COUNTY OF SIMCOE

Social and
Community Services

Building Up Simcoe County

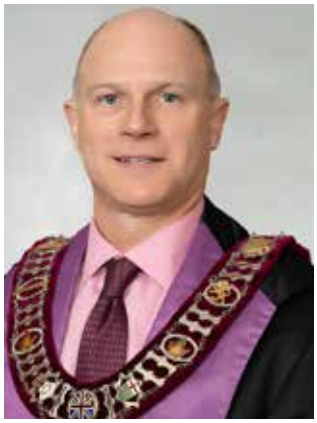
Our Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

2025-2035

Acknowledgment

The County of Simcoe acknowledges that the land on which we live, work and play is the traditional territory of the Anishinabek Nation, which includes the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Pottawatomi Nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. We also recognize the Huron-Wendat, who occupied these lands prior to the middle of the 17th century. We embrace the enduring presence and partnership of the Indigenous Peoples of this region including the Chippewa Tri–Council First Nations, comprised of the Beausoleil First Nation, the Chippewas of Rama, and the Georgina Island First Nation. We also recognize the diverse Métis and Inuit communities within our region. The County of Simcoe is dedicated to honouring our Indigenous history and culture and is committed to coming together to learn, heal, and create future prosperity, respect and understanding in all of our communities.

Warden's Message



Basil Clarke
Warden
County of Simcoe

Our County is growing faster than ever, and with that growth comes both opportunity and responsibility. The rising cost of living, our aging population, and the need for more safe, stable, and affordable homes demands a practical and compassionate response. Building Up Simcoe County: Our Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention is our 10-year plan to meet the needs of today and what we anticipate needing tomorrow – to build more homes, protect the ones we have, and make sure supports are there when people need them.

We have momentum. Over the last decade we created nearly 3,700 affordable homes, and we have been readying shovel-ready projects across our region. But numbers alone don't tell the whole story. Residents told us they want attainable homes close to jobs, transit and services, age-friendly options for seniors, supports for people facing homelessness, and mixed-income neighbourhoods where people of different backgrounds can thrive together.

This strategy focuses on three practical pillars:

1. increasing supply through new builds, modular bridge housing, secondary suites, and conversions
2. keeping people housed with prevention, rent supports, and repairs
3. managing the system with coordinated data, stronger partnerships, and transparent reporting.

Success means building new units and ensuring subsidies, eviction prevention, and targeted supports reach those who need them most.

We cannot do this alone. Achieving our goals depends on partnership – with our communities, municipal councils, non-profits, the private sector, and senior levels of government. We know that by working together, we can continue building up homes, lives, and hope across our region and a positive future for Simcoe County.

Our commitment is simple: be evidence-led, fiscally responsible, and compassionate in our approach. Together, we will create more homes, stronger neighbourhoods, and a more inclusive Simcoe County where people of all ages and incomes know they belong.

Sincerely,

Basil Clarke
Warden
County of Simcoe

Welcome

How to use this summary document

This summary provides an overview of Building Up Simcoe County: Our Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing, the County of Simcoe's new 10-year affordable housing strategy.

The County is committed to making housing decisions based on evidence and insight. This strategy draws from demographic trends, housing market analysis, federal and provincial policy directives, proven practices in social service delivery, and input from the community. Together, these components will shape a more responsive and resilient housing system—one that meets today's challenges and lays the foundation for a stronger future.

The New 10-Year Strategy includes:

- Comprehensive research and analysis
- Historical and policy context
- An overview of housing funding
- Best practices to guide service delivery
- Housing targets
- Strategic objectives
- Implementation actions
- Monitoring and reporting requirements

Throughout this summary, you will find references to specific content sections in the full strategy. These references will connect you directly to expanded data, context, and explanations.

Whether you are a resident, service provider, or policymaker, we encourage you to review the full strategy to see how data, policy, best practices, and community perspectives are shaping practical, innovative housing models in Simcoe County.

A Strong Foundation

County demographic profile

Understanding who lives in our community is the first step in building solutions that truly respond to local realities. Data, including demographic and disaggregated data, is the foundation of our strategy. It ensures that **Building Up Simcoe County: Our Community Blueprint** is not only about constructing more housing; it is about creating a housing system that is adaptive and responsive to the unique and evolving needs of County residents.

Simcoe County's growth is outpacing that of both Ontario and Canada. With rising rents, an aging population, and increasing rates of homelessness, the County will continue to plan for both current and future housing needs, ensuring individuals and families have safe, affordable places to call home.

This housing Strategy focuses on building a stronger, healthier community for generations to come.

Rental Affordability

Average monthly rents in **2022**

$1,601 **1-bedroom**

$2,007 **2-bedroom**

$2,807 **3-bedroom**

These rates exceed affordability thresholds for low- and moderate-income households.

Core Housing Need

23.6%
of renter households are in core housing need

5.8%
of owner households are in core housing need

Most affected: 1- and 2-person households with low or very low incomes

10,468

Estimated deficit of affordable rental units, primarily for households earning below **$46,500**

Population Growth

Simcoe County's population grew by **11.2%** between **2016** and **2021**, outpacing Ontario and Canada.

11.2% 5.8% 5.2%

679,300

Projected population by 2034
(A **17.1%** increase from 2024)

Aging Demographics

By **2034**, the population aged **80+** is expected to grow by **67%**

29.5%

Increase in the **65–79** age group indicates a rising need for senior-friendly housing.

Want to understand how population growth, aging, income levels, and other data shapes housing needs in Simcoe County?

Check out the full strategy: Demographics and Rental Affordability

Note: Rental rates cited for 2022 are based on data collected through the Census and Simcoe County's Annual Market Rent (AMR) survey. For the most current rental rates and housing data, please visit the County's Open Data Portal at: **www.open.simcoe.ca**

Building on Success

2014–2024 Achievements

Over the past decade, the County of Simcoe and its community partners have created 3,692 new affordable housing units—surpassing the minimum target of 2,685. These units include a mix of new affordable rental construction, secondary suites, homeownership down-payment assistance, and rent supplements. The previous housing plan, **Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy**, credits its success to a balanced approach that combined capital and operating investments to support a range of affordable housing options.

- **32** 2014
- **207** 2015
- **544** 2016
- **1,017** 2017
- **1,288** 2018
- **1,873** 2019
- **2,364** 2020
- **2,531** 2021
- **2,775** 2022
- **3,250** 2023
- **3,692** 2024

To learn more about our past success, visit www.simcoe.ca/ourahhps

See the full strategy: Summary of Previous Strategy

Community Designed

What We Heard from You

A housing system should reflect the residents living within it. The County engaged more than 9,000 residents and 150 community partners through surveys, interviews, and telephone consultations. The feedback of County residents, community partners, industry leaders, and elected officials is a cornerstone of the strategy.

What Residents Told Us

Affordability & Access
Residents are calling for affordable housing first—both rental and ownership options that align with local incomes. There is strong interest in smaller starter homes and downsizing options ranging from 800 to 1,300 sq. ft.

More Supply
People want more rental choices and housing located near jobs, schools, transit, and essential services. There is a clear push for diverse housing types, including apartments, condos, duplexes, row housing, tiny homes, secondary and garden suites, modular builds, and multigenerational homes.

Seniors & Families
Seniors are looking for age-friendly units close to amenities, while families want safe, spacious homes with backyards—places where children can thrive.

Young Adults
Young individuals and couples are seeking affordable starter homes and rentals that allow them to live independently and build stability in their communities.

Complete Communities
There is a strong desire for mixed-income developments where people of different income levels live side-by-side—creating inclusive, vibrant neighborhoods.

What Community Partners Told Us

Higher, Flexible Targets
Community partners are advocating for more ambitious and adaptable housing targets that can keep pace with rising demand.

Housing with Supports
There is strong emphasis on expanding supportive housing for individuals living with mental health challenges, addictions, or complex needs.

Inclusive Programs
Partners stress the importance of housing strategies that serve seniors, youth, Indigenous Peoples, newcomers, international students, and LGBTQ2+ residents.

Sustainable Funding
There are ongoing calls for increased capital and operating investments, as current resources fall short of meeting community needs.

Innovation & Partnerships
Recommendations include motel and building conversions, rent-to-own programs, faster approval processes, employer-linked housing, and stronger collaboration across municipalities, non-profits, and the private sector.

Better Data
Partners are asking for improved data collection and regular reviews of root causes, waitlists, and system performance to guide more effective solutions.

See the full strategy:
Community Engagement

Interested in what the community is saying? Find more resources here: **www.simcoe.ca/housing**

Supporting documents:
- What We Heard: Online Public Survey report
- What We Heard: Community Partner Interviews report
- Information on additional community consultation results from corresponding strategies

Planning for Everyone

Inclusive Programs and Services for Housing and Supports

Houses are simply walls and roofs, it is the people inside who bring warmth to our communities, strengthen neighborhoods, and turn a collection of buildings into a community. **Building Up Simcoe County – Our Community Blueprint** is about more than constructing units—it's about creating spaces where every resident feels safe, supported, and truly at home.

This Strategy recognizes that not everyone experiences housing in the same way. Many communities — including Indigenous Peoples, racialized groups, seniors, youth, newcomers, and LGBTQ2S residents — face unique barriers to housing and are over-represented among those experiencing homelessness.

See the full strategy:
Best Practices

Our commitment

Listen and Learn: engaging with Indigenous communities to strengthen relationships, build trust, and support housing solutions that are designed and led by Indigenous partners—while respecting their autonomy, decision-making, and ways of knowing.

Culturally Safe Services: ensure programs remain inclusive and responsive to the diverse identities and needs of County residents, supported by ongoing staff training and the integration of lived-experience perspectives in planning.

Targeted Investment: focus resources on those most affected by housing insecurity and poverty to reduce systemic gaps and improve long-term stability.

Rights-Based Approach: align with the National Housing Strategy Act's recognition of housing as a human right, and with Ontario's direction to encourage a full range of housing options—including mixed-income and non-market housing.

Transparent Measurement: use By-Name Lists, HIFIS, and annual public reporting to track outcomes for priority populations and adapt approaches as needs evolve.

Building Up
Alignment with Provincial Direction

Building Up Simcoe County – Our Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2025-2035 aligns with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, by planning for a full range of housing options to meet projected needs, including affordable housing. The strategy also reflects the Province's priorities to:

- Increase non-market and mixed-income housing supply.
- Promote modular and innovative housing solutions.
- Integrate supportive housing with health, mental health, and addiction recovery systems.
- Expand alternatives to encampments and move people into stable housing.
- Use By-Name Lists and shared data to monitor progress along the housing continuum.

The County of Simcoe intentionally aligns its work with key policies across all levels of government. This includes the National Housing Strategy (NHS), Ontario's Community Housing Renewal Strategy, the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024, and local municipal Official Plans. Sector best practices, such as Built for Zero Canada and coordinated access standards, also inform this work. Together, these frameworks guide a coordinated, evidence-based approach to building housing supply, integrating supportive housing, and preventing homelessness.

See the full strategy:
Policy Background

The Housing Continuum

Creating a Wide Range of Options to Meet a Variety of Needs

	Non-Market Housing			Market Housing		
Housing Type	Emergency Shelters	Outreach and Support Services	Supportive and Transitional Housing	Social/ Community Housing	Market Affordable Rental Housing	Market Affordable Home Ownership	Market Housing (i.e., rental or ownership)
	Emergency Housing Responses		Ongoing housing subsidies and housing support services		Capital construction funding and downpayment assistance		Market options available
Income	**Very Low <$18,600**		**Low $18,600 - $46,500**	**Moderate $46,500 - $74,400**	**Median $74,400 - $111,600**		**High >$111,601**
	Level of Government						
Local Programs	Street Outreach Homelessness prevention and diversion services Emergency shelters Homelessness prevention funding Daytime services		Housing First and rapid re-housing of individuals or households experiencing homelessness. <u>Community Housing</u> Affordable housing with wraparound supports Independent affordable housing Portable housing benefit Rent-geared-to-income housing		Homeownership Downpayment Assistance Program Urgent Home Repairs and Accessibility Modifications Program Secondary Suites Funding		Household can support market housing costs
Strategy	*Homelessness Prevention 10-Point Plan*		*Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC) Master Plan*		*Attainable Supply Action Plan (Housing ASAP)* *Economic Development Strategies* *Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC) Master Plan*		*Attainable Supply Action Plan (Housing ASAP)* *Economic Development Strategies*

Pillars of Focus

Supply, People and Service System Management

This modernized 10-year strategy is built around three pillars: **Supply, People**, and **Service System Management**.

Supply

Building, Preserving, and Incentivizing Affordable Housing

- Increase the supply of new affordable rental housing
- Prevent or mitigate the loss of existing affordable rental housing
- Create affordable housing within existing supply through subsidies and infill.
- Regulate the use of existing housing stock
- Align housing supply with market and local needs

See the full strategy: Supply

Supporting documents:

- Simcoe County Housing Corporation Affordable Housing Master Plan
- County of Simcoe Attainable Supply Action Plan

People

Supporting Residents with Diverse Needs using People-Centered Solutions

- Decrease the number of households experiencing Core Housing Need
- Mitigate eviction into homelessness through prevention, diversion, and rapid-rehousing responses
- Address the unique needs of individuals and households experiencing, or at-risk-of, homelessness through appropriate housing and supports
- Create inclusive communities that support the health, wellbeing, and safety of all community members
- Enhance client experiences within Simcoe County Housing Corporation housing

See the full strategy: People

Supporting documents:

- 10-Point Homelessness Prevention Plan
- Simcoe County Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Community Settlement Strategy
- Community Safety and Well-Being strategies
- 2025-2030 Age-Friendly Positive Aging Strategy

Service System Management

Coordinated, Data-Driven Delivery and Strengthened Community Partnerships

- Continue to enhance community shelter services and standards
- Strengthen partnerships and system coordination with community and municipal partners to optimize housing and homelessness prevention initiatives, improve information-sharing, and expand alternatives to encampments that support transitions into stable housing.
- Improve the effectiveness and impact of affordable housing initiatives through systematic data collection (including disaggregated data), ongoing monitoring, and evaluation processes to inform evidence-based decision-making and ensure successful program delivery
- Ensure that SCHC affordable housing projects are created and implemented with a dual focus on environmental sustainability and fiscal responsibility, providing cost-effective and inclusive living solutions for residents.
- Generate innovative partnerships and revenue streams to support increased affordable housing creation.

See the full strategy: Service System Objectives

Supporting documents:

- 10-Point Homelessness Prevention Plan
- SCHC Master Plan
- Positive Aging Strategy

How Housing is Funded
Why Partnerships Matter

Housing in Simcoe County is funded through a long-standing combination of federal, provincial, and municipal investments, strengthened by contributions from non-profit and private partners. As the designated Service Manager under Ontario's Housing Services Act, the County coordinates these resources to deliver capital projects—building and repairing affordable housing—and operating programs, such as rent supplements, housing allowances, and homelessness prevention services.

While this funding combination keeps housing safe and sustainable, it often arrives through annual allocations or short-term competitive programs, making long-range planning challenging. Collaboration with all levels of government, as well as the private sector and community partners, is essential to ensure predictable results.

Housing in Simcoe County is funded through a combination of federal, provincial, and municipal investments, which can be further enhanced by contributions from non-profit and private partners.

As the designated Service Manager under Ontario's Housing Services Act, 2011 the County of Simcoe coordinates these resources to deliver:

- **Capital projects** – building, purchasing and repairing affordable housing
- **Operating programs** – rent supplements, housing allowances, and homelessness prevention services

These combined efforts keep community housing safe, affordable, and sustainable over the long term. However, most funding arrives through annual allocations (set funding amounts committed by governments each year) or short-term competitive programs (time-limited programs where organizations must apply for funding), which can make it challenging to plan for 10-year targets.

This is why collaboration with all levels of government, the private sector, and community partners is essential to deliver predictable results and strengthen the housing system for residents.

See the full strategy: Understanding Funding Programs and Sources

The SCHC Master Plan

Our Pipeline of New Affordable Housing Development

The Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC) Affordable Housing Development Master Plan (2024–2034) provides a shovel-ready pipeline of projects across multiple municipalities. The plan calls for roughly 1,091 new units plus the replacement of 64 older units, through redevelopment, acquisitions, modular builds, and partnerships.

Because these properties are municipally owned, leased, or secured through partnerships, the County can respond quickly to federal and provincial funding calls, ensuring competitiveness for available program dollars.

Priority	Location	Units	Property Status	Municipality	Project Initiation Year
1	20 Rose Street, Barrie	215 (151 new units)	SCHC - new	Barrie	2024
2	Urban Native Intensification	22	SCHC - intensification	Midland	2024
3	29 & 45 Birch Street	30	CFP - Town owned	Collingwood	2024
4	69 Harriet Street	15 (10 new units)	SCHC - intensification	Penetanguishene	2026
5	175 Zoo Park Road	100	CFP - Town owned	Wasaga Beach	2026
6	Coldwater Seniors Apartment Inc.	59	Non-profit Land lease	Severn	2027
7	32 Yonge St, Elmvale	50	SCHC - intensification	Springwater	2028
8	Angus Gardens Senior Citizens Complex	100	Non-profit Land lease	Essa	2028
9	810 Bay Street/ 837 Montreal	100	CFP - Town owned	Midland	2029
10	60 Maple St, Victoria Harbour	50	SCHC - intensification	Tay	2029
11	8291 4th Line, Angus	100	Private	Essa	2030
12	2049 Victoria Street, Stroud	50	SCHC - intensification	Innisfil	2031
13	1484 Brunelle Sideroad	100	CFP - Town owned	Penetanguishene	2031
14	250 West St North	100	County	Orillia	2033

The SCHC *Affordable Housing Development Master Plan* (2024-2034) is our pipeline. It is a 10-year capital plan that prioritizes redevelopment, acquisitions, modular builds, and partnerships to deliver roughly **1,091 new units**, plus replacement of 64 older units, across multiple municipalities.

Because all properties in the pipeline are municipally owned, donated, leased, or partnered through a Call for Proposals process, these projects are "shovel-ready" or moving toward readiness. This allows the County to respond quickly to federal and provincial funding calls and ensures we are competitive for program dollars

The Simcoe County Housing Corporation Affordable Housing Master Plan and comprises a portion the baseline target for *Building Up Simcoe County – A Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy* 2025-2035.

In addition to these units, the Strategy sets further targets to be achieved through additional capital development, including the creation of Secondary Suites, as well as through initiatives supported by operating funding—such as rent supplements, urgent home repair programs, and eviction prevention supports.

Beyond New Builds

Housing Programs for Prevention, Diversion and Expanding Access to Housing

In addition to building SCHC-owned units, the County — as Service Manager under Ontario's Housing Services Act — delivers a combination of federal, provincial, and municipally funded housing programs. Together these programs work to prevent homelessness, preserve existing affordable housing, and create access to new affordable rental options.

Prevention
Keeping People Housed

- Rent and utility arrears support to stop evictions
- First and last month's rent assistance to help households secure housing quickly

Preservation
Protecting Existing Homes

- Urgent repairs and accessibility upgrades, so low-income homeowners can stay in place
- Capital repair loans to keep non-profit housing safe and in good condition

Access
Opening Doors to Housing

- Rent supplements and portable housing benefits that make market rents affordable
- Secondary suite incentives to add affordable rental units in the community
- Partnership on conversion or modular projects that expand supply outside of SCHC builds

A Balanced Approach

How Targets Were Developed

The County began by reviewing past, current and anticipated funding streams and corresponding service delivery across housing and homelessness programs to establish a baseline for average costs per service and average households served. This approach creates realistic targets built-on proven performance while preparing for the resources needed over the next decade. This approach also allows for flexibility in planning by adjusting forecasts to accommodate increases or decreases in funding.

Housing households is achieved in two primary ways: either by creating new physical supply through capital projects, or by supplementing access to existing housing through operating programs.

Diversion and prevention programs further support the housing continuum by keeping people housed and avoiding entry into homelessness. This includes eviction prevention supports such as rental or utility arrears, homelessness prevention supports like first and last month's rent or moving costs, and programs that preserve existing housing stock through urgent home repairs, capital repair loans for non-profits, and accessibility modifications that help people age in place.

Moving away from 'unit targets'

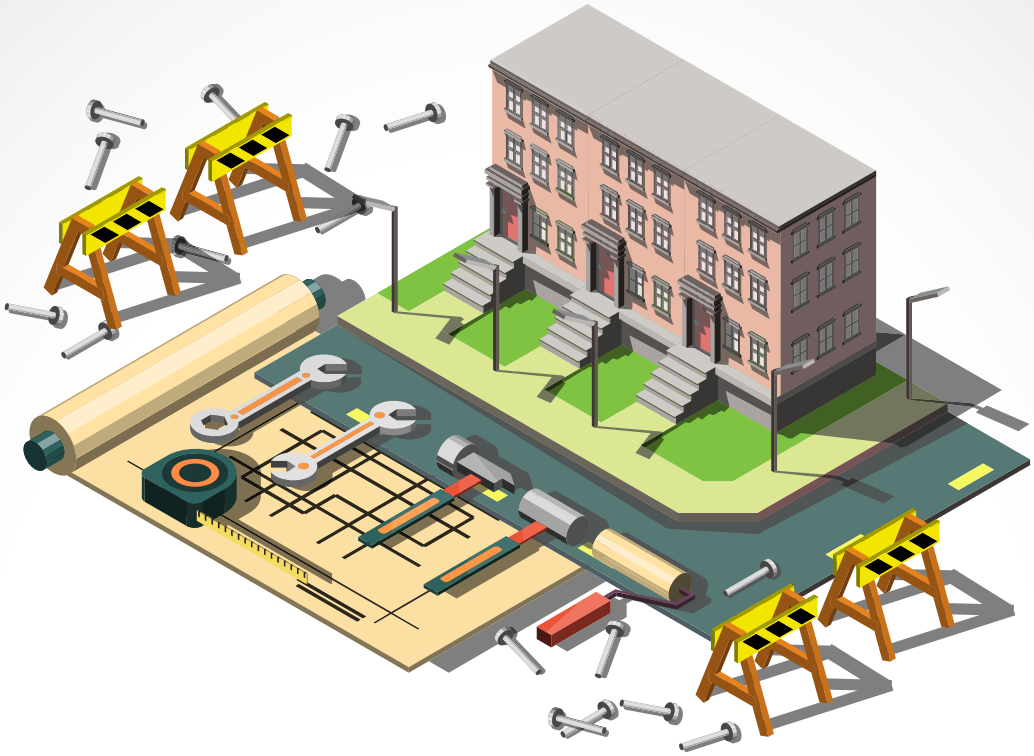
The previous Strategy—*Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy (2014–2024)*—measured success primarily by the number of units created. Units were counted if they resulted from new affordable rental development, secondary suites, affordable homeownership supports or rent supplements. However, feedback from community partners emphasized that rent supplements and homeownership down payment assistance should not be classified as "units created," since they improve access to housing but do not increase the physical supply. This underscored the need for a more transparent and comprehensive way to measure progress.

What's more, previous unit targets did not reflect the high level of investments that went into homelessness prevention programs or the number of households served by investments in eviction prevention programs, capital repair loans for non-profit housing providers, urgent repairs funding for homeowners, or accessibility modifications.

Moving into 'housing targets'

The modernized Strategy, *Building Up Simcoe County: Our Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention* (2025–2035), introduces a clearer framework. It sets a households housed target, which combines results achieved through both capital projects and operating programs. It also includes a broader households served target, which includes households housed plus households supported through diversion and prevention initiatives. This shift provides a more accurate measure of the County's impact — showing not only how many new homes are created or accessed, but also how many residents are able to remain stably housed.

New 10-Year Housing Target



Households Housed

1,331
households housed
in new units

3,750
households housed
through subsidies

5,081
Total households housed

Households Served

15,915
households served with
homelessness prevention
(includes duplication in take-up)

Approx.
55 Buildings
Capital Repairs Program
for Non-Profit Providers
(not currently quantified in
count of households served)

Total Housing Target 2025-2035

20,996
households to be served

Achieving the full target of **20,996** is dependent on sustained investment from all three levels of government—federal, provincial, and municipal—as well as partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors. Funding comes through annual allocations and competitive programs, making collaboration critical to achieving long-term goals.

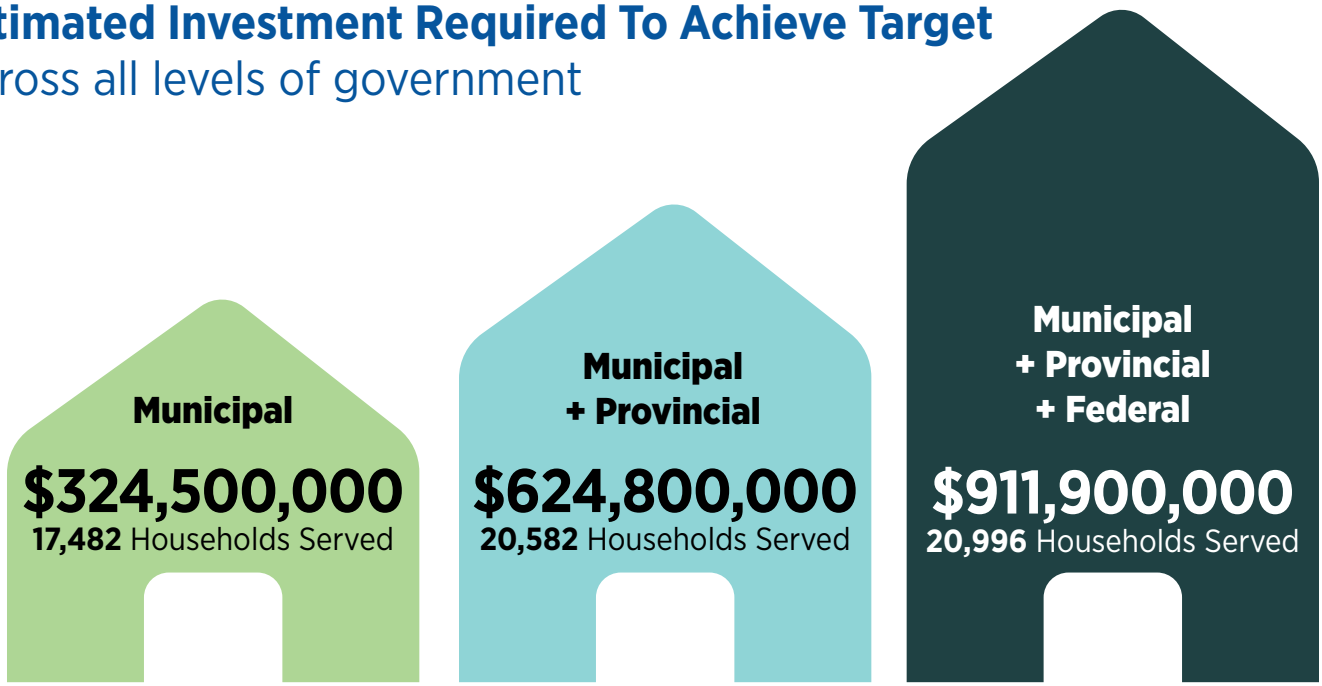
Funding Commitments: Shared Goals, Not Guarantees

While the County of Simcoe coordinates and delivers housing programs, most funding comes from federal and provincial governments. These dollars support both capital projects—building and repairing housing—and operating programs such as rent supplements, housing allowances, and eviction prevention.

Because these investments are renewed annually or provided through short-term competitive programs, funding for the full 10 years is not guaranteed. The targets in this Strategy represent shared goals, achievable if all levels of government continue to invest in Simcoe County.

Estimated Investment Required To Achieve Target

Across all levels of government



Bill 23 and Local Funding Tools

In 2022, the Province passed Bill 23: *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, which removed the ability for regional governments, including the County of Simcoe, to collect development charges for affordable housing. These charges were previously a local revenue source that could be reinvested into new housing and repairs. Their removal means the County now relies even more on federal and provincial funding programs—just like all Service Managers across Ontario.

Building Confidence in Our Plan

Although funding is not guaranteed, the County has a proven record of success. By maintaining shovel-ready projects, aligning with senior government priorities, and partnering with municipalities, non-profits, and the private sector, we are ready to compete for every available dollar.

This approach ensures that, even in a changing funding environment, the County is well positioned to meet these targets and continue strengthening the housing system for residents.

See the full strategy:
Targets

Measuring Success

Monitoring and Reporting

The Strategy will track both the number of units created and the number of households served to provide a clear and transparent view of progress.

Units created will measure the physical addition of new housing — the "bricks and mortar" construction, redevelopment, or acquisition of affordable units through the SCHC Master Plan and other projects.

Households served will measure the impact of programs that help people access and keep housing, even when no new unit is built. This includes households supported through rent supplements or portable housing benefits, those who avoid homelessness through rental or utility arrears support, and those whose homes are preserved through urgent repairs or accessibility modifications.

Together, these measures will distinguish capital investments from operating investments and demonstrate the full range of ways the County is strengthening housing stability across Simcoe County.

A comprehensive implementation plan and monitoring and reporting structure will be brought forward to County Council for approval once the Strategy and target are adopted.

To remain flexible and address changing local needs, the County will also monitor:

System Indicators – including vacancy rates, chronic homelessness trends, and waitlist times. These will be monitored for changes and patterns across the housing system, recognizing that many are shaped by broader market and economic conditions and cannot be attributed to a single program or action.

Equity Measures – tracking outcomes for priority populations such as Indigenous households, youth, seniors, and others at higher risk of housing insecurity, to ensure progress is shared equitably.

The County will use data from the Quality By-Name List (QBNL), HIFIS, and the Open Data Portal to monitor system-wide trends, benchmark results against targets across the housing continuum (emergency shelter, supportive housing, community housing, and affordable market housing), and guide program and funding adjustments as needed.

This approach treats indicators as a compass for progress rather than a direct measure of a single program's performance, helping ensure that all parts of the housing and homelessness system are moving in the right direction together.

Resident FAQ

Q: How will this be paid for?
A: Funding comes from municipal, provincial, and federal governments, with support from non-profit and private partners. Some funding is allocated annually and anticipated in planning, while other funding is secured through competitive application processes. The County works to be financially prudent, maximize every available opportunity, and remain proactive and "funding ready" for future programs. Funding is often allocated to communities that demonstrate project readiness and strong local partnerships, which may include member municipalities, non-profit organizations, or private partnerships. In some cases, the County may use long-term financing tools, such as borrowing or refinancing, to support major capital projects. These decisions are carefully managed within provincial debt limits and require Council approval.

Q: How will this help me or my community?
A: This strategy is designed to respond to the real pressures you see in your community — from rising rents to longer wait lists. It focuses on building the types of homes most needed in Simcoe County, including smaller, more affordable units for singles and couples, accessible housing for seniors, and family-friendly rentals for those raising children. It also invests in support to help people access current market housing and stay housed, which strengthens neighborhood stability and prevents street-level homelessness.

Q: Who will this housing be for?
A: The strategy supports a mix of housing for seniors, families, singles, and couples — including smaller, more affordable units that reflect local incomes. It also prioritizes those most in need, such as people experiencing homelessness, youth, and other vulnerable groups. Where possible, mixed-income communities will be prioritized — developments that include a blend of affordable and market-rate homes — to create inclusive, financially sustainable neighborhoods where people of different income levels can live side by side.

Q: Will this increase overcrowding in neighborhoods?
A: No. New housing is always planned and designed to fit within local zoning, infrastructure, and community needs. The goal is to create well-designed, complete communities — not overburden existing ones — while making efficient use of available land.

Q. How does this strategy align with provincial requirements?
A: It fulfills the Housing Services Act, 2011 requirement for a 10-year plan and aligns with the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024. It also supports the Province's priorities to build more homes faster, integrate supportive housing with health and social services, and provide alternatives to encampments by moving people into stable housing.

Q: How will you measure success?
A: A detailed Implementation Plan and Reporting Framework will be developed and presented to County Council for approval once the Strategy is adopted. This framework will outline clear targets, timelines, and responsibilities. Each year, the County will:

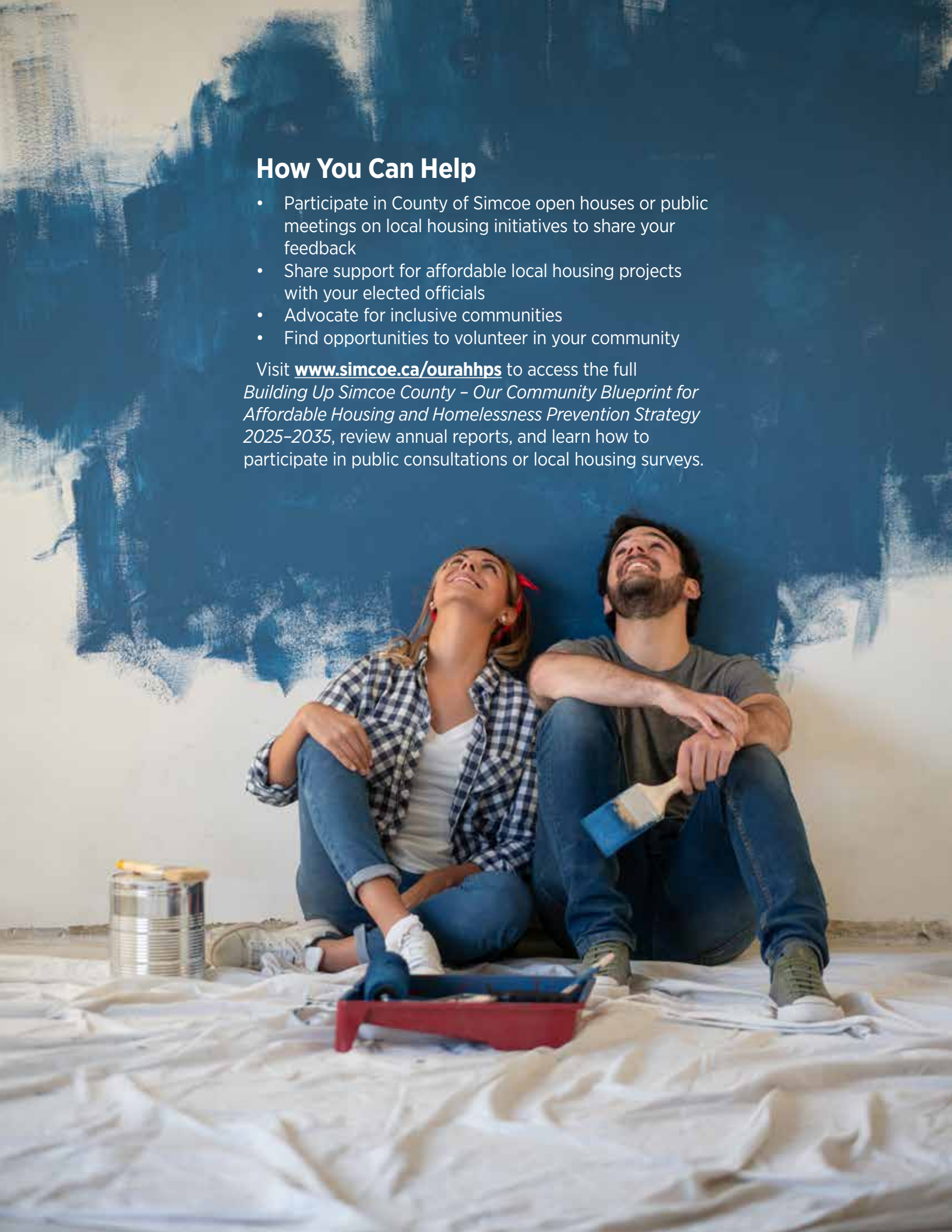
- **Track and Report Progress** – Measure outcomes such as new housing units built, households supported through rent supplements, and households assisted through other housing programs and benefits.
- **Analyze System Trends** – Review data on core housing need, priority groups, market rental rates, and homelessness trends to ensure programs remain responsive to local needs.
- **Use Data for Decision-Making** – Prioritize evidence-based planning to guide program adjustments, funding requests, and policy changes.

As the Service Manager under *Ontario's Housing Services Act, 2011*, the County is legally required to report to both the Province and the public on the results of its 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. These annual reports ensure transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement of the housing and homelessness system.

How You Can Help

- Participate in County of Simcoe open houses or public meetings on local housing initiatives to share your feedback
- Share support for affordable local housing projects with your elected officials
- Advocate for inclusive communities
- Find opportunities to volunteer in your community

Visit **www.simcoe.ca/ourahhps** to access the full *Building Up Simcoe County – Our Community Blueprint for Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2025–2035*, review annual reports, and learn how to participate in public consultations or local housing surveys.



Social and
Community Services

BUILDING UP

Service Simcoe 2025