



HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

2017 Annual Report



A Message from the Warden

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy is a document that reflects a regionally-unified approach to ending homelessness and ensuring safe, affordable housing for all County residents, while still creating tailored solutions that meet the unique and individual needs of each of our communities.

To build greater partnerships, creative solutions and out of the box strategies, we turned our focus to innovation and collaboration, hosting an Affordable Housing Innovations Forum in early 2017. This forum brought together stakeholders from across the social housing system, to learn about and discuss innovative approaches to tackling affordable housing shortages in Simcoe County. Topics included financing affordable housing and a number of innovative approaches to build including form, size, and the construction process.



This forum resulted in Council approving a Motel Conversion Pilot Project which will see the transformation of an existing motel in Barrie into a 17-unit supportive housing project for persons who have experienced homelessness. This project is expected to be complete in 2018.

2017 was also a busy year as our new build of 147 units in Collingwood got underway, and design commenced on a 99-unit project in Wasaga Beach. These projects were further supported through donations of land and other planning and financial incentives from the Town of Collingwood and Town of Wasaga Beach. Projects using donations of land from other municipalities offered in response to our Call for Proposals are currently under review.

We also continued to roll out County-approved funding for the delivery of our own Secondary Suites and Rent Subsidy programs. In 2017, Council approved that the municipally-funded Secondary Suite Program be continued for 2018.

The end of 2017 marked the completion of the Phase One

Implementation Plan for Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. We are excited to have exceeded our target of 895 new units in Phase One, finishing with 1,017 new units. This accomplishment is the result of ongoing advocacy to all levels of government, increased funding allocation for new construction and rent supplements, and strengthened partnerships with the private, non-profit, and the health sectors.

We could not achieve these targets without additional funding commitments from the federal and provincial governments, which includes \$40.4 million in funding received during 2014-2020, under the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario 2014 Extension Program and the Social Infrastructure Fund. We also could not have surpassed the targets without the commitment and perseverance of our many community partners.

Moving into Phase Two (2018-2020) we will continue to remain focused on following the policy directives outlined in the Province's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update 2017, and the goals of the new National Housing Strategy, 2017 to ensure we are best positioned to effectively undertake new funding and partnership opportunities for the creation of affordable housing.

Gerry Marshall,
Warden, County of Simcoe



Housing Our Future Annual Report

JANUARY 1, 2017 – DECEMBER 31, 2017

About the Housing Our Future 2017 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 which took effect in 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 (Strategy).

To translate objectives in the Strategy into specific recommendations for action, an Implementation Plan for 2014-2017 (Phase One) was approved by County Council in November 2015. This plan included a target to achieve 895 affordable housing units by December 2017.

As of December 31, 2017 a total of 1,017 new units were achieved, surpassing the target by 122 additional units or 13% of the County's goal for Phase One. The completion of Phase One marks the achievement of 38% of the County's overall goal of 2,685 new units by 2024. This accomplishment was primarily due to greater information-sharing amongst partners, for example through the work of the Municipal Liaison Group with all municipalities across the county, as well as with the health sector through increased communication with the Local Health Integration Network and its contracted service providers.

With a need for increased affordable housing stock, the AHA Committee was focused on exploring innovative approaches to new affordable housing development.

In February 2017, the County hosted an Affordable Housing Innovations Forum bringing together local developers, property managers, private landlords, non-profit housing representatives, affordable housing and homelessness advocacy groups, local faith-based communities, municipal leaders, municipal planners, other levels of government, and

the general public. This forum provided a number of special-guest presentations on innovative approaches to financing for affordable housing, innovative building materials, built-forms, types and tenures of housing, and conversions of existing built-forms. After researching a variety of built-forms and the potential of their application locally, County Council approved a Motel Conversion Pilot Project in June 2017.

Recognizing that some residents still rely on transitional or alternative rental housing, such as rooming houses, the AHA Committee sought options to better support persons experiencing more precarious housing. In February 2017, County Council approved the delivery of municipal rent subsidies for eligible tenants in rooming houses, under specific program and unit criteria. This people-centered approach aims to best support residents by providing greater flexibility and individual choice, while ensuring resident safety.

The AHA Committee continues to monitor affordable housing at the local level to proactively adapt program and service offerings, and effectively execute the 10-year housing and homelessness plan amidst a changing housing market.

In anticipation of new policy directives required under Ontario's new Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update, to be in place in January 2019, the County undertook a detailed comparative analysis in 2017, to ensure inclusion of provincial directives in its Phase Two Implementation Plan (2018-2020).

These initiatives increase the much needed supply of affordable and supportive housing as well as provide for the personal supports and rent subsidies to help vulnerable clients obtain and retain housing.

Accomplishments

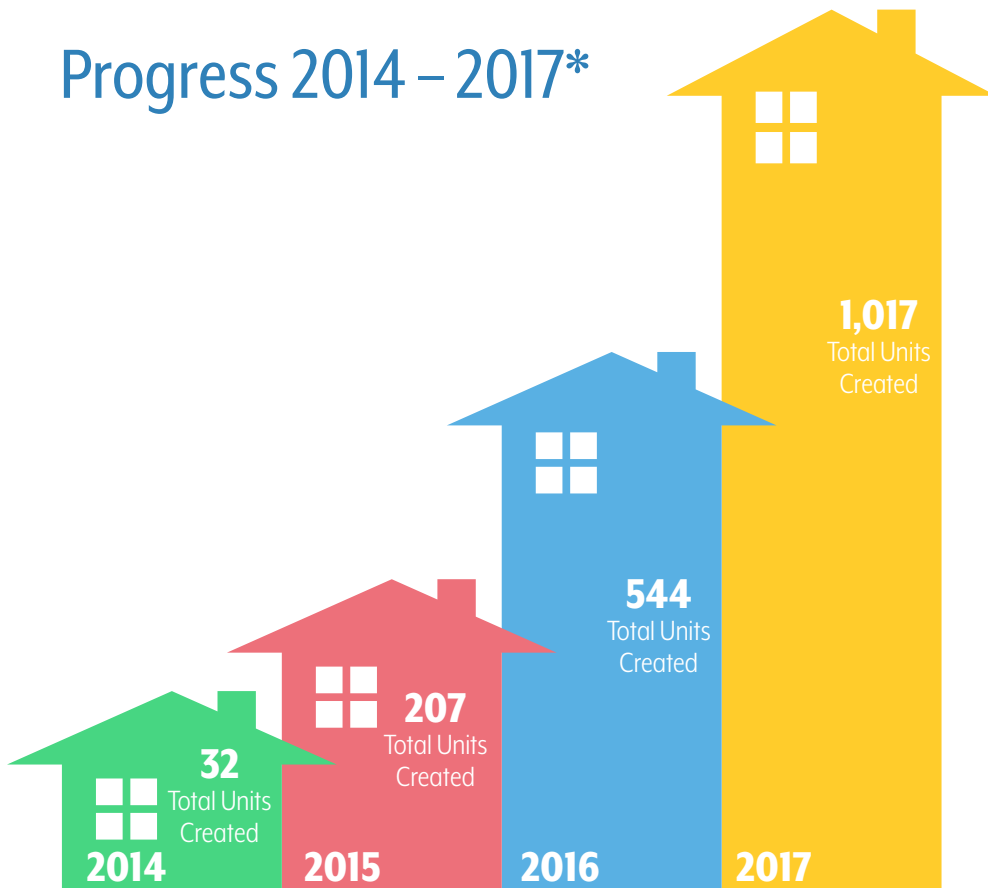
- ▶ County Council approved a Motel Conversion Pilot Project in June 2017, resulting in the purchase of an existing motel property for conversion into a 17-unit supportive housing project for persons who have experienced homelessness. This project will be executed in partnership with Redwood Park Communities and David Busby Centre. Expected completion in 2018.
- ▶ County Council approved \$2 million in funds for affordable housing initiatives in smaller rural development areas, in recognition of the challenges of creating rural affordable housing.
- ▶ The County filed an expression of interest for provincial Home for Good (HFG) funding and successfully received a HFG funding allocation of \$9,789,575 to support both the capital and operating costs of the Motel Conversions Pilot Project in the City of Barrie, as well as a Supportive Housing Project in the City of Orillia, rent supplements and support services funding in community agencies.
- ▶ Conducted a wide range of research on local trends in affordable housing to ensure implementation activities remain grounded in local realities.

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 1 of the implementation (January 2014 – December 2017) targets 895 new affordable housing units.

Progress 2014 – 2017*



**New units were created under New Rental Development, Homeownership, Ontario Renovates-Secondary Suites, and operating programs funded by federal, provincial, county, and municipal governments, as well as a percentage of secondary suites created without government funding as tracked by municipalities.*

Promoting, providing, and protecting a range of affordable housing options.

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy aims to promote, provide, and protect a range of affordable housing options for county residents to ensure that all residents have access to adequate, appropriate and affordable housing that will meet their needs.

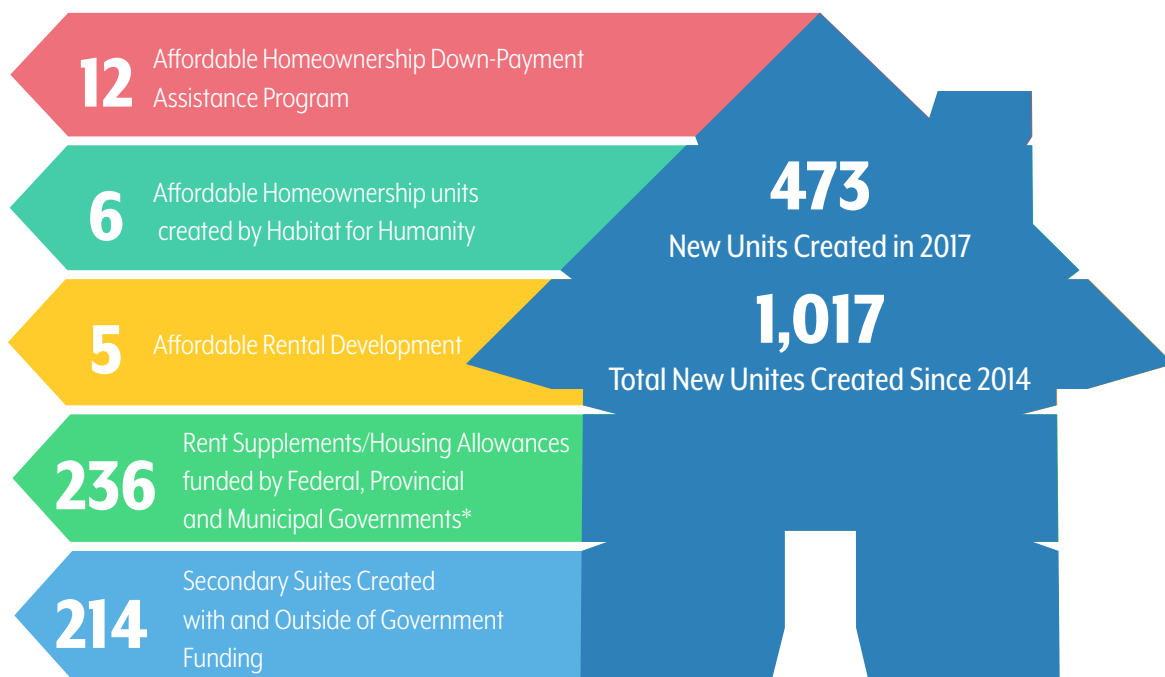


Affordable Housing Advisory Committee



How Are We Doing?

Progress 2017



**Now includes rent supplements provided through the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), since 2014.*

Through a combination of new development, acquisition, conversion, renovation, and/or rent supplements, the County has achieved the creation of 1,017 new units of affordable housing since 2014.

The Strategy builds on initiatives proven to work in Simcoe County, which has led to innovative and effective program development and delivery, including:

- Continued funding for County-funded Rent Subsidy and Secondary Suite Programs that feature more flexible guidelines
- A Revolving Fund which enabled the County to increase the number of available homeownership down payments
- A Redevelopment Plan for Simcoe County Housing Corporation, approved in 2017, which will support new builds and streamline operations, ensuring more affordable housing units and better service delivery to tenants and county residents.

- Increased communications and partnership with local agencies for the delivery and tracking of rent supplements, including new tracking in 2017 of health sector rent supplements.
- Increased communication with various levels of government to increase efficiencies and effectiveness in funding allocations, data collection, and reporting.

Did You Know?

163

new home sales in the private market occurred in 2017 that were at or below the Regional Maximum Affordable House Price of \$416,380.

While affordability in the homeownership market is challenging, this does show that there is a small inventory of affordably priced homes.

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 Well Did We Do?

3,882

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

175

former social housing units remain in affordable housing inventory

\$1.4 million

invested in maintaining assets* during 2017

Out of the original **4,113** units in the social housing portfolio, currently **94%** remain in the mandated social housing portfolio and **99%** of the original units remain affordable housing.

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

Story Behind the Data

Social housing supports many members of our community, from single parents to seniors living on fixed incomes, ensuring that they have a secure, sustainable place to call home. As social housing stock ages, ongoing maintenance and preservation of existing housing assets is continued. This might include repairs and/or maintenance to elevators, retaining walls, roofs, walkways, windows, boiler plants and other key building equipment replacements.

In 2015, the County introduced a Capital Repair Loan process to assist mandated social housing providers with urgent capital repairs. This helps to address non-profit social housing infrastructure. In 2017, \$189,000 was issued through provider loans.

County technical and engineering staff was also busy in assisting providers with new provincial energy programs such as Social Housing Apartment Improvement Program (SHAIP) funding.

Some social housing may be located on real estate that presents opportunities for mixed-income redevelopment or the sale of the property could create an opportunity for rebuilding more units elsewhere in the community. Where prudent to do so, the County will seize opportunities to leverage assets for building more, newer stock; as evidenced through strategic development of existing social housing properties.

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 Simcoe County.

On December 6, 2016, the Province of Ontario passed legislation, Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016 (The Act), 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.

Throughout 2017, a Municipal Liaison Committee continued to meet quarterly to discuss these legislative changes and identify best practices in moving forward. Planning staff and other representatives from the County of Simcoe, Cities of Barrie and Orillia, and all 16 member municipalities shared information and case studies on topics ranging from: Community Improvement Plans (CIPs), promotion of Secondary Suites to homeowners, affordable urban design, municipal planning and financial tools for incentivising private development of affordable housing, data collection and tracking of affordable housing targets, and urban and rural housing.

The Municipal Liaison Committee provides the opportunity for the members to learn from one another, identify creative ideas and share insights on successful projects. As the Local Municipal Official Plans are being updated to bring them into conformity with Provincial and County plans, policies are being added to address the provision of affordable housing and to make use of the tools available.

The County also continues to make a commitment to providing development charges and property tax incentives for affordable housing development.

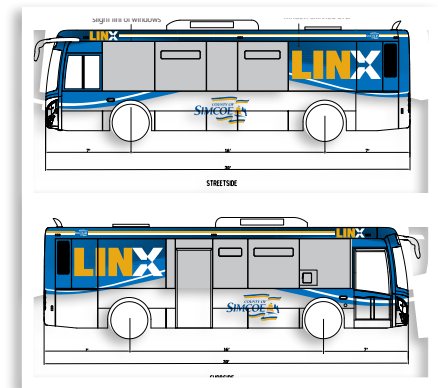


Accessible transportation plays an important role of in the health and wellness of all residents by improving access to: community supports, places of employment, educational opportunities, and access to food.

County Council approved a proposed transit service plan in September 2016. This plan will provide regional connections between primary settlement areas with inter-municipal hub-to-hub routes.

Progress in 2017, on the new transit plan, included the development of an implementation plan which included route planning, target dates, bus design and purchase, issuance of Request for Proposals (RFPs) for operation and maintenance contracts, development of a comprehensive communications strategy, etc.

Under the umbrella of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe policy work has begun to support the achievement of complete communities that offer more options for living, working, learning, shopping and playing, and to provide housing options to meet the needs of people of all ages, including the need for affordable housing.



A Few Examples of Municipal Initiatives

Many local municipalities are undertaking innovative work which supports goals outlined in Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. Through action, innovation, and a commitment to affordable housing, here are some exciting highlights from a couple of municipalities in 2017:

Town of Wasaga Beach

- The Town of Wasaga Beach approved a Downtown Community Improvement Plan in December 2017 that promotes the revitalization of Downtown Wasaga Beach and includes a suite of incentives that could be offered to landowners to assist in building new affordable or market rental apartment dwelling units within the Downtown.
- Wasaga Beach Second Units Policies and Guide were featured in a 'best practices' case-study by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).
- The Town and County are working together to meet the affordable housing needs in Wasaga Beach through a new 99-unit County-owned affordable housing project. The Town offered a number of incentives to assist with financial feasibility, including donating the land for the project.
- Town staff also worked with regional partners on the South Georgian Bay Tourism Labour Supply Task Force which seeks to solve the labour shortage through attainable housing and transportation initiatives. Town staff is also involved in the Regional Affordable Transportation Task Force and continues to work with partners to develop a regional transportation strategy.



City of Barrie

- The City of Barrie worked to improve its process for registering second suites through updates to the City's zoning by-law to better facilitate the creation and registration of second suites, including the introduction of a fast-track building permit process for qualifying second suites, including suites applying for County of Simcoe funding assistance program.
- Approved a Habitat for Humanity application for three affordable not-for-profit homeownership units, to be occupied in 2017. A Redevelopment Grant was approved, and will provide a 50% rebate on development charges and building permit fees, and includes a rebate on the increased taxes paid in decreasing percentages over a five-year period.
- The City of Barrie has been working closely with the County of Simcoe to facilitate planning approvals for a County-owned motel conversion project, which will result in seventeen transitional housing units within the City of Barrie. This project will be eligible for Built Boundary Affordable Housing CIP Grants through the City, and City staff is assisting in coordinating the required permitting.
- The Barrie District Association of Realtors and the City of Barrie teamed up to engage the community in finding short-term five-year solutions to affordable housing through a 48-hour intensive Housing Hackathon workshop. This resulted in some creative solutions to affordable housing.
- The City continues to explore options for redevelopment of City-owned parking lots in the downtown for potential affordable housing

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?

30,824 total nights

spent in emergency shelters
by combined households

1,018 households

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

556 households

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

262 households

supported by the County of Simcoe's
Domiciliary Care Program

188 households

assisted by the Canadian
Mental Health Association

44 households

assisted with Rapid Re-Housing

62 households

supported by the Salvation Army

2,162 households

assisted with funding for housing retention
for rent and utility arrears

187 households

have received assistance with home repairs
and accessibility modifications since 2014,
including 59 households in 2017

141 households

assisted with transitional housing

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

Is Anyone Better Off?

Eight providers with 58-units assisted 141
households with transitional housing, which
included **109 children** under 16 years of age.

44 households were assisted with Rapid
Re-Housing, which included 51 adults, 21 children
(under age 6), 12 children (ages 7-12), and five
youth (aged 13-18).

Story Behind the Data

The County of Simcoe provides leadership to local homelessness prevention community planning and funds a myriad of related programs and services. Planning and funding reflect alignment with provincial policy. Funded domains include: Homeless Shelters, a Regionalized Housing First Program, Housing Resource Centres, Domiciliary Care, Supportive Transitional Housing, Community Hubs, and Rent Retention.

In addition to these primary funded program areas, a number of additional Homelessness Prevention services are supported through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) funding stream. Examples of other funded services, include: breakfast programs, counselling and life skills, drop-in centres, intake and assessment, mental health case management, Out of the Cold programs, and street outreach programs.

The Province has set a goal to end chronic homelessness by 2025. The Homelessness service system is being refined and aligned to target resources to better respond to the needs of clients. This includes planning during 2017 for greater integration across the homelessness service system.

Wasaga Beach Affordable Housing Patio Rendering



Collingwood Affordable Housing Construction - April 2018



HOUSING OUR FUTURE

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and Homelessness Prevention Strategy



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Release Date: JUNE 2018