



HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

2016 Annual Report



A Message from the Warden

Since setting our goal in 2014 of creating 2,685 new units in Simcoe County by 2024, we have created more than 500 new affordable housing units across the County, allocated and secured funding for a number of new builds, and committed to several projects across the County in partnership with the private and non-profit sectors.

Together with our member municipalities, private sector partners, community stakeholders, and other levels of government, we have made a strong commitment to ensuring our most vulnerable residents have access to affordable housing.

Amidst increasing housing market pressures, Our Affordable Housing Advisory Committee continues to seek innovative approaches to address affordable housing needs. The Committee is taking an active leadership role in implementing our strategy and achieving our targets.

In 2015, we met with all 18 of our local municipalities and cities to share our plans and receive input on our implementation strategy; building county-wide collaboration and establishing a Municipal Liaison Committee. In 2016, we once again met with our municipal and city partners to provide updates on achievements towards local targets, share information about upcoming opportunities, and promote best practices for incentivizing the development of affordable rental housing by the private and not-for-profit sectors.

The year 2016 marked many accomplishments, including the creation of 75 new affordable rental units for seniors in both Penetanguishene and Barrie. The County also successfully rolled-out its first year of municipally-funded secondary suites and rent subsidy programs.

We were fortunate to receive an additional \$13.3 million in Federal-Provincial Social Infrastructure Funding, in addition to the approximately \$24.7 million received for 2014-2020.

We continue to deliver programs along the housing continuum, including homelessness prevention, shelters, rent

supplements/housing allowances, new affordable rental development, Ontario Renovates programs for secondary suites, urgent home repairs, accessibility modifications, and affordable homeownership.

Since setting our goals in 2014 of creating 2,685 new units in Simcoe County by 2024, we have:

- Increased the annual budget from \$100,000 to \$200,000 for the provision of development charge rebates, beginning in 2017.
- Issued capital repair loans to support four mandated social housing providers with urgent repairs to housing stock.
- Approved funding for a new build in Collingwood starting in 2017 that will create 117 new units, and replace 30 existing units through redevelopment.
- Approved funding and development charge relief for several projects across the County in partnership with private and non-profit sectors.
- Opened a new addition of 54-units of affordable rental housing in Barrie.

In addition to these accomplishments, we continue to work towards the construction of over 300 new affordable rental units in six communities, in partnership with municipal, private, and non-profit partners to create positive change for our residents.

Gerry Marshall,
Warden, County of Simcoe



Housing Our Future Annual Report

JANUARY 1, 2016 – DECEMBER 31, 2016

About the Housing Our Future 2016 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.



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.

Under each strategic opportunity, a number of indicators have been identified for tracking and performance measurement.

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 One

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

The Affordable Housing Advisory (AHA) Committee is a sub-committee of County Council established in 2014 to support the implementation of *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*.

An implementation plan for 2014-2017 (phase one) was approved by County Council in November 2015. This plan includes a target to achieve 895 units of affordable housing by December 2017. To assist in achieving units in the 2016/17 budget cycles, County Council committed municipal funding and focused its efforts on ensuring the creation of a variety of affordable housing options for County residents.

In an effort to build upon initiatives already proven to work in Simcoe County, County Council approved funding for the delivery of its own secondary suites program, as well as funding to support a new rent subsidy program, which were effectively rolled-out in 2016.

County Council also approved the re-development of a Simcoe County Housing Corporation location in Collingwood that will include both replacement of social housing and creation of new affordable housing.



To stimulate support for continued development of affordable housing the AHA Committee and County staff also actively engaged key stakeholders:

- Met with the Minister of Housing to address flexibility within social and affordable housing funding envelopes to encourage innovation, and meet affordable housing targets.
- Provided written comment to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to help inform the Government of Canada's development of a National Housing Strategy.
- Hosted a series of Information Sessions for local developers on the rental development funding opportunities available through the Investment in Affordable Housing Program.
- Hosted BILD and landlord focus groups to explore tools, incentives, and best practices in promoting and incentivizing affordable housing development.
- Supported continued engagement of a Municipal Liaison Group which includes representation from municipal staff from planning and building departments across the county.
- Continued participation in current community- and sector-based networks for partnerships in planning and delivery of homelessness support services and homelessness prevention advocacy.
- Conducted a second round of municipal deputations to inform member municipalities, and the cities of Barrie and Orillia, about affordable housing progress and achievement of local targets.

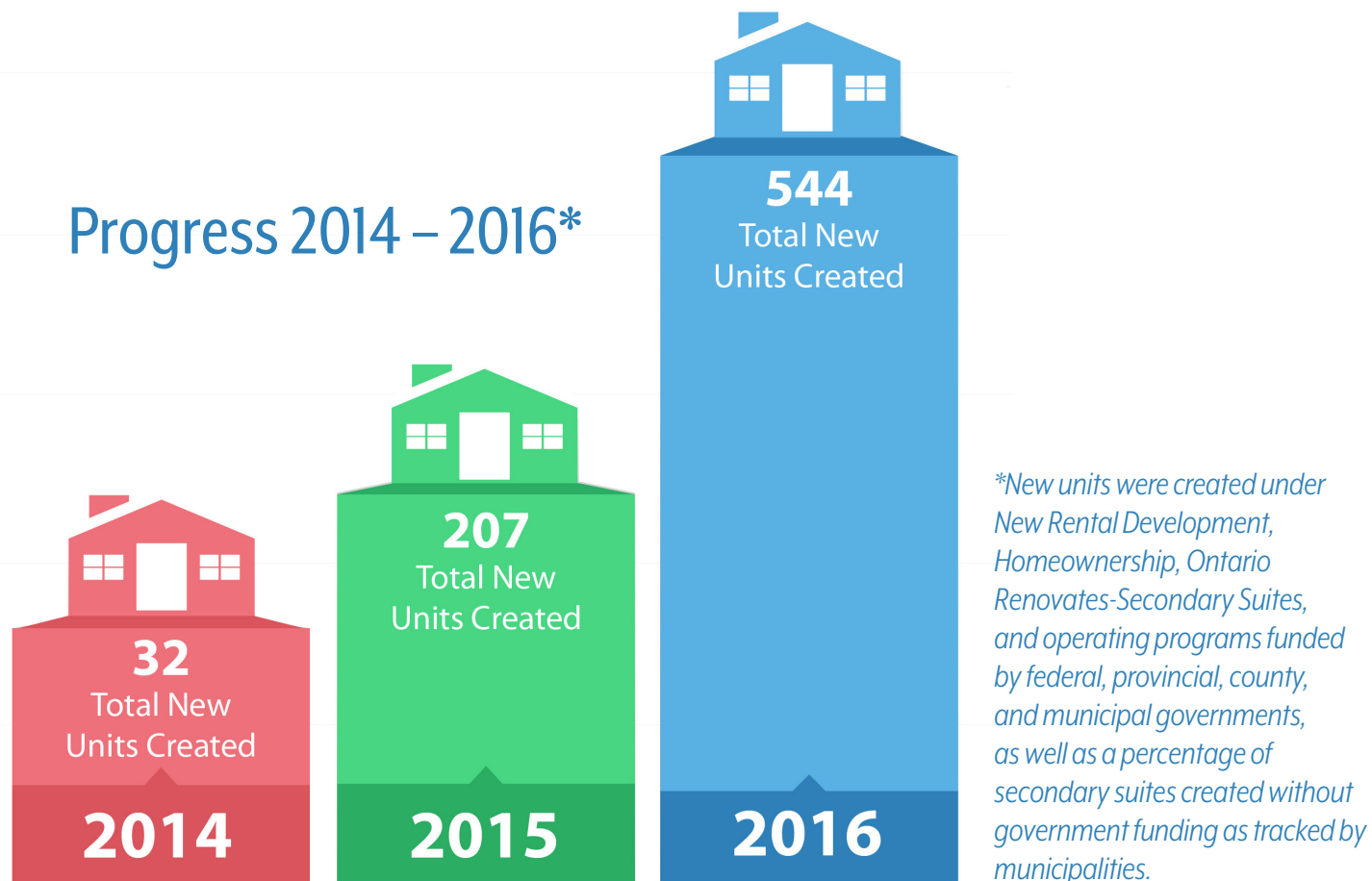
Accomplishments

- Successfully launched new County-funded Secondary Suites and Rent Subsidy programs.
- Issued a 2016 Call for Proposals to solicit municipal interest in affordable housing development in partnership with Simcoe County Housing Corporation, resulting in 11 offered sites in six municipalities.
- Completed an affordable housing project in Barrie (Brooks Street) that featured an expansion of 54 one-bedroom units designed for seniors, which included accessibility features and energy efficient utilities.
- Approved increase in annual budget from \$100K to \$200K for the provision of development charge rebates, beginning 2017.

Achieve Affordable Housing Target

Strategic Opportunity Two

DESIRED OUTCOME: Simcoe County residents have access to a minimum of 2,685 new affordable housing units by 2024; Phase I of the implementation (January 2014 – December 2017) targets 895 new affordable housing units.



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

Housing directly affects health outcomes of individuals and families, enhances their ability to access educational and employment opportunities and leads to increased participation in the social and economic fabric of the community.

Since County Council approved *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy* in 2014, continued progress is being made towards promoting, providing, and protecting a range of housing options for County residents; achieving 544 new units* county-wide in the past three years.

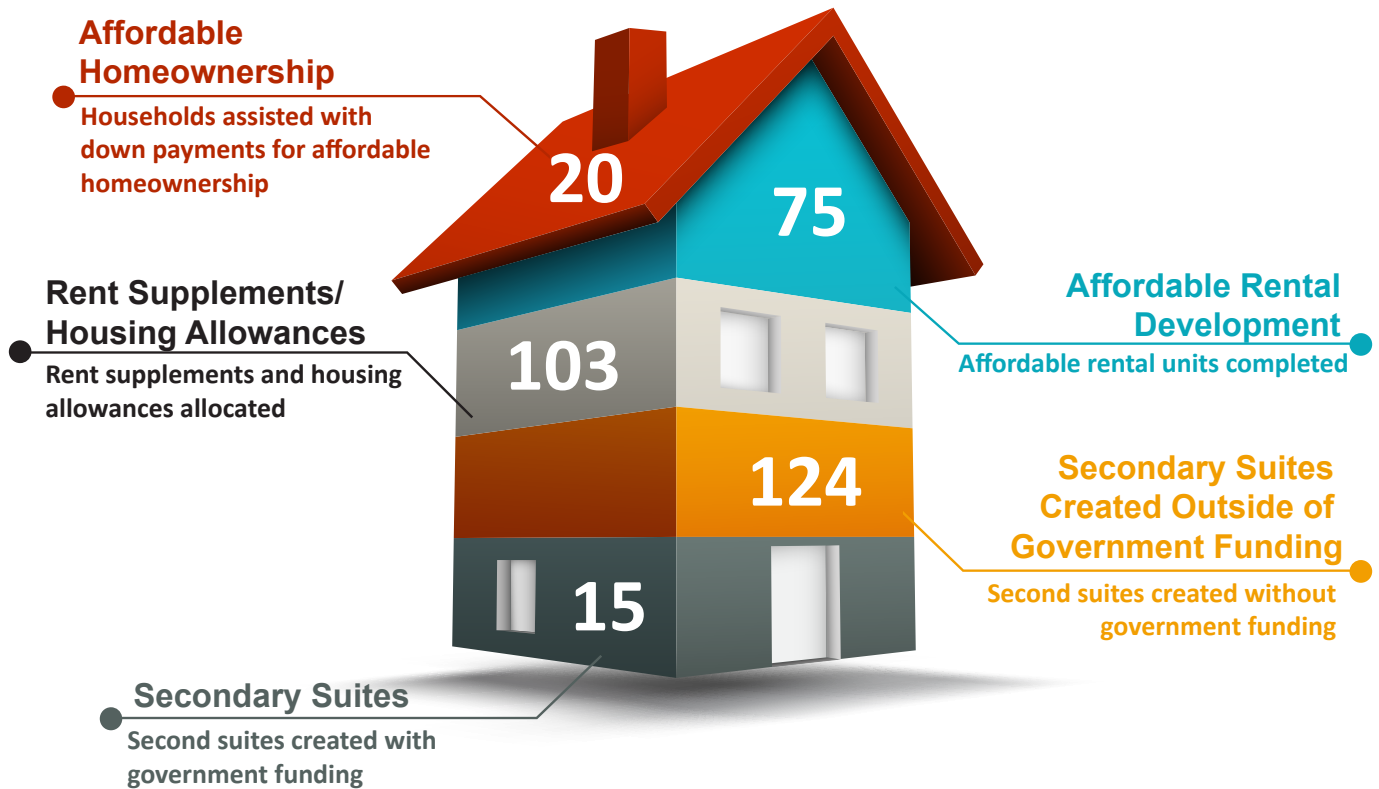
The County of Simcoe has made a commitment to optimizing access to, and use of, rent supplements and/or other housing allowance assistance options as an efficient way to increase affordability.

Moreover, the County strives to increase access to, and development of primarily one- and two-bedroom units to address affordable housing pressure points; improving the range of options available throughout the housing continuum.



How Are We Doing?

Progress 2016



337 New Units Created in 2016
544 Total New Units Created Since 2014

**Data on the number of secondary suites created outside of government funding were provided by local municipalities; based on a percentage of secondary suites permits issued and deemed ready for occupancy.*

Story Behind the Data

Prior to the approval of the 10-Year Strategy, and since the inception of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program in 2002, 451 units in 14 affordable rental projects across 7 municipalities have been developed with federal and provincial funds. County development charges were rebated in all applicable projects; 38 of these units count towards our targets.

More recently, federal, provincial, county, and municipal funding was used to create affordable housing, including new County programs for 60 secondary suites and 100 rent subsidies during 2016-2017.

Partnerships with local municipalities have resulted in an

increased ability to report on secondary units created without government funding.

Innovative solutions, like the utilization of a revolving-fund in delivery of affordable homeownership down payment assistance, increased the anticipated amount of households assisted with down payments in 2016, and shortened the waitlist for those awaiting a funding offer.

Through partnership with municipal, private, and non-profit stakeholders, more than 300 units of affordable rental development are in various stages of the construction process in six different communities across the County. Completion of units will occur throughout 2017-2019.

Protect Existing Public Assets

Strategic Opportunity Three

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



How Are We Doing?

3,935

units of mandated social housing remain in the social housing portfolio*

175

former social housing units remain affordable housing inventory

\$7.9 million

invested in maintaining assets* during 2016

Out of the original 4,113 units in the social housing portfolio, currently 96% remain affordable housing.

**This includes properties owned by the Simcoe County Housing Corporation, as well as non-profit providers.*



Accomplishments

- Completion of an affordable housing project in Barrie (Brooks Street - pictured above) featuring an expansion of 54 one-bedroom units designed for seniors; including accessibility features and energy efficient utilities, as well as improvements to the existing social housing building.
- County Council approved a redevelopment plan in Collingwood, utilizing a vacant parcel of land (including some donated by the Town of Collingwood) and the demolition of 30 existing townhomes for the creation of 147 new units. This results in a net gain of 117 affordable housing units and maximizes County owned lands, increasing supply while creating a more sustainable, energy efficient portfolio with reduced operating costs.
- Under the Social Infrastructure Fund \$13.3 Million in federal-provincial funding will help to create 84 new units, as well as repairing existing social housing buildings in 2016/2017.

Story Behind the Data

Ongoing maintenance and preservation of existing housing assets is a continued focus as social housing stock ages. Where prudent to do so, the County seizes opportunities to leverage assets for building more, newer housing stock; as evidenced through strategic redevelopment of existing social housing properties.

Some social housing providers can exit the social housing system when their operating agreements end. The County continues to work with providers to track the continuation of

affordable housing. 175 former social housing units continue to be offered as affordable housing by their non-profit providers.

A Capital Repair Loan process was established in 2015 to assist mandated social housing providers with urgent capital repairs. This helps to address non-profit social housing infrastructure. In 2016, \$1.6 million was issued through provider loans. Additionally, federal-provincial funding was utilized to support capital repairs for four providers.

Plan for the Public Good

Strategic Opportunity Four

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.



Story Behind the Data

A Municipal Liaison Group continues to meet quarterly to discuss ways to improve affordable housing outcomes at the local municipal level, and best practices for promoting and incentivizing the development of affordable housing.

The County continues to provide development charges and property tax incentives for affordable housing development.

Ongoing interaction with local media, in relation to planning and development, has provided the County of Simcoe and its municipal partners with an opportunity to increase education about affordable housing; promoting its vital role in healthy and prosperous communities.

On December 6, 2016, the Province of Ontario passed legislation, *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*, that will help ensure better access to affordable and adequate housing for the people of Ontario. The Act will allow municipalities to implement inclusionary zoning, exempt secondary suites in new homes from development charges, and give local Service Managers more flexibility.

These changes will support the work that the County has undertaken through the Municipal Liaison Group.

Accomplishments

- A Municipal Housing Tools and Incentives Best Practices Information Sheet was developed to provide information to support municipal levels of government within the County to partner with the private and non-for-profit sectors in the creation of new affordable rental housing.
- Developed new tracking mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the development of privately created Secondary Suites.
- Local municipal accomplishments include enhanced local public transit system with linkages between Clearview, Collingwood, and Wasaga Beach; the development of a comprehensive guide to secondary suites (Wasaga Beach), Council approval of a new Community Improvement Plan (Barrie), and donation of land and other incentives for a Simcoe County Housing Corporation affordable rental housing redevelopment (Collingwood).*

*As reported through the Municipal Liaison Group.



Create an Integrated Service Model for Housing and Supports

Strategic Opportunity Five

DESIRED OUTCOME: People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing.



How Are We Doing?

27,342 total nights

spent in emergency shelters
by combined households

707 households

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

564 households

in permanent housing with supports that use
Housing First approaches, which include:

245 households

supported by the County of Simcoe's
Domiciliary Care Program

212 households

assisted by the Canadian
Mental Health Association

58 households

assisted with Rapid Re-Housing

49 households

supported by the Salvation Army

2,637 households

assisted with funding for housing retention
for rent and utility arrears

168 households

have received assistance with home repairs
and accessibility modifications since 2014

119 households

assisted with transitional housing

**Some household follow-ups
at six months may be duplicated.*

Story Behind the Data

In June 2016, the Ministry of Housing (MHO) and seven partner provincial ministries visited our area over a two day period to learn first-hand from County staff and local community stakeholders about chronic homelessness in Simcoe County. This approach represents an innovative “whole-of-government” approach to better enhance collaboration across provincial ministries and homelessness stakeholders.

Partnerships between federal, provincial, and municipal funding partners have been instrumental in supporting community impact by building capacity in the homeless sector, supporting front-line training and development for front-line workers in the areas of mental health, trauma-informed care, housing-based case management, aboriginal sensitivity, and self-care.

Accomplishments

- Fifty-eight households received housing through the Rapid Rehousing program in 2016, which included a total of 69 adults, 45 children under the age of 12, and 19 youth aged 13-18.
- Local information gathered from the Simcoe County January 2016 20,000 Homes Campaign Registry Week is supporting the planning and development of a Housing First program to support the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness across Simcoe County by:
 - supporting vulnerable populations through additional investments in community caseworkers to assist people experiencing homelessness in achieving their individualized goals and objectives;
 - putting discharge planning protocols in place for individuals exiting from provincially funded agencies, such as child welfare and corrections
 - using systems-planning approaches to identify and develop innovative responses to address gaps and pressures across the regional services system, such as planning and funding for a regional Housing First team.

20,000 Homes

The 20,000 Homes Campaign is a national movement of communities working together to permanently house 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable homeless people by July 1, 2018.

The Simcoe County community participated in a 20,000 Homes Campaign Registry Week in January 2016.

Led locally by the Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness, and supported by the County of Simcoe, the purpose was to identify, determine the needs of, and prioritize the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness across Simcoe County for housing.

Local Enumerations

Beginning in 2018, the County of Simcoe will be leading a local homelessness enumeration every two years, in accordance with new provincial legislation.

The enumeration exercise will include significant community consultation, and will build upon learnings from the inaugural 20,000 Homes Campaign Registry week in 2016.



Simcoe County 20,000 Homes Campaign

A national movement of communities, mobilizing together to house 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable people by July 1, 2018. Locally led by the Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness (SCATEH) and supported by the County of Simcoe. Simcoe County Registry Week was January 13-20, 2016.

Why Did We Participate Locally?

- To connect people experiencing homelessness in Simcoe County to the appropriate services
- To track the progress of housing individuals at the local level for the national campaign goal
- To understand the big picture of need in our communities and the levels of vulnerability
- To raise awareness of issues of homelessness in our community
- To inform local policy and service delivery planning

How the Assessment Works

ACUTY

is used to describe the complexity of the situation that an individual is facing, which is likely to have an effect on their housing stability.

The V-SPDAT assessment questionnaire provides an ACUTY score based on survey participants' responses and provides a recommendation of housing intervention based on this acuity score



Data Limitations

Voluntary Survey - the data is reflective of the population that was reached on January 15 and 16, 2016, not necessarily all the people experiencing homelessness in Simcoe County. Rural/Urban outreach efforts and seasonality need to be considered. Risk of interview bias - potential that the interviewer unintentionally influenced the responses, which can commonly happen by listing examples or summarizing a person's response during data entry. Under-reporting - if emergency service use questions. In some instances, checkmarks were recorded instead of actual number of uses.

Campaign Details

More than 50
Community agencies involved

More than 120
Volunteers and professional staff surveyed people experiencing homelessness or precarious housing

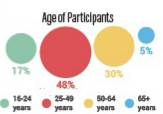
292
Surveys completed

Demographics

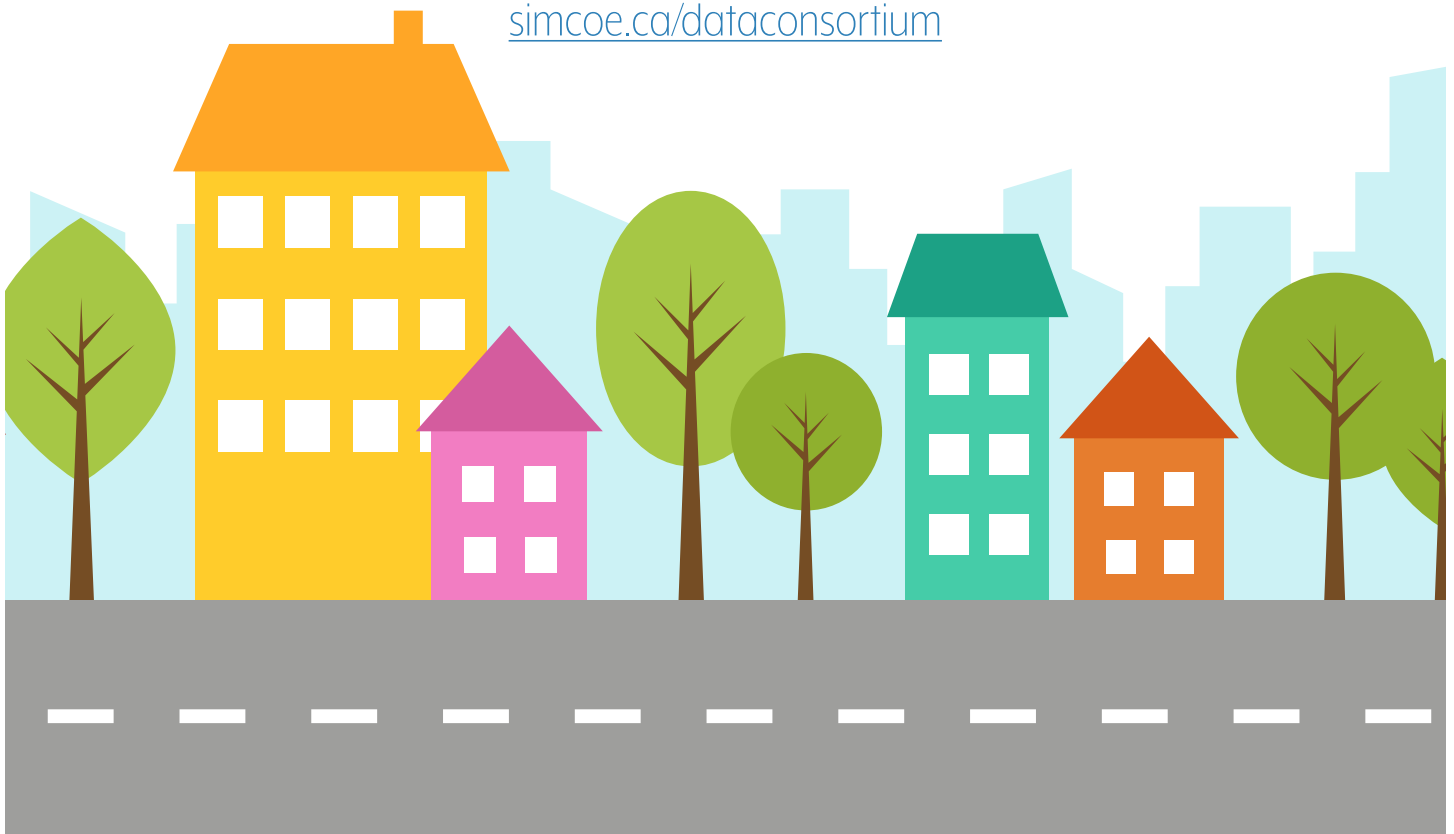
22%
Self-identified as Aboriginal or having Aboriginal ancestry

16%
Have been in foster care

13%
Have been in jail/prison in the past 6 months

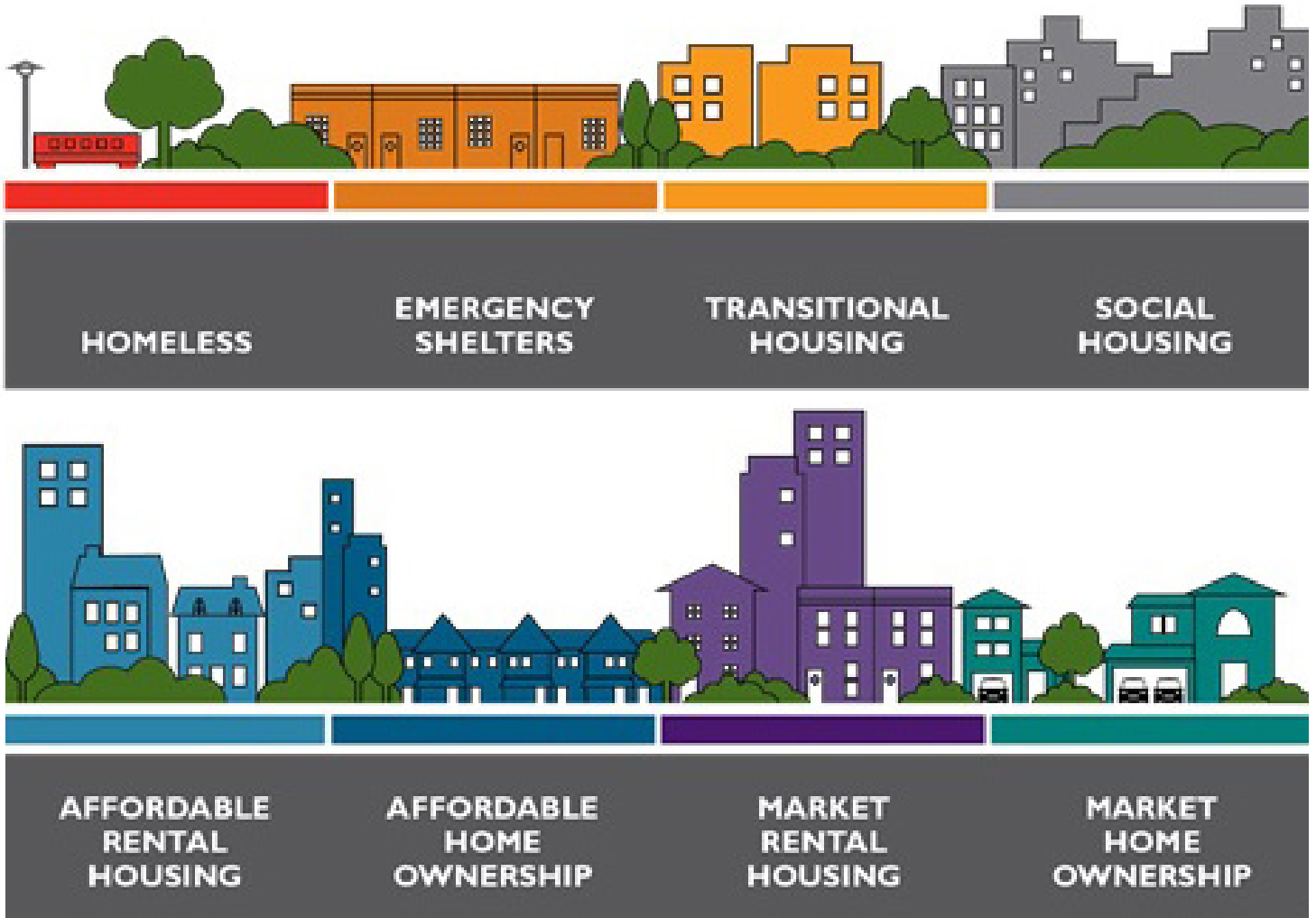


Additional reports and findings from the
Simcoe County 20,000 Homes Campaign
 can be accessed at:
simcoe.ca/dataconsortium



Next Steps in Housing Our Future

The Housing Continuum



Housing needs can be viewed in terms of life cycle stages and life circumstances. Individuals' and families' specific housing needs will change over time. At different times, people may need housing that can accommodate a family with children, or require a smaller market rental unit for a single aging adult.

A newly formed household not yet established in the labour force, an older couple without children, or a divorced single parent may need affordable rental housing, or deeper assistance with social housing.

A healthy housing continuum seeks to

ensure there is an appropriate range and quantity of different types of housing and shelter accommodation with the community to meet the needs of its residents. Individuals will not progress through the continuum in a linear fashion, rather, they may experience different levels of need for supports during their lifetime.

The concept of a housing continuum can help us understand the range of needs, housing, and homelessness supports required to meet the unique needs of residents across the county.

Next steps for moving forward will include the development of a new

implementation plan for 2018-2021 (Phase Two) of *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*. Phase Two will include further exploration of strategies for achieving targets within urban and rural contexts and continuing to fulfill Strategy recommendations to meet the housing needs of communities across the County.

The County's long-term affordable housing strategy will also receive a review and refresh to support alignment with the Province's updated directives and the new *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*.

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy



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