

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

*Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*



2014 ANNUAL REPORT



A Message from the Warden



Access to attainable housing directly affects the social, economic and health outcomes of our residents and communities.

Given this significant impact, we are committed to improving affordable housing opportunities and building creative strategies towards ending homelessness. Our focus is on identifying people-centred solutions that provide a helping hand to those in need so they have opportunities to participate in the social and economic fabric of their community.

This commitment was solidified in January 2014 through the approval of our 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. During the next 10 years, we will work closely with our partners to develop and implement creative solutions to provide greater access to a range of housing options by achieving a minimum of 2,685 new affordable housing units throughout our region.

There is no single solution to address housing needs in Simcoe County. To achieve our goals, we must have strong collaboration with all levels of government, including area municipalities, public and private sector partners. We also recognize that to adequately address

affordable housing needs and achieve our objectives, further exploration of innovative housing styles, models, and funding is paramount.

By working together, we can collectively create a more seamless system of housing supports that is tailored to the individual and local needs of each community.

We are already making solid progress to engage and include our partners in the process and I'm pleased with the level of interest received from our municipalities and area partners to date. Achieving our goals will require ongoing involvement and collaboration with partner agencies for the entire 10 years.

By developing and implementing creative solutions to improve housing opportunities which support the movement of individuals through the housing continuum—from rental assistance to homeownership—we are effectively creating a brighter future for our residents, communities and local economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Marshall'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'G'.

Gerry Marshall,

Warden, County of Simcoe

Housing Our Future

REPORT CARD

JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2014

About the 2014 Housing Our Future Report Card

Under the Housing Services Act (2011), the County of Simcoe, as Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for this region, is responsible for developing and implementing a 10-year long-term affordable housing strategy effective January 2014.

Approved by County Council on January 28, 2014, *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy* outlines five Strategic Opportunities for effectively addressing housing and homelessness needs across the County:

1. Establish strong leadership and governance
2. Achieve affordable housing target
3. Protect existing public assets
4. Plan for the public good
5. Create an integrated service model for housing and supports

The 10-year plan incorporates both population-level and performance-level outcomes required to achieve community well-being and policy and/or program effectiveness.

What's more, under each Strategic Opportunity, a number of indicators have been identified for tracking and performance measurement.



DEFINITIONS

Outcome

A condition of well-being for children, youth, adults, families, seniors, and/or all County residents.

Indicator

A measure that helps quantify the achievement of the desired outcome.

Performance Measure

A measure of how well a program, agency, or service system is working.

Performance Measurement

Using Results Based Accountability, a simple common-sense framework, this report card will use three performance measures to evaluate implementation of our Strategy.

How Much Did We Do?

QUANTITY #

How Well Did We Do It?

QUALITY %

Is Anyone Better Off?

EFFECT/IMPACT

= How Are We Doing

Strong Governance and Leadership

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY 1

DESIRED OUTCOME: SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY IS SUPPORTED BY WORKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, AND ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

On January 28, 2014, County Council approved *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*.

To facilitate the development of a Strategic Implementation Plan, that turns the objectives of the Strategy into recommendations for specific action, a sub-committee of County Council was created.

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHA) brings many valuable partners to the table. The AHA Committee is comprised of six municipal representatives for the geographical areas of North, South, East and West Simcoe, and the cities of Barrie and Orillia. Additionally, six non-municipal representatives were selected based on their expertise in housing development, community health, housing and homelessness prevention, mental health, and property management. The Committee is further supported by County senior staff across all departments.

To further its work, representatives on the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee are required to liaise with the sectors they represent and report external finding back to the Committee.

Understanding there is no single solution that can address the affordable housing needs in our region, the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee undertook a county-wide municipal engagement process to obtain feedback from a local perspective to help inform the development of its implementation plan. This process included offering municipal deputations to all 18 member municipalities, including the cities of Barrie and Orillia.

2015 Affordable Housing Advisory Committee



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Initiated service delivery partnerships with Local Health Integration Networks (LHINS) to increase Housing with Supports.
- ▶ Partnered with Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to host 2014 National Housing Day event.
- ▶ Released first annual report card for work completed between 2014-2015.

Achieve Affordable Housing Target

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY 2

DESIRED OUTCOME: SIMCOE COUNTY RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO A MINIMUM OF 2,685 NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS BY 2024; CREATED THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT, ACQUISITION, RENOVATION AND/OR RENT SUPPLEMENTS.

Adequate, appropriate and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents.

Having a place to call home provides an important base and anchor in our lives. A home nurtures and supports individuals and families as they go about their daily lives, and is directly linked to their health, wellness, safety, and productivity.

In January 2014, County Council approved *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*, which is a shared community vision of actions needed to effectively address housing and homelessness needs across the County. To make housing more attainable for Simcoe County residents, we set a target to increase our affordable housing supply by 2,685 units over the next 10 years.



402

rent supplements
and housing allowances
continued

How are we doing?

New secondary suites funded

1 complete; 6 in progress

113

affordable rental units
in progress



31 households

assisted with down-payments for
affordable homeownership

Story Behind the Data

Since the inception of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program in 2002, 413 units in thirteen affordable rental projects across seven municipalities have been developed with federal/provincial funds. County development charges were rebated in all applicable projects.

County funds have been used to create a 25-unit seniors affordable housing project and to support an additional four units, for a total of 442 new affordable rental units created over the past decade. Currently 113 units are in progress thanks to a combination of federal, provincial, County, and non-profit dollars.

The homeownership program helps free up rental accommodation and provides low to moderate income households with downpayment assistance. Since 2008, 335 households have been assisted with obtaining affordable homeownership. Additionally, Secondary suites are an economical means to not only create an affordable rental unit but also assist the homeowner with an additional source of income.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Approved Capital Repair Loan process for aging non-profit social housing infrastructure
- ▶ Completion of five-year bathroom renovation project for all County-owned apartment buildings. Upgrades resulted in enhanced accessibility and water savings of more than 25% on average, at each property.
- ▶ Received a Local Municipal Champion Award for community development from the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA).



Georgian Blue Gardens, Collingwood

Protect Existing Public Assets

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY 3

DESIRED OUTCOME: 85% OF EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS IN THE COUNTY REMAIN PART OF THE HOUSING STOCK.

How
are we
doing?

4,113 units
100%
remaining in
social housing portfolio*

\$3.4M
dollars invested
in maintaining assets

Story Behind the Data

Throughout 2014, the County of Simcoe worked to review and analyze the impacts of end of operating agreements on social housing stock, including capital repair projections to 2031, in order to manage potential transitions. This resulted in the approval of a Capital Repair Loan process for aging non-profit social housing infrastructure, to be implemented in 2015.

While many agreements expired, the County is pleased to report no non-profit providers operating within the County-managed housing system have left at this time.

Plan for the Public Good

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY 4

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.

Georgian Village, Penetanguishene



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ County continues to approve a budget of \$100K annually for the provision of development charge rebates for affordable housing, subject to availability of funds.
- ▶ Hosted public information sessions for homeowners, municipal planners, and building officials to promote the benefits of creating secondary suites and provide information on funding opportunities.

How are we doing?

Two Official Plan Amendments were approved, which included policies related to providing affordable housing through secondary suites.

County Land-Use Planning software is currently under development. Once complete, data collected for use will enable the County to provide more information on secondary suites.

Story Behind the Data

In order to adequately address affordable housing needs, municipalities must be open to further exploration of innovative housing styles, models, and funding options to reset the cost/lifestyle balance. Recent changes to the provincial Planning Act require municipalities to permit secondary suites in new and existing residential developments, although they are empowered to identify areas where such units are appropriate and to set appropriate building standards. This requirement represents an important opportunity to increase the availability of rental units in Simcoe County, particularly in the absence of the construction of new rental housing on a larger scale.

As outlined in *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*, focus will be placed on strengthening the supply of affordable housing and further promotion of available affordable housing planning tools and financial incentives.

Create an Integrated Service Model for Housing and Supports

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY 5

DESIRED OUTCOME: PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OBTAIN
AND RETAIN HOUSING

541 households
were successful in
retaining their housing at
six-months follow-up *

24,181
total nights
spent in emergency shelters
by combined households

302
households
in permanent housing
with supports

How
are we
doing?



Visibly Unseen Photo Exhibit, Barrie

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

▶ Continuing to promote Community Hub Models like:

- The newly renovated Barrie Salvation Army building that integrates shelter diversion with family service programs to improve housing stability outcomes
- The Barrie Pathways shared facility to formalize central intake and triage, drop-in/outreach services, and access to mental health and addiction case management services for those living with episodic and longer-term homelessness with high acuity needs

▶ Working with transitional housing operators to strengthen homelessness diversion, co-ordination of service delivery and prioritization.

▶ Strengthening funding investments to improve service delivery and community impact with programs like: housing resource centres, youth homelessness services, intake and assessment, food access, street outreach, and case management.

DESIRED OUTCOME:
PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
OBTAIN AND RETAIN HOUSING

How are we doing?

54 households

assisted with funding for urgent home repairs and accessibility modifications.

3,573 households

assisted with funding for housing retention

81 households

assisted with transitional housing

Story Behind the Data

The vision and intent of the County's homelessness prevention services, reflects the transition to a system that will shift the focus of services from reactive responses to homelessness to services that focus on more proactive and permanent housing solutions.

The guiding principles centre on Housing First, People-Centred, Partnership Based, Locally Driven, Inclusive, Fiscally Responsible and Outcome-Focused. Under the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, there now exists enhanced program flexibility and the ability to introduce additional innovative service options to meet the needs of an integrated service model for housing and supports.

Housing our future.

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

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