

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS



5 Strategic Themes Summarized



Establish Strong Governance and Leadership

Desired Outcome

Successful implementation of the Strategy is supported by working partnerships with the public and private sectors, and all levels of government.

Key Concepts

Partnerships | Support for the Private Housing Market | Collaboration Amongst all Levels of Government | Tracking, Measurement and Reporting



Achieve Affordable Housing Target

Desired Outcome

Simcoe County residents have access to a minimum of 2,685 new affordable housing units by 2024.

Key Concepts

Achieving Target | Increasing Supply | Addressing Pressure Points | Supporting Those in Greatest Need | Addressing a Broad Range of Community Needs



Protect Existing Public Assets

Desired Outcome

85% of existing social housing units in the County remain part of the housing stock.

Key Concepts

Protecting Existing Housing Stock | Environmental Sustainability | Non-Profit and Co-operative Social Housing Providers | Capacity Building



Plan for the Public Good

Desired Outcome

All municipalities adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development and transportation modes across the County of Simcoe.

Key Concepts

Supporting Member Municipalities | Encouraging Private Development | Increasing Education for and About Affordable Housing



Create an Integrated Service Model for Housing and Supports

Desired Outcome

People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing.

Key Concepts

Supporting A Housing First Approach | Goal of Ending Homelessness | Enhanced Coordination with Other Community Services | Improving Data on Incidence and Scope | People-Centred Program and Service Delivery

STRATEGIC THEME ONE

Establish Strong Leadership and Governance

1.1 The County will work in partnership with local municipalities, community agencies, the private sector and other levels of government to implement this Strategy and build upon initiatives already proven to work in Simcoe.

Ongoing

1.2 Establish a Working Group comprised of elected officials, municipal senior staff, and representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors to be responsible for leading the implementation.

Short Term

1.3 Actively engage the private sector, to understand the barriers and advocate for changes in regulations and legislation to support the creation of affordable housing.

Ongoing

1.4 Advocate with other levels of government for changes in legislation and regulations that support initiatives and directions of the Strategy; increases in Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates and other poverty reduction initiatives.

Short Term

1.5 Consider establishing an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to increase investment in housing spectrum and comprehensive supports for residents.

Ongoing

1.6 Monitor the implementation of the Strategy. The Working Group and County staff will update targets and recommendations within 5 years of the launch of the Strategy and/or in response to significant policy, program or funding shifts with the potential to impact the implementation of the Strategy.

Ongoing

1.7 Publish annual report cards on the implementation of the Strategy.

Ongoing





STRATEGIC THEME TWO

Achieve Affordable Housing Target

2.1 Between January 1 2014 and January 1 2024, facilitate the creation of a minimum of 2,685 units of affordable housing through new development, acquisition, renovation and/or rent supplements, with a minimum of 198 of the units being affordable owned dwellings.

Long term

2.2 Optimize access to, and use of, rent supplements and/or other housing allowance assistance options as an efficient way to increase affordability.

Ongoing

2.3 Focus on supporting individuals and families in greatest housing need. Initiatives that increase affordable rental housing or help households access existing rental housing should focus first on renter households at the 40th income percentile or less.

Ongoing

2.4 Initiate a Sub-Committee to explore the creation of culturally appropriate off-reserve Indigenous housing, with a goal of creating a minimum of 66 units of affordable home ownership dwellings specifically for off-reserve persons – included in minimum target of 2,685 units.

Short term

2.5 The County, with its community partners, should ensure that the housing and support needs of youth are incorporated into future investments and initiatives. Housing with supports has proven to be an effective strategy for ending youth homelessness.

Short term

2.6 Emphasize access to, and development of, primarily one and two bedroom units to address affordable housing pressure points and to improve the range of options available to single individuals and single-parent families who are homeless.

Ongoing

STRATEGIC THEME THREE

Protect Existing Public Assets

- 3.1** Adaptively reuse under-used housing resources, including a review of over housing situations in current Rent-Geared-to-Income units in County-owned and Non-Profit Housing.

Medium term

- 3.2** Maintain and preserve existing housing assets and seize opportunities to renovate and improve other housing stock for the purpose of affordable housing.

Long term

- 3.3** Create a Sub-Committee to review the impact of the end of operating agreements on social housing stock and make recommendations to the County Council on managing this transition.

Short term

- 3.4** Where prudent to do so, maximize profit of existing housing stock as leverage for building more, newer housing stock elsewhere in the County.

Long term



STRATEGIC THEME FOUR

Plan for the Public Good

- 4.1** Amend local Official Plans to include the provision of a full range of housing types, in order to meet diverse needs of residents.

Short term

- 4.2** Create a private developer and homebuilder roundtable to increase private involvement in affordable housing development across the County.

Short term

- 4.3** All municipalities will be encouraged to adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the Strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development across the County.

Medium term

- 4.4** The County should make a clear commitment to the municipalities as to the financial tools it will support and the circumstances under which it will also waive and/or defer fees or taxes to facilitate the development of affordable housing.

Short term

- 4.5** The County will continue to work with local municipalities to support policies and infrastructures for transportation modes that support access to services, amenities and employment opportunities for those living in precarious, rental, subsidized and/or low income neighbourhoods where substandard housing may exist.

Ongoing

- 4.6** Increase education for, and about, affordable housing. Be proactive in addressing Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes, with developers, landlords, and the general public.

Ongoing



STRATEGIC THEME FIVE

Create an integrated service model for housing and supports

5.1 Shift from emergency and shorter-term solutions, to housing with supports by professionalized staff, which is the only way to end homelessness.

Ongoing

5.2 Improve data on the incidence, scope and depth of homelessness and housing instability. Accurate data is required for policy decisions and program enhancements.

Medium term

5.3 Explore opportunities for integrated technologies like the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) which will provide monitoring tools for accountability for an integrated housing and homelessness service model.

Medium term

5.4 Focus investment on those residents with longer homelessness and more complex issues.

Short term

5.5 Make necessary changes in the existing services, re-profiling funding as necessary, to focus on additional supports to people once housed to prevent future homelessness, including improving awareness of supports available for landlords and tenants.

Short term

5.6 Improve the organization of services in community, including through hubs and satellites, to expand services County-wide rather than expecting people to find their way to services.

Medium term

5.7 Remove unnecessary barriers by supporting harm reduction approaches and strategies to funded homeless services.

Short term

5.8 Facilitate strategic, integrated partnerships and service delivery between the homeless, health and corrections sectors.

Medium term

