



STRATFORD, PERTH COUNTY, AND ST. MARYS • 2020-2024 Housing and Homelessness Plan

The 2020 Annual Report highlights the achievements made in Year 7 of the *Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys*. In this year, local communities approved an updated Housing and Homelessness Plan for the next five years (2020-2024). This update included a new vision that:

Everyone has the right to a home that is safe, suitable, and affordable, and to supports that help them keep their home.

The updated Plan also introduced a revised framework of four strategic objectives and four implementation drivers to better reflect local needs and address emerging challenges.

This updated Plan continues to guide the work of housing and homelessness planning locally.

2020 was an unprecedented year as the world faced a global pandemic and it became even more apparent that permanent, safe, and stable housing was vital for the health and wellbeing of people everywhere. Locally, services continued for those most vulnerable to housing instability and homelessness, with additional options and supports established to help people find and maintain permanent housing.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:



Ending Homelessness



Creating Attainable
Housing Options



Sustaining Community Housing



Addressing a Diversity of Needs

IMPLEMENTATION DRIVERS:



Collaboration



Using local data



Education and training



Focus on outcomes

A SNAPSHOT OF HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

As of December 31, 2020

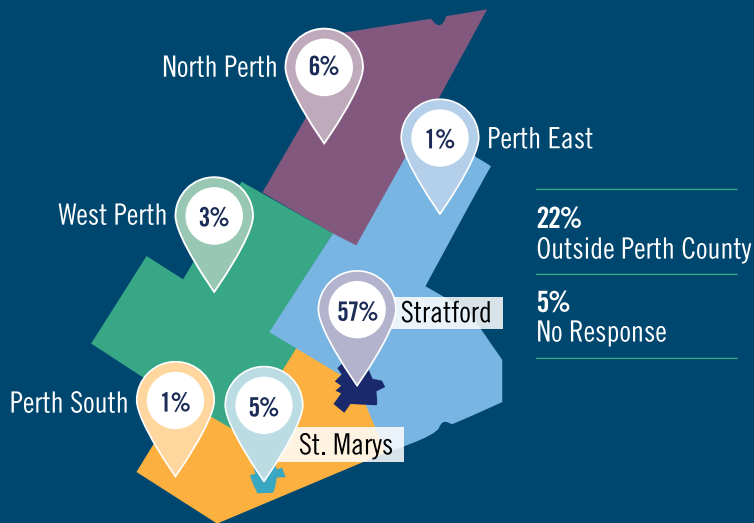
DEMAND FOR GEARED-TO-INCOME (RGI) HOUSING



276

applicants were on the centralized waiting list for RGI housing

Where Applicants Are Applying From



Priority Status

59% Chronological

39% Homelessness

1% Special Provincial Priority



Demand by Unit Size

74% 1 Bedroom

12% 2 Bedrooms

8% 3 Bedrooms

7% 4+ Bedrooms



Applicant Type

63% Singles and Couples

25% Families

12% Seniors

HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS



103

households were experiencing homelessness according to the area's By-Name-List

- 85% were experiencing chronic homelessness
- 11% identified as Indigenous

Household Composition



Gender Identity*

48% Women

45% Men

8% Trans/Gender Non-Conforming/No Response

*percentages do not add up to 100% because of rounding.



Level of Acuity

63% High Acuity

26% Moderate Acuity

11% Low Acuity

RENTAL COSTS



**Average Market
Rent (AMR)**
by unit type

	1-BR	2-BR	3-BR
CMHC	\$889	\$1,034	\$1,182
LOCAL	\$1,239	\$1,421	\$1,720

Vacancy Rates*

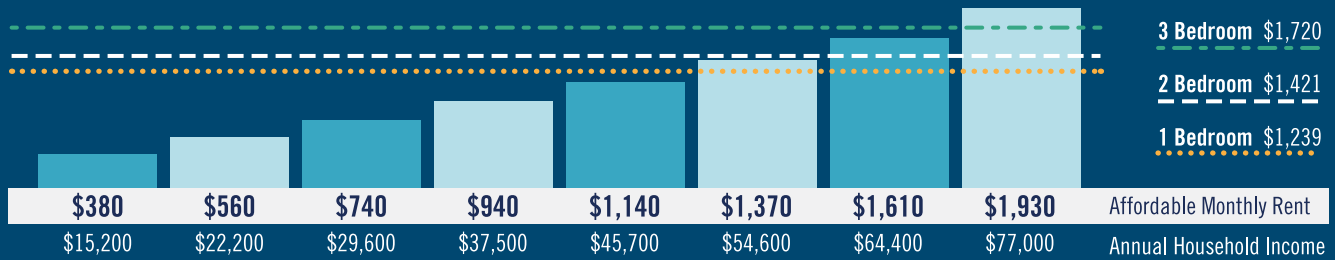
1.5%
Stratford

5.3%
North Perth

*Data unavailable for entire Service Manager area.

Rental Housing Affordability

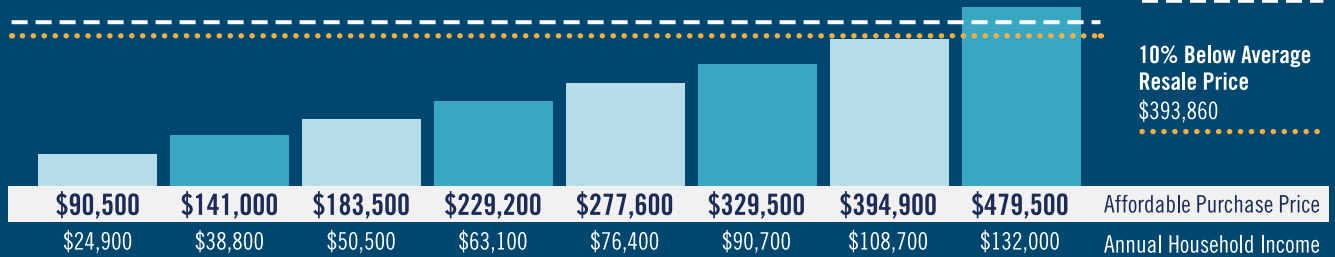
Monthly rental prices
based on local AMR:



Home Ownership Affordability

Average Resale Price
\$437,622

10% Below Average
Resale Price
\$393,860



OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2020

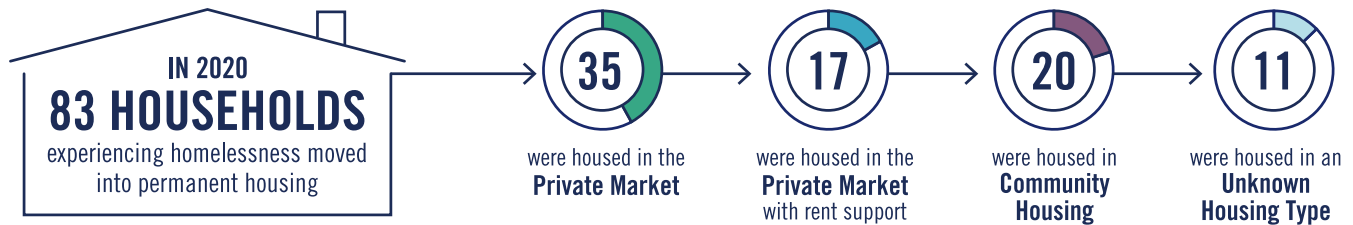
ENDING HOMELESSNESS



- ✓ Established the Homelessness Emergency Operations Group (HEOG) to create a coordinated response for people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic.
- ✓ Secured a motel contract to provide isolation spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness who were presumptive, awaiting a test result, or were positive with COVID-19 and needed to self-isolate or quarantine.
- ✓ Enhanced current outreach capacity by hiring an additional Social Services Outreach Worker.
- ✓ Established the Coordinated Access System Leadership Group (CASLG)—consisting of 12 community agencies—to oversee the implementation of a coordinated access system locally.
- ✓ Increased housing stability and homelessness prevention funding for:
 - Rent and utility banks;
 - Gift cards to purchase incidentals; and
 - Cell phones and minutes to reduce isolation, increase contact with support systems, and assist with housing searches.

- ✓ Increased the capacity of the Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) by an additional 20 case management spots in the scattered site model of the program.

- ✓ Partnered with The Local Community Food Centre to expand meal services to households accessing emergency accommodation at local motels.



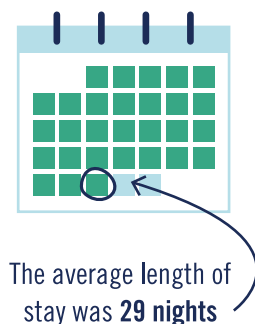
OF THOSE 83 HOUSEHOLDS:

88% had experienced chronic homelessness
(homeless for 6 or more months)

79%* had maintained their housing for 6 months or more

*Percentage based on households housed between January and November 2020

141
households accessed **EMERGENCY** accommodation



154 households received financial assistance through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative program for:



Last month's rent deposit
(30%)



Moving costs
(19%)



Rent arrears
(23%)



Utility arrears
(28%)

CREATING ATTAINABLE HOUSING OPTIONS



(e.g. housing allowance, rent supplement, housing benefit) to make the cost of their housing more affordable.

That's 10% more than last year.

- ✓ Relunched the Affordable Homeownership Loan Program using proceeds from loan repayments and capital gains realized by previous recipients who sold their residential properties.
- ✓ Rolled out the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) with initial target populations of:
 - Households experiencing homelessness;
 - Survivors of domestic violence; and
 - Households living in community housing not currently receiving affordability support.

SUSTAINING COMMUNITY HOUSING



- ✓ Concluded operating agreements with **3** federal housing projects, impacting **36** RGI units.
- ✓ Allocated COCHI money to **5** community housing providers, benefitting **258** households.
 - \$319,380 on capital repairs and improvements
 - \$13,500 on transitional operating grant to assist one of the federal projects with developing a plan to maintain their RGI stock
- ✓ Hosted **2** workshops for community housing providers and covered topics such as:
 - Findings from the Operational Review
 - COCHI funding
 - Risk management during the pandemic
 - Legislative changes to the *Housing Services Act, 2011*

100% of housing providers attended the workshops.

- ✓ Prepared for legislative changes to the *Housing Services Act, 2011* by:

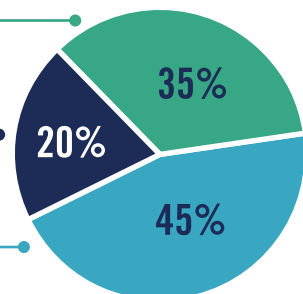
- Creating **5** new Service Manager Directives; and
- Communicating the changes to community housing providers and tenants, applicants on the centralized waiting list, and the public.

78 HOUSEHOLDS HOUSED FROM THE CENTRALIZED WAITING LIST FOR RGI HOUSING

Homelessness Status applicants

Special Provincial Priority applicants

Chronological applicants



ADDRESSING A DIVERSITY OF NEEDS



- ✓ Collaborated with the United Way Perth-Huron on the launch of Help Do Local Good, an initiative to bring those impacted by the pandemic together with those willing to lend a hand.
- ✓ Supported the United Way Perth-Huron in setting up the COVID-19 Urgent Needs Fund to help local organizations increase program capacity, expand the reach of existing programs and shift the way they provide support to individuals and families in need.
- ✓ Helped improve access to reliable and affordable bus service throughout Perth County through the PC Connect pilot program, a partnership between the municipalities of Stratford, Perth County, North Perth, and St. Marys.
- ✓ Provided additional funding to Family Services Perth-Huron to support households struggling with various stresses due to the pandemic, including isolation, small business stress, and family issues.

To view the full report, visit www.stratford.ca

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