



AGENDA
And Schedule "A"
to the minutes of the meeting of the
HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
held Tuesday, November 5, 2013
at 9:00 o'clock a.m.
1266 McDougall Board Room

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT**

3. **MINUTES**

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held September 19, 2013 (previously distributed)

4. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

4.1 **Windsor Essex 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan**

- The "Windsor Essex 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – Background report – Draft for Submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – October 2013" – **attached.**
- The "Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan – Draft for Submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – October 2013" – **attached.**

4.2 **Secondary Suites**

4.3 **Updates from HAC Members**

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be determined.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Windsor Essex 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan

Background Report

DRAFT FOR SUBMISSION TO
THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING

OCTOBER 2013

Prepared by



Contents

Introduction 1

How We Got Here: Methodology and Developing the Plan..... 1

 Consultation Process..... 2

Strategic Context..... 8

 Existing Programs..... 12

The Current Reality 14

 A Closer Look at the Issues 17

 More About Social Housing Inventory and Asset Condition 29

 Assets and Gaps 32

 External Influences..... 33

Implementation Plan 35

Key References..... 58

Appendix 59

 Summary of Survey Results 59

 Rationalization Tool 71

Introduction

Housing is an important building block in a healthy, inclusive community and access to affordable, adequate and suitable housing is a vital indicator of overall health and wellbeing. Delivery of housing and services related to housing is facilitated through an interconnected and coordinated system of public, non-profit and private partners. The City of Windsor, as the designated Service Manager, is responsible for the administration and funding of housing and homelessness programs in the City of Windsor, County of Essex and the Municipality of Pelee Island as well as coordinating the provision of housing.

As the Service Manager, the City of Windsor is required to establish a ten-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to provide a comprehensive approach to delivering a system of housing and homelessness service.

This Background Report provides further detail on the development of the Housing and Homelessness Plan, including an overview of the consultation process. This report also provides the context for the recommended actions in the Housing and Homelessness Plan.

How We Got Here: Methodology and Developing the Plan

The process of developing the Housing and Homelessness Plan for Windsor Essex began in 2012 with the establishment of the Windsor Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) Advisory Committee. This Committee was tasked to develop the terms of reference to guide the development of a ten-year housing and homelessness plan for Windsor Essex and to engage residents and stakeholders to review the draft Plan. The Committee includes representatives from the City of Windsor, County of Essex as well as community partners and stakeholders. The LTAHS Committee developed a preliminary housing and homelessness systems model, which formed the basis for the Housing and Homelessness Plan. This model builds on the work undertaken for the Windsor Essex HARS in 2004 and 2010 and is based on the Homelessness Coalition's Integrated Model and the collective knowledge of Committee members.

In early 2013, SHS Consulting was retained to assist with the development of the Plan. During the project start-up meeting on May 24th, the LTAHS Committee identified what a successful Plan would look like as well as the stakeholder groups to be consulted. The consultation

approach was also discussed and it was emphasized that a wide range of consultation activities would be undertaken to ensure that all stakeholders had an opportunity to provide their input.

Consultation Process

The consultation process engaged a total 408 individuals on different occasions from different sectors, including housing and support service providers, emergency housing providers, funders, residents and persons with lived experience. A total of 78 unique organizations as well as 243 residents and persons with lived experience were consulted. The City's website had a description of all the consultation activities and links to the online surveys. Community agencies also received emails and calls to encourage them to participate in the process. The key issues and strategies that were identified through these consultation activities are outlined below and incorporated throughout the Housing and Homelessness Plan.

The consultation activities included workshops, meetings and a survey with housing and support service providers:

Introductory Community Stakeholder Workshop – The purpose of this workshop was to present and receive feedback on the draft vision, principles and the different components of the housing and homelessness model. This was held on June 20th and there were approximately 90 participants for this workshop.

Meetings with Emergency Housing providers, Domiciliary Hostel Operators, and CHPI-funded organizations – The purpose of these meetings was to confirm what was happening in the current system, to confirm the elements of the future systems model, and to discuss ways to achieve the desired model. These were held on July 17th and there were a total of 22 participants at these three meetings, excluding City staff. These discussions resulted in identifying issues specifically related to the people served and services provided by these three groups, including:

- The need for coordination of services
- The need for increased awareness of available services and “who does what”
- A limited supply of accessible emergency and transitional units for persons with disabilities
- Availability of services in different languages and that are culturally-sensitive
- The need for emergency shelter options for victims of domestic violence in Essex County
- Domiciliary hostels are housing persons with a high level of needs, such as persons with mental illness and seniors, and they are unable to provide proper supports for this group

- The need for affordable housing in the County
- The need for nurses/ appropriate staff in domiciliary hostels to help with proper administration of medication

Suggestions to address these issues were also identified, such as:

- Increasing the number of housing support workers and ensuring that the services they provide are consistent throughout the City and County
- Increasing the community partners who provide services in shelters
- Developing partnerships with the LHIN, CCAC, post secondary institutions, and other organizations that can provide supports for domiciliary hostel residents and people with special needs who are living independently in the community
- Investigating the appropriateness of replicating programs such as A Place of My Own and Keep the Heat
- Formalize partnerships, such as links with health systems, and explore other partnership opportunities to better coordinate services and share resources
- Providing rent supplements for some population groups, such as victims of domestic violence
- Transitional housing for youth and Aboriginal families
- Ensuring that accessible emergency housing is available for persons with disabilities
- The supports provided should address what is important to the person receiving the supports and assist them in succeeding in their preferred housing and achieving a high quality of life and optimal health
- Acknowledge and address the fact that men and women have different need with regard to emergency housing
- The model should include access to a comprehensive and coordinated package of services and programs
- Developing a centralized data base of persons served
- Increased transparency and sharing of information among housing and service providers, such as domiciliary hostel operators, service agencies and hospitals
- Considering standardized domiciliary hostel standards which apply to operators in both the City and the County
- Ensuring that domiciliary hostel standards are appropriate and relevant and that those implementing these standards are knowledgeable

Community Housing Assets and Issues Survey – The purpose of this survey was to gather information from housing and support service providers on the current assets and gaps in the housing and homelessness system in Windsor Essex. In addition to informing the development

of the Plan, this information was used to develop an asset map of the housing and homelessness system. Respondents were also asked to identify housing issues as well as key components that should be integrated into the housing and homelessness system. These included the following:

- Limited transportation options is a barrier to accessing services
- The need for increased housing supports for youth
- Gap in services that are provided in multiple languages and in culturally-sensitive services
- Limited accessible housing units in the social housing stock and the need for accessible emergency and transitional units
- The need for better services for persons with mental health and/or addiction issues
- Increased interim and permanent housing options for families

Additional details can be found in the Appendix.

This survey was undertaken over a ten-week period from June to August and there were a total of 54 responses.

The process also included engaging people with lived experience through surveys, interviews and a photovoice project:

Applicant and Intake Survey – The purpose of this survey was to better understand the issues faced by persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It was undertaken as part of the intake process of the Youth and Family Resource Network, Windsor Youth Centre and the Salvation Army. The survey was administered over a nine-week period from June to August and there were a total of 83 respondents. In addition to data on the profile of persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, the survey identified gaps and barriers to accessing programs and services. The most identified barrier was transportation. Other barriers identified include:

- Limited information or awareness of programs
- Eligibility requirements
- Operating hours
- System accessibility and navigation
- Poor health status of applicants
- No address or telephone

Respondents to the Applicant and Intake survey also suggested changes or improvements to three areas:

- Availability of permanent housing for seniors, students, singles and the need for emergency shelters
- Access to programs and services
 - Services and agencies are not geographically close to each other
 - The need for readily available information about services and programs
 - Transportation
 - Hours of operation
 - Too much paperwork
 - Limited knowledge among some service providers
- Wait times – Slow application process and long wait times once applications have been filled out.

Additional details can be found in the Appendix.

Online Public Survey – The purpose of this survey was to receive public input on the housing issues in the community and gather ideas on how these issues could be addressed. This was administered over a ten-week period from June to August and there were a total of 148 responses. In terms of what was working well with the current system, the most common response was having helpful staff and good communication with staff. In terms of what needed improvement, responses included the need for:

- Shorter wait times
- More housing options for various population groups, including seniors and families
- Increased education and public awareness of services and supports
- More affordable housing

The survey also asked respondents about their knowledge of available supports and services and over 90% of respondents were aware of social/affordable housing options. Also, more than half of respondents were aware of the availability of rent supplements, financial assistance for eviction prevention, and emergency housing. About 40% of respondents were aware of housing supports for persons with disabilities and persons with mental illness.

Intercept Interviews – Intercept interviews were undertaken on August 15th with people served by the Salvation Army Shelter for Men, Welcome Centre Shelter for Women and IRIS House domiciliary hostel for persons with persistent severe mental illness. A total of 11 one-on-one interviews were undertaken. The purpose of these interviews was to get first-hand information on the issues facing persons with lived experience. Some common themes that emerged from these interviews include:

- Limited awareness of services and programs among service providers

- The need for up-to-date information among service providers
- Support service staff were helpful but not always able to provide the information required by individuals
- Limited affordable housing options that are safe and in good condition
- Inconsistent process and eligibility criteria

Photovoice Project – The purpose of this project was to better understand the experiences of persons who are homeless or at risk of homeless by providing them with cameras to take pictures that would represent their daily struggle to obtain and maintain housing. This project was undertaken with individuals being served by the Welcome Centre.

'Your Say' Machine Surveys – This was undertaken on June 21st during the National Aboriginal Day celebration in collaboration with Can-Am Urban Native Homes and throughout August at the Welcome Centre and it provided individuals with the opportunity to provide their opinion on the issues and challenges they face in finding and maintaining housing.

Throughout the process, meetings with the LTAHS Committee were held to obtain their guidance on the development of the Plan as well as to gain further information through the experiences of the Committee members. These meetings included:

Systems Planning Workshop – The purpose of this workshop was to further understand the current housing and homelessness system and to discuss the required elements of the future system. This workshop was held on July 18th with the LTAHS Committee. Some key system issues as well as suggestions to address them were identified during this workshop and include:

- The need for up-to-date information
- The need for a consistent referral process
- A gap in the coordination of services among different agencies and sharing of information
- The need to formalize partnerships among different agencies
- Increased awareness among support service providers of all services available to people in need
- Limited rental housing options in Essex County
- Condition of rental housing stock is an issue
- The need to address the root causes of homelessness rather than just providing financial assistance
- Consider using vacant social housing units for families instead of motels
- The need for emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence in the County

- Domiciliary hostels are becoming the housing option for people with high needs but who do not qualify for long term care, thus highlighting the need for additional funding for supports

LTAHS Committee Meeting – A meeting was held on August 15th to further refine what was needed to achieve the identified goals.

LTAHS Committee Meeting – A meeting will be held on August 29th to discuss who would lead and who would be involved in various strategies and targets that should be established to achieve the goals. The meeting also involved a discussion of the outline, preliminary content and structure of the draft Plan and to discuss the next steps in the process, including the stakeholder consultation session on September 20th.

The LTAHS Committee has met twenty times from June 2011 to August 2013 to develop the initial model for the housing and homelessness system in Windsor Essex, to guide the development of the Housing and Homelessness Plan, and to undertake other initiatives that help to address housing and homelessness issues in Windsor Essex. Many of the members of the LTAHS Committee are also members of the Poverty Reduction Committee, Homeless Coalition and Housing Advisory Committee, thus providing opportunities for collaboration and coordination of efforts.

The Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan is a community plan with all the input gathered from the consultation activities informing the identified issues, goals, objectives and strategies of the Plan. The community had an opportunity to provide feedback on the key elements of the draft Plan during a Stakeholder Consultation Session on September 20th.

Strategic Context

Provincial and municipal policies and strategic documents create the framework for the development of the Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan. These policies include the recent provincial housing policy changes that have taken place and have resulted in four main provincial policy initiatives, namely:

- Consolidation of housing and homelessness programs
- Rent-geared-to-income reform
- Administrative reforms which focus on system outcome requirements instead of detailed administrative rules
- Requirement for each Service Manager to develop a ten-year housing and homelessness plan with implementation beginning in 2014.

The Province also places an emphasis on Housing First as a philosophy and consultations with a broad range of stakeholders, including people with lived experience, in developing local housing and homelessness plans.

Ontario Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy

The province introduced Building Foundations, Building Futures: Ontario's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy. The vision of this strategy is:

To improve Ontarians' access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing and provide a solid foundation on which to secure employment, raise families and build strong communities.

Housing Services Act, 2011 (HSA)

The HSA replaces the Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA) and amends the Municipal Act, Planning Act and the Residential Tenancies Act. The HSA provides a new legislative framework for the delivery of housing and homelessness programs in Ontario. The purpose of the HSA is to provide for community-based planning and delivery of housing and homelessness services with general provincial oversight and policy direction. It is also intended to provide flexibility for Service Managers and housing providers to address housing and homelessness issues in a locally relevant manner.

Ontario Housing Policy Statement

The Ontario Housing Policy Statement provides further direction to Service Managers to support the development of their housing and homelessness plans. Policy directions include ensuring a coordinated approach, increasing awareness, providing measures to prevent

homelessness, including the private and non-profit sectors in planning, and ensuring plans assess the needs of persons with disabilities, victims of violence, Aboriginal peoples living off-reserve, and other local groups.

City of Windsor Official Plan

The Official Plan of the City of Windsor provides the framework for how the City will grow guided by the vision from the City's Strategic Plan:

Windsor is a quality city full of history and potential, with a diverse culture, a durable economy, and a healthy environment where citizens share a strong sense of belonging and a collective pride of place.

The Official Plan has a number of policies that relate to the creation of a safe, caring and diverse community, including policies that encourage a range of housing types to ensure that residents can stay within their communities throughout their life cycle. There are also policies that refer to ensuring an adequate supply of land and the effective and efficient use of land and resources. There is also a definition of affordable housing in the Official Plan based on the definition in the Provincial Policy Statement.

County of Essex Official Plan

The County's first Official Plan was adopted in 2002 and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in 2005. In 2009, the County initiated the mandatory five-year review of the Plan. A consultant was engaged and the County of Essex Official Plan Review Steering Committee was formed to update the Official Plan, incorporating the most recent changes in provincial legislation. It is anticipated that the final draft Official Plan will be presented to County Council in January 2014 for adoption. This review is of the July 26, 2013 draft Official Plan.

The draft County Official Plan has a goal to provide a broad range of housing choices, employment and leisure opportunities for a growing and aging population. The draft Official Plan also has policies related to affordable housing, including achieving a minimum affordable housing target of 20% of all new development, focusing affordable housing within Primary Settlement Areas, encouraging local municipalities to waive municipal fees to encourage the development of affordable housing, discouraging the demotion or conversion of affordable rental housing, and generally permitting second dwelling units. There is also a definition of affordable housing in the draft Official Plan based on the definition in the Provincial Policy Statement.

Municipality of Pelee Island Official Plan

The current Official Plan was adopted by Council on January 27, 2009 and this Plan has a twenty-year planning period. Planning for the Island is based on the goal of achieving a sustainable community, natural environment and economy. One of the objectives of the Official Plan is to provide housing opportunities for the Island's permanent population. It also aims to provide attractive opportunities for seasonal occupancy. Section 4 of the Plan contains policies on residential, rural residential and resort development. While these policies encourage new development, including infill, it aims to ensure that new residential development is at low density and occurs in a manner in keeping with the capacity of the services available.

Windsor Essex Housing Analysis and Recommended Strategy (HARS) Report, 2004

A comprehensive housing strategy for Windsor Essex was undertaken in 2004 to identify housing need and to recommend policies, programs and strategies to address this need. The study found eight fundamental gaps in the housing market with regard to a need for affordable rental housing, emergency and transitional housing, supportive housing, affordable home ownership units, diversity in housing supply, housing accessibility, housing options for seniors, and student housing. Other key issues identified that were not specifically housing issues but that have considerable impact on meeting housing needs were transportation and income support. A total of 78 actions were recommended to address these identified issues. While some of these actions have already been implemented or have been revised as part of the work undertaken in 2010, some actions are still outstanding and are still relevant today.

Windsor Essex Housing Analysis and Strategies Special Initiative Study (2010)

This study was undertaken as a response to recommendations from the Windsor Essex HARS report and the goal of this study was to assist the Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) in meeting their 2008 goals. A key focus of the study was to identify and recommend specific actions that could be taken in the short and mid-term to help meet the identified housing needs. Three background reports were undertaken to enable a thorough examination of the key issues. These reports are the housing needs analysis, rationalizing the social housing stock, and reviewing the delivery of social housing programs.

A total of forty recommendations were developed in response to the issues identified and the Housing Advisory Committee categorized these into nine themes:

- Expand rent supplement programs
- Equalize multi-residential tax rates as a component of affordability in the rental stock
- Target new development projects under the affordable housing program to meet specified needs, especially for one-bedroom single units and units for large families to

address identified needs in the Service Area, such as for the Aboriginal community and newcomers

- Need transitional housing for youth
- Need emergency housing for families in crisis
- Pursue accessibility and barrier free initiatives
- Expand supportive housing for seniors, persons/families, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities
- Pursue energy efficient initiatives
- Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation stock – improve accessibility, create one-bedroom and four+ bedroom units, sell scattered units, improve energy efficiency, conduct operational review

To date, the City has initiated programs and projects related to seven of the nine themes.

These initiatives include:

- Engaging and delivering the Housing Allowance Rent Supplement Program, the Short Term Rent Support Program and the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) Rent Supplement Program
- Evaluating proposals for the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (AHP) and providing additional points if one-bedroom units are proposed and if units are dedicated to certain target groups, such as newcomers
- Dedicating a portion of housing program funds for Aboriginal peoples
- Allocating a portion of rent supplement program funds for one- and four-bedroom units
- Evaluating proposals for the AHP and providing additional points for accessibility and barrier free features
- Allocating a portion of funds under the Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit Program to social housing providers specifically for accessibility and barrier free capital works, including the construction of two new single detached barrier free homes
- Allocating a portion of funds under the AHP to increase supportive housing units in Windsor Essex. This has resulted in the creation of 98 supportive housing units
- Engaging and delivering \$2.9 million to social housing and AHP providers under the Renewable Energy Initiative

Existing Programs

There are a number of provincial and municipal programs that aim to assist individuals and families to obtain and maintain affordable, adequate and suitable housing. The following programs are available to Windsor Essex residents. These are administered by the City of Windsor as the Service Manager. Some of these programs are fully funded by the City and County while others are partially funded by senior levels of government.

Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)

This program was designed to assist individuals experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness. CHPP funding was intended for homelessness prevention, reduction, and relief services that were not covered by other Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). This funding was consolidated into CHPI beginning in January 2013.

Programs in Windsor Essex funded under CHPI:

- Housing Information Services (HIS) – Securing and Retaining Affordable Housing (SARAH)
- Youth and Family Resource Network (YFRN) – Thrive and Voluntary Trusteeship program
- Welcome Centre Shelter for Women – Intensive Case management
- Family Service Windsor Essex – Voluntary Trusteeship program

Housing Stability Plan (HSP)

The HSP aims to help people who are experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing and to help people who are at risk of homelessness to remain housed. This program is funded through CHPI and includes rental assistance, utility assistance, and housing essentials fund.

As of August 2013, a total of 1,085 requests have been received from OW and ODSP recipients with an average request of \$342.88. In addition, there were a total of 98 requests from low income households with an average request of \$1,115.10.

Housing with Related Supports (formerly Domiciliary Hostel Program)

The Domiciliary Hostel Program funds 13 providers with a total of 390 beds in the City of Windsor and 12 providers with a total of 229 beds in the County of Essex. The objectives of the program are to provide: a residential living environment that is safe and supportive; a person-focused environment where residents are supported in a manner that meets individual needs; and, permanent housing that meets the residents' needs.

The Domiciliary Hostel Standards apply forty standards under three categories: program administration, hostel operations and hostel supports. There are three primary factors in determining and approving eligibility for subsidy for placement in a domiciliary hostel: medical need, financial need, and appropriateness of placement.

Emergency Shelter Solutions

This program provides short-term lodging and supports for persons who were homeless. Municipalities and the MCSS shared the per diem costs. There are three providers that are funded through this program as well as motels for families in need.

Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)

This is a federally funded, community-based program that aims to prevent and reduce homelessness by providing communities with the flexibility and tools to identify and address their own distinct homelessness needs and priorities. Projects funded are based on a community plan developed by a Community Advisory Board (CAB). In Windsor Essex, the Homeless Coalition acts as the CAB. The Community Plan identifies gaps and establishes priorities for addressing homelessness in the community.

The City of Windsor acts as the Community Entity (CE), as appointed by the CAB. As the CE, the City of Windsor oversees the funding and monitors the projects against the priorities set by the Community Plan. Windsor Essex received a total of \$1,020,708 for 2011-2014.

2011-2014 Programs in Windsor Essex funded under HPS:

- Housing Information Services – A Place of My Own (APMO)
- Youth and Family Resource Network – Follow-Through, Homeless Coalition Coordinator, Capacity Building Coordinator

Investment in Affordable Housing Program (IAH)

The IAH program provided a total of \$480.6 million in federal and provincial funding over four years for the creation and repair of affordable housing. The 2013 federal budget, Economic Action Plan 2013, set out \$253 million per year over five years to renew this program to 2018/2019. The IAH program builds on the principles of the provincial Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy and is a continuation of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (AHP).

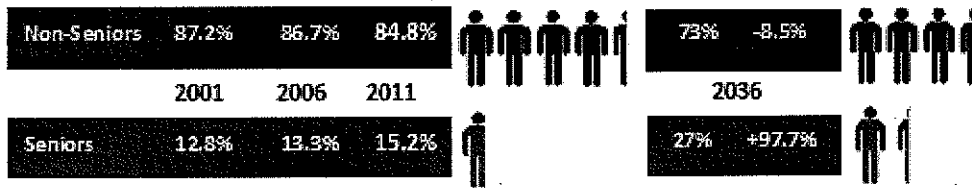
The total allocation for Windsor Essex is \$11,943,158. This financial allocation will be invested in the Homeownership component (10.0%), Rent Supplement component (54.8%), Ontario Renovates (30.1%), and in administration fees (5.0%).

The Current Reality

Residents

As of 2011, the total population of Windsor Essex was 388,782, decreasing by 1.2%, or 4,620 people, from 2006 to 2011. The share of non-seniors (aged 0-64 years) has been decreasing since 2001 and is expected to continue to decrease in the next 25 years. In contrast, the senior population (aged 65+) has been increasing and is expected to make up more than a quarter (27%) of the Windsor Essex population by 2036; increasing by 97.7% from 2011 seniors population numbers. This population group influences the demand for housing in Windsor Essex and providing seniors with the opportunity to age at home is a key strategic direction of the province. Waiting list data indicates that there is currently a sufficient supply of social housing units for seniors but key stakeholders stated that many of these units are not accessible and would not facilitate aging at home.

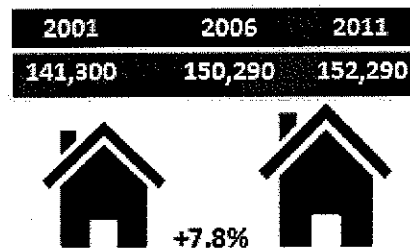
Figure 1: Population Trends and Projections: Windsor Essex; 2001-2036



Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2001; 2006; 2011;
Ministry of Finance Population Projections, 2011-2036

The number of households has increased by 7.8% from 2001 to 2011 although household growth slowed from 2006 to 2011 to only 0.9%. The average household size decreased slightly in 2011 to 2.5 persons. The share of one- and two-person households increased from 56.5% in 2001 to 60.3% in 2011. On the other hand, key informants have pointed out a need for housing units for larger families.

Figure 2: Trends in Household Growth: Windsor Essex; 2001-2011



Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2001, 2006 and 2011

The Aboriginal population in Windsor Essex continues to grow, reaching 6,630 people in 2011 (making up 2.1% of the total population). In general, Aboriginal households have significantly lower incomes compared to the general population, suggesting a greater need for affordable housing options. In addition, consultations undertaken as part of the work on the Windsor Essex HARS in 2010 indicated that there is a continued need for housing options for Aboriginal individuals, couples and seniors. It was also noted that additional supports for Aboriginal persons with HIV/AIDS and fetal-alcohol syndrome were required. Recent consultations

undertaken for the Housing and Homelessness Plan found a need for transitional housing, including for families awaiting reunification. Key stakeholders also noted that current services available for Aboriginal individuals and families are not always culturally-sensitive.

Victims of domestic violence have emergency housing and support service options in the City of Windsor but stakeholders indicated that there is a need for additional housing units as the current shelter is always full. Additionally, stakeholders noted a need for emergency shelter options for victims of domestic violence within Essex County.

The immigrant population currently makes up over a fifth (21.4% in 2011) of the total population in Windsor Essex. Immigrants have specific housing and support needs including units that can accommodate large families as well as support services that are available in different languages. Stakeholders also noted issues with a lack of credit history and discrimination against some immigrants in the private housing market.

Youth 0 – 19 years make up 37.4% of the total population in Windsor Essex. Stakeholders from both the 2010 study and the current study highlighted a gap in the current housing and support services available for youth in Windsor Essex. It was also noted that many youth are not aware of the support services available and that there was a need to increase awareness of these services. There are currently some emergency and transitional housing options in the community for youth but stakeholders suggested that these are inadequate to meet the need, particularly for transitional housing. A recent study found that youth make up approximately 20% of the homeless population in Canada and the results of the Applicant and Intake Survey show that 29.3% of the respondents are 24 years or younger, thus further supporting the need for housing and supports for this population group.

These population and household trends suggest a need for a more diverse housing stock which can accommodate smaller households but with an adequate number of units for large families as well as accessible housing units to meet the needs of an aging population and persons with disabilities.

The Economy

Economic conditions in Windsor Essex are improving as evidenced by decreasing unemployment rates (decreasing by 3.4% from 2009 – 2013) and rental vacancy rates (decreasing by 2.5% from 2004 – 2013) and increasing housing starts. On the other hand, unemployment rates and vacancy rates in Windsor Essex are still higher than the provincial average and there are still a large number of individuals and families with low incomes who require assistance in finding and maintaining appropriate, safe and stable housing.

Housing Demand and Supply

The local housing market in Windsor Essex has a broad range of options, including:

- Rental and homeownership options in the private housing market
- Affordable housing options for households with lower incomes
- Supportive housing options for persons who require additional supports to live independently, including domiciliary hostels
- Emergency and transitional housing options for individuals in crisis

Despite the broad range of options, there are currently gaps in the housing choices available. While there are emergency options for individuals, families in crisis are currently being housed in motels. Additionally, some emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence are full from time to time and are located mainly in Windsor, which makes it a challenge for Essex County residents who require emergency shelter services. There are also very limited transitional housing options for those who require them, such as youth and Aboriginals. In addition, the affordable housing stock is limited and does not fully address the need. There are just over 5,700 rent-g geared-to-income (RGI) housing units in the social housing stock as well as 782 rent supplement units but there are also over 2,300 - 2,400 people waiting to be housed at any given time. There is currently a mismatch in the housing stock related to mandate and unit size, with a higher demand for units appropriate for single individuals and large families.

The location of Windsor Essex also influences the demand for housing. There are a large number of immigrants in the service area and many of these households require affordable housing as well as settlement services. Immigrants also tend to have larger, extended families and larger housing units currently make up a very small proportion of the social housing stock and the private rental market stock.

Vacancy rates in the private rental market (6.3% in April 2013) have decreased but are still over what is typically accepted as a healthy vacancy rate. In spite of this, average rents in the Windsor CMA are increasing (5.6% increase from 2009 to 2012) and becoming unaffordable to lower-income households. Similarly, average house prices for the private ownership market are increasing (13.3% increase from 2010 to 2013) although these have remained relatively affordable.

Approximately two-thirds of the housing stock in Windsor Essex is over 30 years old. An important aspect of meeting housing needs is the ability of the existing housing stock to continue to provide adequate and acceptable living standards to residents. Consultations undertaken as part of the work on the Windsor Essex HARS (2010) indicate significant concerns

with the aging of the housing stock, in particular the social housing stock. Recent consultations (2013) also identified issues with the condition of the social housing stock. Stakeholders noted that while there are some affordable options in the private rental market, these units are often in bad condition. The condition of the housing stock influences housing affordability with regard to increasing repair and maintenance costs as well as utility costs. Analysis of the social housing portfolio viability indicates that a large proportion of the projects will not have enough capital reserves at EOA (End of Operating Agreements), which would be required to revitalize the aging stock.

Services and Supports

Many housing and homelessness programs and services are funded by the federal, provincial and municipal governments. The programs are regulated by the provincial government in that there are requirements and restrictions attached to the use of the funds. The City and County fund programs and services related to housing and homelessness to augment those funded by senior levels of government.

There are housing and support service options in Windsor Essex for persons who require supports to live independently but these are not sufficient to meet the current need, as demonstrated by waiting lists and information from the different agencies. There are also services to help individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness but these are limited and many are not aware or are unable to access these services. Coordination among support service providers is currently limited, which requires people to apply to multiple agencies resulting in cases where some individuals do not receive the services and support needed.

A Closer Look at the Issues

Access

There is a need to increase awareness of available services

Key stakeholders have noted a need to increase awareness of available services to obtain and maintain housing among the different population groups as well as among some service providers. For example, people are unaware of the financial assistance that is available for moving costs for individuals experiencing homelessness. Another example is where youth stay in 24-hour restaurants as they are not aware of any other options if they cannot go home. This has been an issue for several years now as it was also identified as a gap in the 2007-2009 Community Plan for the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The need for a 'factsheet' or common database that lists all the available resources and that is easy to access for both

people in need and support service providers was identified by stakeholders in the most recent consultations.

Key stakeholders also noted that it was difficult to access services for some population groups due to language, technology or transportation barriers. This is supported by responses from the Applicant and Intake Survey which noted that transportation was one of the barriers to accessing services. It was also noted that the current service system was complex and access was inconsistent. For example, assistance may be approved for some individuals but not others who are in a similar situation. Some stakeholders commented on the rigidity of the current system and the need for more flexibility to better respond to the needs of individuals.

There is a need for better coordination and resource sharing among service providers

Stakeholders suggested a need for better coordination of services as the current system requires people to go to multiple agencies. This issue was highlighted in the 2007-2009 Community Plan and was again identified in the most recent consultations for the Housing and Homelessness Plan, which suggests that it still has not been addressed. In addition, an agency making a referral often does not have the ability to keep track of the person referred and whether they were able to access the services they needed. This sometimes results in people falling through the cracks. It was suggested that a central database of up-to-date information as well as a standardized and simple referral process was required to ensure that people who need assistance are provided with the services they need and that follow-up with them is possible.

Stakeholders also suggested formalizing informal partnerships among support service organizations that currently exist to ensure a more efficient service delivery model. This would also help in avoiding duplication of services and ensure a more efficient use of limited resources.

There is also a need for discharge planners and housing and support service providers to coordinate their efforts and work together to provide housing for people who are being discharged from hospitals or correctional institutions. Domiciliary hostel operators noted that in the current process, they are not provided with information that would allow them to anticipate and plan for supports that a potential resident would require. Stakeholders also noted that there is a need for better discharge planning and placements are often made when the individual has no place to go, which sometimes results in inappropriate housing and supports for the individual's needs. The need for coordination of services and discharge planning becomes even more urgent with the opening of the South West Detention Centre Correctional Facility in Windsor in the spring of 2014, to ensure that ex-convicts who are

released into the community have the housing and supports they require should they opt to remain in the community.

Housing Supports

Insufficient income is the primary reason for homelessness

Poverty is the root cause for many issues, including housing affordability. It is estimated that about 1 in 3 people in Canada live paycheque to paycheque so any unexpected event, such as job loss, illness or family breakdown, could easily lead someone to lose their housing. The largest proportion of respondents (19.7% or 25 respondents) to the Applicant and Intake Survey noted that the primary reason for their being in danger of losing their home or being homeless was not being able to afford rent or having issues with a roommate/partner/family.

Additionally, 43.8% of these respondents cited insufficient income as a contributing factor to their current housing situation. Similarly, interviewees at the Welcome Centre and Salvation Army stated that the shelter allowance they receive from Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) was not enough to be able to afford appropriate housing. Respondents to the Community Assets and Issues Survey also noted a need for a more integrated approach, which includes such services as life skills training, health-related services and finding employment, to help ensure that individuals and families who are housed have a greater chance of maintaining their housing. Respondents to the Applicant and Intake Survey also cited limited transportation options as a barrier to accessing the services they require to find and/or maintain their housing.

Housing supports that are currently available are not always able to address the needs of some population groups

Stakeholders noted that there were certain groups whose needs are not being addressed in the current system. For example, stakeholders stated that the needs of children in families who were homeless were often missed as the focus was getting the family housed. It was also suggested that support service workers would be able to respond to the needs of the persons they serve better if they had smaller caseloads. Stakeholders also noted the fact that men and women who are homeless require different types of services to obtain housing stability.

The issue of access to supports for all population groups was also identified in the 2007-2009 Community Plan. It was noted in the Community Plan that eligibility criteria sometimes precluded certain groups from accessing the supports they needed. A need to review criteria for supports was noted to ensure that all those who require support services are able to access them.

Homelessness

Homelessness is defined by the Canadian Homelessness Research Network as the “situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.” In 2012, emergency shelter services in Windsor Essex served 1,438 individuals, but this only provides part of the picture. It is estimated that for every one person who is homeless, there are three others who are part of the hidden homeless population, those individuals who are temporarily staying with friends, relatives or others because they have no other place to live and no immediate prospects of finding permanent housing. In addition, it is estimated that for every one person in a shelter, there are 20 others who are unsheltered, those living on the street, in their cars or in other unsuitable areas. There are also those individuals and families who are at risk of homelessness, people who are not homeless but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious.¹

Studies show that single adult males 25 to 55 years make up almost half (47.5%) of the homeless population in Canada. Other groups that are overrepresented include youth, who make up about 20% of the homeless population, Aboriginal peoples, and women and families. Similarly, the Applicant and Intake Survey results found that 68.0% of respondents were 24 to 64 years old and 29.3% were youth 24 years or younger.

There are risk factors for homelessness including poverty, mental illness or substance abuse and addictions, physical and developmental disabilities, abuse or family conflict, no or few social networks, limited education, and disruptive childhood experiences². People whose life experiences include one or more of these factors are generally at a higher risk of homelessness.

Homelessness is usually the result of a number of factors rather than a single cause³. Individuals who experience a crisis or other unforeseen circumstance, such as job loss, family break-up or illness, is at greater risk of becoming homeless but these events are usually not enough to make an individual or family homeless, particularly if they have a strong support network. Other factors, including structural factors and system failures, usually contribute to homelessness.

Structural factors are economic and societal issues that affect the opportunities and social environments for individuals and families. These include poverty, a limited supply of affordable

¹ Gaetz, S., Donaldson, J., Richter, T., Gulliver, T. (2013). *The State of Homelessness in Canada 2013*. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press

² Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness (2009). *A Place to Call Home: Edmonton's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*

³ Gaetz, S., Donaldson, J., Richter, T., Gulliver, T. (2013). *The State of Homelessness in Canada 2013*. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press

housing and health supports, and/or the experience of discrimination. In Windsor Essex, 17.5% of the 2010 population had low incomes based on the after-tax low-income measure (LIM-AT)⁴ compared to 13.9% in Ontario and many of these low-income individuals live in the City of Windsor. There is also a limited supply of housing that is affordable to low-income households, as evidenced by the large number of applicants on the social housing waiting list. Stakeholders also noted the discrimination faced by some population groups, including those with low incomes and new immigrants, in the private housing market. These factors contribute to a person's risk of becoming homeless.

Interim Housing

There are currently no emergency shelters for families in the service area

Stakeholders have noted that it is a challenge to assist families in need due to the lack of emergency shelters for families. In 2012, 392 people from the City and 127 people from the County received emergency hotel assistance. Motels are not an ideal option as such locations cannot offer the support and access to services available through a shelter or supportive housing environment. Stakeholders noted that this was not a solution, suggesting a need for more appropriate options for families in need. It was noted that there were a number of vacant units in the social housing portfolio and some stakeholders suggested using these units to house families instead of using motels. These units may be used either on a temporary basis instead of motels or on a longer term basis to house families in need. It would provide families with a more stable housing situation as well as lessening the vacancy loss experienced by housing providers.

The number of people accessing emergency and transitional housing services has decreased but there are still a large number of people who require these services

The total number of emergency housing intake has decreased in the last five years from 2,668 in 2007 to 1,438 in 2012. The decrease in intake may be partly due to the improving economy as well as additional programs and services offered in Windsor Essex. In spite of this, there were 1,438 intakes for 2012 which suggests that there is still a need for emergency housing services for people who are homeless as well as supports for to assist people who are at risk of homelessness maintain their current housing or find more appropriate housing.

⁴ Statistics Canada defines the Low-income measure after tax (LIM-AT) as a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of households observed at the person level, where 'adjusted' indicates that a household's needs are taken into account.

Emergency Housing Intake by Year							
	# of Beds	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Salvation Army (Men's intake)	26	1,466	1,388	1,254	866	871	932
Well-Come Shelter (Women's intake)	11	426	238	337	404	462	379
Emergency Hotel Use (City)		776	573	539	279	376	392
Emergency Hotel use (County)		**	4	19	56	78	127
Total	37	2,668	2,203	2,149	1,605	1,787	1,830

Source: Homeless Coalition, 2012

**data was not available

In addition to the agencies that provide emergency housing services listed in the preceding table, there are other agencies in Windsor Essex that provide both emergency and transitional housing. There are also fifteen units under the Inn of Windsor's Supportive Apartment Living Transition Program. Similar to the statistics outlined above, the number of people using these facilities has decreased from 2009 and 2010 but there are still a number of people requiring these services. Stakeholders also noted the need to ensure that a portion of these interim housing facilities are barrier-free, to ensure appropriate options for all population groups, including persons with disabilities. Stakeholders also suggested the need to ensure appropriate interim housing and support options for persons who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness who are struggling with mental illness or addictions.

Emergency and Transitional Housing Intake by Year							
	# of Units	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Emergency and Transitional Housing							
Windsor Residence Inc. (Combined emergency and transitional)	2	93	106	70	26	30	38
Can-Am Urban Homes (Aboriginal Families)	2	4	4	4	4	4	**
Housing Information Services (Families)	4	10	10	12	8	10	10
Youth and Family Resource Network	2	**	**	**	5	10	8
The Inn of Windsor (Youth)	1	31	39	45	51	42	32
Total	11	45	33	61	68	66	88

Source: City of Windsor, 2012; Homeless Coalition, 2012; **data was not available

Transitional housing options for youth and Aboriginal families in Windsor Essex are limited

There are currently interim housing options for Aboriginal families and youth but key stakeholders noted that these were not sufficient to meet the need. Can-Am Urban Homes has two units for Aboriginal families but there is a need for additional units, particularly for families awaiting reunification with their children. The Youth and Family Resource Network as well as the Inn of Windsor provide interim housing for youth but key stakeholders noted that a gap still exists, particularly in communities throughout Essex County as youth need the supports

available in transitional housing and providing permanent housing without supports may not be the most appropriate option.

Emergency housing options for victims of domestic violence are limited, particularly in Essex County

Hiatus House provides emergency housing for women and their children who are victims of domestic violence in a 42-bed shelter in Windsor. The organization has additional programs to help these women and children find and maintain safe housing in the community. Key stakeholders noted that there is a need for additional emergency housing for victims of domestic violence, particularly in Essex County. Stakeholders from Hiatus House stated that their shelter is always fully occupied and they are currently applying for additional funding for shelter beds in the County.

Rental Housing

Vacancy rates have decreased but remain quite high

While the overall vacancy rate in the Windsor CMA continues to be higher than the ideal for a healthy rental housing market (3.0%), this has decreased in the last two years; decreasing from 8.8% in 2004 and 14.6% in 2008 to 7.3% in 2012 and 6.3% in April 2013. Similarly, total vacancy rates for the Town of Essex decreased from 12.7% in 2008 to 6.5% in April 2013. Vacancy rates for the Municipality of Leamington decreased from 5.5% in 2008 to 3.4% in April 2013.

The high vacancy rates, particularly in the Windsor CMA and Town of Essex, may be partly due to the out-migration that occurred from 2005-2010 due to the economic situation.

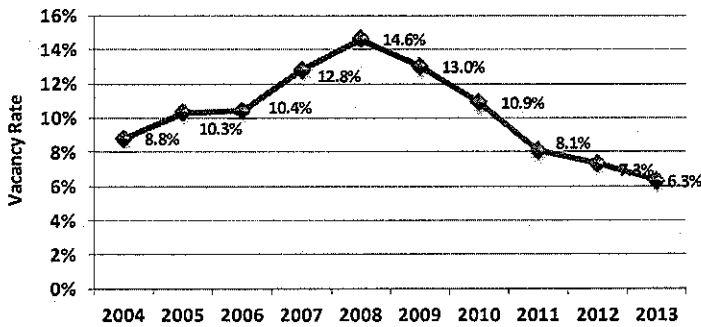
Stakeholders also noted that while there are some affordable housing options in the private rental market, these units are often in bad condition and landlords are not motivated to improve their units. Two-bedroom units, which represent 38% of the rental universe in the Windsor CMA, had the highest vacancy rate in 2012 (8.0%) while 3-bedroom units, which make up only 2.3% of the total private rental universe in the Windsor CMA, had the lowest at 2.3%. The lower vacancy rates for 3-bedroom units may be partly due to the overall demand for larger units to accommodate families.

In the Town of Essex, one-bedroom units had the highest vacancy rate, at 9.4% in April 2013. For three-bedroom units, data was suppressed for 2013 but in April 2012, the vacancy rate for this unit type was 0.0%. While there was a difference in the unit types with the highest vacancy rate between the Windsor CMA and Town of Essex, vacancy rates for three-bedroom units were the lowest in both areas, suggesting that the supply of these units in these areas is inadequate to meet the demand.

In the Municipality of Leamington, two-bedroom units had the highest vacancy rate in April 2013, at 4.0% and this increased from 3.3% in April 2012. One-bedroom units had the lowest vacancy rate in Leamington, at 2.6% in April 2013 and this decreased from 3.1% in April 2012. This suggests that in Leamington, there is a greater need for one-bedroom units compared to other unit types.

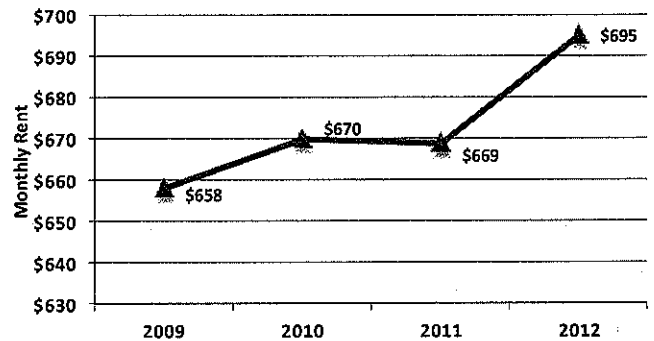
In spite of the high vacancy rates, average rents in the Windsor CMA have increased; increasing from \$658 in 2009 to \$695 in 2012; a 5.6% increase. In terms of affordability, a household would need to earn about \$27,800 annually to afford the average rent in the area.

Figure 3: Trends in Rental Vacancy Rates: Windsor CMA; 2004-2013



Source: CMHC Rental Market Report: Windsor CMA, 2004-2012

Figure 4: Trends in Average Rents: Windsor CMA; 2009 - 2012



Source: CMHC Rental Market Report: Windsor CMA, 2004-

In contrast to the trend seen in the Windsor CMA, total average market rents in the Town of Essex decreased from \$651 in 2008 to \$648 in April 2013. Total average rents in the Municipality of Leamington increased from \$679 in 2008 to \$720 in April 2013. In terms of affordability, a household would need to earn about \$25,900 to afford the average market rent in the Town of Essex and \$28,800 to afford the average market rent in the Municipality of Leamington.

There is a gap in housing and supports for new immigrants

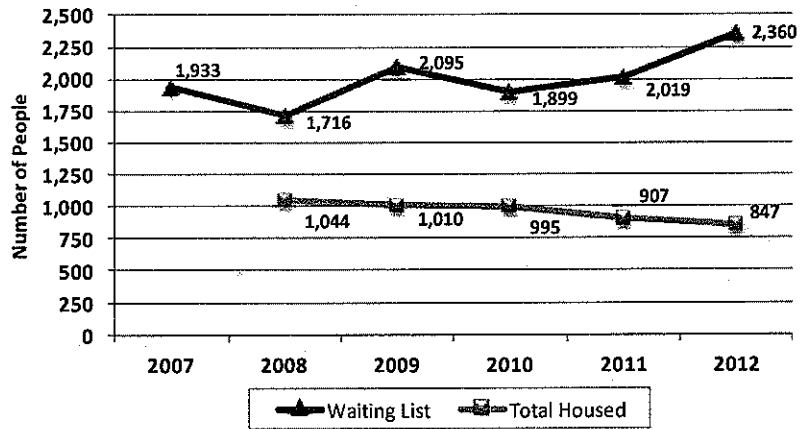
There are a total of 81,730 immigrants in Windsor Essex in 2011; decreasing by 5,440 people from 2006 to 2011. The Windsor Essex HARS Report (2010) noted that local agencies serving new immigrants expressed concerns in finding affordable housing for families, particularly large families. There are a limited number of large units within the social housing stock and often large private market units are unaffordable to new immigrant families. Even when families can afford private market rents, large units (with three or more bedrooms) make up only 2.3% of the total private rental universe (347 units). Additional concerns included limited life skills for some new immigrants, financial difficulties, and a lack of credit history which can limit their access to the housing market. Gaps in housing for new immigrants included a limited supply of

wheelchair accessible housing, high utility costs, inadequate communication services, and housing regulations surrounding larger families.

There is a continued need for housing that is affordable to lower income households in Windsor Essex

In 2012, there were a total of 7,911 units in the Windsor Essex social housing portfolio, including 5,707 RGI units, and an additional 782 units under the rent supplement program and 272 units under the Affordable Housing Program (AHP)

Figure 3: Trends in the Waiting List for Social Housing: Windsor Essex; 2007-2012



Source: Central Housing Registry, 2012

Extension. In spite of this, the number of people waiting for social housing has been increasing. As of December 2012, there were 2,360 households on the waiting list; up from 2,019 in 2011. The increase in the number of people waiting may be partly due to the decrease in the number of people being housed; decreasing from 1,044 in 2008 to 847 in 2012. Wait times range from eight months for seniors to between three and six years for single individuals. Stakeholders have noted the limited affordable housing options in Essex County and the need for additional units, particularly for vulnerable households and households facing discrimination in the private housing market, such as those with low incomes or immigrant households. Some stakeholders have suggested increasing the number of rent supplement units to make the most of the opportunities presented by the higher vacancy rates in the private rental market. It should be noted that these high vacancy rates are only in the Windsor CMA and the Town of Essex while vacancy rates are much lower in the Municipality of Leamington. In addition, adding rent supplement units may not address the issue of discrimination against certain households in the private rental market. Thus, a more appropriate solution in these cases may be to add affordable housing units, particularly in Essex County.

There is a mismatch in the demand and supply of social housing units

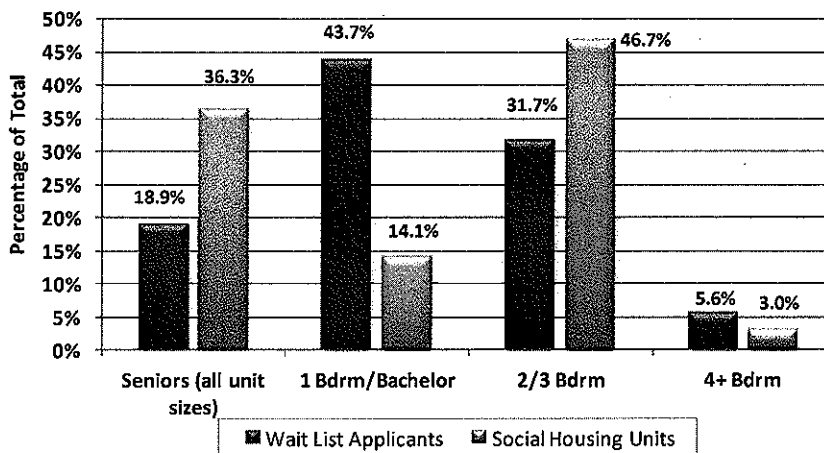
The largest proportion of the social housing stock is made up of units for families (49.8% of the stock) while units mandated for seniors make up the smallest proportion, at 13.9%. While senior-mandated units make up the smallest proportion of the stock, wait times suggest that

the gap is greater for units for non-senior individuals, considering that the average wait is six years for individuals while seniors wait an average of eight months.

The mismatch in demand and supply of social housing units is further demonstrated when the number of applicants is compared to the stock based on the unit size. There is a far greater demand for one-bedroom units compared to the supply. Applicants for one-bedroom units make up 43.7% of all applicants on the waiting list while one-bedroom units make up only 14.1% of the social housing stock in Windsor Essex.

Similarly, applicants for four-bedroom units make up 5.6% of all applicants while four-bedroom units make up only 3.0% of the social housing stock. Wait

Figure 4: Demand and Supply of Social Housing Stock by Unit Size: Windsor Essex



Source: ONPHA 2012 Wait List Survey; City of Windsor

times for one-bedroom units are a minimum of five years and wait times for four-bedroom or larger units are a minimum of three years. In contrast, consultations in 2010 indicate that it can be challenging to fill some two- and three-bedroom units. This suggests that the current composition of the social housing stock is not fully meeting the demand and new stock should be focused on addressing the need for one- and four-bedroom units.

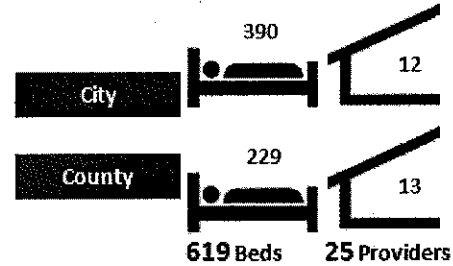
Supported Housing
Supports for individuals residing in housing with supports (formerly called domiciliary hostels) are limited

There are a total of 619 beds with 25 housing with supports providers in Windsor Essex. Residents are provided with board and lodging as well as supervised care. Key stakeholders noted that these homes are currently housing people with high needs making it difficult for some homes to provide the appropriate level of supports. Stakeholders suggested that this was partly due to the fact that there was currently no assessment process to determine whether residing in housing with supports was the most appropriate option for an individual. It was also suggested that there are not enough supports for people living in these homes, which resulted in people not getting the appropriate care they required.

It was also noted that there are very limited supports to assist individuals who are leaving housing with supports (formerly domiciliary hostels) to transition into the community, resulting in some individuals going back into these homes. Some stakeholders also suggested that the current per diem rates for these homes are not adequate for the housing and supports required.

Residents are allowed to hold their beds for fourteen days within a twelve-month period for reasons such as hospitalization. An additional fourteen days may be authorized if the reason for the resident's absence is hospitalization. Stakeholders noted a need to help individuals keep their beds while they are hospitalized to ensure that they will have housing when they are discharged.

Figure 5: Supply of Housing with Supports in Windsor Essex: 2012



Source: City of Windsor; 2012

The need for additional housing and support options for persons with special needs remains

There are supportive housing options for persons with disabilities in Windsor Essex although anecdotal information from service providers as well as waiting lists show that the current supply is inadequate to meet the need. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) has approximately 190 apartment units in the community for persons with mental illness. In spite of this, stakeholders stated that there is a continuing need for housing and support services for this group. It was also noted that some individuals with mental illness who were residing in housing with supports (formerly domiciliary hostels) were not receiving the mental health and addictions supports they require. Some stakeholders also suggested that group homes may not be the ideal option for some individuals and that new models should be explored for housing and supports for persons with mental health issues.

Assisted Living Southwestern Ontario has 42 apartment units and one home while Developmental Services provides supports to 495 people through various housing arrangements in the community. There are also a total of 562 units set aside for person with developmental disabilities provided through Community Living Windsor, Community Living Essex County and Christian Horizons. In spite of this, a gap still exists as illustrated by the number of people on the waiting list. For example, as of March 31, 2012, there were 301 people waiting for housing support through Developmental Services.

About 11.0% of the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation social housing portfolio is modified to accommodate persons with physical disabilities. In spite of this, stakeholders noted that many social housing projects, even those that are mandated for seniors, do not have the

accessibility features required by current residents to allow them to continue to live independently. In addition, respondents to the Community Assets and Issues Survey noted that physical accessibility was still an issue. This suggests a continued need to ensure that there are enough modified and accessible units in the affordable housing stock. Work for the Windsor Essex HARS Report (2010) also found that the location of some of the supportive housing units was not ideal as these were not close to services and amenities.

Home Ownership

Home ownership in Windsor Essex remains affordable although house prices are increasing

Homeownership in Windsor Essex increased from 68.5% in 1986 to 72.9% in 2001, and increased further to 75.5% in 2006 but decreased slightly to 74.3% in 2011. The slight decrease in homeownership rates may be partly due to the economic condition in Windsor in the last few years. Average house prices in Windsor Essex have increased from \$159,381 in June 2010 to \$180,645 in June 2013; an increase of 13.3%. In spite of the increase in the average house price, the overall market saw a softening from 2011 to 2013 with a decrease in the number of units sold from 4,946 in 2011 (June YTD) to 2,725 in 2013 (June YTD). In terms of affordability, a household would need an income of about \$45,700 annually to afford the average house price in the area. In addition, an analysis of the number of sales by price range shows that the proportion of sales in the lower price ranges are decreasing while the proportion of sales in the higher price ranges are increasing. The proportion of sales for units under \$60,000 has decreased from 8.6% of sales in 2011 to 5.9% of sales in 2013. In contrast, the proportion of sales of homes worth \$360,000 or more has increased from 4.1% in 2011 to 5.4% in 2013. Key stakeholders have suggested providing assistance to moderate income households who may be capable of purchasing a home. It was noted that saving for a down payment was the primary barrier to purchasing a home so assistance toward a down payment may address this challenge and, at the same time, free up some rental housing units for lower income households.

Units Sold by Price Range						
	2011		2012		2013	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under \$60,000	427	8.6%	176	6.6%	162	5.9%
\$60,000 - \$99,999	791	16.0%	417	15.7%	412	15.1%
\$100,000 - \$139,999	1,013	20.5%	535	20.2%	523	19.2%
\$140,000 - \$179,999	978	19.8%	570	21.5%	561	20.6%
\$180,000 - \$219,999	669	13.5%	313	11.8%	379	13.9%
\$220,000 - \$259,999	430	8.7%	249	9.4%	252	9.2%
\$260,000 - \$299,999	261	5.3%	145	5.5%	160	5.9%
\$300,000 - \$359,000	174	3.5%	113	4.3%	128	4.7%

\$360,000 - \$419,999	101	2.0%	64	2.4%	70	2.6%
\$420,000+	102	2.1%	68	2.6%	78	2.9%
Total YTD	4,946		2,650		2,725	

Source: Windsor Essex County Real Estate Board; www.wecartech.com

More About Social Housing Inventory and Asset Condition

The 2010 Windsor Essex HARS undertook an analysis of the social housing stock to identify the best use for this stock and it was found that there is a need to create an improved balance within the social housing portfolio in terms of unit sizes, mandate and location to better meet demand. Current waiting list data supports the findings of the previous HARS report which identified a mismatch between demand and supply. The proportion of applicants for one- and four-bedroom units is far larger than the supply of these units. Similarly, the current wait time for senior-mandated units is an average of eight months while individuals wait for an average of six years, demonstrating the mismatch in portfolio.

The HARS report also identified a need for more accessible units within the social housing stock. This issue was also identified by key stakeholders in recent consultations where it was noted that many social housing units, including those that were mandated for seniors, were not accessible. This may be due to the age of some of the buildings, as accessibility requirements have been enhanced in recent years.

The age of the stock also influences the energy efficiency of the housing units. The older stock is less energy efficient and the HARS report identified issues related to the cost of utilities for these housing units. This may be an issue considering that of the 39 social housing providers in Windsor Essex, eight have little or no capital reserve balances, which may suggest that it would be a challenge for these housing providers to undertake renovations to increase the energy efficiency of their units. Housing providers, including WECHC, recently undertook substantial work to improve the condition of their housing stock using funding from the Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit Program (SHRRP). Most of this work was to increase the energy efficiency of the stock.

Another issue that was identified in the HARS report was the increasing vacancy rates in the social housing stock which result in an increasing vacancy loss for these projects. This issue was again noted in recent key stakeholder consultations. This may be partly due to people leaving the area due to the economic downturn a few years ago as well as the mismatch in the demand and supply of the social housing stock. It may also be partly due to the location of some of

these units or the fact that there are also affordable housing options available in the private rental market.

As of the end of 2012, the total vacancy rate for RGI units in the social housing stock was 2.9% while the total vacancy rate for market units in the social housing stock was 4.0%, both less than the total vacancy rate in the private rental market (7.3% in 2012 and 6.3% in 2013). In general, vacancy rates for social housing units in Windsor Essex varied from building to building and vacancies for some projects were due to a lack of parking.

Turnover rates for the social housing stock also varied from building to building. At the end of 2012, the total turnover rate for RGI units was 10.4% and 14.9% for market units. These turnover rates are high compared to the average turnover rate in the province (7.6% in 2012). Buildings in downtown Windsor as well as other desirable locations had higher turnover rates, particularly for larger/family units. This may be partly due to the fact that housing in the private rental as well as the private homeownership markets in Windsor is quite affordable, which provides households, particularly those with moderate incomes, more options.

End of Operating Agreements

The Housing Services Corporation recently undertook an analysis of the social housing stock to determine the viability of each project at the End of Operating Agreement (EOA)^[1] date throughout Ontario including the Windsor Essex service area. When compared to Ontario, a larger portion of the agreements will expire earlier in Windsor Essex than in other parts of the province (33% in 2010-2019 and 3% in 2000-2009 compared to 25% and 1% in Ontario respectively). This suggests that Windsor has less time and will be required to address the impact of these expirations earlier than most other municipalities. Although the peak period of expirations for the City of Windsor occurs in the period from 2020 – 2029 where 61% of projects will expire, the impact of the earlier expirations is sufficiently significant to require a strategy now.

The City of Windsor, as the Service Manager, currently receives federal block funding, which is a yearly lump sum that is meant to offset a portion of the subsidies associated with federal/provincial cost shared programs for the balance of the term of the Federal Operating Agreements assumed by the City when responsibility for social housing was devolved to Service Managers. This federal block funding will cease as operating agreements expire. Provider mortgages in most cases will be fully paid when Federal operating agreements expire. While the loss of the federal block funding will be offset by the reduction in provider mortgage

^[1] For the purpose of this report, the EOA refers to the expiry of federally-signed operating agreements as well as the expiry of mortgages and capital financing obligations under the Housing Services Act (HSA).

payments, a number of projects will still require some subsidies for operating costs in order to remain viable.

The effect of the End of Federal Operating Agreements is dependent on a number of factors including the legacy housing program, the level of provider subsidy funding and the level of geared-to-income tenancies currently housed by each provider.

Analysis by the City's Housing Services department and Housing Services Corporation shows that the City, as Service Manager, will be required to replace the funding lost as a result of the expiry of operating agreements.

The City of Windsor, by legislation, is required to maintain a service level of 5,726 geared-to-income units in the service area despite the expiry over the next 20 years of federal operating agreements and loss of funding attached to them. It is of utmost importance that City and County representatives, Housing Providers and sector organizations continue working with senior levels of government to develop a plan to maintain the level of social housing units and ensure the on-going funding of social housing programming throughout the Province of Ontario.

Project Viability

The Housing Services Corporation also undertook an analysis of the viability of each project in the social housing stock. The result of this analysis should be used with caution as required data was not available for all projects, therefore proxies were used to undertake the analysis for some projects in the portfolio.

Using the Capital Reserve position and the Current Net Operating Income (NOI) position, the viability in the current year was estimated for each project. In addition to these variables, the number of years to EOA was used to estimate the viability of each project post-EOA. The assessment shows that in the current year, 17% of the social housing projects in Windsor Essex are the most viable with both their NOI and capital reserves in a positive position (rating 1⁵), 31% have inadequate reserves to meet capital demand but their NOI is positive (rating 2), 16% have a negative NOI position but their capital reserves are in a positive position (rating 3), and 36% are the least viable as both their NOI and capital reserve positions are in the negative (rating 4).

⁵ Project Viability Rating: 1 = NOI and Capital Reserves = pass (most viable); 2 = NOI = pass, Capital Reserves = fail (inadequate reserves to meet capital demand); 3 = NOI = fail, Capital Reserves = pass (expenses exceeding revenue); 4 = NOI = fail, Capital Reserves = fail (least viable)

Post-EOA, 13% of the social housing projects in Windsor are the most viable with both their NOI and capital reserves in a positive position (rating 1), 35% have inadequate reserves to meet capital demand but their NOI is positive (rating 2), 19% have a negative NOI position but their capital reserves are in a positive position (rating 3), and 32% are the least viable as both their NOI and capital reserve positions are in the negative (rating 4). The majority of projects are in category 4 in the current year while the majority is in category 2 post-EOA. This suggests that operating income improves over time but capital reserve position does not. Thus, it may be necessary to improve the capital reserve position of most projects in the portfolio as the first priority and address issues related to operating incomes next. This is particularly relevant considering the age and condition of the stock, which would indicate that repairs/renovations will be required in the future.

Rationalization Tool

As part of the Windsor Essex HARS study in 2010, a rationalization tool was developed to assess the social housing stock in Windsor Essex whether this was meeting the needs of Windsor Essex resident. The tool outlines criteria and variables that social housing providers should consider when deciding whether to sell, replace or redevelop a social housing property. This tool is included in the Appendix of this report.

Assets and Gaps

The housing and homelessness system is an interconnected network of service providers, agencies, funders and program administrators that work to address housing and homelessness needs in Windsor Essex. While governments provide many of the basic services to individuals and families, such as income support programs and health services, many services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and for people who require supports to live independently are delivered through non-profit community agencies. These agencies are often more flexible and innovative in their response to needs compared to governments and many individuals and families are more comfortable in accessing services provided by community agencies.

In Windsor Essex there is a large number of community agencies that provide housing and support services to residents in need. These non-profit community agencies serve a range of population groups including women, men, families, youth, seniors, Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, and persons with disabilities. These agencies provide multiple services, such as housing, counselling, day programs and life skills development. Some agencies provide emergency services to persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness while others focus on providing housing and supports to allow people to live independently in the community.

In the current funding environment, non-profit agencies usually have to rely on volunteers and fundraising activities as funding programs from governments and other major funders are often provided on a one-time basis. Funding for housing and supports is limited and agencies face challenges in terms of long term planning due to the unpredictability of funding. There are also gaps in terms of coordination of services and sharing of resources. While partnerships among agencies already exist in Windsor Essex, there are opportunities to create other partnerships and to formalize informal partnerships. There are also opportunities to better coordinate services to ensure that the needs of individuals and families can be met with the limited resources available.

Windsor Essex has a range of housing and support service options, but there are still gaps in addressing the needs of current and future residents. Windsor Essex has a number of initiatives that aim to help people maintain their housing or obtain more appropriate housing, such as the rent supplement program as well as providing rent-geared-to-income housing and housing linked with supports. There are still a large number of people whose affordable housing and support service needs cannot be met by the current system. In spite of this, many of the responses to housing and homelessness issues have been reactive rather than proactive. This may be primarily due to a lack of certainty in terms of program funding from senior levels of government as well as a need for better coordination among service providers. In the current environment, with limited resources, increasing demand and diversity of demand, it is necessary to shift the thinking to prevention – focusing on providing housing and supports to minimize the risk of individuals becoming homeless.

External Influences

The success of the proposed strategies to address the housing and homelessness issues in Windsor Essex is dependent on a number of factors, including some external factors that are beyond the control of Windsor Essex housing and homelessness stakeholders. One of these factors is declining income. Social assistance benefit rates are often not enough to afford adequate and suitable housing. Similarly, minimum wage rates are too low to afford decent housing, leading to a growing population of low income households. While economic conditions are beyond the control of governments, ensuring that benefits for low income individuals and minimum wage rates are adequate for the costs of living will help individuals avoid living from paycheck to paycheck, a major risk factor for homelessness.

A successful housing and homelessness system includes a range of adequate housing options, including options for persons with high needs. When these individuals are supported in unsuitable accommodation, it puts pressure on community agencies and housing providers to

fill the gap. While continued and reliable funding from senior levels of government is essential, it is increasingly important for the different levels of government as well as community agencies to form partnerships and work collaboratively to meet the need, particularly with the limited resources available.

A comprehensive package of health supports is also required to ensure that persons with support needs are provided with the necessary supports to live independently in the community. Waiting lists show that current funding for these services is inadequate to meet the need in Windsor Essex. Stable, predictable funding to community agencies that provide support services would ease the strain on these agencies and allow them to provide more effective, long term responses to the needs of the people they serve. It will also allow these agencies to provide staff training and professional development to more effectively deal with the needs of more complex cases. Providing the supports required for persons with disabilities to live in the community not only improves their quality of life but it is a more cost effective, long term response to this issue.

Simplicity in regulatory requirements is another factor that will contribute to successfully addressing the housing and homelessness issues in Windsor Essex. Stakeholders have noted the regulatory complexities and inefficiencies that they have to deal with when trying to assist a person, particularly in relation to sharing information and re-housing. While regulatory requirements are necessary to ensure that limited resources are used effectively and efficiently, these requirements should not act as barriers to assisting people in obtaining and maintaining housing.

Implementation Plan

The actions in the Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan will be implemented in the short, medium and long terms and will be undertaken by the City and its community partners. The following table provides an overview of who is involved in the implementation of each action and the target timeline for implementation.

Tracking progress is important to ensure that housing priorities are being met in a timely manner. Using indicators to help gauge the impact of the strategies will also be important to help the community to better understand where success is emerging or where efforts need to be re-evaluated. As strategies are implemented, a set of key indicators will be developed based on the indicators and performance measures developed by the Province, including the number of people housed and the number of people who maintained their housing.

1 Access

Goal 1: Provide simple, coordinated and consistent access to programs, services and supports that act on what is important to the person receiving services

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
1.1 Establish a single phone number and website for housing help that includes an after-hours housing crisis line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders and other relevant agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: Early 2014 Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information should be provided in multiple languages and formats Website with links to other agencies Locally based and available 24/7 Suggestions for others to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 211 Central Housing

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>1.2 Develop and maintain an education strategy for trusted access points, housing providers, and support service providers</p> <p>1.3 Ensure awareness of available services in the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization that provides the single phone number and website for housing help will take the lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Target Completion: 2015 Monitor on an ongoing basis 	<p>Registry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Centre Hospital Interim housing providers Private sector / business owners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sessions, promotion and outreach of the system in different languages Create tangible documents for future organizations Incorporate the relationship aspect Suggestions of stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private sector/ business owners Faith-based groups General public Politicians
<p>1.4 Establish an effective referral and follow-up process among housing and service providers that is linked to a common intake and assessment process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing who to contact – list of all those involved in the referral process One intake that is integrated and linked with a common

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>1.5 Implement coordinated access and common assessment for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness with triaging to appropriate services, including interim housing where required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target Completion: 2015 	<p>phone number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation to place of access • Relevant documents to be signed off (e.g. service agreements) • Suggestions for others to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Housing Registry • Persons with lived experience

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
1.6 Dialogue with the Erie St. Clair LHIN and LHIN funded organizations to investigate opportunities to expand coordinated access to health funded housing and supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie St. Clair LHIN and CCAC LHIN funded organizations Working group of community stakeholders MCSS MCYS Developmental services providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand coordinated access to health funded housing and supports by 2018 Start: 2014 or 2015 Target Completion: 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should include Aboriginal peoples Education and training There may be opportunities to pursue opportunities to expand Homes for Special Care in the community
1.7 Implement a common application process for social housing, Ontario Works, and childcare subsidies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Housing Registry Advisory Committee Ontario Works Children's Services Employment Services People with lived experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application should be accessible to diverse populations The provision of support services should be self-directed More sharing and consents between agencies Time-limited consents; confidentiality
1.8 Establish an amalgamated communication and information sharing platform (e.g. a housing and homeless management information system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Target Completion: 2018 or sooner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include HIFIS Leverage some of the research from the health sector Web-based vs. software based Establish privacy and

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>1.9 Develop a practice of coordinated discharge planning from institutional facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie St. Clair LHIN Working group of community stakeholders LHIN funded organizations Housing sector providers Corrections MCSS Hospitals Organizations providing services for those with substance abuse issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Target Completion: 2018 or earlier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> access guidelines Develop with 1.3 and 1.6 Common intake and consents; verbal consents Suggestions for others to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HIFIS Community Coordinator Discharge planning is currently in crisis Include follow-up on progress
<p>1.10 Support efforts to reduce transportation barriers that currently exist in the system and support efforts to increase and improve transportation options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation has been a large theme throughout the discussion Transportation is a large barrier to accessing service

2 Person Centred Housing Supports

Goal 2: Have supports available when needed, to act on what is important to the person receiving services, to assist the person in succeeding in their preferred housing

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
2.1 Refine and disseminate information on the changes to the Housing Stability Plan which offers financial assistance for housing stability and homelessness prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders, including those currently providing the Housing Stability Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be developed with 2.2 Housing Stability Plan should include assistance for energy crisis and moving expense E-network for education of support workers Consider a pilot program that provides mortgage assistance as part of the Housing Stability Plan Suggestions for others to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ODSP Persons with lived experience and family and friends of people with lived experience
2.2 Refine the services funded through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative to better align with the strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a person-directed approach Energy assistance,

Strategy in the Plan	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>2.3 Enhance housing support worker roles to provide support, using a person-directed approach, to individuals with moderately complex challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 	<p>trusteeship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education on the system in multiple languages • Simplified, plain language forms • Adequate resources; trained and qualified staff; Housing Help Coordinator • Develop flexible standards re: caseload – length of help and follow-up intervals • Suggestions for stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • COAST • CMHA • Education system
<p>2.4 Develop and implement a Housing First intensive support initiative for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and/or who have the highest needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are critical • Develop standards and funding model that works • Suggestions for stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police • Educational institutions • Employment

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>2.5 Dialogue and collaborate with health sector and community stakeholders to increase the number of people with support needs who receive a coordinated package of services and programs to maintain their housing and optimal health. This will include dialoguing with the Erie St. Clair LHIN, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), and LHIN and MCSS funded agencies regarding mental health and addictions supports and supports for persons with physical and intellectual disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie St. Clair LHIN Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a formal partnership by 2015 or sooner Target Completion: 2015 	<p>sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settlement sector Persons with lived experience Injection support in domiciliary hostels Breaking down silos, changing attitudes There is a disconnect between care providers, housing providers, and hospital staff Suggestions for stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LHIN funded organizations MCSS MCSS funded organizations Homeless Coalition Housing Advisory Committee Mental health and addiction services providers Persons with lived experience
<p>2.6 Increase the number of trusteeships available to individuals voluntarily seeking a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Way, Youth and Family Resource Network of Essex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need a definition or consideration that

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
trustee		County, Family Services Windsor Essex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Social Services • Community stakeholders 		trustees have a different meaning for OW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider accrediting trustees • Requires further discussion on how this will work and the outcomes • Organizations can provide overview and education • Adequate resources to meet demand • Consider using MCSS' compliance review as a template
2.7 Identify and expand the services and supports available in different languages to meet the unique needs of newcomers and Francophone individuals as well as those who are vision or hearing impaired and those with literacy issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working group of community stakeholders • Settlement organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start: 2014 • Ongoing to 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider unique needs of individuals, such as people who are hearing or vision impaired, people with literacy issues, different languages, culture, religion, male/female differences • Suggestions for stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way • Youth and Family Resource Network of Essex County

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
2.8 Expand the number of Aboriginal support workers to meet the unique needs of Aboriginal individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders Aboriginal organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Ongoing to 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Services Windsor Essex CMHC Need specific staff support for access point; additional worker Person directed approach Not everyone has computer access or trained staff
2.9 Develop formalized relationships among housing and service providers, and with other sectors, by establishing protocols, agreements, information sharing, and collaboration opportunities to ensure coordinated supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships; look at collaboration Informal relationships are also important Connections to employment There is a disconnect between housing providers

3 Interim Housing

Goal 3: Have temporary housing, meant to bridge the gap between homelessness and permanent housing, available where appropriate and where needed

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>3.1 Pilot an initiative where social housing units would be re-targeted to accommodation with an interim affordable rent for families, with the intention that the family would be able to stay in the unit on a permanent basis if eligible</p> <p>This is a housing first approach where the family would be provided with what hopefully would be permanent housing. For administrative purposes only, the units would be deemed as interim housing. Only in situations where the family didn't qualify for social housing would they later move to other permanent housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social housing providers, other community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units need to be appropriate for families; clear guidelines; provide choice Could be expanded to the private sector Individuals should also be considered
<p>3.2 Right-size the shelter system by conducting an assessment of demand for shelter beds and adding and reducing beds where warranted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters including Hiatus House Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete assessment by the end of 2014 Right-size over the 10 years of the plan 	
<p>3.3 Re-evaluate the funding formula for emergency shelters to better achieve the strategies in the Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Base funding is necessary
<p>3.4 Review shelter policies (e.g. "the informal 14-day policy"), and amend where required, to ensure policies are not supporting housing instability and inappropriate housing choices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters, other community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
3.5 Improve the physical accessibility of interim housing (both emergency shelters and transitional housing) where required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager, senior levels of government Relevant community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2018 Target Completion: 2023 	
3.6 Expand the supply of interim housing in the County of Essex by using the existing rental housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private rental housing providers Relevant community service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units should be furnished
3.7 Evaluate the need for interim housing for youth, and expand supply if appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate by 2015 	
3.8 Evaluate the need for interim housing for Aboriginal families, and expand supply of transitional housing if appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders including Aboriginal service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate by 2015 	

4 Housing With Supports⁶

Goal 4: Have housing with a comprehensive and coordinated package of services and programs to assist a wide range of individuals with support needs in maintaining their housing

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>4.1 Expand the supply of housing with supports, which may be housing integrated with supports or housing linked with supports⁷</p> <p>Adding to the supply may be done through acquiring and rehabilitating or repurposing existing rental units and dialoguing with other sectors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erie St. Clair LHIN, LHIN funded organizations, housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should consider everyone served, including families
<p>4.2 Implement coordinated access and common assessment to housing with supports funded through CHPI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing with supports funded through CHPI, LHIN funded organizations, hospitals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT Team
<p>4.3 Develop interdisciplinary team roles to support individuals living in housing with supports funded through CHPI, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o housing supports o quality of life programming o staff training and capacity building, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing with supports funded through CHPI Support service organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015 - 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased funding leads to increased expectations Support individual needs Person to person interaction, i.e. with

⁶ This goal refers to housing with supports in its generic use and not specifically housing with supports that are funded through CHPI.

⁷ This strategy refers to **housing with supports** in its generic use and not specifically housing with supports that are funded through CHPI.

Housing integrated with supports refers to situations where the housing provider also offers the supports (housing with supports funded through CHPI is one example of housing integrated with supports, but Community Living organizations would be another example, among others).

Housing linked with supports refers to situations where the housing and supports are connected, but the supports are provided by a party that differs from the housing provider.

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o monitoring of services provided. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support workers • Team approach to working with each person • Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with lived experience • Colleges, universities • Employment sector
<p>4.4 Establish partnerships with LHIN funded mental health and addictions organization(s) to offer mental health and addictions supports to individuals living in housing with supports funded through CHPI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LHIN funded mental health and addictions organizations • Housing with supports funded through CHPI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 - 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a domiciliary hostel-specific ACT Team • Increase awareness of the addition program of the Salvation Army
<p>4.5 Establish partnerships with educational institutions for community placements in housing with supports funded through CHPI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational institutions • Housing with supports funded through CHPI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start: 2014 • Target Completion: 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider bringing back the STRIVE program • Need to be heavily supported and cannot replace professional support workers • Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social workers • Nursing students

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
4.6 Conduct a review of policies and practices related to housing with supports funded through CHPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing with supports funded through CHPI By-law department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research entity
4.7 Implement and establish consistent accountability for standards for housing with supports funded through CHPI to be developed by MIMAH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing with supports funded through CHPI Housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	
4.8 Re-evaluate per diem rates for housing with supports funded through CHPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing with supports funded through CHPI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	

5 Rental Housing

Goal 5: Have a full range of rental housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
5.1 Review social housing policies to identify opportunities to remove barriers to accessing social housing (e.g. birth certificates, asset requirements in the case of victims of domestic violence, court orders and health situations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group of community stakeholders, including the Central Housing Registry Advisory Committee and housing and support service organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 Review on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education
5.2 Regularly monitor the condition of the social housing portfolio and actively pursue funding to assist with energy efficiency and capital repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager and social housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	
5.3 Conduct a rationalization assessment of the social housing stock, beginning with Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation and then for the rest of the social housing portfolio (The aim of this exercise would be the following goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential sites which may be suitable for intensification and/or redevelopment to create additional rental housing Create one bedroom units or 4+ bedroom units when redeveloping social housing units Enhance accessibility when doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Advisory Committee Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation Other social housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2015 Target Completion: 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize housing providers whose operating agreements are expiring soon (before 2018) Some applicants turn down accessible units so these sometimes go to households who don't need the accessibility features Should be linked with 5.2

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>major capital investments in the building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities for changes to public housing agreements to allow for income mixing and transfer of RGI to other sites) 				
<p>5.4 Conduct an analysis of options and plan for ongoing viability and prevention of loss of social housing as operating agreements expire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMAH Social housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	
<p>5.5 Increase the number of households provided with rental assistance. This may include housing allowances, rent supplements, or head leases within private rental buildings to address the social housing waiting list</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2014 and ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase rent supplements Increase supply
<p>5.6 Increase the supply of rental housing in the County This may include incentives to support the development of private market and non-profit development of affordable housing through funding from municipalities and senior levels of government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private rental housing developers/landlords Non-profit housing providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private sector partnerships
<p>5.7 Target new development projects under affordable housing programs to meet specified needs,(e.g. one bedroom units), monitor changes in demographics and needs, and adjust targeting as required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	
<p>5.8 In complying with legislative requirements for secondary suites, encourage and support flexible policies for community-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Departments at the City of Windsor and County of Essex, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager Housing Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By-laws should actively encourage second suites that

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>wide inclusivity of secondary suites as an affordable rental housing alternative</p>	<p>Township of Pelee and Local municipalities</p>			<p>are inclusive throughout the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be implemented in both the City and County Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Way Service clubs that are involved in renovations
<p>5.9 Investigate opportunities to be more active in bringing rental units into compliance that do not meet standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager City of Windsor and County of Essex By-law/Building Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Department Rental housing providers Local municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2014 Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some fire and safety concerns
<p>5.10 Review financial assistance for multi-residential rental housing repair to determine opportunities for improved take-up of funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	
<p>5.11 Move towards equalizing the residential and multi-residential tax rates for projects with a certain percentage of affordable units to enhance the affordability of the existing rental stock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be linked to affordability Consider providing this as a rebate option for those who can provide units were made available for households with low incomes
<p>5.12 Review income eligibility requirements for financial assistance for homeowner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
<p>renovation and repair (e.g. eligibility is based only on the income of the person with disabilities or the senior rather than the entire household)</p>				

6 Ownership Housing

Goal 6: Have a full range of ownership housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
6.1 Increase homeownership opportunities for renters by refining homeownership assistance initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial institutions Realtors Social housing providers CMHC
6.2 Provide supports, including education and outreach, for homeownership opportunities to social housing tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager Organizations that provide the single phone number and website for housing help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support service providers Social housing tenants CMHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2016 Ongoing 	
6.3 As part of (a) neighbourhood improvement initiative(s), identify areas in a community where homeownership and renovation assistance would be available to residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2018 Target Completion: 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMHC
6.4 Investigate social investment financing initiatives to support homeownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2018 Target Completion: 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggestions for other stakeholders to be involved included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMHC
6.5 Continue collaboration with community organizations offering homeownership assistance, such as Habitat for Humanity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat for Humanity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	
6.6 Develop policies, and engage the building community, to increase the supply of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2015 Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the private sector by hosting

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
barrier free housing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Committee • Accessibility Committee • CMHC • Private sector • Housing providers 		workshops or forums geared to increasing awareness of the need for and benefits of providing barrier free housing
6.7 Make financial assistance available for accessibility renovations and repair to existing housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	
6.8 Develop and implement an education strategy for Windsor Essex residents about available services and financial assistance to support people in maintaining their housing (e.g. renovation assistance, supports for activities of daily living)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization that provides the single phone number and website for housing help will take the lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 	

7 Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Goal 7: Measure and report on progress, evaluate success, and based on evaluations, invest in continuous improvement of the housing and homelessness system

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
7.1 The Housing Advisory Committee will be responsible for championing the implementation of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Advisory Committee 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	
7.2 Develop outcome measures for key strategies in the Plan and engage in ongoing monitoring and reporting, including publishing an annual report card and semi-annual homelessness management information system reports once implemented, as well as reporting quarterly and annually on municipally, provincially, and federally prescribed performance measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 for report card HMIS reports once in place 	
7.3 Establish a strategy for regular performance evaluation of the 10-year Plan and its strategies and invest in continuous improvement of housing and homelessness services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Advisory Committee 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	
7.4 Expand partnerships with educational institutions, including to provide community placements for person-centred housing support and research and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community University Partnership St. Clair College United Way Homeless Coalition CMHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create ambassadors Ongoing values-based training for staff involved in the system Mutual benefit in involving students in the housing and

Strategy	Who Will Lead	Others to be Involved	Target	Community Ideas
7.5 Review the Plan in five years and revise strategies and targets as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Housing providers Employment and social service sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start: 2018 	homelessness sector: builds capacity, fosters housing as a career
7.6 Develop a process and allocate resources for ongoing value-based training and professional development for staff and volunteers in the housing and homelessness system to ensure adherence to the person-centred principle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2014 	
7.7 Develop a change management strategy to support stakeholders in embracing the principles and strategies of the Plan, ensuring awareness of changes in the housing and homelessness system, better service and resource coordination, and appropriate allocation of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group of community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Completion: 2015 	
7.8 Pursue opportunities to leverage existing community resources and advocate for funding and to be able to deliver on the strategies in the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of community stakeholders Senior governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	

Key References

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Appendix

Summary of Survey Results

This section provides a summary of the results of the public online survey, Applicant Intake survey and the Assets and Issues survey. Highlights of each survey are presented based on the questions asked.

Public Online Survey

What does 'housing' mean to you?

Based on the responses, the **most frequent** descriptions mentioned specifically or fell under the theme of one the following:

- **Shelter/a place to live**
- **Safety/security or 'peace of mind'**
- **A clean, comfortable, and peaceful place**
- **A stable place to raise kids and spend time with family**

Other less frequent but reoccurring responses included:

- everything
- privacy and a place to call my own
- affordable
- a basic need
- permanent/long-term
- a base to live one's life out of
- independence
- reliability and consistency

What is working well for accessing housing and services?

Respondents noted the following services/supports **most frequently**:

- assistance with **applications, advocacy**
- **good communication** with staff and agencies
- **helpful staff** (CHR, community agencies, and shelters were mentioned)
- more access to **shelters and subsidized housing**

Respondents also mentioned the following associations with 'access' multiple times:

- rent geared-to-income
- centralized applications/online process
- nothing works/uncertainty about available services

What elements of access can be improved?

The following represent the **most common suggestions** for improving the housing access system:

- **shorter wait times/faster housing process**
- **more housing options** for various population groups (seniors, disabled, youth, etc)
- **more education and public awareness** of services/supports
- **more affordable and low-income housing**

Other responses that came up numerous times included:

- safer buildings and decent units
- more family housing
- more singles housing
- more housing for students and young people
- several responses cited being satisfied with access to services

What is working well in terms of providing services?

Respondents **most frequently** answered positively in reference to the following categories of service provision:

- related support services for **applications**
- **food banks and shelters/emergency housing**
- **community agencies, programs, and information support**
- **subsidized and RGI housing**
- several answers stated that there was either a lack of awareness of services, or that they were inadequate in some way

What can be improved in terms of service provision?

The following represent the **most common suggestions** for improving the provision of services:

- **more subsidized and RGI housing**
- **speed up housing process**
- **more funding for shelters and govt/low-income housing**
- **more advertisement/public awareness efforts**

Other suggestions occurring multiple times included:

- more housing support workers
- more resources for mental health/physical accessibility support

What housing options are working well?

Responses **most frequently** mentioned a **variety of housing options and unit types**, as well as housing **location**.

Less frequent but receiving numerous responses were the following:

- subsidized and RGI housing
- accessibility in units/buildings
- nothing/unsure

What housing options are most needed?

The following represent the **most frequent** responses for housing need:

- **seniors housing**
- **family units**

Other suggestions occurring multiple times included:

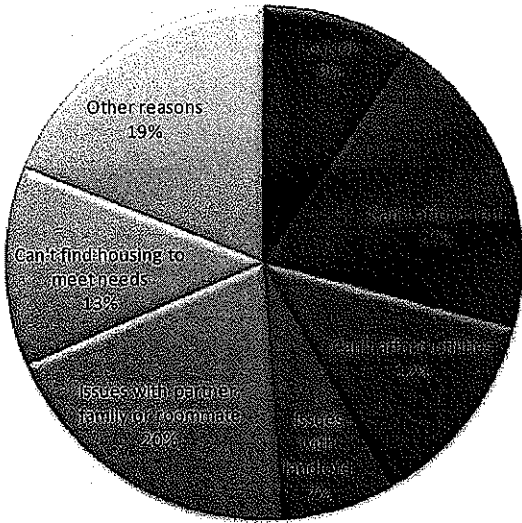
- housing for disabled persons
- singles housing
- larger units
- housing for young men
- more housing in general, affordable and subsidized

Knowledge/awareness of available supports

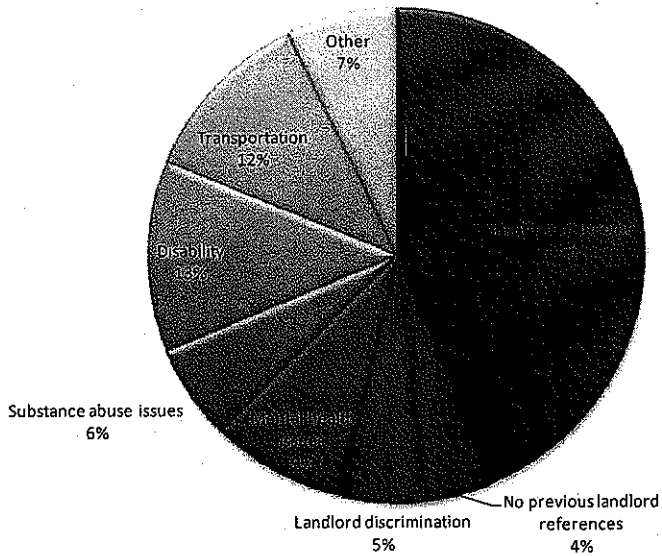
- **Over 90%** of respondents said they were aware of **social/affordable housing availability**
- **More than 50%** were aware of **rent supplements; eviction prevention through financial assistance; and temporary/emergency housing**
- Housing supports receiving around a **40%** response rate were **assistance for seniors; persons with disability; and persons with mental illness**

Applicant Intake Survey

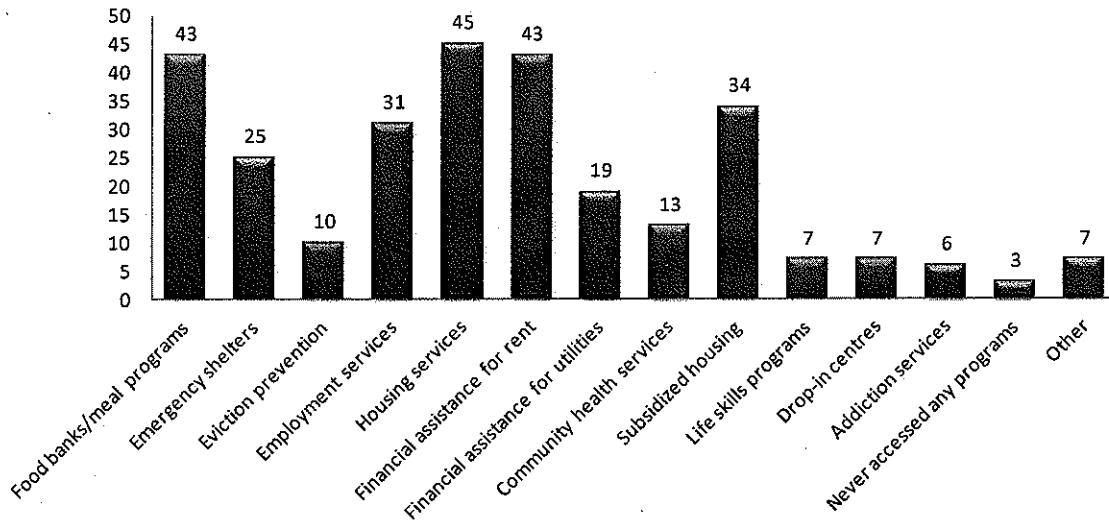
Reasons why respondents are in their current situation:



Contributing factors that prevent respondents from finding and keeping permanent housing:



Services and programs accessed or used:



Gaps and Barriers to Accessing Programs and Services

Based on the responses to the applicant intake survey, the most frequently noted gap or barrier to accessing programs and services was **transportation**. Respondents expressed their difficulty in accessing services in the housing and homelessness system due to their proximity to public transit, the cost of gas, and their distance from the desired access point.

While almost half of the respondents noted no gaps or barriers to accessing programs and services, several other reoccurring responses were expressed:

- Lack of **information** or **awareness** about programs
- **Operating hours** in relation to hours of work
- **Eligibility** requirements
- System **accessibility** and **navigation** (e.g. difficulty filling out paperwork)
- Poor **health** status
- No home
- No telephone

Assistance Received

Respondents who accessed programs or services most frequently received **one of four forms of assistance**:

- Filling out **applications** (e.g. RGI and waiting list applications)
- Permanent **housing leads**
- Information about the **central housing registry**
- Help **paying utilities**

Respondents also listed other forms of assistance received, although these were **less frequently available**:

- General advice and advocacy
- Emergency shelter or transitional housing
- Help paying rent
- Help finding schooling or educational opportunities
- Transportation
- Trusteeships
- Information about other services available
- Addiction and mental health services
- Other forms of financial assistance

Helpfulness of Services Accessed

The applicant intake survey respondents generally found the services accessed helpful. Twelve respondents noted **no gaps** left in their search for permanent housing. Respondents reported that **financial assistance** for food, utilities, transportation, and clothing were helpful. People were also often provided with life skills assistance, which proved to be beneficial. However, other survey respondents noted **several gaps** in available services. Eight respondents noted that they still could not find housing that was affordable for their income levels. Other responses included a **lack of support** for medical issues, money for groceries, transportation, and day care. One respondent also expressed that wait lists for affordable units are too long.

Suggested Changes and Improvement Areas

The survey respondents suggested three major categories of improvement areas:

Availability of Permanent Housing	Access to Programs and Services	Wait Times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For seniors - For students - For singles - Many unsafe housing units, especially for children - The need for emergency shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Services and agencies are not geographically close to each other - The need for readily available information about services and programs - Transportation - Hours of operation - Too much paperwork - Some agency representatives are not knowledgeable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slow application process - Slow process getting on the central housing registry list - Long wait times once applications have been filled out

Assets and Issues Survey

Support Service Providers

The following tables provide an overview of the different community agencies and the services they provide as reported by the agencies⁸ that completed the Assets and Issues Survey.

Organization	Population Groups Served	Services Provided
Community Support Providers for Homeless/At-risk Populations		
John Howard Society Sarnia Lambton	Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Clothing / furniture banks Homelessness intervention / prevention Personal care
Street Help Unit 7 Homeless Services	Seniors; Youth; Men; Women; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Victims of Domestic Violence; Persons Released from Custody	Community outreach Drop-in centres / day programs Help-lines Food security services / programs Clothing / furniture banks Homelessness intervention / prevention Housing search /stabilization and access to services Meals Personal care
Victim Services Windsor Essex	Seniors; Men; Women; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Victims of Domestic Violence	Emotional support Referrals
Windsor Downtown Mission	Seniors; Men; Women; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Homelessness intervention
Windsor Police Service	N/A	Referrals
Windsor Women Working with Immigrant Women	Seniors; Youth; Immigrants; Families; Men; Women	Housing search / stabilization and access to services Employment services Life skills programs Settlement information and orientation
Community Support Providers for Homeless/At-risk Populations and Persons in Permanent Housing		
Canadian Mental Health Association	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families;	Housing: emergency, transitional, supportive, social or affordable housing

⁸ There were a total of 54 respondents for this survey.

Organization	Population Groups Served	Services Provided
(CMHA)	Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Mental Illness; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Homelessness intervention / prevention Community mental health services Other health and treatment services Employment services Life skills programs Medication assistance
Distress Centre Windsor Essex	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Help Lines Community Mental Health Services
Family Services Windsor Essex	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence; Children	Homelessness intervention / prevention Financial support Housing search / stabilization and access to services Community mental health services Addiction services Employment services Life skills programs Accompaniment / transportation to appointments Medication assistance Financial Trustee Services
Legal Assistance Windsor	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Homelessness intervention / prevention Eviction / legal services and support Housing search / stabilization and access to services Community mental health services Addiction services Accompaniment / transportation to appointments
Multicultural Council Windsor Essex (MCC)	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence; Children	Community outreach Homelessness intervention / prevention Housing search / stabilization and access to services Other health and treatment services Life skills programs Do not provide any support services Housing search and Life Skills
Windsor Regional Hospital-Essex ACT Team 2	Persons with Mental Illness	Homelessness intervention / prevention Community mental health services Addiction services Other health and treatment services Life skills programs Housekeeping Meals Personal care Accompaniment / transportation to

Organization	Population Groups Served	Services Provided
		appointments Medication assistance
Windsor Youth Centre	Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Community outreach Drop-in centres / day programs Food security services / programs Clothing / furniture banks Homelessness intervention / prevention Eviction / legal services and support Housing search / stabilization and access to services Community mental health services Employment services Life skills programs Housekeeping Meals Personal care Accompaniment / transportation to appointments
Support Service Providers for Persons in Permanent Housing		
Assisted Living Southwest Ontario (ALSWO)	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Franco-Ontarians; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Community outreach Homelessness intervention / prevention Housing search / stabilization and access to services Other health and treatment services Employment services Life skills programs Housekeeping Meals Personal care Assistance with bathing / dressing Accompaniment / transportation to appointments Medication assistance
Centre Communautaire Francophone (Place Concorde)	Franco-Ontarians; Immigrants	Community outreach Cultural activities
Community Living Essex (CLE)	Persons with Physical or Mental Disability	Housing: emergency, transitional, supportive, social or affordable housing Drop-in centres / day programs Employment services Life skills programs Personal care Housekeeping, medication assistance – for persons supported in 24-hour homes Accompaniment/transportation to appointments
Community Living Windsor (CLW)	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Dual Diagnosis	Housing: emergency, transitional, supportive, social or affordable housing Drop-in centres / day programs Employment services

Organization	Population Groups Served	Services Provided
		Life skills programs Housekeeping Meals Personal care Assistance with bathing / dressing Accompaniment / transportation to appointments Medication assistance
Drouillard Place, Community Service Centre	Seniors; Men; Women; Youth; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Families; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons Released from Custody; Victims of Domestic Violence	Community outreach Food security services / programs Clothing / furniture banks Housing search / stabilization and access to services Employment services Accompaniment / transportation to appointments
House of Sophrosyne	Seniors; Youth; Aboriginals; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Families; Men; Women	Housing: emergency, transitional, supportive, social or affordable housing Community outreach Addiction services Parenting
South Essex Community Council	Seniors; Aboriginals; Immigrants; Victims of Domestic Violence; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Families; Homeless Individuals/ Families; Women	Drop-in centres / day programs Food security services / programs Employment services Life skills programs Meals
Youth Family Resource Network (YFRN)	Seniors; Aboriginal; Youth; Men; Women; Homeless Individuals/Families; Persons with Physical or Mental Disability; Victims of Domestic Violence; Persons Released from Custody; Immigrants	Housing: emergency, transitional, supportive, social or affordable housing Community outreach Drop-in centres / day programs Help-lines Food security services / programs Clothing / furniture banks Homelessness intervention / prevention Eviction / legal services and support Housing search / stabilization and access to services Community mental health services Addiction services Other health and treatment services Employment services Life skills programs Accompaniment / transportation to appointments

Emergency and Transitional Housing Providers

There are two emergency housing providers in Windsor Essex that are subsidized by the Service Manager. These are the Salvation Army Windsor, with 51 beds, and Welcome Centre Shelter

for Women, with twelve beds. The City also uses hotels for families in crisis, including Howard Johnson Plaza Motel, Travelodge Motel, and Ambassador Motel.

The following is a list of organizations that provide emergency and transitional housing facilities for Windsor Essex residents:

Provider	Units	Population Group Served
Windsor Residence	4	Young men
Can-Am Urban Native Non-Profit Homes	2	Aboriginal families
Housing Information Services	4	Families
Youth Family Resource Network	2	Youth and Families
Inn of Windsor	1	Youth
Matthew House	6 beds	Immigrants; Men; Women; Families; Persons with ABI; Refugee Claimants
Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative	3	Seniors; Men; Women; Persons Mental Illness; Homeless Individuals /Families; Persons Released from Custody;

Key components that should be included in the housing and homelessness system

- Transportation
- Understanding why people become homeless
- Focus on homeless youth, particularly in the County
- Long-term facility for homeless youth
- Inclusion of addiction and mental health services
- Affordable, accessible housing

Other elements required in the housing and homelessness system:

Access

- Culturally-sensitive services
- Information in plain language and user-friendly format
- Affordable/free translation services
- Better access to mental health and addiction services
- Accessibility in the built environment
- Supports for those on the waiting list
- Affordable transportation options
- Housing suitable for large families

Person-centred Supports

- Homelessness prevention through housing stability, financial assistance, rapid crisis response, support plans
- Services available in various locations

Housing

- Emergency shelters for families rather than motels
- Transportation services
- Additional one-bedroom units

Rationalization Tool

Management Tool for the Rationalization of the Social Housing Stock			
Criteria	Variables	Measurement Tool	Considerations
<p><u>STEP 1</u></p> <p>Consider the condition of the building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the building in need of major capital repairs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building condition assessment (based on 5-year Capital Plan) Staff opinion/evaluation – Financial evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to establish a guideline or threshold for identification of “major capital repairs” (to be identified by review of Building Condition Assessment) What are the estimated costs for undertaking the identified major capital repairs? Are there sufficient funds in the short and long term to undertake the major capital repairs?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there concerns with the physical condition of the building (i.e. energy efficiency of building, accessibility, functionality)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building condition assessment Evaluation by management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the concerns regarding the physical condition of the building be addressed within the current budgetary parameters either in the short or long term?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the age of the building, is it cost-effective to undertake major capital repairs or improvements to the physical condition of the building (i.e. energy efficiency, accessibility, functionality)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building condition assessment Cost estimates from building consultant or contractors Projections of operating cost reductions, as appropriate Tenant survey or other method to identify needs such as accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factors to consider are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> age of building life expectancy as per building condition assessment extent of capital repairs to be undertaken and cost added life expectancy of the building extent of improvements to be undertaken and cost benefits of incorporating the improvements in the building (i.e. reduce operating costs, address needs of tenants)

Management Tool for the Rationalization of the Social Housing Stock			
Criteria	Variables	Measurement Tool	Considerations
<p>Considerations After STEP 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the building is in need of major repair, the life expectancy of the building is limited, and functionality and physical condition of the building is a concern, further evaluation to determine if the property is fulfilling a need in the community is required (STEP 2) before reaching a decision. • If the building is not in need of major repair an analysis of the properties' ability to meet current housing needs (STEP 2) will assist in determining whether or not a property may be in need of redevelopment and/or if new units are required. 			
<p><u>STEP 2</u></p> <p>Consider if the property is currently meeting a housing need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a waiting list for units in this location? • Is there a waiting list for modified units in this location? • Do needs studies identify future need for this type of housing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windsor/Essex Central Housing Registry provides information on waiting lists by property and bedroom type • Waiting list data for modified units • Needs analysis information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze building turnover rates, as well as the waiting list for the building by unit type and consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a particular unit type that is less desirable? - What has been the waiting list trend (i.e. has the waiting list been increasing or decreasing)? - What do the needs studies tell us? - What are the waiting list trends showing for modified units?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the property have vacancies? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacancies and length of time that units are vacant by property should tracked by social housing provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For social housing, a high vacancy would generally mean a unit was vacant for longer than the time needed to move in a new tenant from the social housing waiting list (i.e. approximately 60 days) • Analyze trends in vacancies for the building, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is a particular unit that is experiencing vacancy problems - is the issue cyclical (i.e. related to job postings, school year) - has the building been experiencing vacancy problems for at least a year • Compare vacancies in the building to the

Management Tool for the Rationalization of the Social Housing Stock			
Criteria	Variables	Measurement Tool	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the location of building problematic? If the building has vacancies, have mitigation strategies been considered? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anecdotal information from Property Manager, tenants, etc. Results from Focus Group C. Examine strategies undertaken by Property Manager to reduce vacancies Focus Group C 	<p>general market area. Is the vacancy issue prevalent in the rest of the area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a crime issue or other negative issue in the neighbourhood where the building is located? Is the building inaccessible to services, transportation, etc. Has a marketing strategy been undertaken? If yes, describe the strategy, length of time in place and results. Have any of the following strategies been considered? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possibility of renting units to others at full market rents Explore option of subleasing to support service providers (i.e. Community Living) to respond to waiting lists for housing for persons with disabilities Change occupancy standards (i.e. allowing more families to qualify for 3 and 4 bedroom units thus alleviating any vacancies in larger units)
<p>DECISION POINT:</p> <p>1) If the building is in need of major repair, the life expectancy of the building is limited, and functionality and physical condition of the building is a concern, and the building is experiencing ongoing high vacancies, the location of the building is problematic and mitigation strategies have been employed. Move to STEP 3.</p> <p>2) If the building is not in need of major repair, is experiencing high vacancies and current mitigations strategies have been unsuccessful. Move to STEP 4.</p> <p>3) If the building is not in need of major repair, and is not experiencing vacancies. Move to STEP 5.</p>			
STEP 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the property worth if 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appraisal by a certified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine what the property is worth and how

Management Tool for the Rationalization of the Social Housing Stock			
Criteria	Variables	Measurement Tool	Considerations
Identify how the RGI units would be replaced if the property is sold	sold?	<p>appraiser should be conducted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An opinion from a realtor should be obtained on saleability of property, i.e. market, length of time to sell, etc. What are options for use of resulting funds? 	<p>long it would take to sell the property.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate possibility of refilling units through rent supplement program Evaluate the feasibility of constructing a new building in a different location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimates would need to be developed on costs of a municipally funded rent supplement program Develop estimates on the costs of constructing new project Identify any existing funding programs that might be able to help defray the costs of new construction. Potential new sites would be needed. The services of a realtor could be retained to undertake this work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine if the equity gained in selling a property can sustain an on-going municipally funded rent supplement program. Determine if there are any suitable sites for a location of a new building. Determine if the equity gained in selling a property is sufficient to construct a new building If it is not sufficient, what is the short fall? Are there any existing government funding programs to defray the costs of constructing a new building?
<u>STEP 4</u> Identify how the existing social housing portfolio may be enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate redevelopment opportunities of current building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social housing stock profile Cost estimates from building consultant or contractors Identify any existing funding programs that might assist in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure a positive balance of supply and demand. Redevelopment strategies to consider may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> altering the unit mix (i.e. replacing two and three-bedroom units with more one-

Management Tool for the Rationalization of the Social Housing Stock			
Criteria	Variables	Measurement Tool	Considerations
		costs of renovations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bedroom units) - changes to occupancy standards - Changes to age requirements for seniors units - adapting modified units and/or adding accessibility features
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the possibility of intensifying current property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost estimates from building consultant or contractors • Identify any existing funding programs that might assist in the costs of renovations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether current building can be intensified (i.e. adding new units to current structure) • Determine if a new structure can be developed on the existing property.
<p>STEP 5 Identify potential to increase the supply of affordable housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the feasibility of constructing a new building in a new location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify surplus units/property that are suitable for affordable housing • Cost estimates from building consultant or contractors • The services of a realtor may need to be obtained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if there are any suitable sites for a location of a new building. • Identify any existing funding programs that might be able to help defray the costs of new construction.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the possibility of adding more affordable housing units to existing private rental housing (e.g rent supplements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities in the private sector to create more affordable housing (Multi-Residential Housing Committee – Focus Group D) • Cost estimates on costs of adding more affordable housing units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether subsidizing more affordable rental housing is sustainable

Management Tool for the Rationalization of the Social Housing Stock			
Criteria	Variables	Measurement Tool	Considerations
OVERALL FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN RATIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL HOUSING PROPERTY			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Current condition of existing social housing stock has been examined 2) Current vacancy rates of existing stock, location and functionality of current stock, and current mitigation strategies have been evaluated 3) A cost-effective method has been identified to replace the RGI units that will be lost if the building is disposed 4) Redevelopment strategies have been identified to enhance existing stock 5) Opportunities to create new affordable housing have been explored 			

WINDSOR ESSEX HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PLAN

DRAFT FOR SUBMISSION TO
THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL
AFFAIRS AND HOUSING

OCTOBER 2013

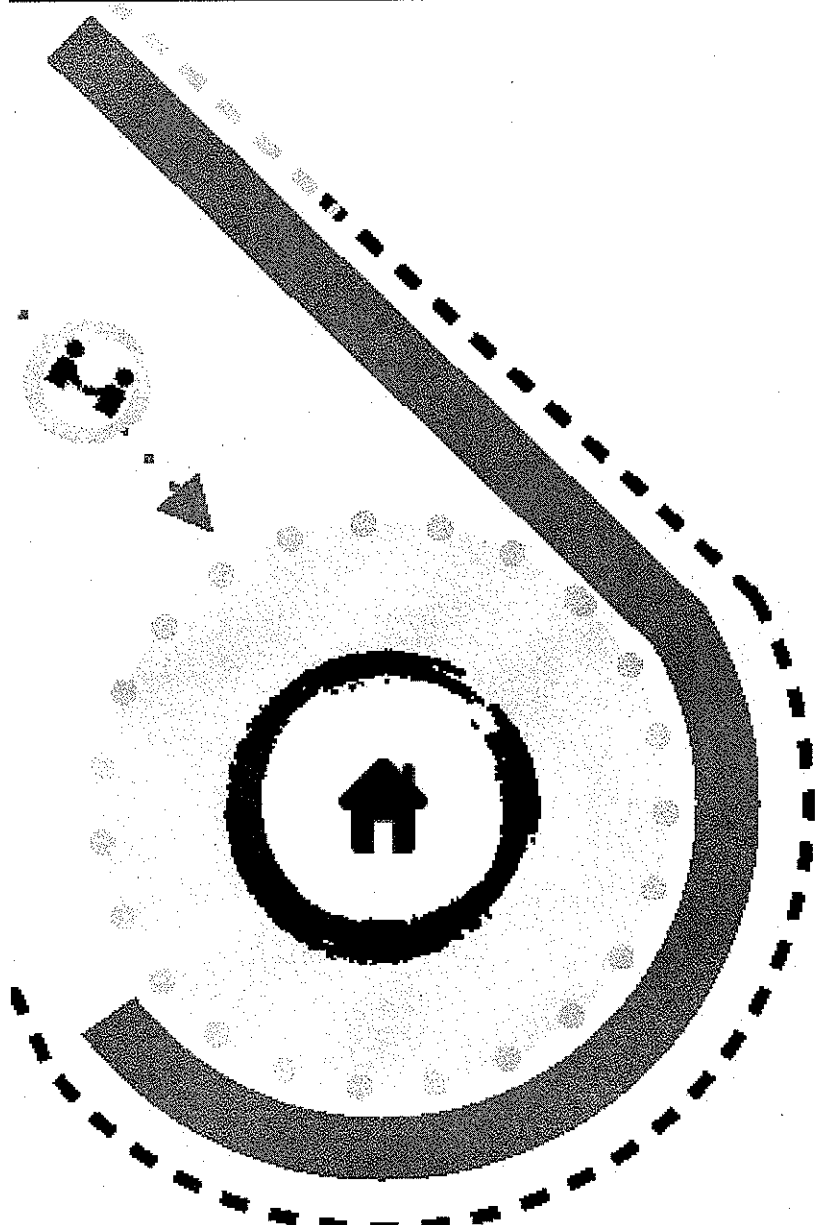




TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
The Plan.....	3
Vision.....	3
Desired Housing and Homelessness System for Windsor Essex..	4
Principles.....	5
Goals.....	6
Strategies.....	8
Access.....	7
Person-Centred Housing Supports.....	9
Interim Housing.....	11
Housing Linked with Supports.....	13
Rental Housing.....	15
Ownership Housing.....	17
Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation.....	19
Concluding Comments.....	21
Acknowledgements.....	22
Appendix: Plan at a Glance.....	23

“Home is not only safe, reasonable and affordable, but a place where you feel a sense of security and belonging. A place where you want to establish yourself and your family.”

“A place where I feel safe and can call my own”

INTRODUCTION

Housing is an important building block in a healthy and inclusive community. Access to affordable, adequate and suitable housing is a vital indicator of overall health and wellbeing. Delivery of housing and services related to housing is facilitated through an interconnected and coordinated system of public, non-profit and private partners. The City of Windsor, as the designated Service Manager for the Service Area which includes the City of Windsor, County of Essex and Municipality of Pelee Island, is responsible for the administration and funding of housing and homelessness programs in Windsor Essex as well as coordinating the provision of housing.

As the Service Manager, the City of Windsor is required to establish a ten-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to provide a comprehensive approach to deliver a system of housing and homelessness service. Windsor Essex has long recognized the benefits of providing a full range of housing and has developed a number of strategic plans to address housing and homelessness issues in the community, including the 2004 and 2010 Windsor Essex Housing Analysis and Recommended Strategies (HARS) and the Community Plan for Homelessness.

The Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan builds on this previous work and identifies goals, objectives and strategies to improve access to safe, affordable, accessible and quality housing and support services for individuals and families in Windsor Essex. The Plan addresses the key aspects of housing from homelessness to affordable home ownership and focuses on housing stability,

homelessness prevention and quick access to permanent housing (housing first) rather than emergency responses. The Plan also considers the housing and support needs of specific population groups, including persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, immigrants, youth, seniors, and victims of domestic violence. In addition to identifying strategies to improve access to housing and supports, the Plan establishes a process to measure and report on progress toward meeting the goals. This will help ensure a coordinated system of service delivery and the most efficient use of limited resources.

While the City of Windsor has taken a leadership role in the development of the ten-year Housing and Homelessness Plan, this Plan is a community plan. It was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including residents, housing providers and support service agencies, (over 78 organizations and 243 residents participated in the consultations) with extensive input from the Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy Advisory Committee, a group that represents a wide range of key community stakeholders. The implementation of the Plan will also involve a wide range of community partners, including stakeholders from the private, non-profit and public sectors.

Please see the Background Report for further details on the development of the Plan.

"Home is the place I go at the end of the day. It's my shelter with my family."

"A place of rest, peace, and being safe, that is affordable."

THE PLAN

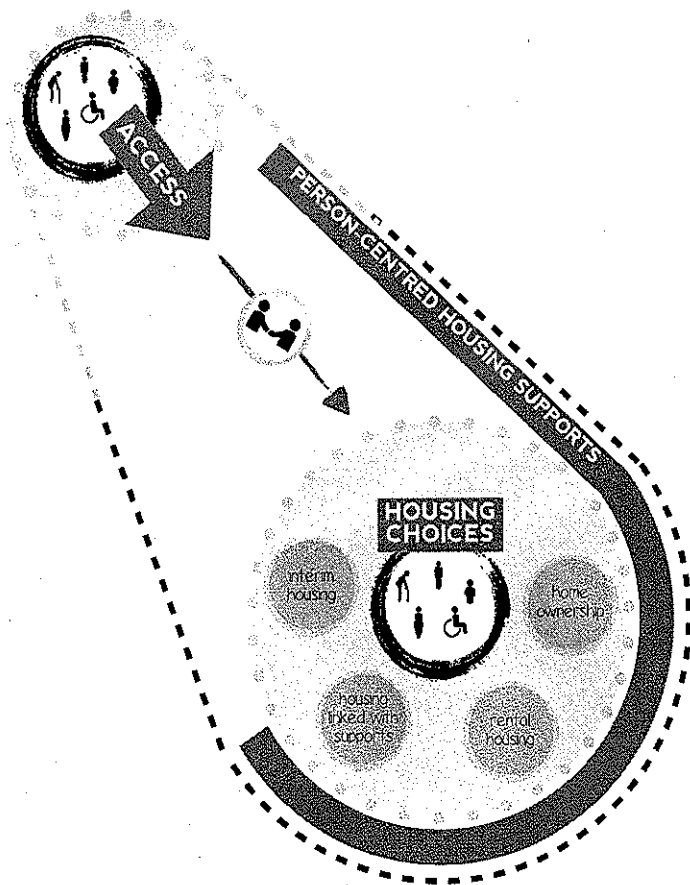
OUR VISION:

Windsor Essex is an inclusive community where everyone has a safe, affordable, accessible, and quality home, and everyone lives where they can actively participate

**1 Vision,
8 Guiding Principles,
7 Goals,
and 63 Strategies**

DESIRED HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM FOR WINDSOR ESSEX

We are using the following diagram to illustrate a simplified version of our desired housing and homelessness system.



From whatever point an individual or family accesses the system, they should move efficiently through coordinated **ACCESS** and be provided with housing and **PERSON-CENTRED SUPPORTS**, where needed. In cases where permanent housing is not immediately available, individuals experiencing absolute homelessness would be provided with **INTERIM HOUSING** to bridge the gap between homelessness and permanent housing, with the goal of having people move to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Some individuals with support needs may choose **HOUSING LINKED WITH SUPPORTS**. Others may reside in a variety of **RENTAL** and **OWNERSHIP HOUSING** options and receive supports in their home, unconnected to their housing. Some individuals and families simply need financial assistance to make their housing more affordable. In this case, they would reside in social or affordable housing or receive an ongoing subsidy to assist with their rent. Still others, (the largest portion of Windsor Essex residents) would simply navigate the housing options on their own and obtain their housing within the private rental or ownership housing markets.

PRINCIPLES

The Windsor Essex 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is built on these eight principles.

Housing First: Housing first is an approach where people, who are experiencing homelessness obtain and maintain permanent, affordable housing; and to assist those who are at-risk of homelessness to remain housed, that places the highest priority on keeping people or moving people into permanent housing as quickly as possible, and then providing the support necessary to maintain their housing.

Partnership Based: Housing and homelessness related services require strong partnerships, communication and collaboration between all orders of government, private, non-profit and co-operative housing providers, community support services and the people who require housing and homelessness related supports to build healthy, sustainable and inclusive neighbourhoods.

Inclusive: All persons have the right to equal treatment and protection from discriminatory practices that limit their housing opportunities. Local services, programs, initiatives and decision making will reflect the voices, experiences and input of people with lived experience of homelessness and risk of homelessness.

Simple Process: A process that is straightforward and understood by all people involved.

Fiscally Responsible: Funding will be administered for local initiatives that meet the intended purpose and outcomes of the consolidated program with due regard for economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Locally Driven: Homelessness related services, programs and housing must be locally relevant and based on peoples' needs, research and best practices to provide opportunities to access affordable and safe housing, employment, support services and other community resources.

Outcome Focused: Initiatives are created with the outcomes for the person in need of services and are informed by the principles of Housing First, people centred and are monitored, evaluated and continuously improved to prevent, address and reduce homelessness.

People Centred: Housing programs, services and supports should be based on a "people-first" approach that focuses on positive results for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness.

GOALS

There are seven key goals of the Windsor-Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan:

- 1. Access** Provide simple, coordinated and consistent access to programs, services and supports that act on what is important to the person receiving services
- 2. Person-Centred Housing Supports** Have supports available when needed, to act on what is important to the person receiving services, to assist the person in succeeding in their preferred housing
- 3. Interim Housing** Have temporary housing, meant to bridge the gap between homelessness and permanent housing, available where appropriate and where needed
- 4. Housing Linked with Supports** Have housing linked with a comprehensive and coordinated package of services and programs to assist a wide range of individuals with support needs in maintaining their housing
- 5. Rental Housing** Have a full range of rental housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations
- 6. Ownership Housing** Have a full range of ownership housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations
- 7. Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation** Measure and report on progress, evaluate success, and invest in continuous improvement of the housing and homelessness system

Accessing the right housing and services is complicated. There is a lack of awareness of available services and a lack of coordination among the services provided.

"Perception has a lot to do with it." (On trying to find accepting landlords)

"Less paper work. Less making people jump through hoops."

1 ACCESS

There are currently many places within the community for individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness or with housing issues to turn to. Residents and their service providers are not necessarily aware of what's available, or where to turn, and the services aren't necessarily available where or when they need them. There is also a lack of coordination and information sharing among service providers, leading to clients having to apply to multiple agencies and some people falling through the cracks. No matter who someone comes into contact with, they must be efficiently connected with appropriate services.

This has led to the need to coordinate access to the system to ensure it is clear, simple and easy to engage. Effective access will include making information on what housing options and services are readily available and where to go for help. It also includes making sure people being discharged from hospitals or correctional facilities have appropriate housing to go to and supports in place. A common referral and intake process and information sharing are also important to improve simplicity for the users of the system.

Goal 1: Provide simple, coordinated and consistent access to programs, services and supports that act on what is important to the person receiving services

Strategies:

- 2014 - 2015 1.1 Establish a single phone number and website for housing help that includes an after-hours housing crisis line
- 2014 - 2015 1.2 Develop and maintain an education strategy for trusted access points, housing providers, and support service providers
- 2014 - 2015 1.3 Ensure awareness of available services
- 2014 - 2015 1.4 Establish an effective referral and follow-up process among housing and service providers that is linked to a common intake and assessment process
- 2014 - 2015 1.5 Implement coordinated access and common assessment for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness with triaging to appropriate services, including interim housing where required
- 1.6 Dialogue with the Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and LHIN funded organizations to investigate opportunities to expand coordinated access to health funded housing and supports
- 1.7 Implement a common application process for social housing, Ontario Works, and childcare subsidies
- 1.8 Establish an amalgamated communication and information sharing platform
- 1.9 Develop a practice of coordinated discharge planning from institutional facilities
- 1.10 Support efforts to reduce transportation barriers that currently exist in the system and efforts to increase and improve transportation options

Strategies marked with 2014-2015 are targeted for completion by the end of 2015

Housing supports are limited and are not always appropriate for what the person needs

"We need to know what services and supports are out there!"

2 PERSON-CENTRED HOUSING SUPPORTS

Housing is not the only necessary ingredient for many individuals and families to successfully gain or maintain housing. Supports are a key component of the housing first approach. They allow the individual or family to deal with any issues that might lead to problems with housing. Supports may mean financial assistance to help maintain housing, or they may mean social or health related supports. Limited supports are available in the community, and they often have waiting lists and eligibility limitations. They are not always flexible enough to respond to individual needs. Services should offer flexibility and choice for individuals accessing them and intensity will vary depending on needs. Providing person-centred housing supports sometimes means having the services go to the individual where necessary, rather than requiring them to come to the service.

Goal 2: Have supports available when needed, to act on what is important to the person receiving services, to assist the person in succeeding in their preferred housing

Strategies:

- | | | |
|-------------|-----|--|
| 2014 - 2015 | 2.1 | Refine and disseminate information on the changes to the Housing Stability Plan which offers financial assistance for housing stability and homelessness prevention |
| 2014 - 2015 | 2.2 | Refine the services funded through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative to better align with the strategies in the Plan |
| 2014 - 2015 | 2.3 | Enhance housing support worker roles to provide support, using a person-directed approach, to individuals with moderately complex challenges |
| 2014 - 2015 | 2.4 | Develop and implement a Housing First intensive support initiative for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and/or who have the highest needs. |
| 2014 - 2015 | 2.5 | Dialogue and collaborate with health sector and community stakeholders to increase the number of people receiving a coordinated package of supports to maintain their housing and optimal health |
| 2014 - 2015 | 2.6 | Increase the number of trusteeships available to individuals voluntarily seeking a trustee |
| | 2.7 | Identify and expand the services and supports available in different languages to meet the unique needs of newcomers and Francophones as well as those who are vision or hearing impaired and those with literacy issues |
| | 2.8 | Expand the number of Aboriginal support workers to meet the unique needs of Aboriginal individuals |
| | 2.9 | Develop formalized relationships among housing and service providers, and with other sectors, by establishing protocols, agreements, information sharing, and collaboration opportunities to ensure coordinated supports |

Interim housing options in Windsor Essex are not available for some population groups and do not always provide enough support to help people find and maintain permanent housing as quickly as possible

"I've been self-sufficient all my life. I never expected to be here."

3 INTERIM HOUSING

Even with a full range of housing and support service options in the community, interim housing, including emergency shelters and transitional housing units, will still be required in Windsor Essex. Individuals and families will experience unforeseen circumstances that will require emergency services and immediate access to accommodation. There are currently no emergency shelters for families and no interim housing in the County of Essex. While the overall philosophy of this Plan is a housing first approach there are also some population groups and circumstances where transitional housing is appropriate. For example, it is appropriate for youth in the County of Essex who are willing to move to the City for permanent housing later, but based on their current circumstances, wish to stay in the County for the time-being. Likewise, interim housing was identified as a need for Aboriginal families, for example in the case of reunification of families. So, interim housing facilities will still be required in the community. While there are currently interim housing options for youth and Aboriginal families, these are limited and do not fully address the need.

Goal 3: Have temporary housing, meant to bridge the gap between homelessness and permanent housing, available where appropriate and where needed

Strategies:

- 2014 - 2015 3.1 Pilot an initiative where social housing units would be re-targeted to accommodation with an interim affordable rent for families, with the intention that the family would be able to stay in the unit on a permanent basis if eligible
- This is a housing first approach where the family would be provided with what hopefully would be permanent housing. For administrative purposes only, the units would be deemed as interim housing. Only in situations where the family didn't qualify for social housing would they later move to other permanent housing
- 2014 - 2015 3.2 Right-size the shelter system, including beds for victims of domestic violence, by conducting an assessment of demand for shelter beds and adding and reducing beds where warranted
- 2014 - 2015 3.3 Re-evaluate the funding formula for emergency shelters to better achieve the strategies in the Plan
- 2014 - 2015 3.4 Review shelter policies and amend where required, to ensure policies are not supporting housing instability and inappropriate housing choices
- 3.5 Improve the accessibility of interim housing where required
- 3.6 Expand the supply of interim housing in the County of Essex by using the existing rental housing stock
- 2014 - 2015 3.7 Evaluate the need for interim housing for youth, and expand supply if appropriate
- 2014 - 2015 3.8 Evaluate the need for interim housing for Aboriginal families, and expand supply of transitional housing if appropriate

Individuals in housing with supports (formerly referred to as domiciliary hostels) do not have all the supports they need

"It's difficult to give up your own space and independence."

4 HOUSING WITH SUPPORTS¹

For some individuals who need supports to maintain their housing, it may be in the form of housing linked with supports (as opposed to having the supports brought in as required, but not affiliated with their housing). Currently, individuals living in housing with supports (formerly referred to as domiciliary hostels) often do not have access to a full range of supports to meet their needs, including housing supports, quality of life supports, as well as mental health and addictions services. Also, there isn't consistent accountability for the level of services provided. Further, some individuals are placed in housing with related supports, where it may not be the most appropriate option. Other supportive housing options have long waiting lists and individuals who could otherwise transition to independent living in the community are not adequately supported to make those transitions where desired. It is very important that individuals in housing linked with supports have access to seamless supports to assist them to maintain their housing.

-
- 1 This goal refers to housing with supports in its generic use and not specifically housing with supports that are funded through CHPI.

Housing integrated with supports refers to situations where the housing provider also offers the supports (housing with supports funded through CHPI is one example of housing integrated with supports but Community Living organizations would be another example).

Housing linked with supports refers to situations where the housing and supports are connected, but the supports are provided by a party that differs from the housing provider.

Goal 4: Have housing linked with a comprehensive and coordinated package of services and programs to assist a wide range of individuals with support needs in maintaining their housing

Strategies:

- 4.1 Expand the supply of housing with supports, which may be housing integrated with supports or housing linked with supports.¹
- 4.2 Implement coordinated access and common assessment to housing with supports funded through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)
- 2014 - 2015 4.3 Develop interdisciplinary team roles to support individuals living in housing with supports funded through CHPI including:
 - o housing supports
 - o quality of life programming
 - o staff training and capacity building, and
 - o monitoring of services provided
- 4.4 Establish partnerships with LHIN funded mental health and addictions organization(s) to offer mental health and addictions supports to individuals living in housing with supports funded through CHPI
- 4.5 Establish partnerships with educational institutions for community placements in housing with supports funded through CHPI
- 2014 - 2015 4.6 Conduct a review of policies and practices related to housing with supports funded through CHPI
- 2014 - 2015 4.7 Implement and establish consistent accountability for standards for housing with supports funded by CHPI to be developed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH)
- 2014 - 2015 4.8 Re-evaluate per diem rates for housing with supports funded through CHPI

¹ This strategy refers to housing with supports in its generic use and not specifically housing with supports that are funded through CHPI.

Safe, accessible and good quality rental housing options are not available in all communities in Windsor Essex

"A place that provides comfort and security in addition to just being a 'basic' means of shelter."

5 RENTAL HOUSING

Rental housing is a key component of the housing system. With the high vacancy rates in the City of Windsor, there is not a need for additional rental stock in the City, but simply more subsidies to improve affordability for low and moderate income renters. In the County of Essex, however, there is a lack of rental housing options. Rental housing that is affordable to many low income households is often in poor condition. For those seeking social housing, there is a limited supply of one-bedroom units and large units for families, as well as modified/accessible units for persons with disabilities. There are also policies that are hindering timely access to social housing for some individuals.

Goal 5: Have a full range of rental housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations

Strategies:

- 2014 - 5.1 Review social housing policies to identify opportunities to remove barriers to accessing social housing
- 2015
- 5.2 Regularly monitor the condition of the social housing portfolio and actively pursue funding to assist with energy efficiency and capital repairs

- 5.3 Conduct a rationalization assessment of the Windsor Essex social housing stock beginning with Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation portfolio
- 5.4 Conduct an analysis of options and plan for ongoing viability and prevention of loss of social housing as operating agreements expire
- 5.5 Increase the number of households provided with rental assistance. This may include housing allowances, rent supplements, or head leases within private rental buildings to address the social housing waiting list
- 5.6 Increase the supply of rental housing in the County. This may include incentives to support the development of private market and non-profit development of affordable housing through funding from municipalities and senior levels of government
- 5.7 Target new development projects under affordable housing programs to meet specified needs, monitor changes in demographics and needs, and adjust targeting as required
- 2014 - 2015 5.8 In complying with legislative requirements for secondary suites, encourage and support flexible policies for community-wide inclusivity of secondary suites as an affordable rental housing alternative
- 5.9 Investigate opportunities to be more active in bringing rental units into compliance that do not meet standards
- 5.10 Review financial assistance for multi-residential rental housing repair to determine opportunities for improved take-up of funding
- 5.11 Move towards equalizing the residential and multi-residential tax rates for projects with a certain percentage of affordable units to enhance the affordability of the existing rental stock
- 2014 - 2015 5.12 Review income eligibility requirements for financial assistance for homeowner renovation and repair

Home ownership remains relatively affordable although house prices are increasing.

"A place where family and friends come together. Where you feel safe. A place where everyone is welcome. A sanctuary."

6 OWNERSHIP HOUSING

Home ownership is a desirable option for many households. To meet housing needs, the housing must be safe, affordable, in good condition and be accessible where required. Average house prices in Windsor Essex remain affordable, although these are increasing and the supply of lower-priced homes is diminishing. However, some moderate income households are finding it a challenge to save for a down payment, thus preventing them from moving from rental to home ownership.

Goal 6: Have a full range of ownership housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations

Strategies:

- 6.1 Increase home ownership opportunities for renters by refining home ownership assistance initiatives
- 6.2 Provide supports, including education and outreach, for home ownership opportunities to social housing tenants
- 6.3 As part of (a) neighbourhood improvement initiative(s), identify areas in a community where home ownership and renovation assistance would be available to residents
- 6.4 Investigate social investment financing initiatives to support home ownership
- 6.5 Continue collaboration with community organizations offering home ownership assistance, such as Habitat for Humanity
- 6.6 Develop policies, and engage the building community, to support the creation of new barrier free housing
- 6.7 Make financial assistance available for accessibility renovations and repair to existing housing on an ongoing basis
- 6.8 Develop and implement an education strategy for Windsor Essex residents about available services and financial assistance to support people in maintaining their housing

7 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, REPORTING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

29 of the 63 strategies in the Plan are a priority for the first two years. Please see the Background Report for target timelines for the other strategies and a preliminary list of stakeholders who will be involved in implementation priority.

Effectively taking action to address housing and homelessness issues requires reliable, meaningful information, and analysis of that information, to measure progress and success and better inform system planning. It also allows the system to provide more effective supports.

Goal 7: Measure and report on progress, evaluate success, and invest in continuous improvement of the housing and homelessness system

Strategies:

- 2014 - 2015 7.1 The Housing Advisory Committee will be responsible for championing the implementation of the Plan
- 2014 - 2015 7.2 Develop outcome measures for key strategies in the Plan and engage in ongoing monitoring and reporting, including publishing an annual report card and semi-annual homelessness management information system reports once implemented, as well as reporting quarterly and annually on municipally, provincially, and federally prescribed performance measures.
- 2014 - 2015 7.3 Establish a strategy for regular performance evaluation of the 10-year Plan and its strategies and invest in continuous improvement of housing and homelessness services
- 7.4 Expand partnerships with educational institutions, including to provide community placements for person-centred housing support and research and evaluation
- 7.5 Review the Plan in five years and revise strategies and targets as appropriate
- 7.6 Develop a process and allocate resources for ongoing value-based training and professional development for staff and volunteers in the housing and homelessness system to ensure adherence to the person-centred principle
- 2014 - 2015 7.7 Develop a change management strategy to support stakeholders in embracing the principles and strategies of the Plan, ensuring awareness of changes in the housing and homelessness system, better service and resource coordination, and appropriate allocation of resources
- 7.8 Pursue opportunities to leverage existing community resources and advocate for funding and to be able to deliver on the strategies in the Plan

We can't achieve our goals alone!

While Windsor/Essex housing and homelessness stakeholders will take responsibility for the implementation of the strategies in the Plan, some of the strategies require support and resources from others, namely senior levels of government and the health sector. The Windsor/Essex community has unique needs and has long been a strong advocate for block funding from senior governments for housing and homelessness. The community acknowledges the steps that senior governments have taken thus far to transition to block funding, and urges continued progress to block funding for all housing and homelessness initiatives.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The 10-year Plan is a collaborative and community-based effort. Collectively the strategies in this Plan provide guidelines and an overall approach for creating a system of housing and homelessness that puts people at the centre, moves people into permanent housing quickly, provides the supports they need, and facilitates a range of housing choices to meet people's preferences.

However, the Plan is just the beginning. Next is implementation. A single point of accountability for implementation is required, and the City of Windsor will take on this role. The City's role will not be to implement the actions in the Plan on its own, but its role will include facilitating discussions of stakeholders and brokering partnerships. Implementation of the Plan will require collective efforts from all housing and homelessness stakeholders. It will also require strategic allocation of limited resources. As a next step, an implementation plan will be developed that outlines key actions required to see the strategies in the Plan come to fruition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Plan could not have been prepared without the dedicated assistance of the Long-term Affordable Housing Strategy Advisory Committee members and City of Windsor Staff, and the contribution from each of the community stakeholders and residents who provided valuable input into this document. We thank everyone who has taken part in the creation of this Plan.

Prepared by:



APPENDIX: PLAN AT A GLANCE

VISION	PRINCIPLES	GOALS	
<p>Windsor Essex is an inclusive community where everyone has a safe, affordable, accessible and quality home and lives where they can actively participate.</p>	<p>Housing First</p> <p>People Centred</p> <p>Partnership Based</p> <p>Locally Driven</p> <p>Inclusive</p> <p>Fiscally Responsible</p> <p>Outcome Focused</p> <p>Simple Process</p>	<p>1 ACCESS</p>	<p>Provide simple, coordinated and consistent access to programs, services and supports that act on what is important to the person receiving services</p>
		<p>2 PERSON CENTRED HOUSING SUPPORTS</p>	<p>Have supports available when needed, to act on what is important to the person receiving services, to assist the person in succeeding in their preferred housing</p>
		<p>3 INTERIM HOUSING</p>	<p>Have temporary housing, meant to bridge the gap between homelessness and permanent housing, available where appropriate and where needed</p>
		<p>4 HOUSING LINKED WITH SUPPORTS</p>	<p>Have housing linked with a comprehensive and coordinated package of services and programs to assist a wide range of individuals with support needs in maintaining their housing</p>
		<p>5 RENTAL HOUSING</p>	<p>Have a full range of rental housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations</p>
		<p>6 OWNERSHIP HOUSING</p>	<p>Have a full range of ownership housing that offers safe, accessible and quality accommodations</p>
		<p>7 MONITORING, REPORTING & EVALUATION</p>	<p>Measure and report on progress, evaluate success, and invest in continuous improvement of the housing and homelessness system</p>

STRATEGIES									
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Implement coordinated access									
Establish information sharing platform									
Establish practice of coordinated discharge planning									
Reduce transportation barriers that exist in the system									
Refine Housing Stability Plan and CHPI	Enhance housing support for people with moderately complex challenges and implement Housing First intensive case management								
Establish partnership to increase health funded supports		Formalize relationships between partners to coordinate supports							
Increase number of trusteeships			Expand availability of Aboriginal housing support workers						
Expand services available to Francophone individuals and to those who are vision or hearing impaired and to those with literacy issues									
Initiate pilot of interim housing for families	Expand supply of interim housing in the County		Improve accessibility of interim housing						
Conduct necessary studies related to interim housing									
Review housing with supports policies		Establish increased supports in housing with supports							
Re-evaluate per diem rates for housing with supports funded through CHPI		Expand supply of housing linked with supports							
		Implement coordinated access							
Increase number of households receiving rental assistance									
Review social housing and financial assistance for homeowner renovation and repair eligibility policies		Move toward equalization of residential property tax rates							
		Conduct a rationalization assessment of the social housing stock							
Monitor social housing portfolio and pursue funding for energy efficiency and repair									
Establish policies to support secondary suites		Investigate opportunities to bring rental housing in poor condition into compliance with standards							
Provide assistance for repairs and accessibility renovations									
Refine homeownership assistance initiatives									
Develop policies and engage the building community in creating new barrier free housing									
Develop education strategy for residents about assistance to maintain housing			Provide supports for homeownership to social housing tenants						
Establish evaluation strategy	Develop a process and allocate resources for ongoing training and professional development for staff and volunteers			Review plan					
Initiate reporting		Develop a strategy to engage stakeholders and to leverage community resources							
Expand partnerships with educational institutions									



CHC
519-946-3251

PHOTO VOICE

"What home means to me..."

