate incomes, and for them, the situation is positive, since homeowners, by definition, have more assets than renters, and comparatively, more rural homeowners are mortgage-free than urban homeowners.

However, the situation has unintended negative impacts for the renter households. Due to a comparatively small rental housing market, there is lower demand for new units to be built, and the majority of tenants have low income. Therefore, it is difficult for landlords to earn enough income to be able to reinvest in their rental properties. Over time, this leads to a decline in the rental housing stock, and a widening gap between the wealthier homeowners and the lower income renters.

This creates an additional challenge. Most housing policy assumes that if a renter household increases their income, they will be able to afford a higher quality unit and

resolve a poor housing situation. However, if the rental housing market is so depressed or constrained that this solution is not possible, the result may be rental households with moderate income who live in inadequate housing due to a lack of options, which could result in relocation to urban areas with more availability of better quality housing.

HOUSING FOR SENIORS IN FRONTENAC

A growing senior population is a reality in many Canadian rural communities, including Frontenac County. According to recent population projections, it is believed that by 2036, fully 34% of Frontenac's population will be over the age of 55. The growth of the senior population in rural areas is not isolated to Frontenac County; it is occurring in rural areas across Canada.

This trend can be understood to have a number of concurrent causes:

- Aging in place of the “baby boomer” population. Mature adults who reside in Frontenac at the time of their retirement are unlikely to leave their home community at that time.
- Returning home of new retirees who grew up in Frontenac. Some former residents of the Townships have moved to a larger city for work. Upon reaching retirement, some are expected to return to their roots.
- Retiring to the country. A number of urbanites move to a quieter, smaller community after retirement. This is particularly the case for individuals who have a seasonal home and may have the desire to make it their primary residence after they retire.
- Out-migration of younger adults. As younger adults leave to urban areas to pursue employment opportunities, the relative proportion of seniors within Frontenac increases.

Seniors have specific housing needs. Some continue to live in a house they own and have lived in for many years. While socially, this is desirable as the resident lives in an area they are familiar with, from a mobility and maintenance point of view, this can be problematic. Many houses in Frontenac are older, thereby requiring more investment for utilities, and maintenance. In addition, a house that was once suitable to a mobile adult may not be suitable to an older person with trouble getting around. In addition, many seniors continue to live in a house with more bedrooms than they need after children have moved out, which also contributes to higher utility costs.

Other seniors will rent a housing unit, whether this is dedicated housing for seniors or part of the regular rental market. While rental options for seniors are expanding, most of the options tend to be expensive such as retirement homes.

For renter seniors with lower incomes, housing affordability is a great challenge since the household's income is either limited or non-existent. Finding a unit that meets the needs of a senior household while remaining affordable is difficult, particularly in areas where the rental market is small.

Finally, seniors often have more health needs than younger adults. As a result, close proximity and access to medical facilities is an important factor to consider related to housing for seniors. However, many seniors do not have access to reliable transportation, due to a variety of reasons including poor eyesight. The closest major hospital is in Kingston, which is over 100 km away from some parts of Frontenac County.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN FRONTENAC

Conversions

A number of existing buildings in rural areas may be suitable for conversion to affordable housing. For instance, large single-family homes may be divided into multiple units, and disused non-residential property (i.e. schools, hotels, warehouses) can be converted into residential uses.

Incentives

Sometimes in rural areas, the lack of affordable housing development is due to a lack of incentives. For instance, zoning or other municipal policies may deter potential developers. In other cases, the lack of municipal infrastructure may cause developers to hesitate. A number of municipal incentives can be explored to encourage affordable housing development, including selling municipal land at a very low price, offering to build infrastructure, or expediting the development approval process.

Intensification

One of the key methods of keeping costs down, particularly in rural areas, is to create dwellings in close proximity to one another. This reduces servicing costs, and, if constructed at the same time, can reduce construction costs due to economies of scale.

However, in many rural areas – Frontenac included – intensification is often viewed as undesirable, and there is the perception that allowing intensification will change the character of the community.

An important counterpoint to this perception is the reality of “aging in place.” If one were to consider housing across a person's lifetime, one would recognize the changing needs at different life stages – from a rental unit to a small starter home to a larger family-sized dwelling to a single-story bungalow, for example. In order to encourage residents to remain in their community throughout their lifetime, there should be a diversity of housing types to accommodate all life stages.

At present, there are some barriers to intensification within Frontenac County. For instance, zoning is almost exclusively for single-detached homes, and there are strict regulations for septic system provision for multi-unit buildings. However, there are a number of ways that moderate intensification can be pursued in the County without making significant changes:

- Permitting and promoting secondary suites, accessory apartments, and garden suites
- Amending zoning provisions to allow two homes to be built on the same lot without requiring subdivision approval
- Simplify the subdivision approval process to encourage the development of smaller dwellings on smaller lots with higher density
- Pursue opportunities for shared housing developments

Alternative Housing Types

An alternate way to increase the amount of affordable housing in rural areas is to explore alternative housing types, such as mobile homes and manufactured (pre-fabricated) homes. Recent innovations within this sector allow for the proper integration of mobile and manufactured homes within rural communities without difficulty, and these options are often sold at a lower price point than traditional housing.

Developing affordable housing in rural areas is wrought with its own challenges, as well. For instance, higher density developments are more cost effective, but are not consistent with the character of a rural area. Nor are multi-unit buildings feasible in areas where septic systems are predominant. In order to ensure adequate provision of affordable housing in rural areas, alternative solutions should be pursued, such as promoting secondary suites, encouraging smaller lot sizes and smaller dwellings, as well as converting existing buildings to residential purposes.

Summary

In order to move towards an adequate supply and range of housing in Kingston and Frontenac, the 40 recommendations identified in the original Municipal Housing Strategy (2011) have been updated and clarified. In addition, new recommendations have been identified in the update. Recommendations from the Municipal Housing Strategy which have been fully completed have been removed from this Plan. The Municipal Housing Strategy's original 40 recommendations and a description documenting progress to date in completing each recommendation can be found in Appendix E.

New or updated recommendations arising from the update are found at the end of this Plan under the heading Recommendations, starting on page 115, Strategies 1 through 5.

Addressing Homelessness in the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac

People experiencing homelessness are a disparate group, ranging in age, gender, ethnicity, level of education, state of health, and mental wellbeing. While their needs may differ, what they have in common is the lack of housing.

This Plan focuses on housing provision with the appropriate level of supports as the key to reducing, and ultimately ending chronic homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac. “Ending homelessness” means that there will be an effective system in place such that absence of housing in the future will be short-term and rare and people will no longer experience chronic homelessness or repeated episodes of homelessness.

This Plan outlines a number of evidence-based and evidence-informed practices, including ‘Housing First’ and ‘Rapid Re-Housing’ that are designed to assist persons experiencing homelessness access housing quickly and maintain their housing. Using these approaches, homeless individuals with co-occurring needs are matched with the most appropriate level of supports relative to their individual needs. These individuals and families are given priority in accessing housing, and are provided with other “wrap-around” supports and services (such as attending to mental health issues or addiction issues) only after they have moved into their new residence and achieved some level of housing stability.

Seven strategies aimed at addressing homelessness have been developed through consultation with over 20 service providers, over 100 members of the public through four consultation sessions, combined with extensive research into best and promising practices from other jurisdictions. These strategies and related activities are found in the Recommendations section, beginning on page 135, strategy numbers 6 through 12. They are summarized here:

- Strategic Direction #6: Systems Reorientation: Leadership, Integration & Coordination
- Strategic Direction #7: Strengthening Homelessness Prevention & Diversion
- Strategic Direction #8: Redefining The Role of Emergency Shelters
- Strategic Direction #9: Increasing Housing Options for Those with Highest Needs
- Strategic Direction #10: Improving Housing Stability for the Most in Need
- Strategic Direction # 11: Developing a Rural Homelessness Strategy
- Strategic Direction # 12: Measuring Outcomes & Report Successes of the Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness

Measuring the Scope of Homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac

It is impossible to state with confidence how many individuals and families are experiencing homelessness in the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac and using proxies from other communities in Canada or the United States is not ideal. This inability to define the scope of the challenge or to determine the exact, disparate needs of those who do find themselves to be homeless results in a network of homelessness and housing services providers who are continually in a reactive posture. To be clear, this is a natural and expected reaction on the part of service providers in this type of environment, not a shortcoming in their efforts to provide excellence in service.

Measuring the scope of homelessness is possible and it is being done with greater precision in jurisdictions around the world and, most notably, in the United States where the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) made homeless counts mandatory every two years as a condition of ongoing funding. The predominant and proven methodology is called a Point-In-Time (PIT) Homeless Count. A PIT Count entails surveying the entire city (outdoor spaces, homeless shelters, etc.) during a specified window in time—up to 24 hours—during the same week of the year from count to count. Historically some communities attempted to use shelter figures as a proxy for the entire homeless population. Methods such as counting the total number of unique individuals visiting shelters during a certain period of time can be inaccurate because they do not account for individuals who may be checked in at more than one shelter during the specified time period resulting in duplication. Another problem is that this approach does not account for the people who did not access a shelter when the count was being conducted.

In Kingston, a Point-In-Time Homeless Count is planned for fall 2013. Estimates from Point-In-Time Homeless Counts from jurisdictions with similarly sized populations as the City of Kingston suggest that, based on population size, there are approximately 400 people at a given point in time who are homeless in Kingston and the County of Frontenac.

In addition, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)¹ in Washington, D.C., estimates that an average of 29 persons per 10,000 people in urban areas is experiencing homelessness.² The NAEH projection suggests that approximately 358 homeless individuals call Kingston their home. However, the numbers will vary widely city to city based on a number of local economic, geographic, climatic, historical, and political factors. Therefore, any reliance on the estimate in the absence of a true count being

1 While there is a fledgling Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, it does not have a Research Institute like the National Alliance does. While some caveats are necessary in using US based work for Canadian related research, the methods employed by the Alliance have been well researched and evaluated considerably. As noted, the intent is to use the methods to provide an "order of magnitude" assessment in the absence of solid local data on the scope of the homeless population at any one point in time.

2 Henry, M. and Sermons, M. W. (2010) *Geography of Homelessness*. National Alliance to End Homelessness.

conducted must be considered an “order of magnitude” barometer of the potential state of homelessness in Kingston, not a scientific metric.³ The 2012 data indicates that 818 unique individuals accessed the emergency shelter system in Kingston during a period of one year.

The table below illustrates communities with similar populations as Kingston and a range of persons experiencing homelessness from a low of 227 in Springfield, Illinois to a high of 1,471 people in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Where Canadian examples can be included, they have been. The high level of variation between similarly sized municipalities indicates that the estimate of 400 homeless persons is likely to be inaccurate to some degree.

Table 9: 2011 PIT Count Results Across Similarly Sized Municipalities

City	Population	Homeless Count
Canada		
Kelowna, British Columbia ⁴	117,312	279
Red Deer, Alberta ⁵	90,564	279
USA ⁶		
Warren, Michigan	134,243	656
Elizabeth, New Jersey	125,660	1,471
Hartford, Connecticut	124,867	881
Allentown, Pennsylvania	119,141	759
Springfield, Illinois	117,076	227
Lansing, Michigan	114,605	444
Manchester, New Hampshire	109,830	350
Cambridge, Massachusetts	106,038	471

Homelessness is also a reality in rural areas that are included within the boundaries of the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac. The NAEH estimates that on average, there are 14 homeless per 10,000 people in rural areas⁷, suggesting approximately that there are 42 people experiencing homelessness in Frontenac County.

³ OrgCode Consulting, Inc. has conducted PIT Counts in Metro Vancouver (23 municipalities, including the City of Vancouver) and Red Deer, Alberta in 2011 and 2012, respectively.

⁴ SPARC BC. (2011) Knowledge for Action: Hidden Homelessness in Prince George, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nelson, and Nanaimo.

⁵ City of Red Deer. (2012) Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012.

⁶ Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2011) The 2011 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness: Supplement to the Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

⁷ Henry, M. and Sermons, M. W. (2010) Geography of Homelessness. National Alliance to End Homelessness.

It is also important to note that the propensity of homelessness, as suggested by the NAEH, does not account for persons or families that are doubled-up with other family members, sleeping on a friend's couch or floor, or in overcrowded situations. No methodology has accurately been able to quantify the extent of these unseen homeless people anywhere in the world, though there is no doubt that these individuals and families use homeless related services, including shelters on occasion.

The homeless population in any geographic area is composed of diverse demographics—they are not a homogenous group. Several distinct “sub-populations” of homeless people exist, often with very different characteristics from one another even within the sub-populations themselves.

The following sections will describe the characteristics and needs of five distinct groups: homeless youth, homeless families, homeless women, homeless aboriginal persons, and victims of domestic violence. While these groups comprise sizeable minorities of the total homeless population, there are other groups that have particular needs as well: persons who are chronically homeless typically comprise 15%-20% of the total homeless population; veterans are often disproportionately represented among those who are homeless; seniors who become homeless are particularly vulnerable; persons who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer can comprise up to 40% of the homeless youth subpopulation; and newcomers to Canada often have culturally specific needs, such as language barriers. A 2013 City of Toronto Interim Report on Homelessness found that 16% of persons living on the street in the City had served in the military. It is not clear how this might compare to the Kingston experience. All of these groups have very different needs in service provision, reinforcing the notion that supports and housing options must be individualized.

Youth

Approximately 1 in 3 persons experiencing homeless are unaccompanied youth – defined as those between the ages of 16 and 24 who are without adult supervision.⁸ In Kingston, 27% of shelter users are in this group.

They are among the most vulnerable of groups who experience homelessness. Homeless youth are more vulnerable to exploitation from adults and other youth. Their brains are still developing and are highly susceptible to outside influence.⁹ Like any youth, they are still experimenting and trying to decide who they are. Youth are extraordinarily resilient, but they still need a supportive environment in which to pursue opportunities and to be able to fail, learn and try again without severe, life-altering consequences.¹⁰

⁸ Mobilizing Local Capacity to End Homelessness in Canada.

⁹ Winters, K. C. (2008) Adolescent Brain Development and Drug Abuse. Mentor Foundation.

¹⁰ Raising the Roof. (2009) Youth Homelessness in Canada: The Road to Solutions.

Youth are best served by youth-specific services, not by being treated as adults. For instance, youth-specific shelters, like Kingston Youth Shelter, help protect homeless youth from exploitation from older homeless individuals or from abuse that they may have been experiencing in their family home.¹¹

The Mobilizing Local Capacity to End Youth Homelessness Program (MLC) is a five-year initiative that sees local community energies and capacity for collective action as the front line in attacking the complex social issues surrounding youth homelessness. The MLC is the result of an exciting partnership between The National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness (LC), Eva's Initiatives and the Canadian Housing Renewal Association (CHRA), with generous funding from the Catherine Donnelly Foundation. "Our ultimate goal is to end youth homelessness by fostering collective community action and promoting systemic change to public policies in Canada," says Maria Crawford, Co-Chair of the MLC program and Executive Director of Eva's Initiatives in Toronto.

Youth are also susceptible to non-homeless persons who will attempt to exploit the vulnerability and uncertainty that accompanies the experience of youth homelessness. The Seattle Police Department, for example, has studied the issue and found that 77% of homeless youth were approached for prostitution, drugs, criminal or other exploitive activities within 45 minutes of when they arrived unaccompanied on the street.¹²

These youth present a unique opportunity to effectively intervene and end their homelessness. If left alone, homeless youth have the potential to become tomorrow's chronically homeless adults. However, assisting homeless youth to find housing stability in their lives is one way of preventing future chronic homelessness.

One study found that each youth experiencing homelessness is reflected in an annual taxpayer burden of \$13,900 and an annual social burden of \$37,450.¹³ Once these youth reach the age of 25, it is estimated that they will impose a future lifetime taxpayer burden of \$148,790 and a future lifetime social burden of \$461,020. Altogether, the lifetime cost of each homeless youth is over \$1 million.¹⁴ This is consistent with annual costs of \$134,642 for chronically homeless adults, including health care, housing, and emergency services.¹⁵

¹¹ Raising the Roof. (2009) Youth Homelessness in Canada: The Road to Solutions.

¹² National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2013) *Conference on Family and Youth Homelessness*.

¹³ The \$13,900 includes homeless shelters, hospital bills, legal fees, cost of Children's Aid workers, incarceration, etc. \$37,450 represents all other indirect costs, such as lost taxes, lower productivity, lost wages, marginal excess tax burden, lower economic growth, etc.

¹⁴ Belfield, C. R., Levin, H. M., & Rosen, R. (2012) *The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth*. The Kellogg Foundation.

¹⁵ Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2008) *Report on the Cost of Homelessness in Calgary*; Gaetz, S. (2012) *The Real Cost of Homelessness: Can We Save Money by Doing the Right Thing?* The Homeless Hub, Paper #3.

Programs that specifically target homeless youth are an essential part of the homeless service delivery system. Kingston has recently been selected to be part of a new, 5-year program initiated by the National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness, Eva's Initiatives, and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association entitled *Mobilizing Local Capacity to End Youth Homelessness in Canada*. Locally, this program is funded and implemented by the United Way. Over the next five years, Kingston hopes to make great strides towards ending youth homelessness.

Families

Homeless families are another sub-group of the whole homeless population that has distinct characteristics and heightened vulnerability. A homeless family is defined as one or more adults with at least one accompanied child, who lack a safe, stable, and permanent housing arrangement. In Kingston, there were a total of 69 family units, comprising 166 individuals, who accessed the shelter system in 2012. This comprises about 18% of all individuals who access shelters in Kingston. Data from the National Alliance to End Homelessness suggests that about 50% of persons experiencing homelessness are part of a family.¹⁶ This is a discrepancy which might indicate that the local experience is not comparable.

Families who become homeless share many characteristics: very low incomes, single parenthood and most often single motherhood, younger heads of households, very young children and sometimes current pregnancy, weaker social networks, and a history of the household moving frequently. However, in these respects and in others, homeless families resemble housed, poor families. Often, these families have higher incidences of domestic violence, and mental illness including anxiety and depression. Children in these families often have behavioural problems and below average performance in school.¹⁷

Fortunately, approximately 75% of families that experience homelessness are able to regain housing with little or no difficulty.¹⁸ For these families, Kingston's Ryandale, Lily's Place, and Dawn House shelters provide safe, emergency shelter. The remaining 25% need additional assistance to end their homelessness. A promising practice in ending family homelessness is known as Rapid Re-Housing. This Plan is designed to help implement Rapid Re-Housing within Kingston and Frontenac.

¹⁶ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006) Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness.

¹⁷ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006) Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness.

¹⁸ Culhane, D. P., Metraux, S., Park, J. M., Schretzman, M., & Valente, J. (2007) Testing a Typology of Family Homelessness Based on Patterns of Public Shelter Utilization in Four U.S. Jurisdictions: Implications for Policy and Program Planning. *Housing Policy Debate*, 18(1).

Women

Homeless women are often identified as a special population among homeless groups. On average, 32% of homeless persons are female;¹⁹ in Kingston, 29% of shelter users are women, which can be considered average.

Homeless women have many characteristics in common with homeless youth and homeless families. This is not surprising, since homeless women are more likely to be in families than homeless men, and homeless women are, on average, younger than homeless men. A 2009 Toronto study found the average age of homeless women to be 36, while the average age of homeless men was 40.²⁰ A recent Red Deer study found that among homeless persons, women had an average age of 31 while men had an average age of 37.²¹ The same Red Deer study found that 1 in 4 homeless women had children with her.

Women who are homeless have significantly different needs than men. On the positive side, homeless women tend to have better networks than their male counterparts. Women are more likely to be able to “couch surf” and are more able to ask for and receive assistance. As a result, women tend to be homeless for shorter amounts of time than men.²²

Conversely, homeless women are more vulnerable than homeless men. Approximately 1 in 8 has been sexually abused in the past year, and 1 in 3 has been physically abused in the same time period.²³ In many cases, this is domestic violence, and may even be a precipitating factor that triggers a woman’s homeless episode. Data from the a 2011 Housing First Symposium in Washington, D.C. identified that more than 40% have major depressive disorder, and more than one-third have post-traumatic stress disorder. 31% have attempted suicide at least once.²⁴

Some homeless women may also engage in what is known as “survival sex.” These women may find a person to stay with so that they have a warm place to sleep overnight – exchanging sexual intimacy for shelter. It is largely unknown how prevalent this phenomenon is, since these women would generally be considered invisibly homeless and may not access homeless services.

19 Morris, R.I. & Strong, L. (2004) *The impact of homelessness on the health of families*. Journal of School Nursing, 20(4), 22127

20 Toronto Shelter, Support & Housing Administration. (2007) *What Housing First Means for People: Results of Streets to Homes 2007 Post-Occupancy Research*.

21 City of Red Deer. (2012) *Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012*.

22 City of Red Deer. (2012) *Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012*.

23 Arangua, L., Andersen, R., & Gelberg, A. (2005) *The Health Circumstances of Homeless Women in the United States*. International Journal of Mental Health, vol. 34, no. 2, Summer 2005

24 Roman, N. (2011) *Domestic Violence Housing First Symposium: Building on Our Past, Learning as We Go: Keynote Remarks*. Conference of the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Although co-ed shelters are appropriate for some homeless women, the needs of women – particularly those with a history of abuse – must be considered within the shelter system.

Aboriginal People

Across Canada persons of aboriginal descent are extremely overrepresented among homeless populations. In Kingston ethnicity of homeless individuals is not currently captured but evidence from other jurisdictions suggests that even municipalities with very few persons claiming aboriginal heritage have disproportionately high rates of aboriginal persons among their homeless populations.

Table 10: Proportions of Aboriginal Identity Among General and Homeless Populations by Municipality

Municipality	Aboriginal People (% of total population)	Homeless Aboriginals (% of total homeless population)
Toronto	0.5%	15%
Hamilton ²⁵	1.3%	20%
Vancouver ²⁶	2.0%	27%
Calgary ²⁷	2.5%	16%
Red Deer ²⁸	4.4%	44%

In Kingston, approximately 2% of the total population is of aboriginal descent, suggesting that 1/4 of all people experiencing homelessness may be aboriginal. The shelters do not currently collect data on aboriginal status.

Multiple studies agree that, on average, aboriginal people experiencing homelessness have higher needs than people who are not of aboriginal descent. While only 15% of Toronto’s homeless people self-identified as aboriginal, 26% of those “sleeping rough” (i.e. sleeping on the streets) were aboriginal.²⁹ In Calgary, while 16% of homeless individuals were aboriginal, persons with aboriginal heritage accounted for 26% of the homeless individuals in police detention and 38% of those sleeping rough.³⁰ A recent report from Red Deer found that aboriginal people tended to be homeless for three times as long as non-aboriginal people, on average.³¹

25 St. Michael’s Hospital. (n.d.) Homelessness in Canadian Cities. Centre for Research on Inner City Health.

26 Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. (2012) One Step Forward: Results of the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count.

27 Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2012) Winter 2012 Point-in-Time Count Report.

28 City of Red Deer. (2012) Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012.

29 St. Michael’s Hospital. (n.d.) Homelessness in Canadian Cities. Centre for Research on Inner City Health.

30 Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2012) Winter 2012 Point-in-Time Count Report.

31 City of Red Deer. (2012) Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012.

Aboriginal homeless individuals tend to be younger, on average. In the City of Vancouver, for instance, over 50% of homeless youth self-identified as aboriginal.³² In addition, more homeless aboriginal persons are female, and they are more likely to be part of homeless families.³³

Most aboriginal persons experiencing homelessness face the same barriers as others who are homeless, such as very low income, health problems, and higher rates of addiction. However, they also face an added layer of complexity due to their unique heritage. The best approach to providing services to this sub-population is to provide culturally specialized, aboriginal-specific services.³⁴

Kingston has some specialized services available for aboriginal persons who are homeless. Tipi Moza is a social housing provider with 17 units specifically allocated for aboriginal families with low income. In addition, Tipi Moza has a support worker that provides supports to their tenants, recognizing the unique needs of this subpopulation. Weeneebayko Patient Services, operated out of Hotel Dieu, provides specialized health-related services to aboriginal peoples from the Mushkegowuk Territory. Kagita-Mikam provides employment services including training for aboriginal individuals, and the Katarokwi Native Friendship Center provides a number of other social services for individuals of aboriginal heritage.

Homelessness Among Off-Reserve Aboriginal Peoples

This Plan has identified the likelihood that persons of aboriginal descent are overrepresented among the homeless population in Kingston and Frontenac. However, at present, there is no hard data to determine the veracity of this claim. In order to better understand the scope and needs of the homeless aboriginal population, a first priority will be better data collection. Effective October 1, 2013, shelter intake forms now ask clients about aboriginal descent. In addition, it is recommended that all Point In Time Counts conducted in Kingston and Frontenac include a question about aboriginal identity. Using this improved data collection, the Service Manager will be able to accurately measure the scope of homelessness among aboriginals living off-reserve in Kingston and Frontenac, and will be able to improve services accordingly.

Victims of Domestic Violence

It is important to note that victims of domestic violence, while frequently women, are not always female. Thus, victims of domestic violence (VDV) are treated as a distinct, special population. It is possible for a homeless woman, man, or youth to also be a VDV,

³² Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. (2012) One Step Forward: Results of the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count.

³³ City of Red Deer. (2012) Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012.

³⁴ Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. (2012) One Step Forward: Results of the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count.

but victims of domestic violence often have much different characteristics than other homeless sub-populations.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing outlines requirements for Housing and Homelessness Plans under the Housing Services Act, 2011. One of the Policy Directions requires that plans include a strategy setting out how the housing needs for victims of domestic violence will be addressed and managed at the local level, in coordination with other community based services and supports.

Although, the Plan focuses on prioritizing housing for households with the deepest and most chronic needs first (Strategy 9, number 55), prioritization of persons experiencing domestic violence will continue regardless of acuity. The legislated Special Priority (SP) on the centralized wait list (CWL) for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance for victims of abuse is followed very closely in the City of Kingston and assists VDV by moving this client group into RGI housing as soon as possible. All housing providers participating in the CWL must house SPP households before chronological households on the wait list. In 2012, forty-five (45%) percent of the households housed from the RGI wait list had Special Priority status and fifty-one (51%) of the vacancies were filled by SP applicants in 2011. It is difficult to set targets related to these percentages because the outcomes are dependent on the match between the vacant unit and the SP household's address selection, bedroom size requirement and the number of appropriate vacancies.

In Kingston and Frontenac, the Plan calls for a common assessment protocol (Refer to Client Trajectory) to better identify the preferred housing type and intensity of resources that will optimize housing outcomes for clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Victims of domestic violence will be referred to the centralized wait list for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance and if deemed eligible for special priority will be placed in priority for appropriate housing regardless of acuity of need. Where the need for supports is identified through the common assessment protocol the housing case manager will assist with referrals to community agencies, which is both wanted and needed. A referral protocol for households housed under the SP policy will be provided to the housing providers for clients moving in to RGI housing with SP priority.

In addition, as recommended in the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan, housing assistance workers will be hired to support clients residing in permanent supportive housing, inclusive of RGI housing. For SP tenants a standard initial and follow up assessment will assess current and future housing needs and establish objectives and goals. These assessments will be used to measure the success of the tenancy and the program and the client's success re-integrating into the community. The assessment tool will include a reporting back requirement to allow analysis.

AVAILABLE SERVICES

Kingston is the only municipality with any extensive homelessness services between Toronto and Ottawa. There is a perception among service providers that persons who find themselves homeless in smaller surrounding communities may hitchhike or purchase a bus ticket to Kingston in order to gain needed assistance.

A 2012 study in Red Deer, Alberta – a community halfway between Calgary and Edmonton, with a similar population size as Kingston – found that 62% of its homeless population were locals suggesting that, while the majority of persons who are homeless are local, many in fact do migrate to the city.³⁵

Kingston currently has a robust network of social services available to persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. There are generally sufficient shelter beds and meal programs to meet the day-to-day needs of persons experiencing homelessness. In short, Kingston is successful in its present orientation towards *managing* homelessness. However, in the effort to *end chronic homelessness*, the service delivery system will need to adjust and align its services to the new objective.

³⁵ City of Red Deer. (2012) Red Deer Point In Time [PIT] Homeless Count 2012.

Shelters

Kingston’s six municipally funded shelters had a total of 20,798 occupied bed nights in 2012. A “bed night” is a measure of shelter usage equal to one person sleeping in one bed for one night. This means that on average, 57 of Kingston’s 78 municipally funded shelter beds were full every night in 2012.

Table 11: Capacity and Mandate of Emergency Shelters in Kingston

Shelter Name	Mandate	Capacity
Ryandale Shelter for the Homeless	Emergency shelter for men, women, families, and children.	15
Dawn House Women’s Shelter	Emergency shelter for women and children.	10
Kingston Harbour Light	Emergency shelter for men.	8 ³⁶
Kingston Youth Shelter	Emergency shelter for youth aged 16-24.	15 ³⁷
In From the Cold	Emergency shelter for men and women.	24/20 ³⁸
Lily’s Place	Emergency shelter for women and children.	14

Homelessness is a rare event in almost all instances, according to analysis of shelter and Homeless Management Information System data. Research done by Culhane et al.,³⁹ as well as Springer & Mars⁴⁰ and others such as Byrne⁴¹, have demonstrated time and again that most people that experience homelessness do so only once in their life, for a short period of time, and are not ever homeless again.

However, this is not the experience in the Kingston shelters. The length of stay is in fact increasing. Graph 1: Length of Stay, All Shelters, 2008-2012, below, indicates that:

- between 2010 and 2012, the average length of stay has increased from 22 nights to 28 nights;
- between 2010 and 2012 the percentage of shelter users staying for less than 30

³⁶ Only 7 of 8 beds are funded municipally.

³⁷ Only 8 of 15 beds are funded municipally.

³⁸ Only 20 of 24 beds are funded municipally as of January 1, 2013. The shelter is also moving to a new location in 2013 which will only have 20 beds, but “flex space” allowing another 9 mats should there be additional demand.

³⁹ Culhane, D. P., Metraux, S., Park, J. M., Schretzman, M., & Valente, J. (2007) Testing a Typology of Family Homelessness Based on Patterns of Public Shelter Utilization in Four U.S. Jurisdictions: Implications for Policy and Program Planning. *Housing Policy Debate*, 18(1).

⁴⁰ Springer, J. & Mars, J. (1999) Profile of The Homeless Population: Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force. City of Toronto.

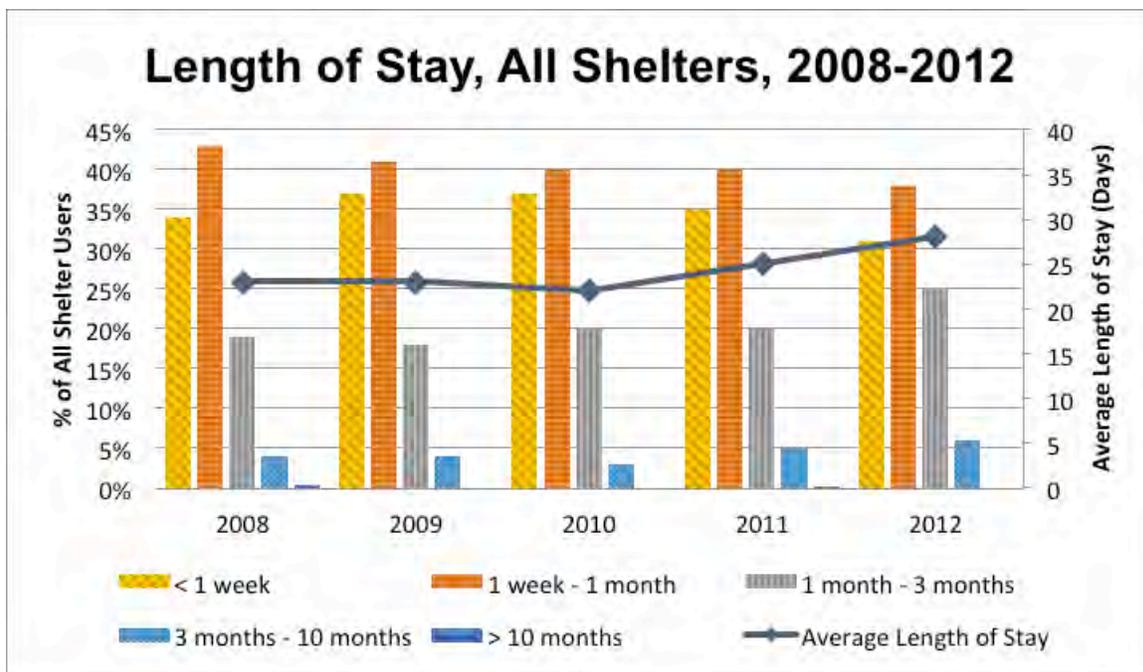
⁴¹ Culhane, D. P. & Byrne, T. (2010) Ending Family Homelessness in Massachusetts: A New Approach for the Emergency Assistance Program. University of Pennsylvania: Departmental Papers (SPP).

days decreased from 77% to 69% of users, as has the number of users staying one week or less; and,

- an increasing number stayed between 30-90 days

There are a couple of trends that are troubling. Firstly, the percentage of people staying less than a week is decreasing. Secondly, there are a greater percentage of people staying for a longer period of time. These trends suggest greater chronicity within the shelter using population over the past five years.

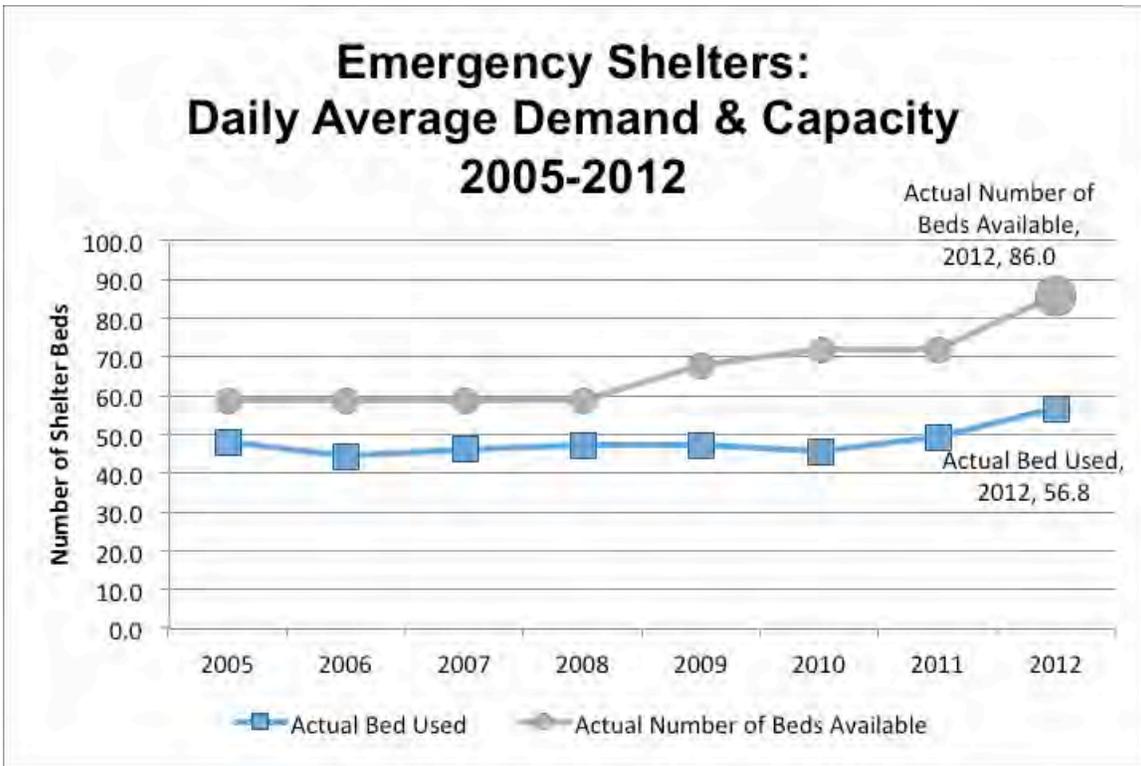
Graph 1: Length of Stay, All Shelters, 2008-2012



Although there are overall trends in average length of stay, the goal consistent with ending chronic homelessness is to reorient the shelter system to its original focus of an “emergency” shelter rather than a place to stay long-term.

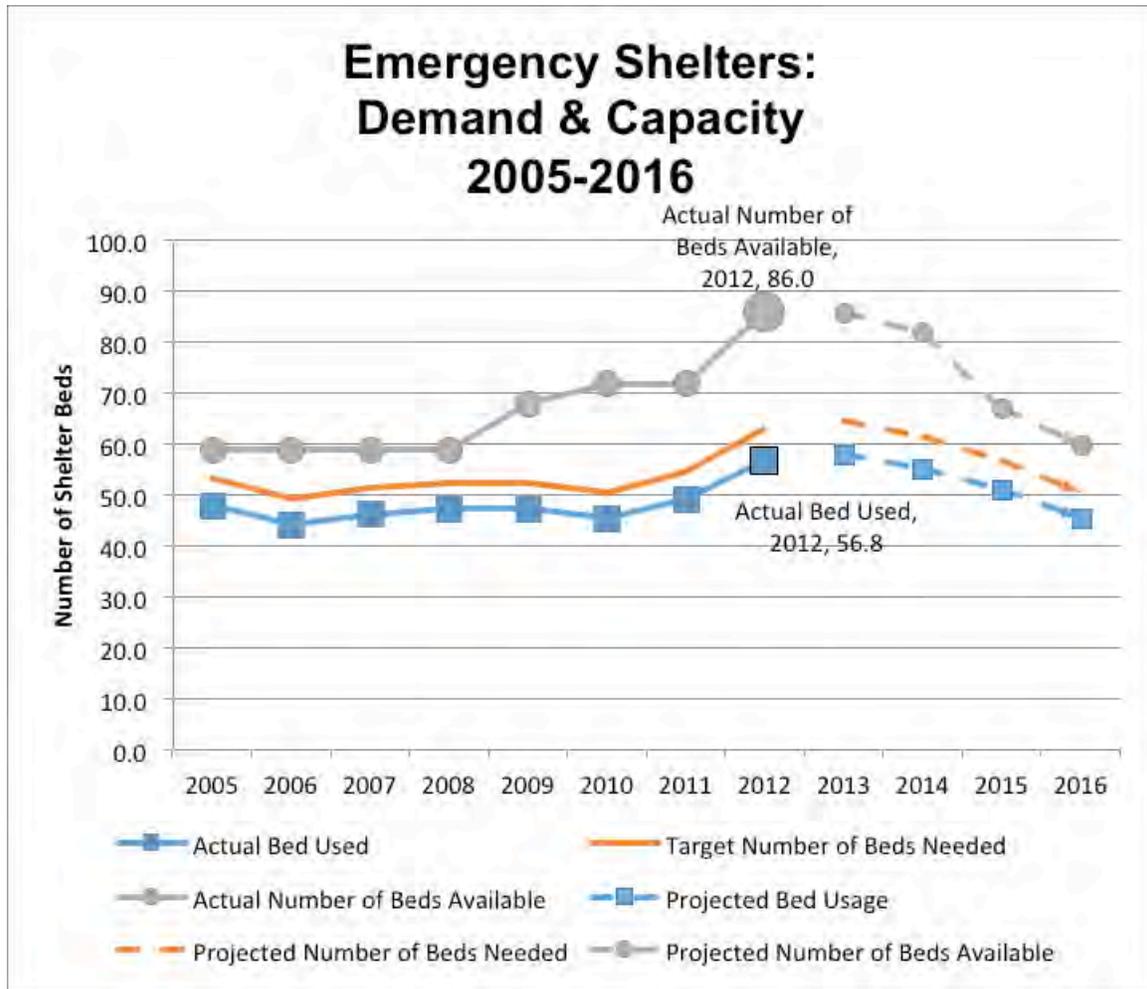
Occupancy rates paint a different picture. In 2011 and 2012, the annual shelter occupancy rate was 76% and 75%, respectively, for the municipally-funded emergency shelter beds, though the occupancy rate fluctuates during the year and from shelter to shelter. The overall occupancy rate of 75% suggests that there is no need, at this time, to increase shelter capacity. If trends continue and the recommendations of this Plan are followed, there is reason to believe that shelter services will not need to be expanded over the next 10 years, and reductions in shelter services will need to be considered at the same time that the services are enhanced to include or provide supports designed to a permanent, safe and affordable housing outcome

Graph 2: Comparison of Actual Occupancy Rates against capacity, 2005-2012



The City of Kingston is currently over-served by shelters and/or has the wrong mix of shelter beds. On average, 57 beds are needed per night, which is a 75% occupancy rate. To cover costs, an ideal occupancy rate is approximately 85-90% and this allows enough space to shelter additional persons in case of emergencies such as extreme weather. Alternatively, other solutions for over-demand might include subsidies for motel rooms. Based on a 90% occupancy rate and demand for 57 beds, the recommended number of beds within the shelter system in Kingston is 63 given the current usage patterns. This may further decrease following full implementation of the strategies in this Plan as indicated in the chart below which projects declining usage from 2014 to 2016.

Graph 3: Demand and Capacity of Emergency Shelters, 2005-2016



Not included in the previous charts and statistics is Kingston Interval House in the City of Kingston, which is funded by MCSS to provide emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence and also provides outreach services to VDV living in the community. In 2009 Interval House was successful in its bid to the City of Kingston to develop 19 short-term second-stage housing units for VDV with 13 units being funded with provincial Delivering Opportunities for Ontario Renters (DOOR) funding. This housing allows victims the opportunity to stabilize before moving into permanent housing in the community. The City of Kingston has implemented a policy to allow the residents of the second stage housing to put their RGI application on hold until they are able to move into permanent RGI housing.

Food Services

The majority of homeless individuals access food services—a food bank, a meal program, or a dinner/breakfast program within a shelter. However, access to food services on the weekends, other than in a shelter, was relatively limited, as illustrated in Figure 5: When is Food Available in Kingston?

Figure 5: When is Food Available in Kingston?



There are at least nine meal programs available in Kingston, and a variety of other programs and agencies that provide residents of Kingston and Frontenac with nourishment. In addition, all shelters provide their clients with at least one meal each day. In total, food banks distributed over 26,000 baskets of food in 2012.

Table 12: Food Services Available and Number of Clients

Food Service	Clients Served (daily)	Clients Served (annually)
Food Banks		
Community Choice Pantry	n/a	7,741
SFCS Food Bank	n/a	720
Vinnie's Emergency Groceries	n/a	6,766
Partners in Mission	n/a	10,299
Bread of Life Club	n/a	800
Meal Programs		
Martha's Table	140	44,600
Lunch By George	40-50	10,000-13,000
Kingston Street Mission	15-20	5,500-7,300
The Gathering Place	60-80	9,000-12,500
St. John's Parish Hall	50-80	2,500-4,000
Loretta Lunch	70	14,229
Storehouse of Hope	30-40	1,500-2,000
Seventh Day Adventist Church	not available	not available
Good Times Diner	35	2,250
Bread of Life Club	100-150	8,400-12,000

Health Care

People experiencing homelessness have much higher rates of virtually all illnesses, particularly infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV infection, and hepatitis B and C.⁴² In addition, they tend to have higher rates of most afflictions, with chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, seizures, musculoskeletal disorders, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease often going undiagnosed and/or untreated.⁴³

The amount of time spent homeless tends to worsen existing conditions. Homeless individuals with a serious illness are less able to properly treat their afflictions in ways that housed individuals can, such as by eating healthy food, taking medications on time, and getting sufficient bed rest. Sleeping in congregate settings and having fewer opportunities to tend to personal hygiene also expose homeless individuals to disease and infection at higher rates than the general populace.⁴⁴

As a result, people experiencing homelessness tend to be frequent users of the health care system. In particular, higher cost services are used more often, such as emergency rooms and ambulances.⁴⁵ One study found that persons experiencing homelessness visit the emergency room an average of 2.1 times per year, a rate more than 10 times higher than the housed population.⁴⁶ A large number of cost effectiveness studies from the United States that focus on health care utilization shows that people who are homeless have high rates of health care utilization. They often obtain care from emergency departments and are hospitalized up to five times more often than the general public.⁴⁷

Improving opportunities for persons experiencing homelessness to access preventative and non-emergency healthcare would stabilize and/or improve their health and reduce the demand on Kingston's emergency medical services.

42 Hwang, S. & Henderson, M. (2010). Health Care Utilization in Homeless People: Translating Research into Policy and Practice. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Working Paper No. 10002.

43 Hwang, S. & Henderson, M. (2010). Health Care Utilization in Homeless People: Translating Research into Policy and Practice. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Working Paper No. 10002.

44 Gaetz, S. (2012) The Real Cost of Homelessness: Can We Save Money by Doing the Right Thing? The Homeless Hub, Paper #3.

45 Ibid.

46 Hwang, S. & Henderson, M. (2010). Health Care Utilization in Homeless People: Translating Research into Policy and Practice. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Working Paper No. 10002.

47 Martell, J. v., Seitz, R. S., Harada, J. K., Kobayashi, J., Sasaki, v. K., & Wong, C. (1992). Hospitalization in an urban homeless population: The Honolulu urban Homeless Project. *Annals of internal Medicine*, 116(4), 299-303.

Mental Health and Addictions

It is estimated that 67% of individuals who are homeless have mental illness or have experienced mental illness sometime in their lives.⁴⁸ The experience of being homeless has been proven to worsen mental wellbeing, exacerbate pre-existing mental illnesses, and lead to new problems including substance use. In fact, a recent study found an inverse relationship between psychiatric hospital beds and homelessness – fewer beds corresponds to more homelessness.⁴⁹ Thus, there is a correlation between chronic homelessness, substance use, and worsened mental health.⁵⁰

Kingston has a number of agencies and facilities that provide assistance, support, and/or treatment for those experiencing mental illness and/or addictions. Many also provide assistance to those with problematic substance use.

In March 2014, Providence Care Mental Health Services will reduce 11 beds from the currently available beds for mental health patients. There will be 120 beds for long-term mental health patients (of which 30 will be forensic beds), 100 beds for patients requiring complex continuing care, and 50 beds for rehabilitation. In 2016, a new 270-bed hospital is slated to open replacing St. Mary's of the Lake and Providence Care Mental Health Services and the beds will move to the new facility.

Evidence suggests that the best approach to helping homeless individuals who are experiencing poor mental health and substance use problems is to end their homelessness by providing safe, permanent and supported housing.⁵¹ This is an approach pursued by some of the service providers in Kingston and Frontenac, such as Frontenac Community Mental Health & Addictions Services who is funded by the Ministry of Health and Kingston Home Base Housing who is largely funded by the City and the United Way. No one sector can meet the challenges alone and creative funding and service delivery partnerships are essential to advance the availability of permanent supported housing units for those most in need.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada received a federal investment of \$110 million for a five year, five-city demonstration project comparing housing first approaches to “treatment as usual”. The “At Home/ Chez Soi” Interim Report published in 2012 found that for high-service users, this approach resulted in savings to government of \$9,390 per person per year and that for every dollar spent on this type of housing and support intervention \$1.54 was saved in reductions to shelter, health, and justice services⁵². Therefore, the net cost of providing the Housing First Intervention of \$16,825 was still

48 Hwang, S. & Henderson, M. (2010). Health Care Utilization in Homeless People: Translating Research into Policy and Practice. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Working Paper No. 10002.

49 Markowitz, F. E. (2006) Psychiatric Hospital Capacity, Homelessness, and Crime and Arrest Rates. *Criminology*, 44(1).

50 Gaetz, S. (2012) The Real Cost of Homelessness: Can We Save Money by Doing the Right Thing?

51 Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report.

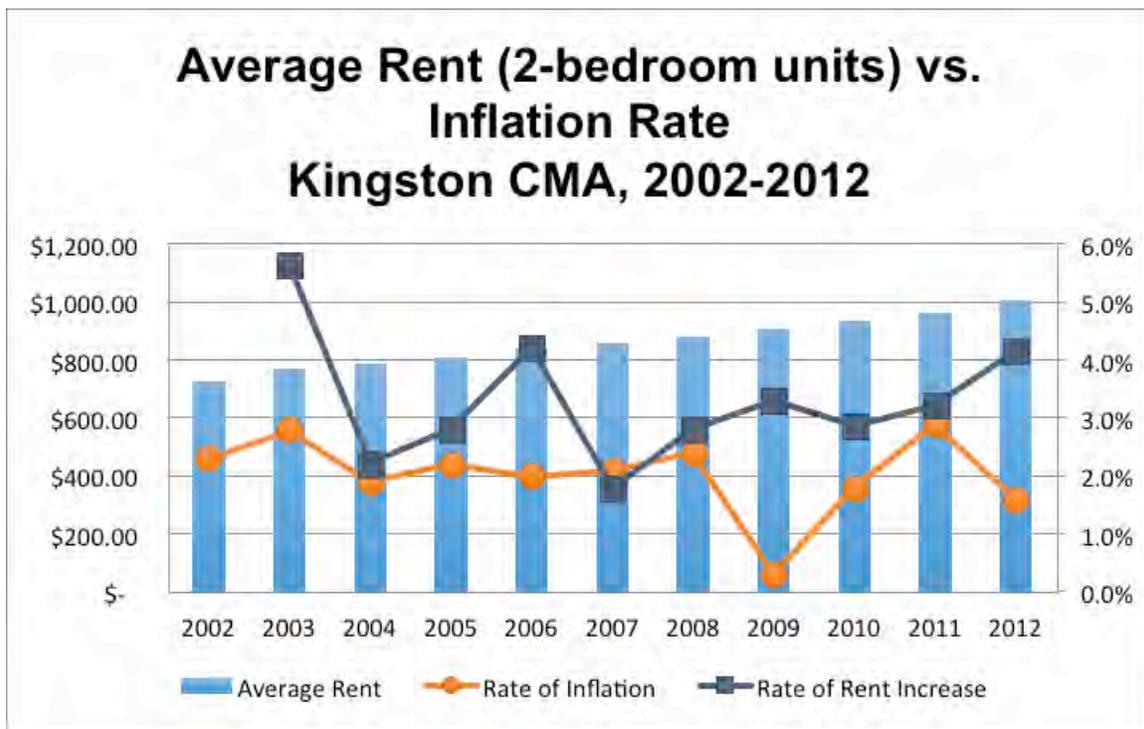
52 Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report.

significantly less than the cost of “treatment as usual group.” While this type of service delivery is intensive and generally more costly than housing help services that do not provide supports to people in a housing first context, the longer-term payoff clearly demonstrates the investment is a prudent use of available resources. This is especially true when one considers that this type of intervention resulted in 86% of clients remaining in their first or second unit, compared to only 30% of the “treatment as usual” population remaining housed.

Housing

A major barrier in Kingston to reducing the scope of homelessness is the lack of housing which is consistent with the household’s income. The vast majority of individuals who experience episodic homelessness are able to quickly regain housing without requiring many services, but this process is currently hampered in Kingston by a combination of low vacancy rates and high rental prices.

Graph 4: Average Rent vs. Inflation Rate, Kingston CMA, 2002-2012



Over the past ten years, the average rate of rent increase has been higher than the rate of inflation every year except for 2007, indicating that rent prices are becoming increasingly unaffordable every year.

Lower vacancy rates create an environment where landlords can achieve higher rent levels because of the demand in the Kingston Census Metropolitan Area. A “healthy” vacancy rate—which favours neither tenants nor landlords—is considered to be 3%. Lower than 3% is considered to be a “landlord’s market” and above 3% is considered to be a “renter’s market”. Kingston’s vacancy rate was 2.4% in spring 2013. Over the last decade, only once, in 2007, has the vacancy rate increased slightly above 3%. In Ontario, only Guelph and Toronto had lower vacancy rates than Kingston in 2013, while Thunder Bay’s was also 2.4%.

Despite the continued low vacancy rate, things are improving. Since 2012, 300 new rental units have been completed in the Kingston CMA, which resulted in a vacancy rate increase from 1.7% in 2012 to 2.4% in 2013.

Graph 5: Vacancy Rate vs. Rate of Rent Increase, Kingston CMA, 2002-2012



One of the reasons for this low vacancy rate is the presence of three post-secondary institutions, which exert pressure on the available rental units: Queen’s University, St. Lawrence College, and the Royal Military College.

Queen’s University had a full-time enrolment in 2011 of 19,462, and an additional 2,442 students who were not full-time. Over the next year, enrolment is projected to grow by approximately 2%.⁵³ Queen’s has slightly over 4,000 beds available in residence and has a policy of providing accommodation to first year students only. Although 550 more

⁵³ Queen’s University, (2012) Enrolment Plan 2012-2013.

beds will be added in two new residences due for completion by 2015⁵⁴ it is estimated that there will be 12,000 students housed off-campus, in 5,000 rental housing units. It is further projected that by 2021, off-campus Queen's students will occupy 6,900 rental units.⁵⁵

St. Lawrence College (SLC) and Royal Military College (RMC) both contribute to the demand for rental housing, but on a smaller scale than Queen's. SLC Kingston hosts 4,729 students and RMC has an enrolment of 1,692. However, neither of these institutions is located in the downtown core and, as a result, they place higher demand in the overall rental market.

It is not clear if student pressure is the reason for low vacancy rates; however, what is certain is that Kingston is host to a large number of students who occupy a large number of rental units. In particular, many students who attend Queen's University reside in a concentrated area in close proximity to the downtown of Kingston. Many of the housing units occupied by students are older, converted single detached homes, which were not originally intended to house a group of students.

In addition to these post-secondary institutions, the Canadian Forces Base Kingston also causes downward pressure on the available rental market. CFB Kingston employs approximately 8,400 persons and approximately 5,000 are military personnel posted in Kingston. While many military personnel live in the 497 on-base units, it is increasingly common for personnel to live in private rental units while stationed in Kingston, particularly those with spouses or families. Since 2000, the number of on-base housing units has been reduced by close to 40%; meanwhile, the number of Lodger Units has increased by 20% since 2004.

There is a strong need in Kingston for more rental units that are affordable to individuals with very low income. Addressing the issue of low vacancy rates by increasing the total number of rental units available may have the effect of reducing the rate of rent increase over time and this has the potential to yield more affordable rent prices.

Increasing affordable housing stock comes with a significant cost – as does housing with supports – which could be achieved through a rent supplement program. However, it is essential for the successful implementation of this plan. Currently those in the housing help field face many challenges finding adequate, suitable, and affordable housing for homeless individuals. Often, housing that is available fails to meet housing standards, which places formerly homeless households at an increased risk of returning to a homeless situation.

⁵⁴ Queen's University. (2012, December 10) Two New Residences Support Need for Student Living Space. Queen's University News Centre.

⁵⁵ City of Kingston. (2011) Municipal Housing Strategy.

Cost of Homelessness

Homelessness has an enormous and negative impact across a number of dimensions on every community in which it exists.

On the individual level, the experience of being homeless can have a significant, negative impact on the individual's current and future wellbeing beyond physical or mental health that was mentioned earlier in this Plan.⁵⁶ People who are homeless are also significantly more likely to be involved in criminal activity, whether as a victim, a perpetrator, or as a witness.⁵⁷

Homelessness is often associated with a strain in relationships.⁵⁸ Sometimes, a relationship reaches a breaking point, such as when a youth fights with his or her parents, resulting in the youth leaving home, or when a victim of domestic violence decides to leave.⁵⁹ In other situations, when an individual spends a period of time experiencing housing and financial instability, the burden of homelessness can be a shared experience when the person asks friends and relatives for help whether that is borrowing money, sleeping on a couch, or looking for a job. This added pressure places stress on a person's relationships and reduces the person's ability to ask for help in the future. Whatever the circumstances, in most cases, homeless individuals face some degree of social alienation and isolation,⁶⁰ which can further worsen health and mental health.⁶¹

Homelessness also places indirect costs on the community in which it occurs. A higher prevalence of homeless people visibly living on the streets can negatively impact perceptions of tourists or local pedestrian traffic and thereby negatively impact sales at local retail stores.⁶²

Finally, the presence of homelessness also places a large financial burden on the local economy. A recent report by Gordon Laird suggested that in 2007, the annual cost of homelessness Canada-wide was \$4.5 billion.⁶³ Although this cost is not evenly divided throughout the entire country, a simple estimate would suggest that the share of this cost for the geographic area of Kingston and Frontenac is approximately \$20 million per year.

56 Hwang, S. & Henderson, M. (2010). Health Care Utilization in Homeless People: Translating Research into Policy and Practice. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Working Paper No. 10002.

57 Hulchanski, D., Campsie, P., Chau, S. B., Hwang, S., & Paradis, E. (Eds.), (2009) The Street Health Report, 2007: The Health of Toronto's Homeless Population, in Finding Home: Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada.

58 Ibid.

59 Kidd, S. A. (2009) Social Stigma and Homeless Youth, in Finding Home: Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada.

60 Hulchanski, D., Campsie, P., Chau, S. B., Hwang, S., & Paradis, E. (Eds.), (2009) The Street Health Report, 2007: The Health of Toronto's Homeless Population, in Finding Home: Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada.

61 Marmot, M., & Wilkinson, R. (Eds.). (2003). Social determinants of health: The solid facts (2nd ed.). Copenhagen: World Health Organization.

62 O'Grady, B., Gaetz, S., & Buccieri, K. (2011) Can I See Your ID? The Policing of Youth Homelessness in Toronto. The Homeless Hub, Paper #5.

63 Laird, G. (2007). Shelter: Homelessness in a Growth economy: Canada's 21 Century Paradox. Calgary, AB: Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership.

This annual cost of \$20 million is shared between the municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government. While some of these costs such as those for emergency shelters may be direct, some costs such as lost taxes may be indirect and difficult to measure.

Evidence proves that the majority of these costs are accrued by only a small proportion of homeless persons.⁶⁴ These individuals are mostly comprised of chronically homeless individuals—persons who have been homeless for at least a year, or at least four times in the past three years.

In Kingston, it is estimated that on average, the annual cost per homeless individual is approximately \$18,000 per year. Chronically homeless individuals, however, accrue much higher costs of approximately \$62,000 per person, per year.⁶⁵ The actual size of the homeless population in the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac is currently unknown, but three population estimates are provided on the table below as an estimate of total known costs accrued by homeless individuals, annually.

Table 13: Total Estimated Costs of Homelessness in Kingston

	Population Size	Top 20% Service Users	Total Cost All Service Users
Low Estimate	300	\$3,729,895.00	\$5,418,780.02
Medium Estimate	818	\$10,170,180.38	\$14,775,206.85
High Estimate	1200	\$14,919,580.02	\$21,675,120.07

A shift in service orientation specifically targeting the top 20% most frequent users of services can result in major potential savings, especially over the long term. A recent study in Halifax suggested that investing in social housing could generate savings of 41% per person.⁶⁶ A similar Canada-wide study found savings of \$1.54 for every dollar invested in supported housing programs.⁶⁷

A reoriented focus to end homelessness requires the community to use existing funds differently rather than relying on new funding. In the process, the community will see – as other jurisdictions have experienced – that the focus on ending homelessness results in fewer people experiencing homelessness, thereby exerting fewer demands on shelter, health and justice services. Simply managing homelessness is an expensive approach that entails doing the same thing year after year and watching demand increase. Ending homelessness entails doing things differently in order to achieve a decrease in the numbers of chronically homeless individuals and families.

⁶⁴ Poulin, S., Maguire, M., Metraux, S., & Culhane, D. (2010). Service use and costs for persons experiencing chronic homelessness in Philadelphia: a population-based study. *Psychiatric Services*, 61(11).

⁶⁵ For a full breakdown of cost estimates, see Appendix B: Costs of Homelessness.

⁶⁶ Palermo, F.; Dera, b.; Clyne, D. (2006). The cost of homelessness and the value of investment in housing support services in Halifax Regional Municipality. Halifax: Cities and Environment Unit, Dalhousie University.

⁶⁷ Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report.

This Plan lays out the framework to end homelessness in the next ten years. Not only will it reduce the financial costs of homelessness, but it will also reduce the social burden to everyone in Kingston and Frontenac.

Ending Chronic Homelessness - Where We Want To Be

By 2023, the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac will have ended homelessness for individuals and families experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness. Ending homelessness means that shelters will return to their initial purpose as a short-term, emergency response to homelessness. Homelessness as a whole shall become infrequent, rare and of a short duration.

WHAT DOES ENDING HOMELESSNESS LOOK LIKE?

- No one is homeless for longer than 30 days.
- Chronic and repeated episodes of homelessness are the exception
- The need for emergency shelter beds has been greatly reduced and shelter beds are an integral part of a housing system.
- The shelter system is an entry point to housing not a substitute
- There are sufficient units of housing – including permanent supportive housing – so that people who are homeless have a place to go.
- Housing and support workers rapidly respond as soon as an individual or family becomes homeless.
- Services are integrated, and there is coordinated access and assessment across the homeless and housing crisis response system.
- Evidence-based practices have been adopted and service providers are constantly refining and improving their techniques based on new data.

In order to get there, a fundamental shift in thinking is required. This shift will be implemented at the Service Manager level and will impact everyone who interacts with homeless individuals and families across the region.

This Plan will help guide the shift in thinking by changing how homelessness is addressed in the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac.

This Plan uses evidence-based, proven approaches that focus on housing as the solution to homelessness. The approaches are based on a fundamental premise: - by providing the appropriate support services that help people experiencing homelessness acquire and maintain housing, the number of people experiencing homelessness—particularly chronic or long-term homelessness—will steadily decrease, reducing the demand for emergency resources such as shelter beds.

Other jurisdictions that have adopted this approach have demonstrated that this goal is achievable. For instance, Chicago reduced the need for emergency shelter beds by 77% over 10 years.⁶⁸ The Government of Alberta is another example when the Province implemented a housing program that focused on chronically homeless individuals with the highest needs. Alberta saw 80% of those clients achieving housing stability. As a result, the province-wide need for shelter beds decreased by 10% in just 3 years.⁶⁹

AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

Pioneer programs in North America that were specifically designed to end homelessness originated in New York City when *Pathways to Housing* was introduced and then in Toronto with their award winning *Streets to Homes* program. These programs focused on similar principles such as tenant empowerment, recovery, the right to self-determination, and the right to personal lifestyle choice. Both programs have received considerable international attention, undergone extensive independent review, received a plethora of awards, and the programs have been successfully replicated in other jurisdictions.

Both programs focused on housing as the primary solution to ending homelessness. A housing first philosophy is an approach to ending homelessness by helping people experiencing homelessness to access housing as quickly as possible without preconditions and before addressing any of the individual's or family's other needs. Once housed, supports are put in place to stabilize housing and then make referrals that the tenant both wants and needs.

This approach delivered measurable differences in people's lives. First, there were marked quality of life improvements among persons who were housed. Persons demonstrated improved health, mental health, and addictions symptoms, largely due to the removal of stress associated with being homeless. There were also fewer interactions with police officers.⁷⁰ Most tenants were more receptive to receiving treatment for various health, mental health, and substance use problems and this resulted in decreased usage of costly emergency services such as ambulances and emergency rooms.⁷¹

Over time, housing first evolved beyond a simple philosophy and became the name of a specific type of comprehensive service delivery.

68 Chicago Alliance. (2012) Chicago's Plan 2.0: A Home for Everyone.

69 Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness. (2013) A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years: 3 Year Progress Report.

70 Toronto Shelter, Support & Housing Administration. (2007) What Housing First Means for People: Results of Streets to Homes 2007 Post-Occupancy Research.

71 Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report.

Housing First

Housing First is a specific type of intervention, which targets currently homeless individuals with complex and co-occurring needs and moves them into permanent housing with minimal preconditions. It is contrasted to a “treatment first or housing readiness model” which requires that persons address any addictions or mental health issues before moving into housing and have adequate life skills.

The critical elements of Housing First include:

- A focus on helping persons experiencing homelessness find permanent housing as quickly as possible. Transitional or interim housing is not a component of a Housing First approach.
- Services are provided to persons with complex, co-occurring needs after they are housed, to promote housing stability and general wellbeing. These services vary greatly from client to client depending on individual needs, and may be time-limited or long-term. Not everyone needs the same type or level of supports.
- A focus on seeking out those chronically homeless individuals and families with the highest level of needs. Housing First is not a “first come, first served” approach and “housing first” does not mean “supports second”.
- No “housing readiness” requirement. There is no expectation that clients demonstrate their readiness by being sober or seeking treatment prior to entering the program. There is an expectation that persons will meet the minimum expectations of tenancy – paying rent on time, not damaging unit, managing behaviours of guests, and not disrupting the reasonable enjoyment of other tenants in the complex.
- A harm reduction approach. Clients are not required to abstain from substance use; instead there is a focus on minimizing the risks and harmful effects associated with substance use.
- The client’s housing is not dependent on compliance with service – services and housing are “de-linked”. Instead, they sign a standard lease and are only expected to meet the most basic requirements of tenancy while being provided services and supports that help them do so successfully. Clients may lose their housing, but this does not cause them to lose their supports. Instead, supports are already in place to assist the client in regaining housing as quickly as possible.
- Clients have a choice in their housing, such as what part of the city they want to live in, whether they would like roommates, whether they would like to live in a dedicated setting or a scattered-site setting, although this may not always be realistic given the lack of Housing First options.

- A client's participation in a Housing First program is completely voluntary. However, if the tenant is not able to manage his or her tenancy, a housing support worker will meet with the tenant in their home and jointly develop a plan to avoid eviction.

This approach has been adopted in many jurisdictions, and has been identified as a "best practice" by the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Housing First is the fundamental approach used by the seven Community Based Organizations in Alberta that were formed as part of the Government's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness in 2009.

Most notably, Housing First reduces the need for shelter beds by moving the highest users of shelter services into permanent housing and helping them stay housed. A recent, Canada-wide study found that individuals in Housing First programs spend 73% of their time in stable housing, as opposed to only 30% for chronically homeless individuals receiving "treatment as usual."⁷²

Housing First is cost-effective even though it is not an inexpensive strategy. The average annual cost of a Housing First intervention is approximately \$17,000 per person. However, for the highest users of services – the specific population Housing First is intended to target – this investment returned a saving of \$1.54 for every dollar invested.⁷³

Housing First requires intensive supports and is delivered through Intensive Case Management (ICM) or Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams. Within the Kingston and County of Frontenac, Providence Continuing Care and Frontenac Community Mental Health and Addictions Services currently operate ACT teams. ACT teams provide daily multidisciplinary support, including medication management, to persons most in need. ACT members share their client group and one ACT team usually has a staff to client ratio of 1-10, so that some ACT teams would carry 100 clients at any one time. It would be critical in a housing first approach to seek opportunities for Housing First teams to partner with existing ACT teams to meet the complex needs of those most in need.

Intensive case management is operated by both mental health /addiction agencies as well as some supportive housing providers. Staff are usually from a single discipline who carry a caseload of 15 -20 clients with complex and co-occurring issues.

⁷² Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report.

⁷³ Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report.

Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid Re-Housing follows the housing first philosophy with a few key differences. First, Rapid Re-Housing is targeted towards individuals and families who have been episodically homeless for a long time and who have mid-range acuity. Typically, these clients have two or three life areas where providing supports would improve their housing stability.

Second, Rapid Re-Housing is almost always time-limited. While clients move into housing that is permanent (i.e. they can live there as long as they continue to pay rent and meet lease obligations), supports are provided for a finite amount of time, usually six months. Supports may be extended (usually in 3-month increments) a number of times, but if there are persistent barriers to housing stability that require long-term support, the client may be better served through a more intensive Housing First program.

Like Housing First, Rapid Re-Housing focuses on helping clients find housing as quickly as possible. There is no requirement that the client be clean or sober, or in a treatment program. Additional services are provided as needed to assist the client in obtaining housing stability, but the approach is different. Clients are assisted in developing a Housing Plan with action steps and goals, and typically, clients are able to achieve some degree of stability within a year.

Rapid Re-Housing is almost exclusively delivered through scattered-site apartments, not dedicated site housing. Similar to Housing First, it is optimal if clients have choice about where they want to live and what type of housing they would prefer; however, this is may not always be possible as options for affordable supported housing may be restricted.

There are different levels of intensity that can be provided as part of a Rapid Re-Housing program, as illustrated in Table 14: Levels of Rapid Re-Housing.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ National Alliance to End Homelessness.(2011) Rapid Re-Housing Triage Tool.

Table 14: Levels of Rapid Re-Housing

	Barriers to Obtaining Housing	Barriers to Retaining Housing	Client Assistance Provided	Landlord Assistance Provided
Level 1	A few late utility and credit card payments.	Low income, insufficient savings.	Start-up financial assistance, home visit after move-in.	Program contact information.
Level 2	Minor offense history, few or no housing references, pattern of late payments.	Inconsistent employment, poor budgeting skills, minor mental illness, possible past homelessness.	Above, plus ongoing assistance with housing search, weekly home visits, services available for up to 6 months.	Periodic check-ins, availability for 6 months, assistance if eviction a possibility.
Level 3	Some criminal history, up to 3 evictions, noise complaints and/or property damage, closed accounts due to debt.	As above, plus problems with mental illness or substance use, possible family conflict, multiple past episodes of homelessness.	Above, plus time-limited rental assistance, unannounced drop-in visits, services available up to 9 months.	9-month availability, assistance after program has ended, possible payment of court fees, relocation if eviction pursued.
Level 4	Up to 5 evictions, criminal history including drug offense or crimes against person or property.	As above, plus very low income, no bank account.	As above, plus staff accompanies client to meet with landlord, up to 12 months of service.	As above, plus 12-month availability, payment or repair of damages, possible up-front payment of damage deposit or other costs in addition to normal start-up costs.

In summary, Rapid Re-Housing is a more appropriate approach to households that are experiencing moderate barriers to obtaining housing. For individuals and families with fewer barriers, homelessness prevention or diversion may be the best approach.

The Kingston Experience with Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing

In 2007, Kingston was one of six Ontario municipalities selected to participate in the *Hostel to Homes* (H2H) Pilot Project. H2H was a program adopting many features of Housing First or Rapid Rehousing in response to the negative trend of increasing lengths of stay at emergency shelters by chronically homeless individuals. A total of 44 participants enrolled in this pilot, including approximately 30% who were chronically homeless with high needs, 30% who were youth with moderate needs, and 40% who were adults with lower needs. While this program did not adhere to all the features of the core Housing First Intervention or Rapid Re-Housing program, it had the critical element of individualized and flexible supports and was lauded in Kingston as being effective helping people obtain and maintain housing.

Hostel to Homes was funded primarily (80%) by the province of Ontario through emergency shelter per diem funding. The program operated effectively for 18 months using roughly the same amount of funding that was previously allocated for the same clients staying in emergency shelters. There was a modest start-up cost related to implementing the program, but the program was primarily funded through a reallocation of existing resources.

H2H Pilot made significant progress in successfully housing emergency shelter users in stable permanent housing. In the first 18 months of the pilot a total of 17 of the 21 participants were housed at “exit of the pilot”. In the second 18 months, 23 of 26 participants remained housed at the end of the funding.⁷⁵

Currently, under the new Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) funding model, it is possible to build on the success and experience of the *Hostels to Homes* program.

Diversion & Prevention

Not all persons experiencing homelessness require – or are best served by – costly interventions. Evidence indicates that close to 80% of persons who experience homelessness do so for a very short period of time and then are able to gain or regain housing with little to no assistance.⁷⁶

In terms of service efficiency, it is important to allocate the right resources to the right person at the right time. If the majority of individuals and families experiencing homelessness can be housed with minimal assistance, then providing those households with additional and unnecessary assistance is not an effective use of funds.

⁷⁵ Ontario Works program, City of Kingston branch.

⁷⁶ Kuhn, R. & Culhane, D. P. (1998) Applying Cluster Analysis to Test a Typology of Homelessness by Pattern of Shelter Utilization: Results from the Analysis of Administrative Data. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 26(2).

A better approach would be to ensure that all persons entering the homelessness service delivery system have exhausted all of their existing resources and networks prior to obtaining homelessness prevention assistance. This strategy is called *diversion*, because it diverts people from the emergency response system and redirects them towards existing, non-emergency resources. For instance, the Ontario Energy Board offers a Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP), which offers assistance with utility arrears. Diversion also relies heavily on trying to connect people seeking service back to “natural” supports such as friends and family when it is appropriate to do so, so that the individual or family does not need to come into the emergency service delivery system. Diversion fundamentally attempts to exhaust all other approaches to meeting the needs of the household prior to accepting them into the emergency service delivery system.

A recent study from New York found that, on average, a typical homelessness prevention program allocates 80% of its resources to preventing homelessness among households that would not have become homeless without the assistance.⁷⁷ In addition, the same programs, on average, “miss” providing assistance to 34% of households that do become homeless.⁷⁸ This is not an efficient or effective use of our limited prevention resources.

The most effective use of prevention funds is to improve screening and targeting techniques to ensure that clients receiving assistance are the ones who have the most characteristics in common with the existing chronically homeless population.⁷⁹ Therefore, in addition to being at risk of eviction, clients must demonstrate eligibility for prevention assistance by presenting a number of other risk factors.

Those individuals who have fewer risk factors are encouraged to use their own resources and networks to prevent homelessness, or to access existing, non-emergency services.

This approach ensures that finite prevention resources are available to those households that are at the greatest risk of becoming homeless. This has proven to be both efficient and effective.

⁷⁷ See the Homebase Study completed by the City of New York, City University, and ABT Associates.

⁷⁸ Shinn, M., Baumohl, J., & Hopper, K. (2001) *The Prevention of Homelessness Revisited*. *Analyses of Social Issues and Policy*, 1(1).

⁷⁹ National Alliance to End Homelessness.(2011) *Prevention Targeting* 101.

Data Collection & Assessment

A critical component in ending homelessness is collecting data through valid and consistent methodologies. Without concrete evidence, it is impossible to determine the success of even the most basic programs or services.

A key component in data collection is to conduct Point-In-Time Homeless Counts on a regular basis. Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts are a widely accepted methodology, implemented across Canada and legally required in the United States as a requirement for ongoing funding. This method of data collection allows for an accurate snapshot of the current homeless population in a given window of time. This snapshot is critical to establish a baseline that allows for a shared understanding regarding the municipality's starting point, and PIT Counts can also be one of the indicators for system performance over time. Currently, in Kingston, there is a lack of reliable data to determine the size and composition of the homeless population living in the urban areas so conducting a PIT Count is an essential step. Understanding homelessness in rural areas will require a different approach as a PIT Homeless Count would not be methodologically appropriate.

In addition, ensuring that all agencies involved in ending homelessness are able to “speak the same language” by using common tools to collect information about their clients is another vital component of this Plan. The data collected does not need to be extensive. In fact, there is a growing movement towards collecting only the most essential data about clients. There is no value in collecting more data than is useful; in fact, such an exercise is frequently seen as a waste of time for staff (and clients) at the point of collection as well as for those people conducting subsequent analyses.

A best practice in data collection is to assemble all stakeholders – including funders and service providers – and identify the most important client information and adopt an intake and tracking tool that allows all agencies in the system to assess acuity and capture information consistently and accurately. However, this implies that full customization is possible, rather than adopting the more cost effective approach of some modifications to an “off-the-shelf” HMIS system.

Coordinated access and common assessment is at the core the *HEARTH Act* provisions in the United States required by all communities as a condition of funding. There are three tools with different applications that are known to have a strong evidentiary basis:

1. Vulnerability Index. Primarily used for medically frail, street involved populations;⁸⁰
2. Vulnerability Assessment Tool. Primarily used in determining Permanent Sup-

⁸⁰ Based upon the research of Drs. Hwang and O'Connell, the Vulnerability Index was first used by Common Ground in New York City, and has since expanded to be the instrument used in the 100,000 Homes Campaign in the US.

portive Housing access and level of support;⁸¹ and,

3. Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool. Primarily used in integrated service delivery systems, from point of initial intake through to successful completion of case management supports in housing.⁸²

These tools are described more fully in Appendix C: Selecting and Implementing an Assessment and Acuity Tool.

THE FUTURE OF HOMELESSNESS IN KINGSTON AND FRONTENAC

By adopting these best practices that are anchored by Rapid Re-Housing and Housing First, Kingston will be poised to end homelessness within ten years.

Chronically homeless individuals with complex, co-occurring needs will enrol in Housing First programs, where they will move into permanent housing and be supported in maintaining their housing. Evidence supports the fact that most people will successfully maintain their housing if they receive the right type and intensity of supports. This will significantly reduce the demand for shelter beds in the city, reduce the average duration of shelter stay, and reduce the number of people repeatedly returning to shelters.

People with more moderate needs – such as those who are episodically homeless, or those who are approaching a state of chronic homelessness – will enrol in Rapid Re-Housing. They will be assisted in finding a new residence and provided with short-term supports to help maintain their housing stability. This will also contribute to further reductions on shelter bed demand, duration of shelter stay, and number of recurring clients.

The majority of persons who experience homelessness will regain housing with little or no assistance. There will be housing workers available to help them find housing more quickly, but most will not need much assistance to secure their housing stability. This group will not notice a major change in service provision, nor will the characteristics of this group significantly change after implementation of this Plan. These individuals and families will access the homeless service delivery system as it is intended – as an emergency service when they are experiencing a crisis situation in their housing.

Some individuals will not become homeless, due to improved targeting of those at risk of homelessness and through increased diversion. Others who currently receive homeless prevention assistance will not receive benefits, yet will still manage to maintain their housing without assistance from the emergency response system. By successfully targeting those who are most likely to become homeless, resources will be allocated more effectively, and there will be a resultant reduction in total number of people who become homeless.

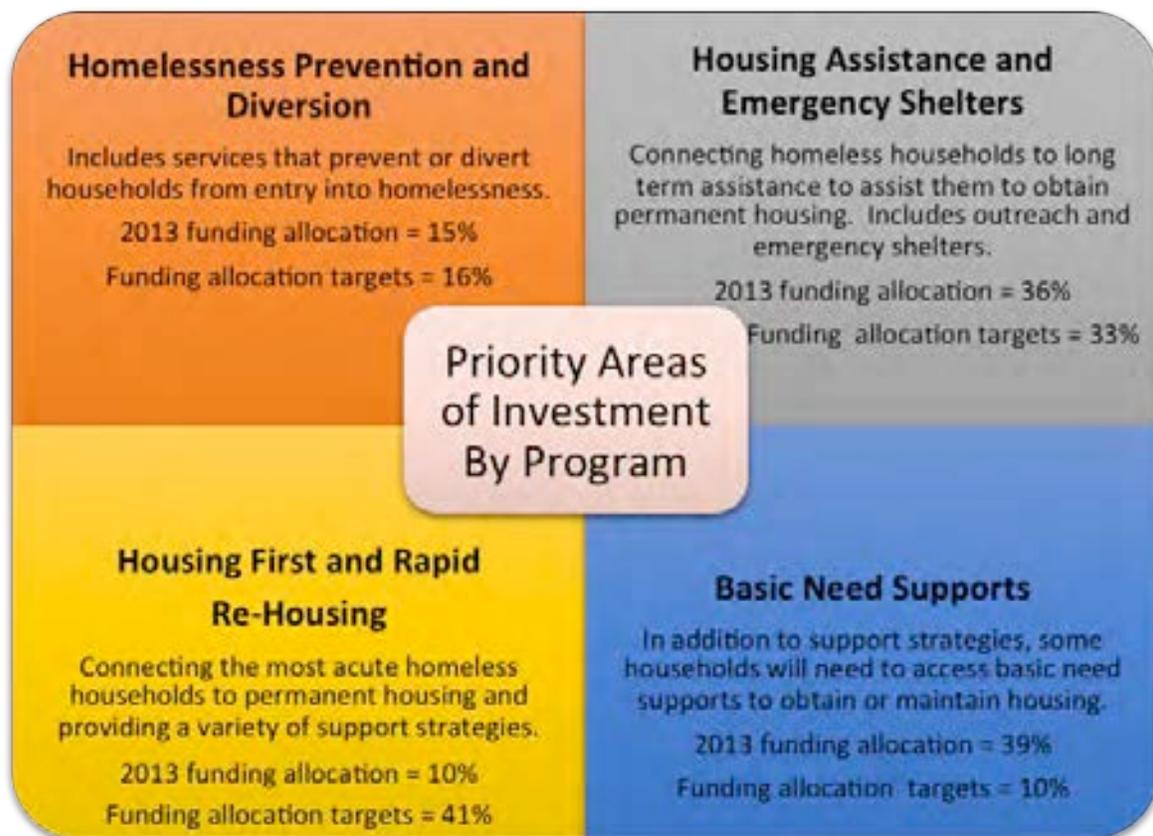
⁸¹ Under the direction of Bill Hobson, the Vulnerability Assessment Tool was created and first implemented by DESC in Seattle, Washington.

⁸² The Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) is a proprietary instrument designed and developed by OrgCode Consulting, Inc.

The data-based feedback for the homeless service delivery system will help the Service Manager adapt and react to any changes, take remedial action if program performance standards and outcomes are not being achieved and will identify high-performing agencies. Finally, Kingston and Frontenac will be able to monitor progress through the efficient and appropriate data collection that will provide a means to monitor the fidelity and impact of the new programs.

Through a targeted, multi-faceted strategic set of priorities that includes shelters as housing help centres, Housing First programs, Rapid Re-Housing programs, Diversion and Prevention Services, and other program supports, the system will be transformed into an efficient system of homeless service delivery to end chronic homelessness. Data Collection and Assessment Tools will measure progress and report successes.

The diagram below illustrates the four investment priorities of a homelessness system and compares 2013 funding allocations to future funding targets from the current 2.6 million dollars of Community Homeless Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and municipal funding. By defining priority areas of investment, identifying more specifically where funds will be allocated becomes clearer. Each area of Investment will be allocated a percentage of the total funding allotment, which will reflect the priorities that will help end chronic homelessness.



Through this priority investment, chronic homelessness can be ended, households will be moved into permanent housing quicker, and people will receive appropriate supports to help sustain their housing. Over time, as this Plan is implemented, there will be reductions in the length of time people spend homeless, a decrease in the number of people becoming homeless for the first time, and a reduction in the need for emergency shelter beds.

How We Get There

To end homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac by 2023, this Plan has identified 7 strategic directions related to ending homelessness, in addition to the 5 strategic directions related to housing, as follows:

- Strategic Direction #6: Systems Reorientation: Leadership, Integration & Coordination
- Strategic Direction #7: Strengthening Homelessness Prevention & Diversion
- Strategic Direction #8: Redefining The Role of Emergency Shelters
- Strategic Direction #9: Increasing Housing Options for Those with Highest Needs
- Strategic Direction #10: Improving Housing Stability for the Most in Need
- Strategic Direction # 11: Developing a Rural Homelessness Strategy
- Strategic Direction # 12: Measuring Outcomes & Report Successes of the Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness

When implemented together, these strategies and their related activities will form the foundational framework for ending homelessness. Each strategy has between three and seven related goals or activities. In total, the 33 recommendations related to ending homelessness provide the Service Manager with the detailed action points that will help end homelessness. These are found in the Homelessness Strategic Directions, beginning on page 134. The following sections detail these strategies and their supporting rationale.

Strategies to End Chronic Homelessness

Strategic Direction #6: Systems Reorientation: Leadership, Integration & Coordination

Ending homelessness requires an overarching shift in the homeless service delivery system. This shift will be guided by this Plan, but requires leadership, collaboration and coordination by the Service Manager to ensure that all aspects of the homeless service delivery system are working together to achieve the objectives of the Plan – including community and social services funded by other agencies such as the United Way.

Each agency should not only be familiar with their own role in the service delivery system, but also the role that the other agencies play, and how they are integrated to serve the overarching system goal of ending chronic and episodic homelessness. Agencies will work together, to adopt common approaches, philosophies, service priority policies and tools.

All agencies involved in the homeless service delivery system who receive CHPI funding must re-structure their approach to focus on ending homelessness by including housing as the desired client outcome. This means that all agencies need to adopt the housing first philosophy. Not every agency needs to deliver a Housing First intervention, but must adopt elements that are consistent with the philosophy such as reducing barriers to services, employing harm reduction techniques, and focusing on connecting clients with housing and supports.

To assist with the goal of acquiring a common language across the service system, a professional development agenda will be implemented. This will help the service providers become fluent with the most current best practices and adopt common policies. The syllabus for the professional development agenda should include the following at a minimum:

- housing-focused case management;
- assertive engagement;
- harm reduction;
- motivational interviewing in a homeless and housing service setting;
- strength based and client centred service responses;
- recovery;
- crisis planning;
- community service access through brokering and advocacy; and,
- acuity assessment.

A critical element of the Plan is for a common intake and assessment tool to be implemented across all access points in the service system. This tool will determine the type of assistance that the client is eligible for, including: shelter diversion, prevention assistance, Rapid Re-Housing, Housing First, or some other type of assistance. When the same tool is implemented at all intake points, system efficiency will be enhanced and there will be consistency in service provision. Gaps in the system and their impacts will become more apparent.

Common intake techniques can be done three different ways, each with its own benefits and drawbacks:

1. Centralized intake requires all clients to access the service system at the same physical location; this reduces training requirements and potential inconsistencies. The downside is that a centralized intake may create barriers for clients who are not able to travel to the intake point.
2. Decentralized intake implements common policies across all intake points; this approach improves accessibility and requires that staff at all intake points undergo the same start-up training and subsequent refreshers and updates. All new staff must receive training as part of their orientation.
3. Finally, a telephone or internet-based access point (i.e. dialling 2-1-1) reduces training requirements but has its own limitations such as the lack of face-to-face interaction.

After intake, client information is captured in a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The database will be shared across all shelters and managed by the Service Manager. Implementing a common HMIS ensures that clients receive coordinated assistance among different service providers, since client data is only recorded once. Less time will be spent on administration and data is shared more efficiently in real time and that means that clients will receive appropriate assistance in a timely manner. An HMIS with more advanced features can also be used to track shelter usage in real time. For instance, if one shelter is full and another client arrives, staff would be able to know which shelters have beds available and be able to refer the client without difficulty.

A common concern related to sharing HMIS data is that of confidentiality and privacy of clients. However, most HMIS packages are built with such challenges in mind and are well equipped to address these issues, and the vendors that create and sell HMIS products have had to prove that all personal privacy and protection matters have been addressed in accordance with all relevant legislation. For example, HMIS vendors in the United States have had to demonstrate compliance to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development requirement that there are considerable data controls on who is authorized to view which data under which circumstances. In Alberta,

there are two different HMIS in use, both of which were rigorously reviewed by Provincial privacy experts and found to meet or exceed all privacy controls. Entry of data into an HMIS comes with documented client consent. Given that there is informed consent, and considering the range of privacy controls that are in place with an HMIS, there is no reason to believe that an HMIS could not be implemented in Kingston; nor is there reason to believe it would not meet MFIPPA requirements. In practice, most clients are agreeable to consent, since they would normally provide the same information to multiple service providers anyway and often are frustrated with repeating themselves each time they access a new service.

Ending homelessness means that every part of the system is dedicated to that goal. This requires a system-wide shift in thinking, an emphasis on leadership and coordination, and the adoption of new tools to enhance service delivery. Recommendations related to Systems Re-orientation are found in the section “Homelessness Strategic Directions” Recommendations beginning on page 134 - Strategic Direction #6, numbers 42-49.

Strategic Direction #7: Strengthening Homelessness Prevention & Diversion

Preventing homelessness is an attractive proposition. By reducing the number of individuals and families who become homeless, the burden on the emergency response system is lessened, including the demand for emergency shelter beds.

However, preventing homelessness is not an easy task. Entering a state of homelessness is a complex process that manifests differently for every person and family. While many people who are facing evictions are able to find an alternate solution that doesn't result in homelessness, it is not always simple to predict which individuals and families have the capacity to do so.⁸³

Emerging research indicates that homelessness prevention strategies are most effective before an at-risk individual reaches a crisis situation. Those at risk of imminent eviction are less likely to stay engaged with services and supports that help them address the underlying issues at play. Without resolving those underlying issues, the same individuals are more likely to experience periodic crises and repeated experience with eviction.⁸⁴

⁸³ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006) Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness.

⁸⁴ Shinn, M., Baumohl, J., & Hopper, K. (2001) The Prevention of Homelessness Revisited. *Analyses of Social Issues and Policy*, 1(1).

The National Alliance to End Homelessness identifies several common misconceptions about homelessness prevention:

- That, households being evicted will become homeless if not assisted. In reality, many households will be able to resolve the situation without assistance from the homelessness service delivery system. One study conducted in New York found that on average, 80% of recipients of eviction prevention assistance would not have resulted in homelessness.⁸⁵
- That, if a household is assisted in their moment of need, homelessness has been prevented. In reality, longer term supports may be needed to address the root causes for the crisis situation, otherwise, the household may face another eviction again in the near future.
- That, households know when they are at risk of homelessness and will seek assistance when that is the case. In reality, not all households know that their tenancy is at risk, and many do not know where to turn for assistance or are able to navigate the system if they do need help.
- That, households that can't prove that they can stabilize quickly without assistance are bad risks. In reality, the process of determining which households are the best candidates for assistance is more complex than a simple risk analysis.

Research suggests that strategically targeting homelessness prevention services is the most effective way to allocate homelessness prevention resources. This proactive approach specifically targets those at-risk individuals who most closely resemble the existing chronically homeless population.⁸⁶

People being released or discharged from prisons, jails, and hospitalizations is one such group that is at risk. A recent study in Toronto found that 32% of provincial inmates expected that they would be homeless upon release from prison.⁸⁷ With such a high likelihood of imminent homelessness, developing a discharge plan for those targeted individuals is an effective solution.

For those at risk of eviction, but who do not resemble the chronically homeless population, diversion is a more appropriate strategy. It relies on individuals at imminent risk of becoming homeless to draw on existing networks to end or prevent their own homelessness without entering the homeless service delivery system. The underlying principle is to provide front-line intervention to households seeking emergency assistance by pro-

⁸⁵ Shinn, M., Baumohl, J., & Hopper, K. (2001) *The Prevention of Homelessness Revisited*. *Analyses of Social Issues and Policy*, 1(1).

⁸⁶ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2011) *Prevention Targeting* 101.

⁸⁷ Kellen, A., Freedman, J., Novac, S., Lapointe, L., Maaranen, R., & Wong, A. (2010) *Homeless and Jailed: Jailed and Homeless*. John Howard Society of Toronto.

viding a brief intervention and assistance with problem solving and to divert individuals and families from accessing emergency shelter beds.

Recommendations related to reducing homelessness through prevention and diversions are found in the section “Homelessness Strategic Directions” beginning on page 136 under Strategic Direction 7, numbers 50 to 53.

Strategic Direction #8: Redefining The Role of Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters play a critical role in the emergency response system to homelessness. It is important that shelters remain consistent in their role to meet immediate shelter needs. However, shelters should never be used as de facto housing.

With a movement towards ending homelessness rather than managing it, the role of shelters needs to be reframed in Kingston and Frontenac. Over time, shelter occupancy will decrease along with average length of stay in shelters. This shift is possible when shelters reframe their operations to an emphasis on housing assistance as shelters become access points to the overall service delivery system.

The core goal that must remain at the forefront at all times is that clients must move out of shelters and into housing as quickly as possible.

First, shelter services will have a dual role - in the evening and overnight hours shelters will continue to provide a place for homeless people to shelter and sleep; during the day, shelters will offer intense housing assistance to those in need of accessing income, supports, and suitable housing and supports to end their homelessness.

Staff providing housing assistance will not necessarily be staff of the shelter, nor are necessarily on-site at each shelter. They would, however, be available to meet and provide the necessary intensive housing assistance, such as viewing apartment listings, applying for financial assistance, accompanying clients to appointments and apartment viewings. Chronic shelter users would be expected and encouraged by shelter staff to receive housing assistance to find and secure housing.

Thus, 24-hour shelter services have two distinct modes of operation: a night system, which is about sheltering; and a day system, which is about getting people out of the shelter. Some shelters may be open 24/7 and may become the hub from which housing assistance services are offered to non 24/7 shelters.

All shelters will use the same intake and assessment tools that are used throughout the homeless delivery system and record client data on a common system, streamlining the intake process. This process will ensure that each client is matched and connected to an appropriate level of support.

Priority will be given to people who are chronically homeless. By adopting a housing first philosophy and ensuring that adequate supports are in place, Kingston will see a significant reduction in the demand for emergency shelter beds as chronically homeless individuals move out of shelters and into housing. Currently, the top 20% of shelter users account for 66% of bed nights in Kingston. If those individuals are successfully housed and supported in maintaining their housing, the need for shelter beds in Kingston will drop to as low as one-third its current level within the next ten years.

To reflect the future changing need for shelters, the shelter system will be “right-sized”. Based on the successes of new programs and the results of a Point-In-Time Homeless Count, and the increased options for permanent supportive housing the need for shelter beds will be revisited. This will entail the re-allocation of resources away from shelter beds, towards other needed services within the homeless service delivery system. Some shelters may be re-purposed into permanent housing if appropriate and required.

It is important to consider the role of shelter specialization going forward. For example, evidence suggests that outcomes for homeless youth are higher when they are separated from homeless adults, such as through the presence of youth-specific services and a youth-specific shelter.⁸⁸ In Kingston, the Mobilizing Local Capacity (MLC) to End Youth Homelessness initiative seeks to develop other youth-specific services. At the time of writing, Kingston and Kamloops, BC have been designated as pilot locations for this Canada-wide initiative.

Recommendations related to Reframing the Role of Emergency Shelters are found in the section “Homelessness Strategic Directions” beginning on page 137 - Strategic Direction # 8, numbers 54-57.

Strategic Direction #9: Increasing Housing Options for Those with Highest Needs

The only solution to homelessness is housing. However, housing comes in a number of different forms, with a number of different characteristics. For formerly homeless individuals, there is no single type of housing that is most appropriate to all homeless individuals. The best approach is to increase the range of options available for clients.

Some individuals may be homeless due to a lack of availability of apartments, and may be best housed in rental units on the private market, or with a small rent supplement. Others may need a staff member to check in periodically to provide support with a medical treatment regime, while still others may be best served with an on-site staff member 24 hours each day, communal meals, and daily programming activities.

⁸⁸ Raising the Roof. (2009) Youth Homelessness in Canada: The Road to Solutions.

Providing a range of options ensures that each individual and family receives housing and supports best suited to their needs within the range of what is feasible to fund.

A 2007 study in Toronto found that formerly homeless individuals who were able to choose their housing arrangement were much more satisfied with their housing arrangement than those who had no choice, and moreover that those with choice had better quality of life and increased housing stability.⁸⁹

There is a broad spectrum of housing models with various associated benefits and drawbacks of each. One dimension is level of supports. A housing support worker interviewed by the consultants suggested that in Kingston there are gaps in this continuum, and that there may be a lack of housing with moderate supports, while there are greater amounts of housing with high supports and with light supports.

Table 15: Housing Options by Level of Support

No Support	Financial Support	Light Support	Moderate Support	High Support
Independent living without assistance.	Residents live independently, receiving only some financial support in paying rent.	Also known as “independent living with supports,” a support worker is available by phone and generally spends a few hours on-site each week.	A support worker is generally on-site during normal business hours, and a support worker is on call should a crisis occur.	Support worker(s) are on-site 24/7; often ACT or ICM teams are involved. Clients have high needs and need intensive supports.

A second dimension is a range of housing forms. Self-contained units are more expensive to build, while shared buildings are less expensive but may cause problems due to individuals with higher needs living in shared settings.

⁸⁹ Toronto Shelter, Support & Housing Administration. (2007) What Housing First Means for People: Results of Streets to Homes 2007 Post-Occupancy Research.

Table 16: Housing Options by Housing Form

Shared	Single Room Occupancy (SRO)	Self-Contained Apartment or House
A shared house, on average 4 bedrooms, with shared bathrooms, kitchen, and common areas.	Similar in form to a hotel or college residence, each small unit has a private bathroom, and efficiency kitchen. Shared full kitchen & common areas.	Standard apartments as found on the private market, with private kitchen and bathroom. Minimal common space.

Level of concentration is also a dimension on which supportive housing can be differentiated. Dedicated/ single site housing arrangements have a high density of clients in one location – often a single building is consisting entirely of supportive housing units. In contrast, scattered site supportive housing units are intermixed within the larger community, and are located next to private market housing units and/or non-supportive social housing units.

Finally, there is the question of who owns the housing units. While it is more common for supportive housing units to be owned by not-for-profit housing providers or public bodies, in scattered-site arrangements, private landlords are encouraged to play a role in providing housing options.

One innovative model known as sponsor-based, scattered site housing entails agencies contacting landlords and arranging to lease several units from that landlord through a “head lease” or “master lease” arrangement. The agency then sublets each unit to their clients, using standard leasing agreements. This mutually beneficial arrangement can be successful because the landlord is guaranteed to have tenants but does not deal with the tenants directly. Service providers may get a reduced rate for renting “in bulk” and are spared the capital cost of building or owning their own housing units. This approach helps clients secure a place to live and they often have a greater range of housing options due to the scattered-site model. The drawback to this approach can be the liability and insurance associated with this type of rental arrangement, which rests with the master leaser, and which can create significant additional costs.

Interim housing is a type of housing that can be provided on a non-permanent basis. In general, time-limited housing is not an effective approach to ending homelessness because inherent deadlines can cause housing instability, not solve it. However, for some distinct sub-populations – such as families escaping domestic violence – interim housing can be a good solution, since they are very likely able to achieve housing stability once they find suitable accommodations, but they have an immediate and pressing need for some sort of temporary housing.

Regardless of the cause of homelessness, the best solution is to develop an available range of housing options to meet each client's individual needs. This might include dedicated permanent supportive housing sites appropriate for a Housing First approach, shared housing and apartments in scattered sites in the private or non-profit sector appropriate for a Rapid Re-housing approach. It is important that increasing housing options depends on ensuring the right supports are in place and that collaboration between landlord, support worker, and tenant are on-going and often.

Recommendations related to increasing housing options are found in the section "Homelessness Strategic Directions" beginning on page 140 under Strategic Direction # 9, numbers 58-62.

Strategic Direction #10: Improving Housing Stability for the Most in Need

An examination of Housing First programs shows that chronically homeless individuals and families are commonly re-housed on multiple occasions. Some service providers are known to describe these individuals as "hard to house" and are cautious to help these persons find new housing, fearing that the outcome will be yet another eviction and the attempt will result in loss of credibility with landlords.

Housing First challenges these assumptions and seeks specifically to target those individuals who have the most difficulty retaining their housing. Intensive and often lifelong services and supports are provided with the specific goal of improving the person's housing stability and thus reducing the likelihood of eviction.

Importantly, when a tenant in a Housing First program is evicted, it is not seen as a failure of the program or the individual. Instead, it is understood that the individual is already accessing the supports he or she needs to be re-housed quickly, thus minimizing the amount of time that the spent homeless. This also results in improved system efficiency, since the person and his or her support worker are able to learn from the experience and determine what worked and what did not, rather than starting from the beginning.

An effective homeless service delivery system focuses on housing as the solution to homelessness. It also acknowledges that formerly homeless individuals and families often need support in maintaining their housing after being re-housed.

Formerly homeless individuals and families have a range of needs and require a range of different types and levels of supports available to help them maintain their housing. This is informed by the assessment and understanding of the persons depth of need or acuity. Some will need some form of time-limited supports, and some may require periodic check-ins from a support worker to ensure that there are no problems with housing

or life stability. Some clients may request more intensive services, such as assistance accessing mental health services, addictions treatment, or supported employment that may extend for long periods of time.

It is important to understand as well that different clients may require different supports that are unique to their situation. An LGBTQ youth requires housing and supports that allow him or her to safely and positively express his or her identity. A veteran may require counselling to deal with his or her PTSD. An aboriginal person may require culturally specific supports and an environment that caters to his or her specific needs, while the needs of a victim of domestic violence may in fact be quite different.

A key element in providing housing supports is *choice*. People are never required to accept supports and they can never be evicted for refusing services. In fact, clients should be allowed to opt in to one service while refusing another. It is not an “all-or-nothing” condition for engaging with housing first. Services are offered to help promote housing stability but if a client believes that he or she can maintain housing stability on their own, or if they simply do not want certain services, that is always their choice. This is not to say that there are minimum requirements of being a tenant – paying rent, not destroying the unit and not interfering with your neighbours.

Improving housing stability among formerly homeless individuals and families is primarily a matter of matching the individual or family to the right intensity and type of supports and services.

Recommendations related to improving housing stability for those most in need are found in the section “Homelessness Strategic Directions” beginning on page 141 under Strategic Direction # 10, numbers 63-66.

Strategic Direction #11: Developing a Rural Homelessness Strategy

Rural homelessness is often overlooked because homelessness is typically seen as an urban phenomenon. While it is true that the vast majority of persons experiencing homelessness find themselves in urban or even suburban areas, evidence suggests that 7%⁹⁰ to 9%⁹¹ of all homeless people live in rural areas.

90 National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2010) Rural Homelessness: Fact Sheet.

91 Robertson, M., Harris, N., Fritz, N., Noftinger, R., & Fischer, P. (2007) Rural Homelessness. 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research.

There is currently a paucity of research about rural homelessness. However, the available evidence suggests that rural homelessness has several distinct features that differentiate it from the more prevalent urban homelessness:

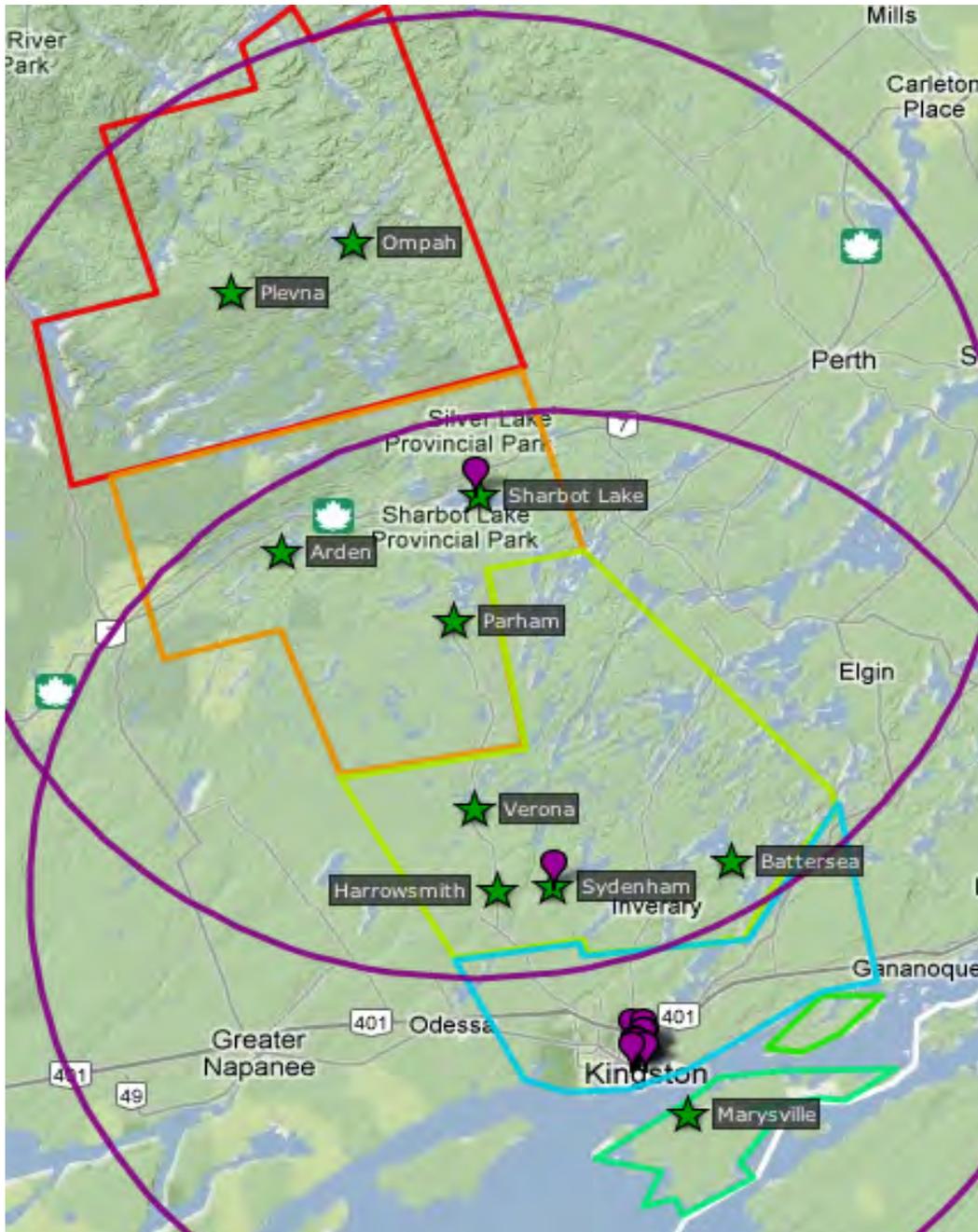
- Access barriers. Even when services are available, due to the geography of a rural area, it is often difficult to access these services, particularly among low-income groups.
- Low public awareness. Homelessness is often perceived as an urban issue, so rural residents are often unwilling to believe that homelessness is an issue in their community. This lack of awareness makes action difficult.
- Lack of funding. Due to the low public awareness and overall smaller population, proportionally fewer funds are available for services related to homelessness in rural areas.
- Low density. It is estimated that in Frontenac County, there may be one homeless person per 100 square kilometers. This level of density does not support fixed-location facilities to address the needs of homeless persons.

A concerted effort to end homelessness in Frontenac County requires a dedicated effort to address all four of these barriers, all the while adhering to the other principles outlined in this Plan, such as increasing housing options and improving housing stability.

Lack of access to services is a major difficulty in rural areas. Due to the geography of a rural area, a private automobile is nearly mandatory, but for low-income persons, this may be unrealistic. There have been interesting innovations in other jurisdictions to address the transportation barrier. For instance, in nearby Hastings County, a rural public transportation system has been created called the TROUT. Other communities have focused on enhancing remote access to services, using forms of communication such as telephone or internet. Alternatively, some areas have implemented mobile services such as a Health Bus – services that travel to where people need them.

Figure 6: Geography of Frontenac County illustrates the size and scale of Frontenac County. While the green stars are major settlements within the County, the purple markers represent service locations. The two large purple circles are 50-kilometer radii around North and South Frontenac service locations – a distance that could take an hour or more of driving time.

Figure 6: Geography of Frontenac County



Of course, even if services are available and accessible, they still will not be able to reach persons in need if those people are not aware of them. This speaks to the issue of low public awareness. Rural homelessness is less visible than urban homelessness, with many persons who are experiencing homelessness getting shelter through couch

surfing, living in cars or vans, camping, or sleeping in barns or other structures not intended for human habitation.⁹² A person sleeping on a friend's couch may not think of him or herself as homeless, and may not be aware of the services available. A homeless person may be reluctant to let on the truth of his or her situation, refusing to access services even if available. Conversely, the fewer persons who use homeless services, the less significant the problem of homelessness appears, which may result in pressure to cut funding.

It is important in rural areas to raise awareness about the problem of homelessness. In Frontenac County, 40% of renters and 18% of homeowners pay more for housing than is affordable. In addition, 8.7% of Frontenac households are below the poverty line. These statistics suggest that as many as 1 in 5 households in the County might require assistance from time to time. Raising awareness about this issue addresses three problems: community support for programs and initiatives; knowledge about the services available for those who will need them in the future; and combating stigma associated with asking for help.

Low public awareness may mean lack of funding. If it is generally believed that homelessness is not an issue in Frontenac County, it may be difficult to obtain funding for initiatives related to homelessness. This can be combatted in a few ways. First, by increasing public awareness, there may be more support among voters and donors to contribute to homelessness initiatives. Second, seeking partnerships and opportunities for collaboration, and strategically allocating funds can put limited resources put to maximum effectiveness. For instance, effective rural homeless service delivery systems can be found in Arizona and Alabama; in both cases several neighbouring counties opted to join together and pool their funds, since no county had enough resources on their own to address the problem of homelessness.⁹³

Finally, there is a lack of homeless service provider infrastructure in rural areas. For instance, there are no “formalized” emergency shelters anywhere in the County of Frontenac. In most rural areas, due to low population density, dedicated emergency shelters are impractical due to the access challenges. Building an emergency shelter in the County of Frontenac is not an effective solution. Other rural jurisdictions have experimented with other types of emergency shelter provision: a host homes program involves volunteers opening their homes to a homeless guest for a short while, and is most applicable for homeless youth;⁹⁴ a motel voucher system allows homeless persons and families to have a short hotel stay paid for by an agency;⁹⁵

⁹² National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2010) Rural Homelessness: Fact Sheet.

⁹³ Housing Assistance Council. (2002) Continua of Care Best Practices: Comprehensive Homeless Planning in Rural America.

⁹⁴ See, for instance, Halton's Bridging the Gap program.

⁹⁵ See, for instance, Napanee's program administered by the Morningstar Relief Mission.

a bus system that collects homeless persons and brings them to shelters;⁹⁶ or dual-purposing a building (or buildings) such as a church to act as a mat program during extreme weather.⁹⁷

To address many of these issues, evidence from several rural jurisdictions in the USA also indicate that critical to the success of rural homelessness service provision is strong leadership, collaboration between different stakeholders, and inclusion.⁹⁸

In developing the strategy for the homeless survey to be conducted in the County in the fall of 2013, there has been success in pulling service providers together and planning as a group what will work in the rural areas. It is important that this continue and that there is a point person identified who will help move the plan forward in a way that addresses the rural needs of homeless persons.

Despite the fact that the population of the County of Frontenac is comparatively smaller than Kingston's, homelessness is a very real problem for those in the County who have experienced, are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. Due to a general lack of infrastructure available to respond to homelessness, the National Alliance to End Homelessness in the United States suggests that the best approach to ending rural homelessness is to focus on prevention, using evidence-based prevention and targeting strategies.⁹⁹

Ending rural homelessness requires an adherence to many of the other strategies identified in this Plan, such as focusing on housing as the solution to homelessness, supporting people in their housing, and using a data-driven approach. It is not recommended that the Service Manager create a rural emergency shelter and this is supported by the County given the geography.

Recommendations related to understanding and addressing rural homelessness are found in the section "Homelessness Strategic Directions" beginning on page 143 under Strategic Direction # 11, numbers 67-70.

⁹⁶ See, for instance, the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group.

⁹⁷ See, for instance, Macomb County's Rotating Emergency Shelter Team.

⁹⁸ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2010) Critical Success Factors in High Performing Rural Continuums of Care.

⁹⁹ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2010) Rural Homelessness: Fact Sheet.

Strategic Direction #12: Measuring Outcomes & Report Successes of the Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness

To meet the goal of ending homelessness, it is vital that performance and progress is tracked and that data is recorded accurately and in a timely fashion. Homelessness is a field where the lack of data often hampers system effectiveness, response and improvement due to an incomplete understanding of the population being served.

There are several reasons why data may be incomplete or unreliable. First and foremost, even the definition of what constitutes homelessness may be brought into question. Youth who have run away from their homes but intend to return, and women fleeing abusive situations, are two examples of situations where there may be some dispute. A second reason why data may be incomplete is because some homeless individuals use multiple services while others use no services at all. Counting, for instance, the number of unique visitors to shelters may result in inaccurate estimates about the total homeless population due to some individuals not accessing shelters at all. In addition, homelessness is a fluid situation, resulting in some individuals moving in and out of homelessness over a given period of time—meeting the definition of chronic homelessness but essentially “unseen.”

Dealing with these issues requires an attention to data integrity and adherence to proven methodologies. Better data yields better results, and allows for programs and services to be modified as needed based on outcomes and changing needs.

In the United States, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has mandated that all municipalities conduct a Point-in-Time (PIT) Homeless Count every two years as a requirement of receiving funding, and has created national standards for this practice.¹⁰⁰ While PIT counts are not a perfect, over time there have been adaptations to the methodology that will improve the quality and reliability of the results. Conducting a PIT Count can also provide an opportunity for service providers to conduct a needs assessment at the same time. This allows the community to establish a baseline and understand how many individuals and families are experiencing homelessness at a given point in time. Conducting PIT Counts at fixed, regular intervals with consistent, evidence-based methodology has been found to provide increasingly more valuable data with each subsequent count.

Other data can be obtained from shelters and other service providers, although this data will not account for those persons experiencing homelessness who do not engage with the service system. To achieve an accurate determination, a Homeless Management

¹⁰⁰ Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2011) The 2011 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness: Supplement to the Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

Information System (HMIS) that is shared across service providers will ensure that there is no duplication in counting. Double counting is one of the complications that often results when agencies independently track and report data to the Service Manager. Without using a common HMIS, it is impossible to know if clients staying in emergency shelters are the same people who access drop-in centers.

Jurisdictions that have made a commitment to end homelessness have also embraced data and a focus on outcomes as the critical pillars to success. With a strong attention to data, it is possible to not only achieve better outcomes, but also to demonstrate that success. A continuously maintained dataset also allows for ongoing program evaluation and refinements based on that evaluation. Finally, those places that are achieving positive outcomes in addressing homelessness share their findings and status with the community at large.

Recommendations related to Measuring Outcomes and Reporting Successes are found in the section “Homelessness Strategic Directions” beginning on page 144 under Strategic Direction #12, numbers 71 to 75.

Implementing the Homelessness Strategy

The goal of the combined strategies is to create an integrated response across Kingston and Frontenac to unify all agencies working towards the common goal of ending chronic and episodic homelessness.

The Service Manger will provide the required leadership to reorient the system to achieve an integrated system to move from managing homelessness to ending homelessness.

This Plan governs programs and services initiated and funded by the Service Manager in Kingston and the County of Frontenac. However, many agencies within the homeless service delivery sector receive additional funding – sometimes even all of their funding – from other sources, most notably the United Way. The Service Manager is committed to working closely with other funders to collaborate on how best to achieve the strategies and policies set forth in this Plan.

The approaches laid out in this document are based on extensive research of evidence-based practices that have been proven to be effective in ending homelessness. One key component is to ensure that all agencies within the service provider system are working in collaboration with one another, even in such cases when funding is not received through the Service Manager.

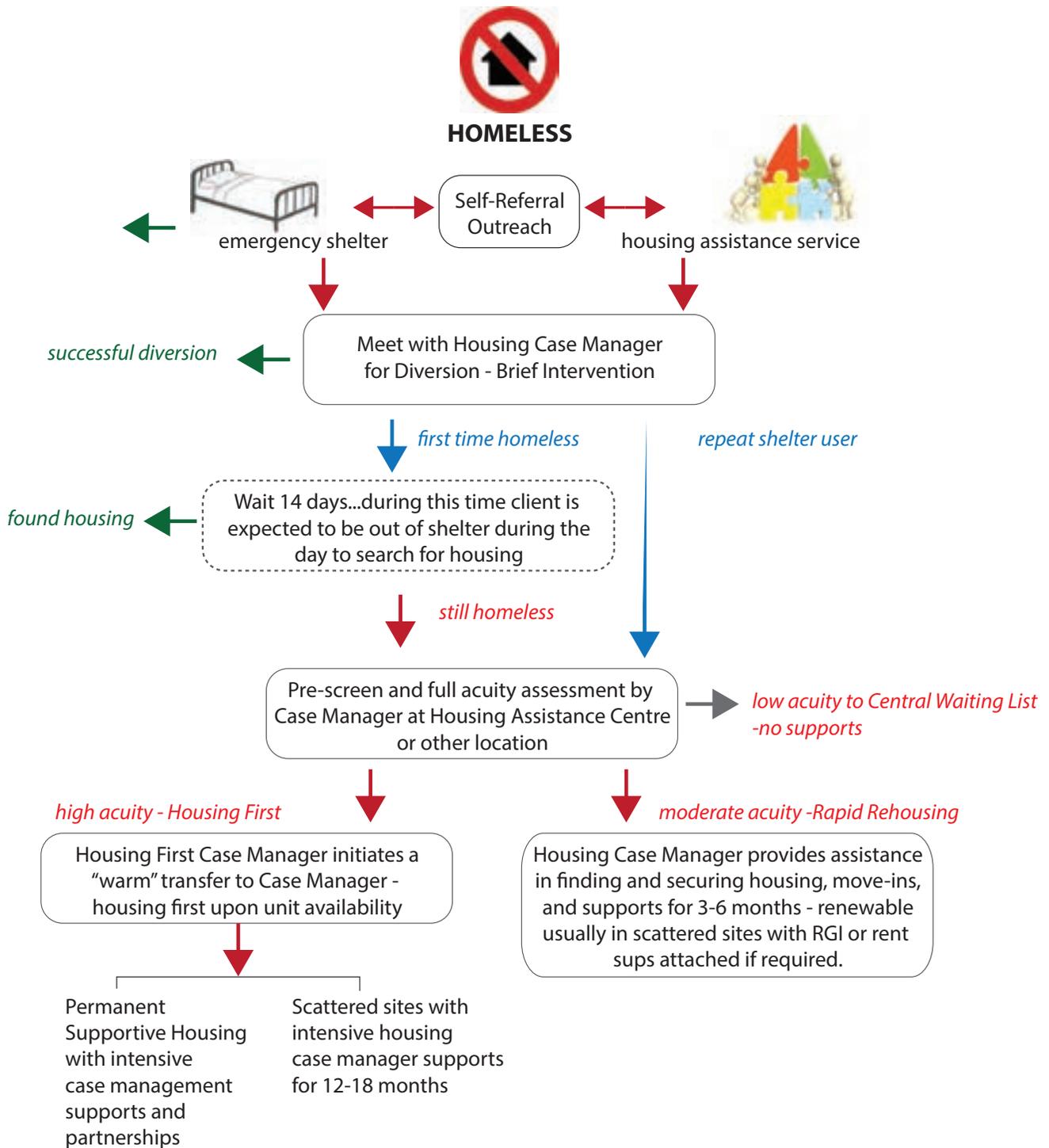
Thus, in implementing this Plan, it is essential to ensure that all governmental, non-governmental, non-profit, faith-based, civic, philanthropic, and community-based organizations operating in the homeless service delivery sector fully adopt this Plan. As has been the experience in other jurisdictions, the more that funders are aligned, the better the results of moving forward with ending homelessness. To that end, the leadership within the community, including the pivotal and influential status of the Service Manager, will need to work across funding tables to build a common strategic purpose to realize the full potential of this Plan.

In summary, the flow chart on the following page shows one possibility of the how the service user would enter and move through the system. A service user may begin his journey into stable housing by using the shelter at night and/or may seek help during the day by accessing the Housing Assistance Service. The service user will connect with a Housing Case Manager who will initially focus on diversion from the shelter system and brief intervention to help remove those immediate barriers to stable housing. During the first 14 days in the shelter, the first time shelter user receives “encouragement only” from shelter staff to obtain housing but does not meet with a Housing Case Manager for assessment of acuity until after the initial 2 weeks as now the shelter use is exceeding the acceptable length of stay that is an “emergency” in nature. This assessment, which is common across the homelessness system, will identify those most in need and will help triage the service user into one of two streams –a housing first approach, or a rapid re-housing approach. Persons who are assessed as not acute will be referred to housing options within the community without supports attached.

For service users requiring and receiving a Housing First program, the service user is attached to a “Housing First team” for that area.

The process is similar for repeat users of the shelter except that the 14 day “encouragement only” period is waived.

Chart 2: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PLAN – CLIENT TRAJECTORY



IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

A detailed implementation work plan is being developed to transform the system from a focus on managing homelessness to one of ending chronic homelessness. Over time, Kingston and Frontenac will begin to undergo a change. This change will be felt most acutely by service providers, who will, by necessity, undergo some restructuring, but also by persons experiencing chronic homelessness and those at risk of homelessness.

The Implementation work plan will focus on each of the homelessness strategies so that:

Within the first year, Kingston and the County of Frontenac will:

- Conduct and a Point-In-Time Homeless Count within the urban area of Kingston and a homeless survey in the rural areas to set as a base-line against which to measure future performance and progress
- Publicly announce a shift in approach from managing homelessness to ending homelessness.
- Continue to consult with stakeholders on the implementation of the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan
- Begin development and implementation of a common assessment protocol

In Year One, Kingston will:

- Implement a new funding model, reflecting the four “Priority Area of Investment” through issuing and awarding a “Request for Proposal for delivery of funded services.
- Design and implement a full professional development agenda as a condition for agencies to receive CHPI funding.
- Identify and adopt a Housing Management Information System (HMIS) that meets the needs of the City, the Province and service providers within funding available.

Three years from now, Kingston will:

- Begin to see a decrease in shelter bed demand.
- See a reduction in recidivism to the emergency shelter system
- Conduct a second Point-In-Time Count and Rural Homeless Survey and notice a reduction in chronic homelessness.
- Begin to see some tenants in a “Housing First” or “Rapid Re-Housing” program, achieving housing stability and requiring significantly fewer supports.
- Have reduced the average length of stay in shelters to 21 days.

Five years from now, Kingston will:

- See a marked decrease (at least 30% reduction within the first three years after the first Point in Time Count) in the amount of chronically homeless individuals accessing shelters and sleeping outdoors.
- Have reduced the average length of stay in shelters to 14 days.
- See a 30% reduction in shelter bed nights from 2013 levels.
- See more Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing clients “graduating” from the program, achieving housing stability and requiring significantly fewer supports.
- Update this Plan, as per the requirements of the Housing Services Act, 2011.
- See 80% of former chronically homeless individuals now stably housed.

Ten years from now, Kingston will:

- See a 50% reduction in shelter bed nights from 2013 levels.
- Have reduced the average length of stay in shelters to 7 days.
- Ensure that no one is homeless for longer than 30 days.

In 2023, service providers will have ended homelessness in Kingston and Frontenac. This means that chronic and episodic homelessness will be relics of the past. Shelters, while fewer, will continue to play an important role in meeting emergency shelter and service needs. Homelessness, when experienced, will be infrequent and of a short duration.

Recommendations

Housing Strategic Directions Updates

Strategic Direction #1: Managing the Housing Agenda

1. That the City and County establish the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan as the primary strategic plan to help guide and align local housing efforts.
 - Adoption of the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan by each respective Council will establish a clear strategic housing framework.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: ongoing
2. That the City develop a tactical plan concerning the acquisition of new units of affordable housing to address the needs of the homeless population.
 - Develop a financial plan to direct the acquisition and construction of new units of affordable housing.
 - Ensure that all existing Capital housing programs contain maximum flexibility to be used for acquisition of existing housing units or other alternative housing types
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Finance, Real Estate & Construction, and Planning Departments
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: no action taken
3. That the City and County use the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan as an alignment tool across areas of municipal responsibility.
 - Having adopted the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan as a strategic document, City/County senior staff should use it to guide implementation via related municipal work plans.
 - Responsibility: Senior staff in City of Kingston and County of Frontenac
 - Time Frame: Short-term, then ongoing
4. That the Housing Department of the City take lead responsibility for advancing the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, including the County.
 - Housing Department to set-up and chair interdepartmental committee that

- oversees implementation of 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan, as required. Planning, Building, Finance and Community & Family Services staff and County as core participants, other staff as required
- Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term, then ongoing
 - Status: ongoing
5. That the City recognize and support the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee as a primary vehicle for engaging stakeholders and providing advice on matters related to housing by:
- Focusing Committee activity on housing issues, policies and program.
 - Ensuring broad and balanced representation on the Committee from private, public and municipal interests.
 - Continuing to support the role of the Committee in vetting policies relating to housing and homelessness.
 - Ensure focus is centered on providing advice for housing and homeless issues
 - Membership to include representatives from the local Homebuilders Assn., City Planning Dept., Community Leadership Team (per United Way), homeless service providers and service recipients
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), other departments as required
 - Time Frame: Short-term, then ongoing
 - Status: ongoing
6. That the City report on 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan progress regularly and publish an annual report card identifying key indicator status including indicators relating to homelessness.
- Establish 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan monitoring table to show progress against approved recommendations
 - Define and develop key housing indicators
 - Report annually to Council via report card on indicators and 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan status
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), in consultation with Planning; and Building and Licensing Departments
 - Time Frame: Short-term, then ongoing

- Status: first year complete, ongoing
- 7. That the City gather, maintain and monitor data to support housing and homelessness accountability practices, both internally and in support of provincial requirements.
 - Monitor 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan implementation to confirm provincial expectations and obligations
 - Consolidate standard data and program monitoring information into one source
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), in consultation with Planning; and Building and Licensing Departments
 - Time Frame: Short-term, then ongoing
 - Status: ongoing

Strategic Direction #2: Creating a Complementary Regulatory Environment

- 8. That the City encourage social capital initiatives by:
 - Supporting legislative reforms that improve household income retention incentives and help address the impacts that utility costs have on poverty
 - Working collaboratively with social assistance staff and the Province to reduce procedural ‘barriers’
 - Linking municipal programs and poverty reduction initiatives that help support win-win opportunities
 - Advocate through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) for income maintenance reforms based on identified issues.
 - Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial reforms regarding rent-geared-to-income (RGI) and social assistance, as well as social capital initiatives.
 - Review municipal housing and homeless programs to help identify and promote opportunities that reduce poverty
 - Explore opportunities through system planning with stakeholders to help address mutually beneficial housing outcomes.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), City of Kingston Council, Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee
 - Time Frame: Short- to medium-term
 - Status: ongoing

9. That the City consider Official Plan policies that promote inclusive, sustainable and flexible communities by:
 - Ensuring that the Locational Analysis For Affordable Housing be used and referred to during decisions on which affordable housing projects should be supported
 - Reviewing demolition and conversion provisions to help further support the retention of existing rental stock.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead) in consultation with Housing Department, interdepartmental committee
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term, then ongoing
 - Status: ongoing
10. That the City pursue inclusionary zoning opportunities while it completes the comprehensive Zoning By-Law (ZBL) review. Further opportunities could be explored at the time of any Official Plan updates.
 - Working to strengthen municipal policies related to height and density bonusing through further detail on how to implement the OP policies by way of an implementation guide.
 - Review further specific inclusionary policies at the time of the 5 year Official Plan review.
 - Conducting a study to implement a new inclusionary policy.
 - Taking advantage of possible future legislative changes that permit more inclusionary zoning.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department
 - Time Frame: Short- to long-term
 - Status: ZBL review in progress
11. That the City seek opportunities to appropriately integrate student housing by:
 - Supporting initiatives to address the supply of student housing.
 - Work with Queen’s University as part of the Central Accommodation Review to develop a strategy to ensure an adequate supply of student housing within Kingston.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead) with input from Housing Department and Town/Gown Committee; Queen’s University
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term, then ongoing
 - Status: Central Accommodation Review in progress

12. That the City continue to analyze and monitor housing form, tenure, and affordability to ensure that the housing affordability, intensification, and density goals of the Official Plan are realized by:
 - Using the following as benchmarks for housing form, tenure and affordability:
 - * Housing Affordability – 25% of units at rates up to the affordability threshold
 - * Housing Tenure – 70% ownership, 30% rental
 - * Housing Form – 45% singles, 15% multiples, and 40% apartments
 - Measuring and reporting on housing form, tenure and total housing units constructed as part of Report Card (per Rec. #6)
 - Using incentive tool available, actively seek out commitments to help support form, tenure, and affordability targets through the development approval process
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead) with input from Housing Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: no action taken
13. That the County establish an Official Plan to help guide land use planning which has consistent housing policies among the four constituent Townships and which establishes targets for units to be added to the current housing stock over the next 10 years as follows:
 - Housing Form – 92% singles, 4% multiples and 4% apartments
 - Housing Tenure – 90% ownership, 10% rental
 - Housing Affordability – 25% of units at rates up to the affordability threshold
 - Review and consult on key housing issues, options and policies to be implemented, including:
 - * Defining affordability
 - * Housing mix and diversity
 - * Residential intensification
 - * Renewal and rehabilitation of housing stock
 - * Seniors housing options
 - * Secondary suites

- Adopt OP, work with local jurisdictions to implement upper tier policies in local Ops
 - * Implement a definition of affordable housing and adopt affordable housing targets in the County of Frontenac Official Plan.
 - * Implement a definition of affordable housing and adopt affordable housing targets in the Township of Central Frontenac Official Plan.
 - * Implement a definition of affordable housing and adopt affordable housing targets in the Township of South Frontenac Official Plan.
 - * Implement a definition of affordable housing and adopt affordable housing targets in the Township of Frontenac Islands Official Plan.
 - Responsibility: County of Frontenac (lead) in collaboration with four constituent Townships
 - Time Frame: Mid-term
 - Status: County OP in development
14. That the City and Council continue their support for second suites as an affordable rental housing alternative by:
- Encouraging and supporting applications for second suites where currently permitted in ZBL's and where appropriately accommodated through required municipal Planning approvals
 - Monitoring the implementation of the secondary suite pilot project to assist in evaluating impacts and the number of units created through the program
 - Undertaking a study to assess the potential to broaden the pilot project area to include as-of-right permissions within additional areas of the City where servicing concerns are addressed; in accordance with applicable legislation, the study should also evaluate and recommend zoning provisions for accommodating secondary suites within accessory buildings (e.g. above detached garage, within a separate building on a residential lot occupied by a primary dwelling).
 - Through the comprehensive ZBL review process, implement the recommendations and appropriate zoning provisions resulting from the preceding study.
 - Encouraging built-in conversion potential for appropriate housing within new development
 - Streamlining administrative approvals for second suites, including developing expedited internal Planning and Building review procedures to reduce the

cost and time to obtain appropriate approvals for secondary suites throughout the City.

- Continue to enhance awareness through the public education campaign including, the development of public information materials
 - Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial expectations and obligations regarding second suites
 - Encourage the creation of second suites and support applications that come forward in areas where currently permitted by ZBL's
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), Planning Department, interdepartmental committee, and County of Frontenac
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term
 - Status: Ongoing
15. That the City consider key affordable housing provisions from the Official Plan including policies that:
- Encourage housing mix and diversity
 - Support density and intensification
 - Enable residential renewal and rehabilitation
 - Review minimum separation distances for residential care facilities
 - Through the comprehensive ZBL review, ensure that OP provisions regarding affordable housing are implemented by:
 - * Providing for a mix of residential uses and densities across zones
 - * Allowing various forms of intensification in the urban area while considering minimizing parking and amenity space arrangement.
 - * Supporting housing renewal while limiting conversion or demolition when not in the public interest
 - Reviewing opportunities to reduce/eliminate separation distances for residential care facilities
 - Encourage the adoption of a definition of housing affordability that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement across all departments and committees within Kingston and Frontenac, and encourage the adoption of affordable housing targets as identified in this document.
 - * Work with the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee so that they understand their role as champions of the definition of housing affordability and the affordability targets within Kingston.

- Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead), Housing Department, and interdepartmental committee
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term
 - Status: In progress
16. That the County undertake a review with local Townships to identify zoning anomalies that may be acting as barriers, especially when it comes to supporting seniors housing options.
- Undertake preliminary review to identify specific zoning barriers
 - When County Official Plan is in place, work to implement County and local OP policies via zoning bylaws and use this process to help address identified barriers
 - Encourage the development of secondary suites and garden suites within the County of Frontenac.
 - * Create policies within the County of Frontenac Official Plan that permit such developments.
 - Pursue opportunities as they arise to increase the amount of affordable housing within the County.
 - * Seek opportunities to convert underutilized buildings to affordable housing.
 - * Investigate the possibility of amending planning and zoning policies to support intensification.
 - * Support affordable housing developments such as the Seniors’ Housing Pilot Project.”
 - Responsibility: County of Frontenac (lead) in collaboration with four constituent Townships
 - Time Frame: Mid-term
 - Status: implementation to occur after the adoption of the County Official Plan
17. That the City continue to support timely land use approvals through the Implementation and Service Improvement Plan developed as a result of the 2013 Mayor’s Task Force on Development.
- Housing Department staff to help facilitate applications for affordable housing by providing advice and education to applicants
 - Expand private sector roundtable sessions to include Housing Department or other City staff who are on the interdepartmental committee
 - Seek to have affordable housing projects designated as a High Priority by

the Inter Departmental team overseeing the implementation of the Mayor's Task Force on Development

- Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), Planning Department, and interdepartmental committee
- Time Frame: Ongoing
- Status: Ongoing

Strategic Direction #3: Leveraging Resources and Tools

18. That the City maximize available funding by:

- Utilizing current program offerings
- Continuing to actively seek out other funding opportunities
- Developing a contingency plan to manage anticipated step downs in future senior government funding
- Leverage homeless funding by bundling/aligning various funding streams with community priorities
- Continue to maximize take-up of available rent supplement dollars through active negotiation with local landlords
- Using sector networks, seek out other possible housing funding opportunities
- Establish a plan for managing funding step down by:
 - * Creating a detailed funding horizon profile by program and project
 - * Developing an impact analysis against the funding horizon profile
 - * Ensure the step down funding plan considers end of operating agreement impacts
- Establishing a prioritized resource plan to mitigate the impacts
- Give consideration to prioritizing surplus City and County land for the purpose of affordable housing – through direct use of the land or by dedicating the provisions of the sale directly for affordable housing purposes
- Promote limited-equity ownership amongst lower income persons
- Prioritize homeless funding on those initiatives that are focused on ending homelessness instead of managing it
- Reinvest money saved from closing shelters as outlined in the homelessness plan into housing and support programs
- Protect existing public assets through policy mechanisms such as conversion and demolition controls.

- Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead)
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term, then ongoing
 - Status: in progress
19. That the City and County advocate for additional funding from senior governments on a 'fair share' basis, particularly with regards to addressing capital short-falls and affordability gaps.
- Advocate through local MP's, MPP's, AMO & OMSSA for additional funding to address local housing needs, especially in the area of low income households and social housing stock repairs
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: ongoing
20. That the City evaluate local opportunities to increase sustained resources that could be made available to address local housing needs.
- Select financial models which offer best-value investment, balancing needs for short term affordability (e.g. rent supplements) and longer term housing supply (e.g. capital funding or incentives). Options to be reviewed include:
 - * Utilizing tax increment financing to support affordable housing development
 - * Allocating proceeds from the sale of surplus City land
 - * Other sources as may be identified
 - Providing greater specificity to Affordable Housing as a preferred public good when density bonusing is considered as part of Section 37 agreements
 - Ensure any larger plans of subdivision and redevelopment at or above 1 hectare include a portion of units considered to be affordable as per the Official Plan guidelines
 - Work with the Provincial Government to ensure a portion of land transfer tax is made available locally, and that said portion be earmarked exclusively to build, acquire and support lower income persons in housing
 - Evaluation of Development Charge relief for affordable housing projects
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead), in collaboration with Finance Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: ongoing

21. That in recognition of Council's decision to invest \$2M per year for 5 years towards the Capital Investment in Affordable Housing Program and the Affordable Housing Land Acquisition and Disposition Fund, the City review and consider extending the investment for the full 10-year duration of the Plan.
 - The initial programs should be reviewed prior to the end of the initial 5-year funding cycle to evaluate their effectiveness and the need to continue funding for the full 10-year period.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
 - Time Frame: 2015
 - Status: ongoing
22. That the City continue partnering with private and non-profit housing providers to enable leveraging of available resources in order to maximize the provision of affordable housing.
 - Actively promote increased development dialogue between non-profit and private sector partners.
 - Use opportunities to broaden awareness through venues such as the Planning Dept. roundtable sessions, Construction Association meetings and KEDCO
 - In housing procurement processes, recognize the potential benefits of joint partnerships within the evaluation process
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department
 - Time Frame: Ongoing
 - Status: ongoing
23. That the City pursue opportunities to utilize inclusionary zoning and density bonusing to achieve negotiated agreements for the provision of affordable housing in new developments.
 - Reinforce affordability target obligations of the OP with the local development industry and implement tracking systems for meeting affordable targets.
 - Based on incentive tools available through OP and zoning, actively seek out affordability commitments through the development approvals process
 - Review opportunities for potential projects during the planning pre-consultation stage
 - Target new development opportunities for inclusionary zoning, especially in greenfield locations when and if the legislation permits.

- Create an implementation guide to height and density bonusing.
 - Identify in the guide the situations in which the provision of affordable housing is a priority.
 - Consider in the guide the target number of affordable units required for the target density bonus. It is recommended that 15% of units be affordable in exchange for a 25% density bonus (or equivalent).
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead) in consultation with Housing Department
 - Time Frame: Ongoing
 - Status: ongoing
24. That the County consider establishing appropriate authorities/incentives in support of affordable housing to help prepare for development opportunities that may arise.
- Explore development fee relief, property tax relief for multi-res and capital facility by-law authorities in concert with local townships as initial measures
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead) in consultation with Finance Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: no action taken
25. That the City expand the current inventory of suitable lands or properties for affordable housing to include opportunities from other public sector agencies, other levels of government (including the County) and privately held lands.
- Augment current City inventory of potential lands with other possible target sites (public private), including donations
 - Ensure full circulation of agency surplus notices within City when received (i.e. federal, provincial, county, school boards, etc.)
 - Establish options for land exchanges as part of acquisition/disposal process or via development approvals processes using capital facilities authorities
 - Adopt a three-pronged approach for acquiring more affordable housing which may include any or all of the following:
 - * Acquisition of existing structures, such as vacant hotels, apartment buildings and houses for sale, empty schools and warehouses, and convert to affordable housing;
 - * New construction; and,

- * Rent supplements.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Real Estate & Construction and Planning Departments
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term
 - Status: in progress
- 26. That the City continue to regularly monitor the condition of the social housing portfolio and actively seek alternate funding to assist with major capital repairs.
 - Maintain up-to-date snapshot of portfolio condition by supporting project Building Condition Assessments (BCA's) and actively gathering data for portfolio planning purposes
 - Using existing asset planning tools and City resources to help guide decisions regarding allocation of repair funding
 - Continue to advocate to MMAH for additional capital repair assistance (e.g. Social Housing Renovation & Retrofit Program)
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Real Estate & Construction Department
 - Time Frame: Ongoing
 - Status: set-up complete, implementation ongoing
- 27. That the City explore opportunities to review services and asset management planning to ensure sharing of resources between the City's two municipal housing providers, and to then expand these resources to other local housing providers.
 - Review opportunities to share services and asset management planning for the two largest housing providers in order to expand access to resources, broaden knowledge and better manage risks
 - Once established, expand access to these technical resources to other housing providers in the community
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Kingston & Frontenac Housing Corporation & Town Homes Kingston
 - Time Frame: Short- to mid-term
 - Status: ongoing

28. That the City research and develop options for the continuation of social housing post End of Operating Agreements to meet its legislated and financial obligations in conjunction with the Step Down Funding planning study.
 - Analyze each Housing Provider to assess current and future financial and capital needs
 - Establish asset management strategies for each Housing Provider
 - Review rent supplement program to identify cost saving measures
 - Should be considered in conjunction with Step Down Funding planning
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: in progress
29. That the City establish a strategic asset management plan using existing tools to help guide decisions regarding asset renewal/ redevelopment in the social housing portfolio.
 - Build on interim work established for short term properties
 - Using the funding step down plan evaluate all properties within the social housing portfolio.
 - Specifically assess options for sustaining each asset and leveraging equity versus current condition, remaining useful life, operational capacity and ability to maintain resident affordability.
 - Establish a strategic asset management plan that sets out long term strategies for leveraging equity and managing portfolio asset renewal/re-development.
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Finance and Real Estate & Construction Departments
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: in progress
30. That the City use Rideau Heights as an initial pilot community for testing asset renewal strategies that can be applied elsewhere.
 - That the City partner with KFHC to undertake a regeneration planning process for the social housing core area and municipally owned lands of the Rideau Heights community including:
 - * The preparation of a land development plan to achieve the goals of community renewal

- * The development of a business plan and phasing strategy to accomplish the eventual regeneration build-out
 - * The planning process should include a full program of consultation with residents and key stakeholders
 - * Identify strategies and lessons learned to support renewal of other social housing sites within the City
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Finance, Real Estate & Construction, and Planning Departments
 - Time Frame: Mid- to long-term
 - Status: in progress
31. That the City and County continue to advocate for additional senior government funding to address the increasing support service needs of residents (Ontario Disability Support Program, Ministry of Community & Social Services, etc.)
- Along with other municipalities, advocate through AMO & OMSSA for additional support service dollars to address growing needs
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: ongoing
32. That the City and County pursue linkages with support service funders and coordinators in the health and community service fields (Local Health Integration Network, Children's Aid Society, etc.) as a means of expanding support service opportunities in the community.
- Building on connections in the supportive housing & homelessness sectors, convene a community roundtable to explore possible housing support opportunities
 - Use the venue as a means of broadening support for the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan and seeking solutions to support issues
 - Establish and sustain a dialogue on partnership opportunities by connecting agencies with HHAC
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department, County of Frontenac
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: ongoing

33. That the City arrange, through existing funds, for housing workers to support persons who are precariously housed in social housing to gain greater housing stability.
- Develop a program to provide supports to persons living in social housing that are precariously housed and/or at risk of homelessness with a focus on achieving long-term housing stability for those households
 - Should be considered as part of support worker job descriptions for implementation of the Homelessness Plan
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: no action taken

Strategic Direction #4: Building Housing Capacity

34. That the City continue the consolidation of the municipal housing function by:
- Supporting the Housing Department as the ‘Centre of Expertise’ for housing and homelessness issues within the City
 - Coordinating housing and homelessness planning for the broader service area in collaboration with the County and community service providers
 - Re-aligning housing staff to accommodate future needs arising from integrated homelessness service planning
 - Housing Department responsibilities expanded to include stronger homelessness role, integrated with housing duties
 - Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial expectations and obligations, especially with regards to Service Manager obligations and the resulting impacts on resources
 - Coordination of housing & homelessness planning in concert with the United Way (HPS), while ensuring collaboration with the County and fully engaging community stakeholders
 - Housing Department to have primary responsibility for 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan implementation
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with County of Frontenac*
 - *Time Frame: Short-term*
 - Status: set-up complete, implementation ongoing

35. That the City in collaboration with the County implement the Service Manager's Communications Plan developed as part of the MHS
- Ensure that all programming and services offered by the Housing Department is consistent with the Communications Plan and is an integral part of that program or service
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with County of Frontenac*
 - *Time Frame: Short-term*
 - *Status: ongoing*
36. That the City in collaboration with the County use community forums and theme-based workshops as vehicles for bringing partners together, expanding knowledge of housing development practices, and sharing community ideas, programs and policy.
- Develop possible themes for events, as necessary that brings partners together
 - Actively seek timely topics, speakers and possible sponsors (e.g. CMHC, Home Builders Assn., KEDCO, United Way of KFL&A, service clubs, etc.)
 - Focus on broader based housing topics that bring various stakeholders together
 - Host some events in the County and use these opportunities to address rural themes.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with County of Frontenac*
 - *Time Frame: Short-term*
 - *Status: ongoing*
37. That the City, in concert with sector organizations where possible, help support community agency renewal through workshops geared to social housing practitioners.
- Collaborate with sector organizations like Ontario Non-Profit Housing Assn., Cooperative Housing Federation, Ontario municipal Social Services Assn., Social Housing Services Corp. and Canada Mortgage & Housing Corp. to determine what workshops or events they will be holding locally
 - Identify potential unmet gaps and seek opportunities to encourage addressing of gaps by sector organizations
 - Where necessary, supplement sector efforts with targeted workshops to help

- build and maintain social housing provider capacity
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
- *Time Frame: Ongoing*
- *Status: ongoing*

Strategic Direction #5: Cultivating Partnerships

38. That the City engage the homelessness service sector as part of the broader housing context
- Collaborating with the Community Advisory Board regarding the funding of homelessness programs and initiatives
 - Collaborating with other agencies for funding allocations aligned with this Plan, such as the United Way.
 - The implementation plan include the inclusion of a community table composed of other funding agencies such as United Way, Community Foundation of Kingston and Area, Government of Canada and other stakeholders in order to maximize collaborative funding to support the implementation plan.
 - Extending partnership information to homelessness agencies, especially those with housing-related activities sponsored by City
 - Supporting the implementation of the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan
 - Engage housing, service and support providers to set out integrated planning directions
 - Establish homelessness contact and resource information for sharing among service agencies
 - Consolidate information and resource material for posting on the City web site (e-centre), promoting this as a central information tool for service providers and housing stakeholders
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: Short-term, then ongoing*
 - *Status: in progress*
39. That the City continue to actively engage the private sector by:
- Expanding on existing private-sector roundtable sessions currently fostered by the Planning Dept.
 - Inviting private sector representatives to the Housing and Homelessness Committee table to share insights

- Hosting topical workshops or forums geared to private sector issues as a means of broadening a shared understanding among community partners
 - Provide for Housing Department representation at private sector roundtable hosted by Planning Dept.
 - Provide for private sector representation on the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee
 - Host occasional events that bring community housing stakeholders together with the private sector
 - Seek topics on broader based housing topics that are of interest to both private sector and community partners
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in consultation with Planning Department
 - Time Frame: Short-term
 - Status: ongoing
40. That the City establish and maintain a housing information e-centre on the City's web-site to provide housing information and establish a virtual contact point for inquiries.
- Develop an on-line resource centre on the City web site that provides one-stop shopping for housing information
 - Build on existing housing services area but broaden housing topics to capture housing and homelessness
 - Ensure ease of navigation
 - Develop and maintain standard plus refreshed content to meet changing user needs
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Communications Department*
 - *Time Frame: Short-term*
 - *Status: in progress*

41. That the City include community-based housing innovation awards as part of the Liveable City Program as a means of acknowledging community partners and raising the profile of affordable housing.

Broaden the Liveable City Program to recognize community-based housing innovations in affordability

- Host occasional recognition events
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Planning Department (lead) in consultation with Housing Department*
- *Time Frame: Short-term*
- *Status: ongoing*

Homelessness Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction #6: Systems Reorientation: Leadership, Integration, & Coordination

42. The Service Manager will take a leadership role in setting targets and standards for service delivery and reporting outcomes.
- Set goals, ensures compliance, and assess results
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department
 - Time Frame: on-going
 - Status:
43. Implement a new funding model with existing funds to reflect the Plan's priorities and implement the Plan's strategies.
- Develop a consistent standard for funding allocation, tie to client needs, and outcomes
 - Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department
 - Time Frame: short term
 - Status:
44. Adopt a housing first approach across the system
- Agencies funded by the City to provide permanent supported housing must adopt practices and philosophies more consistent with a housing first approach
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in consultation with*

CHPI funded Supportive Housing Providers

- *Time Frame: medium term*
 - *Status:*
45. Implement common intake and assessment protocols and practices.
- Adopt an intake/assessment tool and protocols that work best within the Kingston homeless service delivery system.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in consultation with CHPI funded Supportive Housing Providers and other interested agencies*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
46. Adopt a common Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Identify which HMIS meets the needs of Kingston and Frontenac.
 - Purchase the system, install it, and provide initial and ongoing training for staff using the system.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in consultation with CHPI funded Supportive Housing Providers and other interested parties*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
47. Implement a new professional development agenda to support implementation of the plan while building on existing competencies.
- Mandate that all homeless service delivery workers engage in training seminars to ensure that there is a common understanding of each aspect of the Plan.
 - The City ensure that housing supports workers are in place, trained and functioning before funding for the basic support needs are phased out.
 - *Responsibility: City Of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
48. Monitor the on-going alignment of the homeless strategies with the housing strategies.
- Update the Municipal Housing Strategy and ensure that its strategies also work towards the goal of ending homelessness; the Municipal Housing Strategy and this Plan will be companion documents.

- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: on-going*
 - *Status:*
49. Continue to foster and support networking among homeless service providers and other interested parties, such as health, mental health, addictions, legal, corrections police and so forth
- Use these “networking opportunities ” to improve communication and reduce inconsistencies across services, and find opportunities for further integration through collaboration and coordination
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in cooperation with Service Providers*
 - *Time Frame: short-term*
 - *Status:*

Strategic Direction #7: Strengthening Homelessness Prevention and Diversion

50. Place a strong emphasis on diversion from emergency shelter resources.
- Assist households in accessing and maximizing the use of natural support systems and networks prior to entering the homeless delivery system
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in cooperation with emergency shelters*
 - *Time Frame: short-term*
 - *Status:*
51. Develop and adopt a tool to identify which individuals and families are eligible for targeted homelessness assistance.
- Through coordinated access, ensure that all intake points use the same assessment tool to determine when diversion or prevention *may* be appropriate.
 - Target homelessness prevention programs specifically at those households who most closely resemble the existing chronically homeless individuals and families.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in collaboration with homeless provider system*
 - *Time Frame: Short-term*
 - *Status:*

52. Develop a discharge protocol for the region so no-one is discharged from an institution, such as hospital or correctional facilities into the streets.
- Create a plan, policies, and protocols governing the process of an individual's discharge, release, or graduation from federal or provincial prisons, police detention, psychiatric facilities, hospitalization, or the child welfare system.
 - Engage hospitals, mental health facilities, addictions treatment programs, correctional services, Kingston Police Force, Children's Aid Society, John Howard Society, Elizabeth Fry Society, interim housing providers, permanent social housing providers, supportive housing providers, landlords, and emergency shelters to participate in its creation, development, and implementation.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston in collaboration with hospitals, correctional facilities, and children's aid societies*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
53. Increase access to and awareness of services available to individuals and households at risk of homelessness.
- This will help prevent homelessness in a few cases where households simply do not know what services are available to them.
 - Assist households in accessing a range of effective prevention activities which may include, but is not limited to, brief intervention and counselling, assistance with utility and rent arrears, assistance with obtaining income supports, landlord tenant mediation and legal advocacy.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston with homeless service providers*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*

Strategic Direction #8: Redefining The Role of Emergency Shelters

54. Reframe emergency shelters as "Housing Assistance and Emergency Shelter Services" that are one of the entry points into the housing system
- Shelters will be accessible service points, open 24/7, with services available on site or through direct referral that will end a person's homelessness, including access to housing help resources and specialists. Not every shelter requires its own housing help resources, but the shelter system as a whole must be served by specialists with the sole function of helping people to ac-

cess and sustain permanent housing.

- Develop municipal directives and standards outlining the new role of shelters.
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
- *Time Frame: short-term*
- *Status:*

55. Establish housing worker functions within shelters.

- Enhance the capacity and responsibility of shelters to offer assistance to clients in accessing and maintaining housing through direct staffing or dedicated staff from another organization in the service system as housing specialists for the shelter.
- Integrate a coordinated access and common assessment functions into shelters to triage client housing support needs.
- Structure the staffing of housing workers serving shelter residents as follows:
 - * 20% of staff to provide general housing help to individuals or families newly in shelter (less than 14 days) including access and support in locating vacant units;
 - * 40% of staff to provide Rapid Re-Housing support to those individuals and families with a moderate acuity level. Assistance will be provided in locating units and in providing case management supports for 3-6 months for each household selected for Rapid Re-Housing. Fidelity to proven Rapid Re-Housing practices will be a requirement.
 - * 40% of staff to provide Housing First Intensive Case Management supports to individuals and families with high acuity levels. Assistance will be provided in locating units and in providing intensive case management for at least 12 months for each household selected for Housing First. Fidelity to proven Housing First practices will be a requirement.
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in collaboration with homeless provider system*
- *Time Frame: short term*
- *Status:*

56. Right-size the shelter system.

- Within the next two years, evaluate the need for shelter beds based on the PIT Homeless Count, HMIS data, and the impact of new housing services and training, and adjust the system-wide number of shelter beds to achieve efficiencies. Considerations in the evaluation shall include:
 - * The number of unsheltered homeless individuals—people sleeping outdoors, staying in overnight restaurants or coffee shops, sleeping in cars, squatting, sleeping in other buildings not designed or fit for human habitation—that would access shelters if space were available;
 - * The reduction in moderate and high acuity individuals and families staying in shelter rather than being supported in housing;
 - * The reduction in recidivism (reduced returns to homelessness) through housing and supports; and,
 - * The reduction in consumption of shelter resources by a small cohort of shelter stayers (the top 20% of shelter users currently consume 66% of bed nights).
- Focus on closing entire facilities after the evaluation rather than across the board retractions to ensure viability of operations. This focus also encourages economies of scale and mergers within the shelter system.
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in collaboration with homeless provider system*
- *Time Frame: short-term*
- *Status:*

57. As appropriate, introduce specialization within Kingston's shelter system.

- Explore opportunities for quiet beds that can be designated for shelter users who are physically ill, agitated, or are behaviourally disruptive to others, and other specialized options within existing shelters.
- Explore opportunities for the accommodation within the shelter system of persons discharged from hospital who are chronically or acutely ill. Explore partnering and funding opportunities to ensure that the necessary medical, nursing, and paraprofessional staff are in place.
- The City continue to provide funding for day services for families with children who are staying in shelters.
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in collaboration with homeless provider system and health systems*

- *Time Frame: short term*
- *Status:*

Strategic Direction #9: Increasing Housing Options for Those with Highest Needs

58. Work towards the rental housing targets in Recommendations 12 and 13.
- Increasing the number of private market rental units available will serve in the longer term to stabilize rental prices and increase the vacancy rate.
 - *Responsibility: Housing Department City of Kingston*
 - *Time Frame: medium term*
 - *Status:*
59. Prioritize access to available housing for those with the deepest and most chronic needs first.
- Those who have been homeless the longest, and those with the highest acuity, are served most effectively by ensuring that they obtain access to housing as quickly as possible. Victims of domestic violence will continue to have special priority in meeting housing needs.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in collaboration with housing providers*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
60. Remove the homeless priority policy from the social housing waitlist.
- Currently, 1 in 10 available social housing units is allocated to homeless persons. However, this can result in wait times of years. Other methods will be used to encourage quick housing solutions.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
61. Create more permanent supportive housing (PSH) units to house those with complex, co-occurring issues
- Re-profile some existing shelter beds into PSH units as opportunities arise.
 - Investigate alternative and cost-effective options, such as purchasing existing buildings.
 - In the implementation stage transitional housing be maintained until it can be shown that there is no longer a need.

- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - Time Frame: medium term
 - Status:
62. Develop and maintain an inventory of scattered-site rental units that can be used for Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing clients.
- This inventory should include a range of unit types and locations, from both public and private housing providers.
 - Fund a dedicated function of “Housing Liaison” or “Landlord Locator” to find and secure appropriate scattered site rental units.
 - Encourage collaboration between landlords, housing workers and tenants to improve housing tenure
 - Create a forum to discuss common approaches, identify support and training needs, and problem solve to decrease evictions
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*

Strategic Direction #10: Improving Housing Stability for the Most in Need

63. Reallocate resources towards providing support to clients after being housed.
- Prioritize resources for those with the highest needs first.
 - In addition to the shelter-specific housing workers outlined in 3.2, ensure that there is (1) FTE Housing First Intensive Case Manager (ICM) for every 20 homeless people encountered outdoors during the PIT Count that have been homeless for greater than one year
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: Short term*
 - *Status:*

64. Expand the municipality's existing Ontario Works Pay Direct Policy to allow for amounts to exceed the monthly shelter allowance.
- Remove the stipulation that places a limit on the amount that can be paid to landlords as rent.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing and Community and Family Services Departments*
 - Time Frame: Short term
 - Status:
65. Implement a Housing First program.
- Allocate staff and resources, including training, for a Housing First program.
 - Establish Housing First program expectations through updated policies and procedures.
 - Ensure that contracts with Housing First program providers are aligned to specific measurable targets that:
 - * Have a maximum 1:20 staff/client caseload at any one point in time.
 - * Maintain housing stability target of 80% or more of the clients being supported.
 - The City ensure that the implementation plan for a housing first approach include a documented transition plan from the current system, including emergency shelters, to the future system, which minimizes disruption to clients, service providers, and the community. The transition plan shall include risk mitigation in the event that adequate housing is not available.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: Short term*
 - *Status:*
66. Implement a Rapid Re-Housing program.
- Allocate staff and resources including training to a Rapid Re-Housing program.
 - Establish Rapid Re-Housing program expectations through policies and procedures.
 - Ensure contracts with Rapid Re-Housing program providers are aligned with specific measurable targets that:
 - Have a maximum 1:30 staff/client caseload at any one point in time.
 - Maintain housing stability target of 85% or more of the clients being sup-

ported.

- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
- *Time Frame: Short term*
- *Status:*

Strategic Direction #11: Developing a Rural Homelessness Strategy

67. Expand housing options for low-income and homeless individuals in rural areas.

- Promote secondary suites within existing structures without compromising safety or the character of the older buildings.
- Consider rent supplements as a vehicle for promoting housing access in rural areas rather than extensive new construction.
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department and County of Frontenac*
- *Time Frame: Short term*
- *Status:*

68. Improve access to services in rural areas.

- Promote on-line resources that can be accessed to assist with housing security.
- Increase outreach programs to better connect at risk households with available services.
- Investigate options to address the transportation issue in rural areas
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department and County of Frontenac*
- *Time Frame: medium term*
- *Status:*

69. Enhance targeted prevention in rural areas.

- Increase awareness of resources within and across the broader region.
- Assess needs of presenting households and exercise diversion as much as possible to connect people with natural supports first, rather than system supports.
- *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department, County of Frontenac and rural homeless service provider system*

- *Time Frame: medium term*
 - *Status:*
70. Promote local leadership in ending homelessness.
- Identify a “glue person” to improve local service delivery.
 - Identify a “champion” to raise public awareness of rural homelessness.
 - *Responsibility: County of Frontenac homeless service provider network*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*

Strategic Direction #12: Measuring Outcomes & Report Successes of the Strategy to End Chronic Homelessness

71. Conduct a Point-In-Time (PIT) Homeless Count every 2 years using a valid, reliable, and consistent methodology.
- Conduct the first PIT count in fall 2013 and use the results as a baseline from which to identify needs and set goals.
 - Use the second PIT count in fall 2015 to evaluate the impact of new programs, measure success against goals, and revisit targets.
 - In the Report on the results of the 2013 PIT Homeless count, describe the methodologies and limitations of the current PIT count, who is being counted and outline the statistical validity of the current approach. Consider ways to improve the research methodology so that the statistical validity of future counts will be enhanced.
 - *Lead Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department in cooperation with homeless service providers and County of Frontenac*
 - *Time-Frame- short term*
 - *Status:*
72. Publish HMIS reports of aggregate data and circulate to service providers quarterly.
- By providing up-to-date sector-wide data, individual service providers can react and respond to changing needs and evaluate the effectiveness of programs.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department with assistance from Information Services*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*

73. Publish an annual report card for public consumption.
- Provide information as part of housing and homelessness report card to report key indicators and identify trends.
 - Increase transparency and public awareness about services and service performance related to homelessness.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing department in collaboration with Corporate Communication*
 - *Time Frame: short term*
 - *Status:*
74. Track performance of funded agencies compared to performance targets on a quarterly basis.
- Take remedial action for under-performance.
 - Provide transparent, public praise for those organizations meeting or exceeding expectations.
 - Service Manager to conduct an annual, system-wide evaluation.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: medium term*
 - *Status:*
75. The City monitors the effectiveness of its prioritization strategy for Rapid Re-housing and Housing First which targets persons most in need.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the service prioritization tool and process in identifying the most acute who are directed to housing first programs.
 - Evaluate the delivery and outcomes of Diversion and Prevention Services for persons identified as less acute.
 - Evaluate the delivery and outcomes of Program Support Funding in preventing homelessness.
 - *Responsibility: City of Kingston Housing Department*
 - *Time Frame: medium term*
 - *Status:*

Appendices

Appendix A: Provincial Requirements

Appendix B: Costs of Homelessness

Appendix C: Selecting and Implementing an Assessment and Acuity Tool

Appendix D: Professional Development Agenda

Appendix E: Original MHS Recommendations

Appendix F: Additional Resources

Appendix A: Provincial Requirements

This Plan meets all requirements set out by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as identified in the Housing Services Act, 2011, as demonstrated in the introduction of this document. The following appendix outlines these requirements, for information purposes only.

The Housing Services Act, 2011, requires that:

SECTION 6. Housing and homelessness plans

- (1) Each service manager shall have a plan to address housing and homelessness. 2011, c. 6, Sched. 1, s. 6 (1).
- (2) The plan must include,
 - (a) an assessment of current and future housing needs within the service manager's service area;
 - (b) objectives and targets relating to housing needs;
 - (c) a description of the measures proposed to meet the objectives and targets;
 - (d) a description of how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets will be measured; and
 - (e) such other matters as may be prescribed. 2011, c. 6, Sched. 1, s. 6 (2).
- (3) The plan must,
 - (a) address the matters of provincial interest under section 4, including each aspect described in a clause of subsection 4 (1); and
 - (b) be consistent with the policy statements issued under section 5. 2011, c. 6, Sched. 1, s. 6 (3).

Section 6. (1) (3) (a) refers to matters of provincial interest under section 4:

SECTION 4. Provincial interest

- (1) For the purposes of sections 5 and 6, it is a matter of provincial interest that there be a system of housing and homelessness services that,
 - (a) is focused on achieving positive outcomes for individuals and families;
 - (b) addresses the housing needs of individuals and families in order to help address other challenges they face;
 - (c) has a role for non-profit corporations and non-profit housing co-operatives;
 - (d) has a role for the private market in meeting housing needs;
 - (e) provides for partnerships among governments and others in the community;
 - (f) treats individuals and families with respect and dignity;
 - (g) is co-ordinated with other community services;

- (h) is relevant to local circumstances;
- (i) allows for a range of housing options to meet a broad range of needs;
- (j) ensures appropriate accountability for public funding;
- (k) supports economic prosperity; and
- (l) is delivered in a manner that promotes environmental sustainability and energy conservation. 2011, c. 6, Sched. 1, s. 4 (1).

Section 6. (1) (3) (b) refers to policy statements under section 5:

SECTION 5. Policy statements to guide plans

- (1) For the purpose of guiding service managers in the preparation of their housing and homelessness plans, the Minister may, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, issue policy statements on matters relating to housing or homelessness that are of provincial interest under section 4. 2011, c. 6, Sched. 1, s. 5 (1).

Section 5. (1) references a policy statement. The *Ontario Housing Policy Statement* states:

1.2 Policy Direction

Service Managers will ensure that local housing and homelessness plans:

- (a) Demonstrate a system of coordinated housing and homelessness services to assist families and individuals to move toward a level of self-sufficiency;
- (b) Include services, supported by housing and homelessness research and forecasts, that are designed to improve outcomes for individuals and families;
- (c) are coordinated and integrated with all municipalities in the service area;
- (d) contain strategies to increase awareness of, and improve access to, affordable and safe housing that is linked to supports, homelessness prevention and social programs and services;
- (e) contain strategies to identify and reduce gaps in programs, services and supports and focus on achieving positive outcomes for individuals and families;
- (f) contain local housing policies and short and long-term housing targets;
- (g) provide for public consultation, progress measurement, and reporting.

2.2 Policy Direction

Service Managers will ensure that housing and homelessness plans:

- (a) provide measures to prevent homelessness by supporting people to stay in their homes including eviction prevention measures and the provision of supports appropriate to clients' needs;
- (b) are based on a Housing First philosophy and developed in consultation with a broad range of local stakeholders including those who have experienced homelessness;
- (c) support innovative strategies to address homelessness;
- (d) include the provision of supports prior to and after obtaining housing to facilitate transitioning people from the street and shelters to safe, adequate and stable housing.

3.2 Policy Direction

Service Managers will ensure that their housing and homelessness plans:

- (a) reflect the active engagement of non-profit housing corporations and non-profit housing co-operatives in current and future needs planning;
- (b) include strategies to support non-profit housing corporations and non-profit housing co-operatives in the delivery of affordable housing;
- (c) include strategies to support ongoing access to affordable housing by preserving existing social housing capacity.

4.2 Policy Direction

Service Manager housing and homelessness plans will set out a strategy to generate municipal support for an active and vital private ownership and rental market, including second units and garden suites, as a necessary part of the housing continuum including affordable home ownership, where appropriate.

5.2 Policy Direction

Service Manager housing and homelessness plans will demonstrate how progress will be made in moving toward integrated human services planning and delivery.

6.2 Policy Direction

- (a) Accessibility.** Service Manager housing and homelessness plans will contain an assessment of needs that identifies and sets local requirements for accessible housing and homelessness services for people with disabilities, including those who have mental health needs or illness and/or substance use issues.
- (b) Special Priority Policy.** Service Manager housing and homelessness plans will include a strategy setting out how the housing needs for victims of domestic violence will be addressed and managed at the local level, in coordination with other community-based services and supports.
- (c) Aboriginal Peoples Living Off-Reserve.** Service Manager housing and homelessness plans will identify and consider the housing needs of Aboriginal Peoples living off-reserve.
- (d) Community Needs.** Service Manager housing and homelessness plans reflect the evolving demographics of their community and address the needs of specific local groups. Local groups might include: seniors, youth, women, immigrants, persons released from custody or under community supervision, Crown Wards, and Franco-Ontarians.

7.2 Policy Direction

Service Manager housing and homelessness plans will demonstrate a commitment to improve the energy efficiency of existing and future publicly funded housing stock. This includes support for energy conservation and energy efficiency through operating programs, tenant engagement, housing located near transportation choices, and innovative investment decisions such as the installation of renewable energy and low carbon technologies.

Appendix B: Costs of Homelessness

The following chart describes the average annual costs per homeless person broken down by services used. A similar study in Philadelphia divided the homeless population by level of service usage into five groups, ranging from the top 20% (First Quintile), who were found to account for over 60% of the costs associated with homelessness, to the bottom 20% (Fifth Quintile), who while comprising the same number of individuals experiencing homelessness, accounted for less than 2% of all service use.¹⁰¹

This useful approach demonstrates clearly how the majority of costs associated with homelessness are borne by a small group – those who are chronically homeless. However, large-scale studies show that only about 15.8% of the homeless population is chronically homeless, so the costs of chronic homelessness may be even higher than the costs of the First Quintile on the table below.¹⁰²

This chart was derived using a similar approach, using values obtained from a number of Canadian sources.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Poulin, S., Maguire, M., Metraux, S., & Culhane, D. (2010). Service use and costs for persons experiencing chronic homelessness in Philadelphia: a population-based study. *Psychiatric Services*, 61(11).

¹⁰² Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2012) The 2012 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness: Volume 1 of the 2012 Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

¹⁰³ Data obtained from: City of Kingston; Frontenac Paramedic Services; Kingston General Hospital; Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012) At Home/Chez Soi Interim Report; Ku, B. S., Scott, K. C., Kertesz, S. G., & Pitts, S. R. (2010) Factors Associated with Use of Urban Emergency Departments by the U.S. Homeless Population. *Public Health Reports*, 125(3); Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2008) Report on the Cost of Homelessness in Calgary.

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Table 16: Costs of Homelessness by Quintile of Homeless Population

Service Unit	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	Overall Average
Days in shelter (\$51.65)	82.20 days \$4,245.57	25.98 days \$1,341.85	11.21 days \$578.99	4.45 days \$229.84	1.21 days \$62.50	24.96 days \$1,289.16
Street outreach (\$20.00)	7.59 uses \$151.74	5.96 uses \$119.11	4.60 uses \$92.01	3.72 uses \$74.31	2.55 uses \$51.00	4.88 uses \$97.63
Case management claims (\$24.00)	19.48 claims \$467.63	3.97 claims \$95.29	0.42 claims \$9.97	0.08 claims \$1.91	0.00 claims \$0.00	4.79 uses \$114.87
Land Ambulance (\$387.00)	3.11 rides \$1,201.78	1.09 rides \$423.10	0.58 rides \$223.37	0.31 rides \$119.40	0.09 rides \$35.66	1.04 rides \$400.66
Emergency Room Visit(\$360.30)	8.70 visits \$3,134.05	3.06 visits \$1,103.37	1.62 visits \$582.51	0.86 visits \$311.37	0.26 visits \$92.99	2.90 visits \$1,044.86
Hospitalization (\$1054.88)	7.80 days \$8,226.71	2.75 days \$2,896.28	1.45 days \$1,529.05	0.77 days \$817.32	0.23 days \$244.10	2.60 days \$2,742.69
Detox (\$256.93)	6.60 days \$1,695.43	2.32 days \$596.89	1.23 days \$315.12	0.66 days \$168.44	0.20 days \$50.31	2.20 days \$565.24
Psychiatric crisis re- sponse (\$475.00)	4.73 uses \$2,248.92	1.79 uses \$851.08	0.71 uses \$338.03	0.31 uses \$146.92	0.11 uses \$52.19	1.53 uses \$727.11
Psychiatric inpatient days in general hospital (\$693.25)	18.09 days \$12,542.10	3.83 days \$2,654.79	0.80 days \$551.69	0.25 days \$173.80	0.05 days \$31.89	4.60 days \$3,188.94
Psychiatric inpatient days in psychiatric hos- pital(\$795.96)	21.63 days \$17,217.90	4.58 days \$3,644.52	0.95 days \$757.36	0.30 days \$238.59	0.06 days \$43.78	5.50 days \$4,377.80
Mental health outpatient consults(\$91.84)	11.37 uses \$1,044.61	1.24 uses \$114.26	0.32 uses \$29.13	0.06 uses \$5.73	0.01 uses \$1.31	2.60 uses \$238.79
Addictions treatment inpatient days (\$71.67)	26.40 days \$1,891.83	9.29 days \$666.03	4.91 days \$351.62	2.62 days \$187.95	0.78 days \$56.13	8.80 days \$630.71

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Service Unit	1st Quintile	2nd Quintile	3rd Quintile	4th Quintile	5th Quintile	Overall Average
Addictions treatment outpatient visits(\$60.00)	18.03 visits \$1,081.99	6.12 visits \$367.36	3.14 visits \$188.33	1.37 visits \$82.05	0.13 visits \$7.64	5.76 visits \$345.33
Community policing arrests (\$84.00)	15.11 arrests \$1,269.33	5.33 arrests \$447.55	2.81 arrests \$236.28	1.50 arrests \$126.30	0.00 arrests \$0.00	5.05 arrests \$423.82
Police detention (\$261.39)	3.77 days \$984.20	1.26 days \$328.64	0.37 days \$97.61	0.10 days \$25.45	0.01 days \$2.59	1.10 days \$287.52
Provincial or federal prison (\$108.72)	43.79 days \$4,761.14	15.42 days \$1,676.20	8.14 days \$884.93	4.35 days \$473.02	1.30 days \$141.27	14.60 days \$1,587.31
Total annual costs per person	\$62,164.92	\$17,326.34	\$6,766.00	\$3,182.39	\$873.36	\$18,062.46
Total Annual Cost, Low Estimate (300)	\$3,729,895.00	\$1,039,580.21	\$405,960.05	\$190,943.12	\$52,401.63	\$5,418,780.02
Total Annual Cost, Medium Estimate (653)	\$8,118,738.13	\$2,262,819.59	\$883,639.71	\$415,619.53	\$114,060.88	\$11,794,877.84
Total Annual Cost, High Estimate (1000)	\$12,432,983.35	\$3,465,267.37	\$1,353,200.17	\$636,477.07	\$174,672.10	\$18,062,600.06

Appendix C: Selecting and Implementing an Assessment and Acuity Tool

The Plan calls for the implementation of a tool that can be used to assess the needs of people seeking service, determine acuity, and inform service delivery. The right acuity tool will also assist Kingston in measuring how people's lives change as a direct result of the intervention overtime. This type of outcome data is not available in the community at present.

As outlined in the Plan, there are three evidence-informed and valid tools that can be chosen from:

- Vulnerability Index
- Vulnerability Assessment Tool
- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT)

In 2013, a new tool was released that combined aspects of the Vulnerability Index with the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool to form the VI-SPDAT, which is an effective prescreening tool which provides an indication of the type of assessment to be conducted. This new tool demonstrates growing acceptance of the SPDAT tool across North America.

In the first quarter of year one, Kingston should have selected which of the three tools it wishes to see implemented across all service providers. The second and third quarters of year one will present the opportunity for all service providers to be effectively trained on how to use the tools in assessment and case management supports.

By year two, the assessment and acuity tool should be implemented throughout the community. Service contracts should reflect that the use of the tool is part of contract compliance.

There are three assessment and acuity tools that are recommended for use to determine service prioritization. The three tools are:

1. Vulnerability Index
2. Vulnerability Assessment Tool
3. Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT)

Vulnerability Index

From Vulnerability Index: Prioritizing the Street Homeless Population by Mortality Risk. Available online at: <http://www.jedc.org/forms/Vulnerability%20Index.pdf>

The Vulnerability Index is a tool for identifying and prioritizing the street homeless population for housing according to the fragility of their health. It is a practical application of research into the causes of death of homeless individuals living on the street conducted by Boston's Healthcare for the Homeless organization, led by Dr. Jim O'Connell. The Boston research identified the specific health conditions that cause homeless individuals to be most at risk for dying on the street. For individuals who have been homeless for at least six months, one or more of the following markers place them at heightened risk of mortality:

- more than three hospitalizations or emergency room visits in a year
- more than three emergency room visits in the previous three months
- aged 60 or older
- cirrhosis of the liver
- end-stage renal disease
- history of frostbite, immersion foot, or hypothermia
- HIV+/AIDS
- tri-morbidity: co-occurring psychiatric, substance abuse, and chronic medical condition

The Vulnerability Index is administered in the form of a survey, which captures a homeless individual's health and social status. It identifies the most vulnerable through a ranking system, which takes into account risk factors and the duration of homelessness. This ranking allows those with the most severe health risks to be identified and prioritized for housing and other support.

Vulnerability Assessment Tool

From Vulnerability Assessment Tool for determining eligibility and allocating services and housing for homeless adults. Available online at: <http://www.desc.org/vulnerability.html>

The DESC Vulnerability Assessment Tool provides a structured way of measuring a homeless person's vulnerability to continued instability. By rating a person's level of functioning or severity of condition across 10 domains, a comprehensive assessment of vulnerability can be reached and then compared with vulnerability assessments of other homeless people. The assessment process entails a structured interview followed by completion of the rating scales.

The tool is designed for use by service workers accustomed to interacting directly with homeless people, and training is required to ensure reliable application of the tool.

At the heart of the DESC Vulnerability Assessment tool are the ten separate domains that interviewers use to measure client vulnerability. The domains are as follows:

4. Survival Skills
5. Basic Needs
6. Indicated Mortality Risks
7. Medical Risks
8. Organization/Orientation
9. Mental Health
10. Substance Use
11. Communication
12. Social Behaviours
13. Homelessness

Each domain represents an area that assesses a homeless person's limitations in meeting his or her own needs. Over the years, DESC determined that the above domains are key to understanding a homeless person's risk for victimization or death on the street. The numerical score that is applied to each domain provides a way to rank a homeless person's vulnerability when compared to other clients who have been interviewed and assessed. Once a community of homeless adults have been assessed, those with the highest scores are considered to be at highest risk and can be prioritized for services.

Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT)

From SPDAT, available online at <http://www.orgcode.com/spdat/>

The Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) is changing the intake and service delivery landscape. SPDAT was launched in 2011 and is now in use in more than 50 communities across North America — SPDAT is a best practices requirement in several of those communities.

The SPDAT uses 15 dimensions to determine an acuity score that will help inform professional Housing First or Rapid Re- Housing practitioners about the following:

- people who will benefit most from Housing First
- people who will benefit most from Rapid Re-Housing
- people who are most likely to end their own homelessness with little to no intervention on your part
- which areas of the person's life that can be the initial focus of attention in the case management relationship to improve housing stability
- how individuals and families are changing over time as a result of the case management process

The 15 dimensions are:

1. Self Care and Daily Living Skills
2. Social Relationships and Networks
3. Meaningful Daily Activity
4. Personal Administration and Money Management
5. Managing Tenancy
6. Physical Health and Wellness
7. Mental Health and Wellness
8. Medication
9. Interaction with Emergency Services
10. Involvement in High Risk and/or Exploitive Situations
11. Substance Use
12. Abuse and/or Trauma
13. Risk of Personal Harm/ Harm to Others
14. Legal
15. History of Homelessness and Housing

The SPDAT can be easily integrated with existing HMIS systems and, in many communities, it has been used to supplement or replace various self-sufficiency matrices.

Devoid of gimmicks and poorly informed assumptions, the SPDAT is based upon evidence and has undergone rigorous testing in communities throughout North America.

The SPDAT has been reviewed by experts in health, mental health, addictions, housing and homelessness and has proven to be effective for a range of populations from an age, gender and cultural perspectives. Now, in Version 3, the SPDAT continues to positively impact the lives of thousands of homeless individuals and families. An added benefit is that frontline workers have reported improvement in their job performance through the use of the SPDAT.

The SPDAT is logical, succinct and quick to administer with your clients. Organizationally, SPDAT is easy to implement. By the way, the SPDAT is free. The only cost to your organization is the required one or two-day training program to ensure that frontline staff, team leaders, supervisors and other important community stakeholders know how to effectively use this remarkable tool.

Appendix D: Professional Development Agenda

Service providers cannot just be asked to deliver services differently than how they have done so historically. They must be fully trained to achieve the outputs and outcomes envisioned in the Plan. A professional development agenda must be invested in to increase the likelihood of goals being achieved, especially as it relates to the effective provision of Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing services that have true fidelity to proven practice.¹⁰⁴

The professional development requirements outlined below are in addition to what may be considered standard training and staff requirements to work in the sector (e.g., boundaries, first aid, universal precautions, practicing self-care, mental health first aid, relevant legislation, etc.).

There are two methods through which a professional development agenda may be pursued. In the first method, the Service Manager is responsible for implementation of the professional development agenda. This could be implemented (at least in part) through the Homeless Service Providers Networking Group. The second method would allow each individual agency to be responsible for the training of its employees; however, this method is much more difficult to ensure that training is consistently of high quality across all service providers. The first method is recommended.

A professional development agenda must be implemented as quickly as possible with the understanding that such an undertaking requires time and resources. The proposed funding allocation for future years assumes that the majority of professional development will occur in year one.

Those involved in Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing should have the following training components delivered to them within the first month of employment:

- Core concepts and service orientation of Housing First
- Core concepts and service orientation of Rapid Re-housing
- Objective based client interactions
- Using acuity to leverage case management opportunities in goal setting
- Documentation, case notes, file organization, and case structure

¹⁰⁴ Independent of the Plan, some organizations such as Elizabeth Fry Society, Home Base Housing and Frontenac Community Mental Health and Addictions Services all began to invest and participate in related professional development activities in 2013.

Annually, throughout the entire service delivery system, staff in all programs should have access to training in:

- Motivational Interviewing in homeless and housing service delivery settings
- Excellence in housing-based case management
- Using assertive engagement to promote housing access and stability
- Brokering and advocacy
- Crisis planning
- Risk assessment and risk management
- Working safely alone
- Exit planning
- Promoting recovery
- Stages of change
- Acuity and assessment
- Promoting greater independence through the five components of housing stability

Following one year of service delivery with an effort to build increased specialization and performance excellence, consideration should be given to training qualified case management staff in the following areas of expertise:

- Integrated Dual Disorders Treatment
- Illness Management Recovery
- Implementation of Treatment Protocols
- Supported Employment
- Discharge Planning
- Leveraging assets of Peers
- Working effectively with those that hoard, collect and/or treasure hunt

Appendix E: Original MHS Recommendations

This appendix includes the original recommendations from the Municipal Housing Strategy of which this Plan is based. The appendix provides an overview of the actions taken to date for each of the recommendations. This section is included for reference purposes only; the most up-to-date recommendations are in this document, beginning on page 119.

Strategic Direction #1: Managing the Housing Agenda

1. That the City and County establish the Municipal Housing Strategy (MHS) as the primary strategic plan to help guide and align local housing efforts.	
Implementation	Adoption of the MHS by each respective Council will establish a clear strategic housing framework
Responsibility	City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
Time Frame	Short term (1 st year)
Resources	Staff report

Actions Taken:

- The MHS was adopted by Kingston City Council in September 2011.
- County Council have accepted MHS and are actively implementing the recommendations that are specific to the County
- The Municipal Housing Strategy will act as a guide to create a 10-year housing plan, as per provincial legislation.
- The MHS and its associated policies are now referenced in all relevant department reports and are used as a guide by Housing Department in formulating new program policies

Status: Complete

2. That the City and County use the Municipal Housing Strategy (MHS) as an alignment tool across areas of municipal responsibility.	
Implementation	Having adopted the MHS as a strategic document, City/County senior staff should use it to guide implementation via related municipal work plans.
Responsibility	Senior staff at City of Kingston and County of Frontenac
Time Frame	Short term set-up (1 st year), then ongoing
Resources	Staff time

Actions Taken:

- The MHS has focused the departmental activity and work plans of the City and County since its adoption. It is used as a reference for new program policy development in the Housing Department of the City but also in associated departments such as Planning and Community and Family Services.
- The MHS will continue to guide the creation of an extended 10-year housing plan.

Status: Set-up: complete, Implementation: ongoing

3. That the Housing Department of the City take lead responsibility for advancing the MHS in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, including the County.	
Implementation	Housing Department to set-up and chair interdepartmental committee that oversees implementation of MHS, as required. Planning, Building, Finance and Community & Family Services staff and County as core participants, other staff as required
Responsibility	City of Kingston – Housing Department (lead)
Time Frame	Short term set-up (1 st year), then ongoing oversight
Resources	Staff time

Actions Taken:

- An interdepartmental committee has been created to review and implement secondary suites policies and regulations led by the Housing Department.
- The City Housing Department has consulted with the County of Frontenac regarding the plan to build new affordable housing units for seniors within the County.
- The City Housing Department has consulted with community partners, service providers and members of the general public in the City and the County regarding the creation of the 10-year homelessness plan.
- The City Housing Department has led staff from various City departments to review and develop an Affordable Housing Locational Analysis, which has been endorsed by City Council.

Status: Set-up: complete, Implementation: ongoing

4. That the City recognize and support the Affordable Housing Committee as a primary vehicle for engaging stakeholders and providing advice on matters related to housing by:
- Renaming the Committee to the ‘Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee’
 - Focusing Committee activity on housing issues, policies and program.
 - Ensuring broad and balanced representation on the Committee from private, public and municipal interests

Implementation	<p>Revise terms of reference to change name, broaden mandate to include homelessness and expand membership</p> <p>Ensure focus is centered on providing advice for housing and homeless issues</p> <p>Revise current membership to also include representatives from the local Homebuilders Assn., City Planning Dept., Community Leadership Team (per United Way), homeless service providers and service recipients</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston – Housing Department (lead), other departments as required
Time Frame	Short term set-up (1 st year), then on-going
Resources	Staff time for technical support to committee.

Actions Taken:

- The Committee was renamed the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee
- The mandate/terms of reference of the Committee is to:
- Provide advice to Council on housing, publicly assisted affordable housing and homelessness policies;
- Provide advice regarding the implementation of the Municipal Housing Strategy, Homelessness Plan and other municipal housing strategies, policies and directives;
- Provide information and input on housing matters as related to poverty reduction through the appointment of one member of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee to the Poverty Reduction Group, for a term of two years and two members of Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee to the Poverty Reduction Housing Sub Working Group for a term of two years.

- Maintain close linkages with other City Committees and working groups to ensure co-ordination of housing, affordable housing and homelessness initiatives.
- Provide housing and homelessness advice.
- Provide advice on overall financial investment tools for housing and homelessness but not on individual funding allocation.
- The terms of reference have ensured the focus of the Committee remains on advice and policy setting
- A broad and balanced representation on the HHA Committee has been established through the committee by-law that requires membership composition of:
 - 2 members of Kingston City Council,
 - 1 representative from the County of Frontenac,
 - 1 representative from the Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO),
 - 1 representative from Kingston Home Builders Association (KHBA),
 - 1 representative from the Kingston Not for Profit Housing Association,
 - 1 representative from homelessness service providers (involved with Community Advisory Board on Homelessness),
 - 1 representative from the Community Leadership Committee (as established by United Way KFLA,
 - 1 tenant of social/affordable housing services, and,
 - 2 members of the public at large.

Status: Set-up: complete, Implementation: ongoing

<p>5. That in accordance with the Province's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) direction for integration on local program planning, the City:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Engage local homelessness service providers, recipients and the County in system planning – Work with the United Way as they pursue community entity status in order to secure federal Homeless Partnership Strategy (HPS) funding – Consolidate provincial homelessness funding programs to help effectively address community priorities 	
Implementation	<p>Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial expectations and obligations, especially around funding consolidation</p> <p>Working in consultation with the United Way, confirm the lead role for community entity per the Federal Homeless Partnership Strategy) and connection with the Community Advisory Board (CAB)</p> <p>Coordinate efforts with CAB and County to identify, plan and set strategies for addressing local housing and homeless needs</p> <p>Engage housing, service and support providers as well as recipients throughout the planning process</p> <p>Develop a consolidated homeless funding strategy that respects LTAHS parameters while directing funds to priority community needs</p>
Responsibility	<p>City of Kingston – Housing Department (lead), United Way (HPS), CAB and community agencies as primary stakeholders</p>
Time Frame	<p>Short term. Set-up roles and planning process (1st year), consolidate funding (2nd year), on-going engagement thereafter.</p>
Resources	<p>Additional staff time to facilitate planning & consolidate funding, Consulting resources as required</p>

Actions Taken:

- City staff have met twice with CHPP funded agencies in 2011 to review services and conduct gap analysis. In 2011, operational reviews with each agency were conducted.
- Two information sessions were held with service providers in 2012 regarding consolidated funding; reports to Council were sent to agencies to keep them updated throughout the planning phase in 2012

- City staff have met with emergency shelter providers quarterly
- United Way in concert with the City of Kingston organized a service mapping session in April 2012
- City of Kingston and United Way have met with service providers to organize a networking committee
- Initial meeting held in May 2012;
- A community kick-off meeting for the group occurred in September 2012;
- A third meeting is scheduled for May 2013.
- County staff have been kept informed of plans for RFP for CHPP funding and funding changes and proposed local strategies and have been consulted on the various Reports to Council with respect to same;
- City staff assisted in the development of the Terms of Reference for the Community Advisory Board (CAB)
- City staff assisted the United Way in the community plan for homelessness required by Service Canada for Community Entity
- Two City staff members sit on the CAB and are active members.
- The Province has announced the provincial allocation towards consolidated homelessness funding; the City has hired a consultant (OrgCode) to develop the homelessness plan for the City and County to help inform required services and service levels. Public consultations and interviews with key community stakeholders occurred in Autumn/Winter 2012;
- County staff are represented within the working group created to oversee the development of the Homelessness Plan; the CAB will be consulted as a key stakeholder in the development of the homelessness plan.
- Housing, service and support providers will all be interviewed and consulted throughout the homelessness planning
- The consolidated homeless funding strategy will be created as a part of the 10-year homelessness plan that will be available by mid-2013.

Status: Complete. Removed from 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan

6. That the City report on MHS progress regularly and publish an annual report card identifying key indicator status.	
Implementation	<p>Establish MHS monitoring table to show progress against approved recommendations</p> <p>Define and develop key housing indicators</p> <p>Create template for annual report card</p> <p>Report annually to Council via report card on indicators and MHS status</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston – Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Planning, Building and Licensing
Time Frame	Short term. Set-up indicators + template (1 st year), reporting annually thereafter
Resources	Additional staff time, Consulting resources as required for initial template

Actions Taken:

- The report on the status of the 40 recommendations found in the MHS was be completed and submitted to the HHA Committee at their December 2012 meeting
- The template of the annual report card is complete
- The 2012 annual report card was circulated to the public in April 2013

Status: Set-up: complete, 2012 report: complete, Annual reports: ongoing

7. That the City gather, maintain and monitor data to support housing and homelessness accountability practices, both internally and in support of LTAHS requirements.	
Implementation	<p>Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm provincial expectations and obligations</p> <p>Consolidate standard data and program monitoring information into one source</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston – Housing Department (lead) with input from Planning Building and Licensing
Time Frame	Short term consolidation (1 st year), Annual data gathering
Resources	Additional staff time

Actions Taken:

- The City of Kingston engaged local service providers in exploring the use of a Government of Canada approved, data collection software package called HIFIS (Homeless Individuals and Families Information System). Training on the software was provided to interested parties during 2012.
- The 10-year Homelessness Plan will make a recommendation with respect to the benefits of a consolidated data collection system that would be universally used by all homeless service providers. Currently, HIFIS use is voluntary and not universally used in Kingston.
- The Housing Department Work Plan for 2013 includes the development of benchmarks to measure housing and homelessness progress. The research for this project was started in the fall of 2012.

Status: In progress

Strategic Direction #2: Creating a Complementary Regulatory Environment

<p>8. That the City encourage social capital initiatives by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supporting legislative reforms that improve household income retention incentives and help address the impacts that utility costs have on poverty – Working collaboratively with social assistance staff and the Province to reduce procedural ‘barriers’ – Linking municipal programs and poverty reduction initiatives that help support win-win opportunities 	
Implementation	<p>Advocate through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) for income maintenance reforms based on identified issues.</p> <p>Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial reforms regarding rent-geared-to-income (RGI) and social assistance, as well as social capital initiatives.</p> <p>Review municipal housing and homeless programs to help identify and promote opportunities that reduce poverty</p> <p>Explore opportunities through system planning with stakeholders to help address mutually beneficial housing outcomes.</p>
Responsibility	<p>City of Kingston –City Council – advocacy role, Housing Department (lead), Collaboration with the newly re-named Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee (HHAC)</p>
Time Frame	<p>Short term Advocacy & monitoring, (1st year), Program review & implement, (2nd-3rd year)</p>
Resources	<p>Additional staff time</p>

Actions Taken:

- City of Kingston Housing Department staff have partnered with Kingston Hydro to help promote their Home Assistance Program for Social Housing Residents; a program designed to reduce electricity consumption in social housing units, and in turn, reduce utility bills. This information has been extended to the local housing providers group who can help further promote the program to their tenants.
- The REDY program enhances tenant education about energy reduction and saving practices.

- One of the objectives of the Kingston-Frontenac Renovates program initiated in summer 2012 is to encourage home repair associated with energy efficiencies. Funding for this program is currently available through 2014.
- Under the proposed changes to the Community Start Up Municipal Benefit (CSUMB) as a result of the Consolidated Homeless Prevention Initiative (CHPI), social assistance clients will now be able to access income assistance from one source through their case manager. This new process is a more efficient management of this funding.
- The City of Kingston's Housing Department initiated a working group among local housing service providers to examine the newly implemented Housing Services Act (HAS), discuss its content, provide feedback on options that would be customizable for the Kingston community and report back to the larger housing provider group. This process will lead to policy changes to address issues related to poverty.
- The Housing Department retained OrgCode Consulting Inc. to develop a 10-year Homelessness Plan for the City of Kingston and the County of Frontenac. Implementation is scheduled for late 2013.

Status: Ongoing

<p>9. That the City implement Official Plan policies which promote inclusive, sustainable and flexible communities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pursuing inclusionary zoning opportunities as part of the comprehensive Zoning By-law (ZBL) review – Seeking opportunities to appropriately integrate student housing – Undertaking a broad locational analysis of affordable housing opportunities and recommending options that promote community inclusion. – Reviewing demolition and conversion provisions to help further support the retention of existing rental stock. 	
Implementation	<p>Complete a broad locational analysis in support of inclusive housing policies</p> <p>Through the comprehensive ZBL review, explore opportunities to promote inclusionary zoning concepts and retain rental housing stock through demolition and conversion policies</p> <p>Identify and promote solutions to student housing issues through the Town & Gown Committee</p> <p>Where necessary, develop and bring forward an Official Plan (OP) amendment to implement necessary policy changes that support inclusion</p>
Responsibility	<p>City of Kingston – Planning Department (lead) with input from Housing Dept. and the interdepartmental committee, Locational analysis led by Housing Department, undertaken by consultants, CAO's office – lead on Town & Gown Committee</p>
Time Frame	<p>Short to mid-term, Locational analysis, (1st year), ZBL review (1st-3rd year), Other work (on-going)</p>
Resources	<p>City funding for locational analysis, Staff time for policy review and committee engagement</p>

Actions Taken:

- Locational analysis was endorsed by City Council in March 2013.
- The Housing Department presented housing data MHS recommendations to the Town-Gown Committee. The Housing Department is working with Queen's to coordinate housing issues and maintain a transparent, on-going dialogue.
- The City is currently undertaking a comprehensive zoning bylaw review. Hous-

ing Department staff have actively contributed to the preparation of preliminary research to identify issues related to affordable housing.

Status: Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review: Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 in progress, Locational Analysis: complete

<p>10. That the City adopt refined targets for units to be added to the current housing stock over the next 10 years as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Housing Form – 60% singles, 20% multiples and 20% apartments – Housing Tenure – 70% ownership, 30% rental – Housing Affordability – 25% of units at rates up to the affordability threshold 	
Implementation	<p>Approve the housing targets as part of the MHS</p> <p>Develop a monitoring tool for key info</p> <p>Measure and report on targets annually as part of Report Card (per Rec.#6)</p> <p>Using incentive tools available, actively seek out commitments to help support form, tenure, and affordability targets through the development approval process</p>
Responsibility	<p>City of Kingston – Planning Department (lead) with input from Housing Department</p>
Time Frame	<p>Short term, (1st year)</p>
Resources	<p>Staff time</p>

Actions Taken:

Building targets will be included and tracked annually in the report card. Statistics will be contributed by the City’s Building and Licensing Department.

Status: No action taken

<p>11. That the County consider establishing an Official Plan to help guide land use planning which has consistent housing polices among the four constituent Townships and which establishes targets for units to be added to the current housing stock over the next 10 years as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Housing Form – 92% singles, 4% multiples and 4% apartments – Housing Tenure – 90% ownership, 10% rental – Housing Affordability – 25% of units at rates up to the affordability threshold 	
Implementation	<p>Confirm approval for undertaking Official Plan development</p> <p>Review and consult on key housing issues, options and policies to be implemented, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining affordability Housing mix and diversity Residential intensification Renewal and rehabilitation of housing stock Seniors housing options Secondary suites Adopt OP, work with local jurisdictions to implement upper tier polices in local OPs
Responsibility	County of Frontenac in collaboration with four constituent Townships
Time Frame	Medium term, (3 rd to 5 th year)
Resources	Wide range of resources required (staff and consultants)

Actions Taken:

County Council approved of the development of an Official Plan in 2012. County Council will review a first draft of its Official Plan in the summer of 2013, with an aim for completion by 2014.

Status: In progress, completion anticipated by the end of 2014

<p>12. That the City and County support second suites as an affordable rental housing alternative by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encouraging and supporting applications for second suites where currently permitted in ZBL’s – Developing and implementing as-of-right zoning provisions within appropriate residential zones via the comprehensive ZBL review – Encouraging built-in conversion potential for appropriate housing within new development – Streamlining administrative approvals for second suites – Enhancing awareness through the public education campaign (Rec.#33), including a resident fact sheet 	
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial expectations and obligations regarding second suites</p> <p>Encourage the creation of second suites and support applications that come forward in areas where currently permitted by ZBL’s</p> <p>Through the comprehensive ZBL review, identify appropriate zones, establish as-of-right provisions and define suitable standards for second suites, having regard for servicing capacity</p> <p>Once zones, provisions and standards are established through the ZBL review, the Housing Department should:</p> <p>Establish a user-friendly application process which includes a servicing review as part of the necessary approvals process</p> <p>Develop a resident information package for second suites which outlines standards, zoning requirements and the approvals process</p> <p>That the City establish a working group to develop guidelines for implementing second suites and that this working group include representation from the private sector</p>
<p>Responsibility</p>	<p>City of Kingston - Planning Department (lead) with input from Housing Department and the interdepartmental committee, Housing Department to lead support for second suite applications, monitor LTAHS, promote awareness and develop applicant information & communication tools, County of Frontenac in collaboration with four constituent Townships</p>

Time Frame	Short term. Promote interim applications, ZBL provisions and standards (2 nd to 4 th year)
Resources	Additional staff time, consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

- The Housing Department initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments, which would permit Second Residential Units as-of-right within particular areas of the City. The proposed amendments will partially implement recent provincial legislative changes which provide direction for municipalities to permit Second Residential Units within single-detached, semi-detached, and row house dwellings.
- In support of the proposed amendments, a series of public information guidebooks are being developed which will assist homeowners in navigating the administrative and construction requirements for developing a legal Second Residential Unit within the City of Kingston. The guidebooks and other supporting information will be provided on the City website.
- Subsequent initiatives to promote Second Residential Units as an affordable housing option will include streamlining approvals processes within areas excluded from the as-of-right permissions in addition to conducting further research regarding the development of second dwellings within ancillary or detached structures.
- The current planning approvals, which will provide permissions for Second Residential Units within particular areas of the City, will be formally in place in early 2013. This is being considered a pilot project and will be evaluated by Housing Department in 2013 and 2014.

Status: Ongoing

<p>13. That the City implement key affordable housing provisions from the Official Plan as a part of the comprehensive ZBL review, including policies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encourage housing mix and diversity – Support density and intensification – Enable residential renewal and rehabilitation – Review minimum separation distances for residential care facilities 	
Implementation	<p>Through the comprehensive ZBL review, ensure that OP provisions regarding affordable housing are implemented by:</p> <p>Providing for a mix of residential uses and densities across zones</p> <p>Allowing various forms of intensification in the urban area while considering minimizing parking and amenity space arrangement.</p> <p>Supporting housing renewal while limiting conversion or demolition when not in the public interest</p> <p>Reviewing opportunities to reduce/eliminate separation distances for residential care facilities</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston – Planning Dept. (lead) with input from Housing Department and the interdepartmental committee
Time Frame	Short to mid-term, Tie in locational analysis results from Rec. #9, (1 st year), ZBL review (1 st -3 rd year), Other work (on-going)
Resources	Staff time and City funding, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

- Similar to Recommendation #9, the Locational Analysis is presented to the HHA Committee in December 2012. This issue will continue to be analyzed and addressed in 2013.
- The Planning Department initiated the Comprehensive Update of the City's Zoning Bylaw's in 2012. Issues related to affordable housing have been included and considered in the preliminary issues documents produced to evaluate items to consider during the update.
- In the Zoning Bylaw consolidation, the Planning Department has stated their intent to remove separation distances related to residential care facilities altogether.

Status: In progress

14. That the County undertake a review with local Townships to identify zoning anomalies that may be acting as barriers, especially when it comes to supporting seniors housing options.	
Implementation	Undertake preliminary review to identify specific zoning barriers When County Official Plan is in place, work to implement County and local OP policies via zoning bylaws and use this process to help address identified barriers
Responsibility	County of Frontenac in collaboration with four constituent Townships
Time Frame	Medium term, (3rd to 5th year)
Resources	Planning resources required (staff + consultants)

Actions Taken:

Similar to the action taken in Recommendation #11, County Council will review a first draft of its Official Plan in the spring of 2013, with an aim for completion by 2014. The County’s Official Plan will address zoning anomalies that may cause barriers to development.

Status: No action taken. Implementation anticipated to begin in 2015 and continue through 2016.

<p>15. That the City continue to support timely land use approvals by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Re-evaluating opportunities to streamline the planning approvals process wherever possible – Establishing an internal review mechanism for identifying policies that cut across areas of responsibility – Continuing to dialogue with the development industry to identify and resolve any problem areas 	
Implementation	<p>To monitor the approvals process and seek opportunities that help streamline application processing</p> <p>Housing Department staff to help facilitate applications for affordable housing by providing advice and education to applicants</p> <p>Expand private sector roundtable sessions to include Housing Department or other City staff who are on the interdepartmental committee</p>
Responsibility	<p>City of Kingston - Planning Dept. (lead) with input from Housing Department and the interdepartmental committee, Housing Department (lead) on facilitating affordable housing applications</p>
Time Frame	<p>Short term, expand private sector roundtable, (1st year), Process review, (on-going)</p>
Resources	<p>Staff time</p>

Actions Taken:

- Housing Department staff attend Planning Department meetings to remain informed of ongoing project applications.
- Planning Department holds quarterly liaison meetings with the Kingston Homebuilders Association and the Kingston Construction Association.
- The Mayor’s Task Force on Development was established in 2012 recently reported on ways to improve the development review system.
- The Planning Department has initiated a customer service training program for all staff and departments involved in the development review process to ensure consistency and efficiency in this process

Status: Task Force: complete; Implementation: ongoing;

Strategic Direction #3: Leveraging Resources and Tools

<p>16. That the City maximize available funding by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Utilizing current program offerings – Continuing to actively seek out other funding opportunities – Developing a contingency plan to manage anticipated step downs in future senior government funding 	
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Leverage homeless funding by bundling/aligning various funding streams with community priorities</p> <p>Continue to maximize take-up of available rent supplement dollars (including Short term Rent Supplement Program) through active negotiation with local landlords</p> <p>Actively refer interested individuals to the Renovation & Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) offered by Canada Mortgage & Housing Corp. (CMHC)</p> <p>Using sector networks, seek out other possible housing funding opportunities</p> <p>Establish a plan for managing funding step down by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a detailed funding horizon profile by program and project Developing an impact analysis against the funding horizon profile Establishing a prioritized resource plan to mitigate the impacts
<p>Responsibility</p>	<p>City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead)</p>
<p>Time Frame</p>	<p>Short term, Step down Plan, (1st year), Bundling and take-up for programs, (1st to 2nd year), On-going, Referrals and scanning for other funds</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>Additional staff time, Consulting resources as required for funding step down Plan</p>

Actions Taken:

- The leveraging of homeless funding by bundling/aligning various funding streams with community priorities will be determined by the findings of the Homelessness Plan which was initiated in fall 2012 with an end date of July 2013. The timing of

the completion of this Plan will allow for this aligning of funding to occur for 2014 funding agreements.

- Funding under the IAH program will provide a significant number of new rent supplements beginning April 2013 for up to nine years
- Housing Department staff continues to work on a Rent Supplement Analysis to establish various funding scenarios in order to maximize future available funding.
- RRAP funding terminated in March 2012. Kingston-Frontenac Renovates initiated effective July 3rd however geared to private homeowners only. This indirectly reduces demand for social housing and other rental stock. Non-profit housing and multi-unit landlords currently not eligible for this program funding.
- 2 properties were purchased by the City of Kingston through the Affordable Housing Land Acquisition Program for the expressed purpose of future affordable housing development
- Housing Department staff have encouraged its housing providers to join the microfit program in order to secure new forms of revenue
- Housing Department staff have begun to address the operating agreement expiry and managing the funding step-down. This item is in the 2013 Department Work Plan.

Status: In progress

17. That the City and County advocate for additional funding from senior governments on a 'fair share' basis, particularly with regards to addressing capital shortfalls and affordability gaps.	
Implementation	Advocate through local MP's, MPP's, AMO & OMSSA for additional funding to address local housing needs, especially in the area of low income households and social housing stock repairs
Responsibility	City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
Time Frame	Short term, (1st year)
Resources	Staff assistance

Actions Taken:

- The City of Kingston has an elected official appointed to the AMO Board.
- The Mayor/CAO office hired an Intergovernmental Relations Manager in 2012, which has been instrumental in lobbying for senior government funding and identifying better means to engage senior government funders.

Status: Kingston: ongoing; Frontenac: no action taken

18. That the City continue to review its Capital Facilities By-law with the goal of expanding incentives and tools as they arise.	
Implementation	<p>Examine the Municipal Capital Facility (MCF) by-law to ensure that all incentives contemplated under the MHS are available for use</p> <p>Where necessary, broaden the range of available municipal incentives under the by-law to better promote affordability (in terms of duration, depth or both)</p> <p>Incentives should be made available in relation to benefit offered – the greater the incentive offered, the more affordability that will be expected in return</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in collaboration with Legal
Time Frame	Short term, (1st year)
Resources	Staff time, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

The noted by-law has recently been revised twice. The latest revision was to add affordable homeownership as a funding possibility under this by-law which allows the municipality to provide funding to affordable housing initiatives

Status: Complete. Removed from the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan.

19. That the City evaluate local opportunities to increase sustained resources that could be made available to address local housing needs.	
Implementation	<p>Select MHS financial models which offer best-value investment, balancing needs for short term affordability (e.g. rent supplements) and longer term housing supply (e.g. capital funding or incentives). Options to be reviewed include:</p> <p>Utilizing a portion of savings from uploaded social service costs to address low income housing needs</p> <p>Dedicating a share of City assessment growth for housing purposes</p> <p>Apportioning a specific dedicated municipality tax levy for housing</p> <p>Utilizing tax increment financing to support affordable housing development</p> <p>Allocating proceeds from the sale of surplus City land</p> <p>Other sources as may be identified</p> <p>Secure formal commitment from Council to fund inflows to the Housing Fund (Rec. #20) per the selected options</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in collaboration with Finance Dept.
Time Frame	Short term (within 1 year)
Resources	Staff time, Consulting resources as required, Funding commitment as determined by process

Actions Taken:

- A funding strategy has been created for the Discretionary Municipal Residency Benefit which has a direct impact on housing outcomes for low income earners
- Directing of the Housing Provider Net-Operating Surplus to the Social Housing Construction Reserve Fund (SHCRF) is a resource for retaining existing stock. Expanding CRF access to include funding for REI Projects also enhances program/project sustainability by reducing operating costs or maximizing revenues

Status: Ongoing

<p>20. That in recognition of Council's intention to invest up to \$5M, the City give particular consideration to establishing a Housing Fund as the principal tool for accumulating and disbursing funding for affordable housing and that the City consider an initial investment to seed the fund.</p>	
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Explore options for creating and operating a Housing Fund which will operate as a revolving fund</p> <p>Funding of initiatives should address the needs of those along the housing continuum, especially those households with low or moderate incomes and who are most vulnerable</p> <p>Target funding initiatives that support innovative approaches, leverage available resources and generate the maximum benefit for investment</p> <p>Define input, output and replenishment parameters</p> <p>Consider consolidating existing City housing reserve funds into this new Housing Fund</p> <p>Seed the Fund with an initial allocation</p> <p>Investment in the Housing Fund be distributed to support capital, rent supplement/housing allowance and home ownership programs</p> <p>Provide inflows to the Fund through options adopted via Rec. #19</p>
<p>Responsibility</p>	<p>City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in collaboration with Finance Dept.</p>
<p>Time Frame</p>	<p>Short term (1st to 2nd year)</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>Initial seeding, on-going contribution, staff time, Consulting resources as required</p>

Actions Taken:

- 3-year funding for the City of Kingston's Home Ownership Program began in 2012
- \$1M capital investment in affordable housing program set up and funded
- \$1M affordable housing land acquisition and disposition fund set up and funded
- Each of the \$1M programs has been funded for five years
- The land acquisition program policy guideline expects that the program will function as a revolving fund as funds will be returned to the program upon the sale of lands

Status: Ongoing

21. That the City place particular emphasis on partnering with private and non-profit housing providers to enable leveraging of available resources in order to maximize the provision of affordable housing.	
Implementation	<p>Actively promote increased development dialogue between non-profit and private sector partners.</p> <p>Use opportunities to broaden awareness through venues such as the Planning Dept. roundtable sessions, Construction Association meetings and KEDCO</p> <p>In housing procurement processes, recognize the potential benefits of joint partnerships within the evaluation process</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead)
Time Frame	On-going
Resources	Staff time

Actions Taken:

- KFHC opened the Royal Cataraqui affordable housing units for seniors on Queen Mary Road in 2012.
- The Housing Department remains engaged in the planning process for development of units on Cassidy Street with Town Homes Kingston
- Housing Department provided funding and a new type of partnership arrangement with EngCon Inc on Canaterra Ct project to facilitate the construction of 10 seniors apartments
- Home Base Housing purchased property on Montreal Street for the purpose of building affordable housing units, as well as moving the Housing Help Centre to the same location. The Housing Department has partnered with HBH with rent supplement funding.
- The Housing Department facilitated the sale of the former Leroy Grant Drive parkland to a private developer for the provision of 16 affordable housing units throughout the City.

Status: Ongoing

22. That the City pursue opportunities to utilize inclusionary zoning and density bonusing to achieve negotiated agreements for the provision of affordable housing in new developments.	
Implementation	<p>Reinforce affordability target obligations of the OP with the local development industry</p> <p>Based on incentive tools available through OP and zoning, actively seek out affordability commitments through the development approvals process</p> <p>Review opportunities for potential projects during the planning pre-consultation stage</p> <p>Target new development opportunities for inclusionary zoning, especially in greenfield locations</p> <p>Target higher density and mixed use transit corridors for density bonusing, giving particular attention to the impact of parking relief</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Planning Dept.
Time Frame	On-going
Resources	Staff time

Actions Taken:

- Housing Department staff are attending pre-consultation meetings to communicate departmental objectives and programs to private sector developers
- Housing Department will be working with Planning Department to review options within the Comprehensive Update to the Zoning Bylaw being undertaken by the Planning Department to find other means to encourage new forms of affordable housing.

Status: In progress

Notes: See also Recommendation #9 and the chapter on Inclusionary Zoning on page 55

23. That the County consider establishing appropriate authorities/ incentives in support of affordable housing to help prepare for development opportunities that may arise.	
Implementation	Explore development fee relief, property tax relief for multi-res and capital facility by-law authorities in concert with local townships as initial measures
Responsibility	County of Frontenac -Planning Dept. (lead) with Finance Dept.
Time Frame	Short term (1 st to 3 rd year)
Resources	Staff time, costs subject to measures implemented

Actions Taken:

County Official Plan, which is currently being written, must be in place before this recommendation can be implemented.

Status: No action taken.

24. That the City expand the current inventory of suitable lands or properties for affordable housing to include opportunities from other public sector agencies, other levels of government (including the County) and privately held lands.	
Implementation	<p>Augment current City inventory of potential lands with other possible target sites (public private), including donations</p> <p>Ensure full circulation of agency surplus notices within City when received (i.e. federal, provincial, county, school boards, etc.)</p> <p>Establish options for land exchanges as part of acquisition/disposal process or via development approvals processes using capital facilities authorities</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) with input from Real Estate & Construction as well as Planning Dept.
Time Frame	Short term Circulations (1 st year), Mid-term, Inventory/ exchanges (2 nd to 3 rd year)
Resources	Staff time, surplus lands

Actions Taken:

- The City of Kingston acquired two additional properties for the purpose of affordable housing in 2012 (1336 Princess Street and 7 Wright Crescent)
- The City of Kingston maintains ongoing dialogue with all provincial/federal and educational agencies regarding the potential transaction of properties.

Status: In progress

25. That the City continue to regularly monitor the condition of the social housing portfolio and actively seek alternate funding to assist with major capital repairs.	
Implementation	<p>Maintain up-to-date snapshot of portfolio condition by supporting project Building Condition Assessments (BCA's) and actively gathering data for portfolio planning purposes</p> <p>Using existing asset planning tools and City resources to help guide decisions regarding allocation of repair funding</p> <p>Continue to advocate to MMAH for additional capital repair assistance (e.g. Social Housing Renovation & Retrofit Program)</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) with input from Real Estate & Construction, City Council – advocacy role
Time Frame	On-going
Resources	Staff time and funding for BCA's

Actions Taken:

- The Housing Department continues to work with providers to manage their capital needs through Asset Management software purchased in 2011. Housing Department staff are working with providers to ensure all capital and building condition data is in this system for all buildings in order to fully utilize the software beginning in 2013. This software will allow providers and the Service Manager to track building conditions, allow short & long term capital planning and allow for the development of a long term funding strategy by individual providers and the SM.
- Building Condition Assessments for all providers were last completed in 2003 (paid for by Service Manager). Local Housing Corporation recently updated BCAs on all buildings in 2011.

Status: Set up: complete; Implementation: ongoing

26. That the City explore opportunities to review services and asset management planning to ensure sharing of resources between the City's two municipal housing providers, and to then expand these resources to other local housing providers.	
Implementation	Review opportunities to share services and asset management planning for the two largest housing providers in order to expand access to resources, broaden knowledge and better manage risks Once established, expand access to these technical resources to other housing providers in the community
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in collaboration with Kingston & Frontenac Housing Corp. and Town Homes Kingston
Time Frame	Short to mid- term, Initial review, (2nd year), Expand (3rd year)
Resources	Staff time and provider support, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

- KFHC has agreed to offer its Asset Planner management services to all smaller housing providers. This would include data input into Asset Planner program on behalf of smaller providers.
- There have been ongoing discussion and encouragement for KFHC to provide support services such as RFP / Tender Templates, Review/Evaluation of capital repair requirements, other initiatives as identified, such as bulk purchasing and community supports

Status: Ongoing

27. That the City research and develop options for the continuation of social housing post End of Operating Agreements to meet its legislated and financial obligations.	
Implementation	Analyze each Housing Provider to assess current and future financial and capital needs Establish asset management strategies for each Housing Provider Review rent supplement program to identify cost saving measures
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead)
Time Frame	Short term (1 st year)
Resources	Staff time and technical/consulting support

Actions Taken:

- The Housing Department is developing a policy to address consents permitting refinancing and redevelopment options to create additional units and promote financial viability
- Note: only transitions within the next 12 – 16 months are debentures being paid off on two KFHC projects. Unit numbers and operating costs are not affected.
- Housing Department staff are interested in developing and sharing possible ‘End of Operating Agreement’ Solutions Package to be presented to Non Profit Housing Corporation Boards well in advance of agreement expiration. An EOA survey (through HSC) will soon be identifying potential options. Level of detail will support localized plans/options.
- Ongoing review and implementation of the HSA may also expand options around ability to leverage assets, etc.
- The Housing Department has partnered with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to develop a consent policy pilot project that the Ministry will use with other Service Managers across the Province.

Status: In progress

28. That the City establish a strategic asset management plan using existing tools to help guide decisions regarding asset renewal/ redevelopment in the social housing portfolio.	
Implementation	<p>Build on interim work established for short term properties (ref. Rec.#27)</p> <p>Using the funding step down plan (ref. Rec. #16), evaluate all properties within the social housing portfolio.</p> <p>Specifically assess options for sustaining each asset and leveraging equity versus current condition, remaining useful life, operational capacity and ability to maintain resident affordability.</p> <p>Establish a strategic asset management plan that sets out long term strategies for leveraging equity and managing portfolio asset renewal/re-development.</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) with input from Finance and Real Estate & Construction
Time Frame	Short term (2nd – 3rd year)
Resources	Staff time and technical/ consulting support

Actions Taken:

- The Asset Planner Program is a work in progress which is intended to focus Building Condition Assessments as required, track building conditions, allow short & long term capital planning and allow for the development of a long term funding strategy by individual providers and the SM. This program will also provide a Facilities Condition Index (FCI), which will help determine how long repair funds will be required for ongoing maintenance and identify when a building should be considered for replacement.
- The City recently received grant funding approval from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to be used towards asset management planning. Housing Department staff will be working with Housing Providers in 2013 to determine how best to use this funding.

Status: In progress

29. That the City use Rideau Heights as an initial pilot community for testing asset renewal strategies that can be applied elsewhere.	
Implementation	<p>On the basis of foundational work establishing asset management strategies (ref. Rec #28), use a pilot process to test asset renewal strategies</p> <p>Elements would typically include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing an asset renewal context assessment Conducting a feasibility screen Identifying possible options and financial implications for each Developed a preferred renewal concept option with staging and full costing
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) with input from Finance, Real Estate & Construction and Planning Dept.
Time Frame	Short term (2nd – 3rd year)
Resources	Staff time and technical/ consulting support

Actions Taken:

- Preliminary departmental planning was initiated in 2012. This included research on other successful projects elsewhere in North America and coordination with other City departments on expectations and issues related with the project.
- The 2013 City Capital Budget includes \$550,000 to undertake this multi year project.
- KFHC has agreed to assist in the funding of the project and Housing Department staff will be initiating grant applications in 2013 for further funding opportunities
- A consultant has been hired to undertake this pilot project and planning has begun.

Status: In progress

30. That the City and County continue to advocate for additional senior government funding to address the increasing support service needs of residents (Ontario Disability Support Program, Ministry of Community & Social Services, etc.)	
Implementation	Along with other municipalities, advocate through AMO & OMS-SA for additional support service dollars to address growing needs
Responsibility	City of Kingston Council, County of Frontenac Council
Time Frame	Short term, (1st year)
Resources	Staff Assistance

Actions Taken:

- Similar answer to Recommendation #17: The City of Kingston has an elected official appointed to the AMO Board. These advocacy efforts are ongoing and a future strategy will be refocused, following an anticipated provincial election in 2013.
- The Housing Department and the Community and Family Services Department have utilized the Manager of Intergovernmental Affairs hired in 2012 to assist in the lobbying of senior governments.
- The Community and Family Services Department has actively engaged senior governments over recently announced reductions in social service benefits as well as proposed changes to the social services system in Ontario. This has included appearing in front of legislative committees at Queens Park and hosting senior provincial officials in Kingston.

Status: Ongoing

31. That the City and County pursue linkages with support service funders and coordinators in the health and community service fields (Local Health Integration Network, Children's Aid Society, etc.) as a means of expanding support service opportunities in the community.	
Implementation	<p>Building on connections in the supportive housing & homelessness sectors, convene a community roundtable to explore possible housing support opportunities</p> <p>Use the venue as a means of broadening support for the MHS and seeking solutions to support issues</p> <p>Establish and sustain a dialogue on partnership opportunities by connecting agencies with HHAC</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Dept. (lead) and County of Frontenac
Time Frame	Short term (2nd to 3rd year)
Resources	Staff time

Actions Taken:

- Housing Department have ongoing meetings with City staff and community agencies to identify gaps in support services and develop a means / resource to fill gaps.
- Housing Department staff have taken the lead on facilitating 3 sessions with housing providers and community agencies, which created the Homeless Services Networking Committee. The next community session will be held in May 2013.
- Frontenac Community Mental Health and Addiction Services (FCMHAS) received funding through HPS to hire a support worker to support social housing tenants;
- Housing Department staff and the consultant preparing the Homelessness Plan have completed consultations with key community agencies and service providers

Status: Ongoing

Strategic Direction #4: Building Housing Capacity

<p>32. That the City better consolidate the municipal housing function by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Establishing the Housing Department as the ‘Centre of Expertise’ for housing and homelessness issues within the City – Coordinating housing and homelessness planning for the broader service area in collaboration with the County and community service providers – Having City housing staff lead the inter-departmental committee responsible for implementing the MHS (which is to include County staff) – Re-aligning housing staff to accommodate future needs arising from integrated homelessness service planning 	
Implementation	<p>Housing Department responsibilities expanded to include stronger homelessness role, integrated with housing duties</p> <p>Monitor LTAHS implementation to confirm Provincial expectations and obligations, especially with regards to Service Manager obligations and the resulting impacts on resources</p> <p>Coordination of housing & homelessness planning in concert with the United Way (HPS), while ensuring collaboration with the County and fully engaging community stakeholders</p> <p>Housing Department to have primary responsibility for MHS implementation, including chairing of interdepartmental committee that oversees MHS</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in collaboration with County of Frontenac
Time Frame	Short term (1st to 2nd year)
Resources	Additional staff resources, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

- The City of Kingston’s Housing Department has been created and it has been established as the ‘Centre of Expertise’ for housing and homelessness issues within the City and County.
- The Housing Plan is to be updated and extended from 5 years to 10 years as required by Provincial legislation; process to begin in 2013

- Consultant has been hired to complete the 10-year Homelessness Plan. Public consultations and interviews with key community stakeholders were completed in Autumn/Winter 2012. The final recommendation report is complete and is scheduled to be presented to Council in summer 2013.
- Interdepartmental consultation was completed as part of secondary suites planning.
- Interdepartmental consultation has begun for the multi-year Rideau Heights Community Renewal Plan
- Regular update meetings have occurred between City of Kingston Housing Department and County of Frontenac staff
- The Housing Department hired two new staff members in 2012 to reflect increased work expectations generated by the MHS.
- Staff roles within the Housing Department were evaluated and reassigned in 2012 to align with the MHS and the City's Strategic Plan priorities
- The Housing Department has placed more emphasis on homelessness programs and homeless service provider support, through regular updates at housing team meetings, cross-training of staff, increased profile of homelessness programs and services in the annual report card.
- Provincial expectations for the service manager obligations and impacts on resources will be outlined in the Homelessness Plan, spring 2013.
- City staff are serving on the United Way's Community Advisory Board to ensure coordination of homelessness planning
- Similar content covered in the Actions Taken for Recommendation #5

Status: Set-up: complete; Implementation: ongoing

33. That the City in collaboration with the County develop a communications plan to drive out main messages from the MHS in a simple, visual way - reinforcing the issues and the need to work collectively	
Implementation	Working with Communications Dept, develop MHS summary messaging to be used for building broader community awareness and promoting partnerships Link audience back to expanded presence on City web site (ref. Rec.#39) to reinforce contact point for housing information
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in concert with County of Frontenac
Time Frame	Short term (1 st year)
Resources	Staff time, including Comm. Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

Housing Department staff have finalized this Plan and it was presented to the HHA Committee in early 2013.

All programs initiated in 2012 such as the Home Ownership Program and Kingston Frontenac Renovates Program had a coordinated communications plan to ensure appropriate advertisement in the community

Status: Set-Up: Complete; Implementation: Ongoing

34. That the City and County adopt a Housing Charter as a means of communicating policy principles regarding housing and homelessness.	
Implementation	<p>City staff to develop background information/examples and draft a charter for HHA Committee consideration that conveys principles in succinct, straight-forward language</p> <p>Committee to review and recommend Charter for Council consideration</p> <p>County staff to develop draft for County Council consideration</p>
Responsibility	<p>City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in consultation with Housing and Homeless Advisory Committee</p> <p>County of Frontenac - Planning staff (lead)</p>
Time Frame	Short term (1st year)
Resources	Staff time, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

Housing Charter draft is complete and a report prepared for review by the HHA Committee in December 2012.

Status: Complete. Removed from the 10-Year Municipal Housing & Homelessness Plan.

35. That the City in collaboration with the County use community forums and theme-based workshops as vehicles for bringing partners together, expanding knowledge of housing development practices, and sharing community ideas, programs and policy.	
Implementation	<p>Develop possible themes for events, as necessary that brings partners together</p> <p>Actively seek timely topics, speakers and possible sponsors (e.g. CMHC, Home Builders Assn., KEDCO, United Way of KFL&A, service clubs, etc.)</p> <p>Focus on broader based housing topics that bring various stakeholders together</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) in concert with County of Frontenac
Time Frame	Short term (1st to 2nd year)
Resources	Staff time, modest City and County funding as required

Actions Taken:

- The Housing Department hosted a community symposium on affordable housing in May 2012. Renowned expert on affordable housing and architecture, Dr. Avi Friedman, led the lecture presentations and offered the keynote address.
- The Housing Department is responsive to identified needs of local housing providers by bringing in speakers to monthly housing provider meetings. The intent is to address operational needs, identify community service gaps, enhance housing management practices and provide information regarding legislative changes.
- The same approach applies for regularly-scheduled meetings with shelter providers meetings – i.e. police, Frontenac Community Mental Health Services
- The Housing Department helped create a Homelessness Service Provider Networking Group that can help bridge between the gaps in services, offer referrals to clients in need and support for front-line staff who serve clients regularly.
- Similar content found in the Actions Taken for Recommendation # 32

Status: Ongoing

36. That the City, in concert with sector organizations where possible, help support community agency renewal through workshops geared to social housing practitioners.	
Implementation	<p>Collaborate with sector organizations like Ontario Non-Profit Housing Assn., Cooperative Housing Federation, Ontario municipal Social Services Assn., Social Housing Services Corp. and Canada Mortgage & Housing Corp. to determine what workshops or events they will be holding locally</p> <p>Identify potential unmet gaps and seek opportunities to encourage addressing of gaps by sector organizations</p> <p>Where necessary, supplement sector efforts with targeted workshops to help build and maintain social housing provider capacity</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead)
Time Frame	Ongoing
Resources	Staff time

Actions Taken:

- Similar Actions Taken to Recommendation #35
- The Housing Department is responsive to identified needs of local housing providers by bringing in speakers to monthly housing provider meetings. This is intended to address operational needs, identify community service gaps, enhance housing management practices and provide information regarding legislative changes.
- A chart has been prepared that identifies all gaps in services for homeless prevention. This is intended to better inform the Homelessness Plan on needs in this sector as well as funding agencies such as the United Way to ensure funding is being used most advantageously in the community
- The Housing Department helped create a Homelessness Service Provider Networking Group that can help bridge between the gaps in services, offer referrals to clients in need and support for front-line staff who serve clients regularly. The group will meet quarterly.

Status: Ongoing

Strategic Direction #5: Cultivating Partnerships

<p>37. That the City engage the homelessness service sector as part of the broader housing context by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Broadening the Housing and Homelessness Committee’s mandate to include homelessness issues and encourage the participation of service providers – Collaborating with the Community Advisory Board regarding the funding of homelessness programs and initiatives – Expanding Housing staff responsibilities to include homelessness integration – Extending partnership information to homelessness agencies, especially those with housing-related activities sponsored by City 	
Implementation	<p>As part of the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) community entity framework, work with the Community Advisory Board (CAB) to establish roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Engage housing, service and support providers in an inaugural roundtable to introduce staff and set out integrated planning directions</p> <p>Use this opportunity to clarify the roles of the City and CAB and how these relate to the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee</p> <p>Provide for CAB representation on the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee and encourage service provider participation</p> <p>Establish homelessness contact and resource information for sharing among service agencies</p> <p>Consolidate information and resource material for posting on the City web site (e-centre), promoting this as a central information tool for service providers and housing stakeholders</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead)
Time Frame	Short term, connections with providers and community, (1 st year), Information sharing is on-going
Resources	Staff time, support for web, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

- Housing Department staff are now a part of the Community Advisory Board
- Housing Department staff are working with United Way to clarify roles of City and CAB
- The Housing Department holds quarterly meetings with the local shelter group
- The Housing Department coordinated meetings with all homeless provider agencies
- Similar responses given in Recommendation #5, noted above.

Status: In progress.

<p>38. That the City more actively engage the private sector by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding on existing private-sector roundtable sessions currently fostered by the Planning Dept. • Inviting private sector representatives to the Housing and Homelessness Committee table to share insights • Hosting topical workshops or forums geared to private sector issues as a means of broadening a shared understanding among community partners 	
Implementation	<p>Provide for Housing Department representation at private sector roundtable hosted by Planning Dept.</p> <p>Provide for private sector representation on the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee</p> <p>Host occasional events that bring community housing stakeholders together with the private sector</p> <p>Seek topics on broader based housing topics that are of interest to both private sector and community partners</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department and Planning Dept.
Time Frame	Short term (1st to 2nd year)
Resources	Staff time, modest event costs

Actions Taken:

- Housing Department staff now monitoring development activity and attending pre-consultation meetings where preliminary development plans are presented
- Private sector representation is included in the Planning Department private-

sector roundtable

- Private sector housing developers were invited to attend and participate in the Avi Friedman spring symposium. Private sector representatives also attended CMHC events scheduled in 2012.
- Housing Department staff are active and attentive resources to private sector inquiries, when required.

Status: Ongoing

39. That the City establish and maintain a housing information e-centre on the City’s web-site to provide housing information and establish a virtual contact point for inquiries.	
Implementation	<p>Develop an on-line resource centre on the City web site that provides one-stop shopping for housing information</p> <p>Build on existing housing services area but broaden housing topics to capture housing and homelessness</p> <p>Ensure ease of navigation</p> <p>Develop and maintain standard plus refreshed content to meet changing user needs</p>
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Housing Department (lead) with Communications support
Time Frame	Short term (1st to 2nd year)
Resources	Staff time, web support, Consulting resources as required

Actions Taken:

- The content of the current Housing Department website was reviewed in autumn 2012, in concert with the corporation’s “clean-up” of the existing website, prior to the change-over to the new website in early 2013. The content of the Housing Department tab on the website will be corrected and refreshed, where necessary; late-2012-early 2013
- The City of Kingston unveiled a new corporate website in early 2013. E-service on this website is included as part of the 2013 Housing Department work plan.

Status: In progress

40. That the City include community-based housing innovation awards as part of the Liveable City Program as a means of acknowledging community partners and raising the profile of affordable housing.	
Implementation	Broaden the Liveable City Program to recognize community-based housing innovations in affordability Host occasional recognition events
Responsibility	City of Kingston - Planning Dept. in collaboration with Housing Department
Time Frame	Short term (2nd to 3rd year)
Resources	Staff time, modest City funding

Actions Taken:

The next Livable City Awards will be awarded in 2014, and there are plans to recognize affordable housing.

Status: Ongoing

Appendix F: Additional Resources

Homelessness Prevention

- Prevention Targeting 101. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/prevention-targeting-101>
- Sample: Eligibility Criteria and Rating Tool for Hennepin County Family Homelessness Prevention. Available at http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/3919_file_hennepin_prevention_screening_tool.pdf

Intake/Assessment Protocols

- Coordinated Entry: The Basics. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/coordinated-entry-the-basics>
- Coordinated Assessment Checklist. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/coordinated-assessment-checklist>
- The Assessment and Referral Process: Coordinated Assessment Checklist Addendum. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/the-assessment-and-referral-process-coordinated-assessment-checklist-addendum>
- Sample: Memphis/Shelby County Intake Form. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/memphis-shelby-county-intake-form>

Rapid Re-Housing

- Rapid Re-Housing: A Triage Tool. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rapid-re-housing-triage-tool>
- Rapid Re-Housing: Successfully Ending Family Homelessness. Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rapid-re-housing-successfully-ending-family-homelessness>

Rural Affordable Housing

- Bruce, D. (2003) *Research Report: Housing Needs of Low-Income People Living in Rural Areas*. Distinct Housing Needs Series. Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation.
- Slaunwhite, A. (2009) *Under Pressure: Affordable Housing in Rural Ontario*. CPRN Research Report. Canadian Policy Research Networks.



For more information, contact:

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The City of Kingston is the Service Manager for housing and homelessness programs for the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac and welcomes your feedback. To comment on this document please contact:

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AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATE FORMATS