

From **Onus** to **Action** in the Housing and Homelessness Crisis

Exploring Government Responsibilities and Innovative Approaches by Mid-Sized Ontario Cities



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Chapter 1 Introduction	4
Acronyms	4
Key terms	4
Background and rationale	5
Executive Summary	6
Structure of report	6
Chapter 2 Who is responsible for the right to housing?	7
2.1. Governmental responsibility in Canada overview	7
2.2 Federal government responsibility	8
2.3 Provincial government (Ontario context) responsibility	11
2.4 Municipal government (Ontario context) responsibility	13
2.5 Conclusion	16
Chapter 3 Case study approach	16
3.1 Why case studies?	16
3.2 Recruitment	17
3.3 Interviews	17
Chapter 4 Ontario case studies	18
4.1 Wellington County, ON (Guelph)	18
4.2 City of Greater Sudbury, ON	22
4.3 City of Kingston, ON	26
4.4 Region of Waterloo, ON (Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge)	30
Chapter 5 Conclusions	34
References	36

Acknowledgements

Many people and organizations have been important in the production of this report. We want to acknowledge and express our gratitude:

To the individuals who contributed as advisors on the report:

Jessica Penner (Peterborough Drug Strategy)

Sage Irwin (Peterborough Drug Strategy)

Emily Jones (Peterborough Police Service, Chair of Peterborough Drug Strategy)

Donna Rogers (FourCAST)

Dane Record (PARN)

Jamie Hartnett (Peterborough Police Service)

Carolyn Doris (Peterborough Public Health)

To the individuals and organization who contributed to the completion of this report in various capacities:

Adrienne Crowder (Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy)

Kerri Kightley (FourCAST)

Laura Pin (Wilfrid Laurier University)

Anoushka Moucessian (KFL&A Public Health)

Peterborough Police Service

Erica Poulin (Waterloo Integrated Drug Strategy)

To the interviewees, who generously took the time to discuss the housing and homelessness response in their communities.

To Sage Irwin and Jessica Penner for editing and reviewing this document. Your attention to detail and expertise has greatly improved this report.

This report was produced and written by Lilian Dart (Peterborough Drug Strategy). Enquiries should be directed to info@peterboroughdrugstrategy.com.

Report design by WeDesign.

Funded in part by a grant from the Government of Ontario.



Chapter 1: Introduction

Key Terms

Affordable housing: Programs since 2002 have led to the construction of about 21,800 rental units with rents maintained at or below 80% of average market rent for at least 20 years. These units were built in both the community and market sector.¹

At risk of homelessness: Individuals or families whose current housing situations are dangerously lacking security or stability which may result in homelessness imminently or soon.³

Community housing: Housing owned and operated by non-profit housing corporations, housing co-operatives and municipal governments, or district social service administration boards. These providers offer subsidized or low-end-of market rents.¹

Emergency sheltered: This refers to people who, because they cannot secure permanent housing, are accessing emergency shelter and system supports, generally provided at no cost or minimal cost to the user. Such accommodation represents a stop-gap institutional response to homelessness provided by government, non-profit, faith-based organizations and/or volunteers.³

Harm reduction: A set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing the negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs.²

Homelessness: Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is a result of systemic barriers and is a social determinate of health.³

Provisionally accommodated: Describes the situation in which people, who are technically homeless and without permanent shelter, access accommodation that offers no prospect of permanence. Those who are provisionally accommodated may be accessing temporary housing provided by the government or the non-profit sector or may have independently made arrangements for short-term accommodation.³

Social housing: Developed through federal or provincial programs from the 1950s through 1995. Over 250,000 households live in social housing. About 185,000 pay rent-geared-to-income and the rest pay moderate market rent.¹

Supportive housing: Where housing and support are linked, with staff members providing various levels of support within the residence⁴. It includes both clinical and nonclinical services that might help someone stay reliably housed.⁵

Unsheltered: This includes people who lack housing and who are not accessing accommodation, like shelters, except during extreme weather conditions.³

Acronyms

AMO – Association of Municipalities Ontario
BFZ – Built for Zero
NHS – National Housing Strategy
NIMBY – Not in my back yard
OAGO – Office of the Auditor General of Ontario

PDS – Peterborough Drug Strategy
RGI – Rent geared to income
YIMBY – Yes in my back yard
OMSSA – Ontario Municipal Social Services Association

Background and Rationale

This report is produced by Peterborough Drug Strategy (PDS). PDS is a collective of community-based organizations based in Peterborough, Ontario, which are committed to reducing the harms related to substance use.⁶ PDS follows a four-pillar approach, which include: prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and enforcement.

In the autumn of 2022, PDS embarked on a new project focused on housing and homelessness. The drug poisoning epidemic, the mental health crisis, and the housing and homelessness crisis intersect in many ways. In fact, “the evidence is clear that many harms are reduced and wellness improved when people have access to safe, appropriate and affordable housing” (para. 8).⁷ Understanding the current and evolving state of housing is important for PDS partners and to other Drug Strategies to have a fulsome picture of how their work, despite being focused on substances, can also support solutions in housing and homelessness.

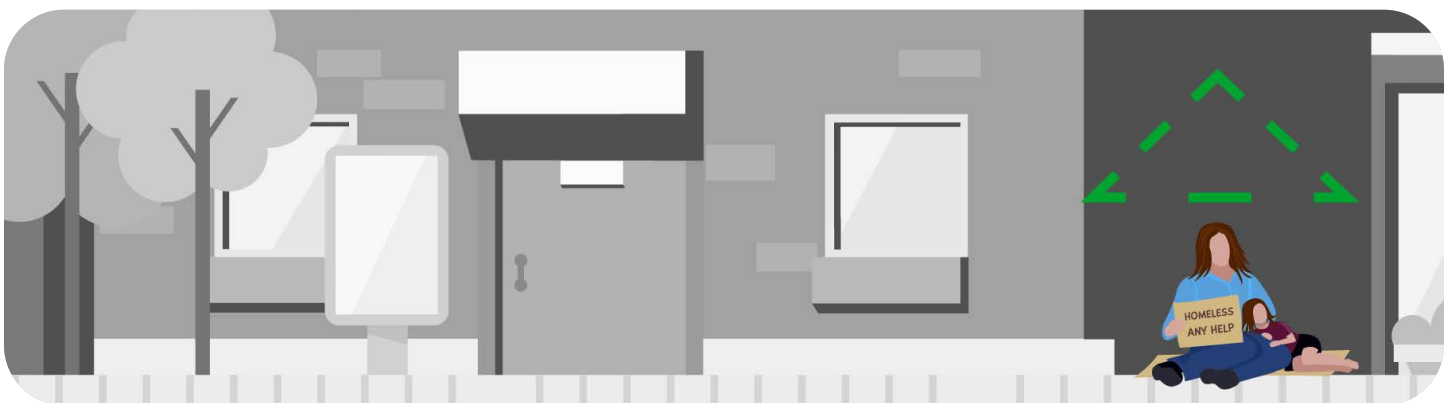
As the crisis intensifies, communities across Ontario are asking the question, “who is responsible for taking care of individuals experiencing homelessness?”. PDS intends to consolidate this information into one place for quick reference.

Local governments in Ontario are largely responsible for delivering homelessness services and therefore are consistently looking for ways to better their response. As Councillor Matt Crowley from the City of Peterborough said at a city council meeting in 2022, “it behooves us as council to look for new and radical ways to address [homelessness]”. This report intends to provide tangible examples of innovation and creative solutions as a means of inspiration for mid-sized cities across Ontario. It is important to remember that the goal of this report is to present the productive ways in which cities are addressing homelessness. However, no community in Ontario has solved homelessness. Each faces a host of issues that are very real and frustrating for those who are affected by homelessness or housing insecurity, and those advocating for change. While the critiques are not the focus of this work, it is important to remember that there is no ‘perfect’ response and that communities must remain diligent in strengthening their programs and services.

This report is intended for: Partners of PDS, community agencies across Ontario, Service System Managers, and any interested community member who is motivated to improve their city’s housing and homelessness response.

“it behooves us as council to look for new and radical ways to address [homelessness]”

Matt Crowley

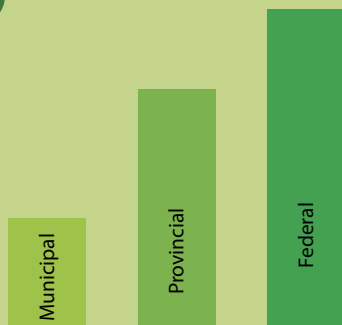


Executive Summary

Canada is currently facing a housing and homelessness crisis.

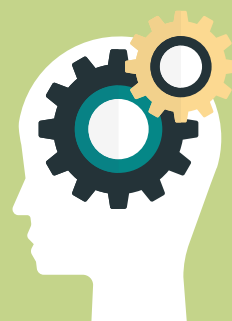
This report was produced to fulfill several objectives, including:

#1



Clarify the role of the different levels of government, producing an accountability framework

#2



Identify innovation in the housing and homelessness response across Ontario's mid-sized cities

In Canada, the responsibility for homelessness services is shared between federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments. However, municipal governments do the heavy lifting of addressing the problem in their communities.⁸ This report presents four case studies to exemplify innovation and creativity in responding to the needs of their communities. In particular, Wellington County (City of Guelph), The City of Sudbury, The Region of Waterloo (Cities of Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge), and The City of Kingston, are featured.

The local response to homelessness is not one-size-fits-all. Different local contexts necessitate different responses. While mid-sized cities across Ontario face many challenges, this report provides examples of four communities which have demonstrated creativity and innovation in addressing the housing and homelessness crisis. As Canada continues to grapple with housing, the goal of this report is to showcase how four unique mid-sized cities have demonstrated some success, how they have prioritized projects, and the philosophy behind their approach.

Structure of report

This report will begin with a review of 'who is responsible for what' in the Canadian context, delving into the duty of federal, provincial, and municipal governments in addressing housing and homelessness. Next, the research approach for the case studies will be briefly described. Then, the four case studies will be profiled, detailing different ways mid-sized cities are being innovative in their housing and homelessness response. Finally, the report will outline the lessons learned and next steps of the research.

Chapter 2: Who is responsible for the right to housing?

2.1. Governmental responsibility in Canada overview

Often, the question of responsibility is raised in conversations around housing and homelessness. When it comes to vulnerable people in our communities, it can be easier to dismiss the responsibility than to tackle these complex systemic issues head on. To begin, this report will outline

the difficulties with defining the jurisdictional responsibility in both providing services and in funding them. Next, the responsibilities of each level of government will be described based on the current literature, to define who is responsible and create an accountability framework.

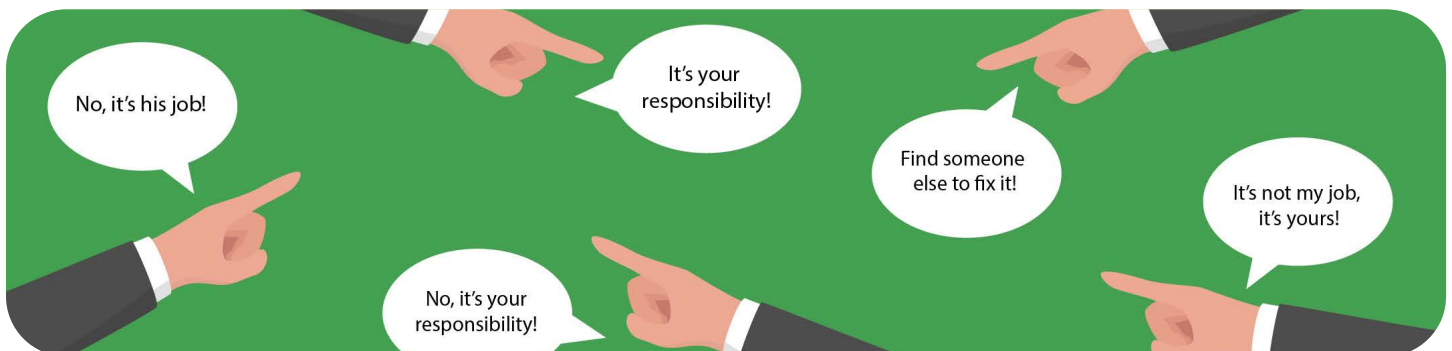
Challenges

A common sentiment among policy experts is that the jurisdictional lines in Canada are blurred and grey, and “the story is more complicated than it appears” (p. 6).⁹ The responsibility is often shared, and programs are co-funded, making it difficult to hold specific governments or elected officials accountable.

While some services in communities are entirely funded and managed by their municipalities, housing and homelessness services in Ontario are intertwined, which leads to cost sharing between municipal, provincial, and federal governments based on political negotiations.⁶ This complicated division of responsibility is made further unclear when governments change, and the downloading (or uploading) of costs and responsibilities are altered at any given time¹⁰. For example, the *Local Services Realignment* in 1997 under Mike Harris’ Progressive Conservative government led to several portfolios (including social housing) being downloaded to municipalities, leading to conflict in inter-governmental affairs.¹¹

Municipalities are often referred to as “creatures of the province” (p. 2);¹² they are directed by and report to the provincial government. In fact, “... no fewer than 280 provincial statutes, and countless political regulations, policy frameworks, and service standards affect how municipalities in Ontario deliver services” (p. 6).⁶ As such, while most of the costs and responsibilities are placed upon municipalities, they are understood as having limited guidance and support.¹³

The Government of Canada has signed onto innumerable international human rights agreements and treaties, described in section 2.2 and has underscored its fundamental belief and commitment that housing is a human right through the National Housing Act. However, while provinces, territories, and municipalities are required to uphold international law,¹⁴ they have no specific obligation to implement the recommendations from the National Housing Council.¹⁵



2.2 Federal government responsibility

The Government of Canada “functions as a system enabler” (p. 8).¹⁶ The federal government leverages its power by producing policies and funding to support housing and homelessness programs. In particular, the federal government has ratified several international human rights laws and domestic acts and has adopted international agendas that recognize the right to housing.¹¹

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing and her lead researcher, consolidated this information into a report titled A National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada.¹¹ Despite the report being focused on encampments specifically, many of the principles underscored could be applied to other housing-related issues. These principles are based upon Canada’s commitment to the right to housing, which include:

#1

Recognize **residents of homeless encampments** as rights holders.

#2

Meaningful engagement and **effective participation of encampment residents.**

#3

Prohibition of forced evictions.

#4

Explore **all viable alternatives** to eviction.

#5

Ensure that any **relocation is human rights compliant.**

#6

Ensure **encampments meet basic needs** of residents consistent with human rights.

#7

Ensure **human rights-based goals** and outcomes and the **preservation of dignity** of encampment residents.

#8

Respect, protect, and fulfill the **distinct rights of Indigenous Peoples** in all engagements with encampments.

Canada ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which is often cited as a pivotal document in the right to housing. Article 11.1 states, “the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for [themselves] and [their] family including adequate food, clothing, and housing and to the continuous improvement of living conditions”.¹⁷ Additionally, Canada has ratified or recognized several other international agreements that underscore the right to housing¹. Canada is also a member nation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s). Under SDG 11, sustainable cities and communities, the right to safe and affordable housing is explicitly stated.

Finally, clauses in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms affirm the right to shelter, including Section 7 which states, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice.”¹⁸ and section 15(1) which states, “Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination...”¹⁵

National Housing Strategy (NHS)

The National Housing Strategy (NHS) Act was adopted on June 21, 2019.¹² The act declares:

#1

That the right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right affirmed in international law.

#2

That housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of the person and to building sustainable and inclusive communities.

#3

Support for improved housing outcomes for the people of Canada.

#4

The progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as recognized in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. (p. 6)¹⁹

¹ This includes statutes like, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, *Convention of the Rights of the Child*, *Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*, *Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*¹².

The NHS is intended to bring Canada in line with international standards.¹² The NHS commits to:

#1

Create a long-term flourishing vision for housing in Canada.

#2

Establish national housing and homelessness goals and identify priorities, initiatives, timelines, and desired outcomes.

#3

Focus on improving housing outcomes for persons in greatest need.

#4

Provide for participatory processes to ensure the ongoing inclusion of all stakeholders. (p. 7)¹⁶

To attain its ambitious goals, the NHS includes \$40 billion of federal investment into housing programs such as the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, Reaching Home, and Canada Housing Benefit.²⁰ In addition, the NHS has established several processes for furthering housing policy in Canada. Each process has a specific goal which assists the Government of Canada in its progressive realization of the right to housing.

The systems include:

- National Housing Council which provides advice for the Minister of Housing;
- Federal Housing Advocate who monitors progress and implementation, researches housing issues, and receives submissions from the public on systemic issues; and the
- Review Panels, which are requested by the Federal Housing Advocate to hold a hearing to review systemics housing issues and provide a report with recommendations to the Minister.¹⁶

National Housing Council



Federal Housing Advocate



Review Panels



2.3 Provincial government (Ontario context) responsibility

Despite the right to housing being federal law in Canada, no territorial or provincial government has recognized this human right.¹² There are processes in place for levels of government to collaborate on human rights issues. For example, the FTP Senior Officials Committee Responsible for Human Rights (SOCHR) was formed to "... enhance high level federal, provincial, and territorial collaboration on human rights by working to promote and strengthen information sharing between governments and by providing leadership on Canada's adherence to

the implementation of human rights instruments" (para. 4).²¹ However, this committee only had its first meeting in 30 years in 2017.

The provinces and territories in Canada differ significantly due different regional contexts and policy decisions. This report will focus on the responsibility of the Government of Ontario, as Ontario is where the case studies in section 4 are situated.

The Government of Ontario downloaded significant costs and responsibility of managing housing and homelessness onto municipalities in the late 1990's. The Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO)

has reported comprehensively on the responsibility of the Ontario government. They outline that the Government of Ontario:

#1

Has a housing supply action plan which aims to **make it easier to build housing**.

#2

Regulates the municipal planning function through The Planning Act 1990.

#3

Is the steward of the housing system, **creating legislation and establishing service requirements** for the service system managers.

#4

Regulates community housing through the Housing Services Act 2011.

#5

Manages funding programs which are delivered by the Service System Managers.ⁱⁱ

#6

Provides funding for: **supportive affordable housing construction**, facilitating homeownership and renovations, **advancing homelessness prevention**, increasing access to low-cost financing, **providing rent supplements** and housing allowances, and supportive housing. (p. 11-12)²²

ⁱⁱ This includes Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), Strong Communities Rent Supplement, Home for Good, Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI; co-funded with federal government under the National Housing Strategy), Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI; co-funded with federal government).

While provincial policy is hugely influential on housing and homelessness outcomes, the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (OAGO) underscored several fundamental challenges in the current approach. In 2021, the OAGO published a report assessing the strategies, systems, and processes that address housing and homelessness. They state that,

“Over the past 10 years, the province has taken a fractured approach to preventing and reducing homelessness. Five ministries have put forward at least 14 strategies to address factors that are related to homelessness... However, the province has not produced one coordinated overall implementation plan aimed directly at preventing and reducing homelessness” (p. 2).²³

In their audit, they found that:

#1

Ontario lacks an encompassing and overarching plan that addresses housing and homelessness.

#2

The province lacks supports for individuals transitioning from correctional facilities, health care facilities, and the child welfare system.

#3

The lack of housing affordability impedes progress in reducing homelessness.

#4

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing does not evaluate the programs and services provided by provincial funding that support people experiencing homelessness.

#5

For the past 10 years, the funding methodology for the Community Homeless Prevention Initiative has been primarily based on historical spending rather than current or local need. For example, in 2017 five communities did not receive Home for Good funding despite having higher scores of need than those that did receive funding. (p. 2-4)²⁰

2.4 Municipal government (Ontario context) responsibility

In Ontario, the delivery of housing and homelessness services is largely a local responsibility. The programs are administered by the 47 service managers. In particular, the service managers include consolidated municipal service managers (which may be regional governments, counties, or separated cities) and district social service administration boards.²⁴ This system was designated under the Housing Services Act, 2011. The appointment of a service system

manager is often based on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between a city and county. For example, the City of Peterborough is appointed as the service system manager (rather than the County of Peterborough) for the Peterborough area, whereas Wellington County is appointed as the service system manager (rather than the City of Guelph) for the Guelph area.

The service system manager is responsible for the following:

#1

Managing affordable housing units.

#2

Providing affordable homes.

#3

Administering, funding, overseeing standards, and capacity building for non-profit and co-operative housing providers.

#4

Managing waitlists and access to affordable housing.

#5

Providing affordable housing options, including shelter, transitional and supportive housing, rent-geared-to-income, and affordable rentals.

#6

Meeting the complex housing needs of their communities. (p. 1)²⁵

Within these responsibilities, the municipal government is also responsible for local planning and the implementation of the Ontario Building Code.

While the previous list falls under municipal responsibility, local governments often transfer the funds to third parties like community agencies who administer services.²⁰ As AMO states, "Municipal governments... do the heavy lifting in tackling the crisis on the ground" (p. 10).¹⁹ Municipalities are the largest funding contributor to community housing.²⁶ However, unlike the federal or provincial governments, they cannot run a financial deficit. It is interesting to note that Ontario is the only province or territory that has placed this responsibility onto

the local government, with property taxpayers paying 1.77 billion towards community housing in 2017.¹⁹

Municipalities are faced with tackling housing challenges on the frontlines with limited resources and are dependent on decisions being made at higher levels of government, yet they are also legally responsible to uphold this human right.¹¹ However, as lawyer Leilani Farha and researcher Kaitlin Schwan outline that, "municipal authorities are often unaware of their legal obligations under international human rights law..." (p. 6)¹¹ as the Government of Canada's commitment to international human rights treaties also applies to local governments.¹¹

While this responsibility does bare significantly on municipalities, "... some choose to play greater roles [in addressing housing and homelessness] than others" (p. 17).²⁷

Housing researcher Nick Falvo outlines the role of municipalities and recommendations on how they can better their local response, which include:

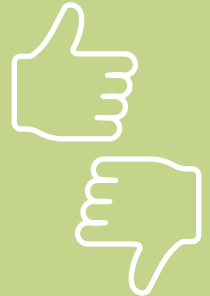
Land use planning and zoning:

Municipal governments can decide which areas are zoned for what, how the public is engaged, and how quickly approvals are made (this is particularly relevant in emergency shelters, daytime facilities, supportive housing, and affordable housing).



By-law enforcement:

Municipalities often push by-laws that prohibit or restrict outdoor sleeping (including encampments) and pan-handling, however, can choose whether to enforce them.



Coordination of the local homelessness response:

Due to the landscape lens of municipalities, they are able to grasp a greater understanding of the factors impacting homeless populations (tax, low-cost housing, labour market, migration, weather, etc.).



Municipalities can play a convening role:

Due to their power and influence in communities, they can assist in coordinating other services.



Using municipal facilities:

Municipalities own several facilities like washrooms, large floor space, and shower facilities. Facilities like these can be used for the individuals experiencing homelessness.



Using municipal land:

Municipal land can be used for supportive housing, emergency facilities, or deeply affordable housing. In some cases, municipalities have offered a steep discount to non-profit housing organizations (often under the Rapid Housing initiative).



Organization of public services:

Local governments often fund and have oversight of public services (for example, police, libraries, public transit, etc.) and can work with these partners to better address homelessness.



Use of municipal staff:

Municipalities have large staffing pools. As they did during the pandemic, staff can be redeployed to address pertinent issues and crises (like the homelessness crisis).



Councillors or mayors can act as advocates:

It has proven effective for individuals or groups within the municipality to champion the issues and advocate for change.



Municipalities can use their resources to analyze:

To ensure research is up to date, and that responses are data-driven, it is important that the local government utilize analysis.



Municipalities can provide training:

To effectively address homelessness on the ground, municipal staff can train frontline staff. (p. 17-19)²⁴



Australian researcher Leanne Mitchell offered similar suggestions as Nick Falvo, but added: a) the conversation must be on more than just housing; b) local governments should not be afraid to hand the strategy over to community partners; c) involve people who are not conventional homelessness

experts (for example, people who interact with the unhoused community every day like librarians or staff at a corner store); d) recognize the power of peer support; e) embrace and manage the goodwill of community; e) think prevention before crisis; and f) use all the information possible.²⁸

2.5 Conclusion

The responsibility of housing and homelessness in Canada (and particularly in the Ontario context) is complicated. The cost sharing and delivery of services is blurred between federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments.

The purpose of this literature review is to consolidate this information into a summary that can spark further exploration (see chapter 6, further reading). Despite not being wholly comprehensive, this review has made one thing abundantly clear: while municipalities are limited by "...competencies, revenue, and policy frameworks to advance the right to housing locally" (p. 12),¹¹ they are largely (and legally) responsible

for the coordination and many funding avenues of this response. However, this lack of resources can lead inadequate outcomes in the local response (for example, increases in chronic homelessness, lack of shelter space, insufficient housing options, punitive encampment responses, and other housing-related issues).

Some municipalities, however, play a greater role in the housing and homelessness response through innovation and creativity.²⁷ The case studies featured in this report will complement the literature review by providing on-the-ground examples of local success stories and what was behind each success.

Chapter 3 Case study approach

3.1 Why case studies?

Homelessness has often been thought of as a big-city problem. Because of this, most research has been focused on the problem and response in large urban areas. However, the visibility of homelessness is growing in mid-sized cities. Local governments are most proximate to the housing and homelessness crisis and are largely responsible for delivering housing programs. While their obligations are documented, creativity is necessary to use their limited resources wisely. Rather than simply reiterating what a city should be doing to take care of their unhoused community members, the case studies outline how they are addressing the problem through tangible examples and success facilitators.



3.2 Recruitment

To find interviewees, PDS began by using contacts from the Drug Strategy Network of Ontario (DSNO) and other people connected to our network, in the communities chosen for the case studies. We asked our network to put us in touch with individuals that they felt fit our criteria.

From each community, we hoped to interview:

- (1) A person with systems awareness: for example, an individual who was involved in a collaborative or who work with the Service System Manager.
- (2) A person who has frontline awareness and experience: for example, individuals involved in client-facing jobs or in grassroots advocacy.

3.3 Interviews

The data were collected through interviews between January and March of 2023, where each interviewee was asked about stories of success and success facilitators in their city.

Each interviewee gave consent to record the interview and was offered anonymity in the report. Prior to publishing this report, each person was sent a draft to review.



4.1 Wellington County, ON (Guelph)

Community Profile

City of Guelph Population: **131,794**

Wellington County population: **241,026**



Wellington County is the Service System Manager, meaning that it is responsible for administering social services in the county (including in the City of Guelph).

Member of Parliament: **Lloyd Longfield**
(Liberal Party of Canada)

Member of Provincial Parliament: **Mike Schreiner**
(Green Party of Ontario)

Post-secondary institutions: **University of Guelph**
(30,000 student population)

Community known for: **Agriculture and creative economy.**

The state of housing and homelessness:

Wellington County has seen notable impacts of the housing and homelessness crisis in the last number of years. The most recent point in time count found that 270 individuals were experiencing homelessness, 62% of that figure being 'chronically homeless'.

Wellington County and the City of Guelph deploy several tactics to address housing and homelessness. It is a Built for Zero community, and has a quality by-name list, a chronic baseline, and quality coordinated access. To address short-term needs, the county has several emergency shelters located in the City of Guelph. The county also administers funding and monitors compliance for housing stability and eviction prevention, including: a rent bank, a housing stability program, an emergency

energy fund, and a low-income energy assistance program. Additionally, the county has formal service agreements with various other housing providers that serve pregnant individuals, seniors, and youth.

The community prides itself in its longer-term solutions to the housing and homelessness crisis. In the City of Guelph, three new permanent supportive housing initiatives are underway to provide approximately 70 self-contained units with private baths and kitchenettes to low-income individuals. The residents of these buildings will be supported by 24/7 staff and wraparound services offered by Guelph Community Health Centre.

Case study

For this report, Gail Hoekstra from **Stepping Stone** and Dominica McPherson from the **Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination** were interviewed. Two themes emerged which are central to the housing and homelessness response in Guelph and Wellington County:

1. Consensus on long-term solutions.
2. Collaboration among stakeholders.

While distinct from one another, it was clear through these conversations that the intensive collaboration is leveraged as a way of working towards innovation in long-term solutions.

When inquiring about what makes Guelph and Wellington County's housing and homelessness response unique, the answer is unanimously "long-term solutions." While the emergency response is important to the region (like, for example, the yearly campaign to distribute an extreme weather response directory and Stepping Stone's *Emergency Overnight Shelter*, which follows the principles of harm

reduction), the agencies and the local government have long valued the 'upstream' changes. In other words, Dominica says: "... *immediate needs are critical, and we must have that same sense of urgency for root cause solutions.*"

In January 2019, Mayor Cam Guthrie convened the Mayor's Task Force on Supportive Housing. Dominica was asked to co-chair the task force and was responsible for developing a comprehensive community plan to create permanent supportive housing. The task force identified priority items and community organizations (namely, Stepping Stone, Kindle Communities, and Wyndham House) rallied together with health agencies who could provide wraparound services. While the fine details of each of the supportive housing projects had yet to be ironed out, Dominica referred to the *Field of Dreams* analogy – "*build it and they will come.*" She said that this courage of committing to make projects possible and the resulting collaboration "*was an exercise of building faith, building momentum, and building hope.*"

A supportive regional and municipal council has been essential in Guelph and Wellington County moving forward with:

A)

Support for projects: The local government has been vocal and engaged with initiatives to build capacity in housing and homelessness projects. The brave leadership, or "effective championing," as Dominica characterized it, of elected officials has been integral for the success of the region's supportive housing projects.

B)

Providing resources like funding and land: As the County of Wellington is the Service System Manager, the City of Guelph (and the other municipalities in the region) transfer most housing and homelessness-related funds to the county. However, the City of Guelph also has an Affordable Housing Reserve, which was given to agencies to co-fund the permanent supportive housing projects. This funding complemented or helped to unlock provincial and federal funding.

Leveraging collaboration to address longer-term solutions to housing and homelessness is not a novel approach in the region. For example, Gail explained that Stepping Stone historically provided an overnight shelter and a daytime drop-in and meal program. Recognizing the need to shift from acute needs, Stepping Stone worked with other agencies who stepped up to fulfill the daytime drop-in services required by the community. By relying on partnerships, together Stepping Stone and other agencies can target longer-term housing solutions. Gail expanded on this by stating,

“This permits a different way of targeting the problem. We are solutions focused... people deserve better than just surviving.”

Due to this community collaboration, agencies like Stepping Stone were able to shift away from “Band-Aid solutions” and look toward stability.

Guelph and Wellington County have seen great success in focusing on long-term solutions to housing and homelessness. Under the leadership of the County of Wellington, the quality by-name list has found reductions in chronic homelessness, a downward trend which could be furthered by the addition of the 70 permanent supportive beds in the community. When positing what has made these projects successful, it’s clear that culture matters. Gail said that *“It’s about picking the right people to work with,”* and Dominica mentioned that it is not only collaboration – it is collaboratives: organizations like **Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination** and the **Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy**.

These collaboratives, she said, *“Create space for partners to work together, and create the context necessary to facilitate that working together.”* The birds-eye view that collaboratives function within allow for systems-level change by understanding the ways in which different agencies and actors function and how their strengths can be leveraged

into tangible outcomes. Although these relationships take time and intentional effort to develop into strong partnerships, Dominica explained that they can spark a unified feeling among partners, which *“creates a space where people are more willing to take risks or commit to bolder action.”*

Risk taking then, becomes the seed by which innovation grows.

Collaboratives and agencies in Guelph and Wellington County have prioritized engagement with the community as a way of gaining support. They recognize that without a culture shift and a change in public opinion, important projects will be challenging to move forward. The Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination launched a **Yes in my Back Yard (YIMBY)** campaign. While the general intention was to shift public opinion about housing and homelessness, this began as a targeted project to prevent approvals of the zoning changes for the permanent supportive housing projects from being denied. The organization created a training that followed a strong human rights approach. The training outlined:

1. What Not in my Back Yard (NIMBY) is and what it means for the community.
2. Myths that accompany NIMBY-ism.
3. Tools to identify whether a concern is valid or discriminatory.

Dominica estimated that they had trained over 500 individuals, including politicians at all different levels of government. Each training was tailored to the audience – Gail underscored the importance of the YIMBY campaign for politicians, giving them the tools to talk to their constituents and set the tone for public meetings. Opening the dialogue with elected officials has allowed for mutual trust leading to ongoing positive relationships. Though the YIMBY campaign was not the only factor that had an effect on the permanent supportive housing process, the projects received unanimous support by council on the zoning changes and did not receive an appeal by the community.

Gail echoed the YIMBY philosophy on a practical, on-the-ground level. When asked how the neighbours feel about the shelters and housing projects that Stepping Stone runs, she said that they are generally supportive of it. However, often the loudest voices are in opposition to the projects. Gail said, *“my philosophy on this is to answer them right away,”* to open a respectful dialogue so the neighbours feel heard – no matter if they have a positive or negative perspective. Similar to the YIMBY training, Gail highlighted that she ensures that she helps the neighbours distinguish between a legitimate concern like safety, and an annoyance or discriminatory concern.

Finally, when thinking about sustainability and long-term solutions to housing and homelessness, Dominica and Gail often referred to evidence-based approaches and looking to success stories from other communities. Gail highlighted that Stepping Stone has a small diversion and rapid rehousing team because evidence has shown that quickly rehousing people who have lost their accommodation prevents chronic homelessness. Further, when Stepping Stone moved to a harm reduction model in its shelters, there was initially some confusion about what harm reduction in shelters really means. Gail and the team at Stepping Stone worked with experts in harm reduction to ensure their model was reflective of harm reduction best practices. Dominica also pointed to several studies, reports, and cases that they have used to inform their best practices.


This case study has demonstrated a particular effectiveness in the housing and homelessness response in the City of Guelph and Wellington County. Through a consensus on long-term solutions, intense collaboration among stakeholders, and supportive politicians, the community has shown a commitment to innovation and evidence-based solutions.



4.2 City of Greater Sudbury, ON

Community Profile

City of Greater Sudbury population: **166,004**

 The City of Greater Sudbury is the Service System Manager, meaning that it is responsible for administering social services in the community.

Member of Parliament: **Sudbury: Viviane Lapointe**
(Liberal Party of Canada)
Nickel Belt: Marc Serré
(Liberal Party of Canada)

Member of Provincial Parliament: **Sudbury: Jamie West**
(New Democrat Party)
Nickel Belt: France Gélinas
(New Democrat Party)

Post-secondary institutions: **Laurentian University**
(8,000 student population)
Cambrian College
Collège Boréal

Community known for: **Health care, economics, and education hub in Northern Ontario. Formerly known for nickel mining and lumber extraction.**

The state of housing and homelessness:

The housing and homelessness crisis has affected Sudbury similarly to other communities. While the city was already in crisis, the pandemic furthered inequalities and forced others into homelessness by losing income and therefore losing housing. The most recent point in time (PIT) count from 2021, found that Greater Sudbury had 398 persons who identified as experiencing homelessness in shelter, transitional housing, or unsheltered.³²

The City of Greater Sudbury is also a Built for Zero community. The municipality has a quality-by name list, chronic baseline, and uses coordinated access. There are several overnight shelters including a women's shelter, an all-gender shelter, a youth shelter,

and a women's and family shelter.

The City of Greater Sudbury coordinates housing-related programs that assist individuals in avoiding the loss of housing or in accessing housing. As of 2021, 3,923 households received subsidized accommodations through the City of Greater Sudbury Housing Services.³³ The city owns 1,848 properties used for rent-geared-to-income housing and provides rent supplements for private landlords who own properties used for community housing. In 2022, city council approved the development of a 40-unit transitional housing building supported by Health Sciences North Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT).³³

Case study

Sudbury is being profiled for its ability to meet the needs of its community through a shorter term or emergency response. However, as will be explored in this case study, the city addresses the housing and homelessness crisis using a host of different approaches. In fact, when reflecting on what has made their approach successful, newer initiatives like the Transitional Housing Project and the Encampment Response were highlighted.

For this report, Gail Spencer from the **City of Greater Sudbury**, and Raymond Landry of **Homelessness Network of Greater Sudbury** were interviewed. Three unique themes emerged that were key to the success of the homelessness response in the region:

- (1) Using housing and homelessness data to inform strategies and releasing data to the public.
- (2) Soliciting experts to consult on best practice in the housing and homelessness response.
- (3) Using networks and collaboration to sustainably reach goals.

Sudbury is the only community in this report that is located in the Northern Ontario context. As such, it is a hub for the region and has considerable migration of individuals from smaller towns and Indigenous communities surrounding the city. It is a *Built for Zero* community and Gail and Raymond both mentioned that the Built for Zero approach has been incredibly useful in tracking data.

When examining the City of Greater Sudbury's website, a unique feature is the real-time data that is accessible to the public. The municipality publishes weekly updates on shelter use and capacity, and an update to the by-name list every two months. Additionally, the city publishes a yearly report card to update the public on progress being made.

The inclusion of this data was an intentional move. Gail noted, *"there were always a lot of myths among the public... we wanted to be really transparent about it."* Raymond echoed this. He explained that before the city was as transparent about the numbers, there was a lot more criticism and anger from the media and the public. Raymond said that

"In the absence of data and information led by the municipality, others were quite willing to fill those voids with [their own] information... we just knew we needed to be transparent about the actual numbers."

Thus, transparency in data by the city has become a strategy in the toolbox to combat NIMBY-ism in the community. Additionally, Gail mentioned that this has helped councillors in making decisions based on evidence, and in keeping the community informed. She said that she would highly recommend this to other communities, suggesting to *"make it easy for your council to answer constituent questions about homelessness, keeping up-to-date information on what the city is doing and what the state of homelessness is."*

As with many other communities, the pandemic exacerbated the housing and homelessness crisis in Sudbury. Not only did people become more vulnerable to housing insecurity, but homelessness also became more visible. In the summer of 2021, a large encampment (100 people were estimated to reside in the encampment) began in a city-owned park, Memorial Park. While the city always had unsheltered homelessness, this large encampment was new. The City of Greater Sudbury recognized that the shelters were full and decided that a different strategy was necessary.

In response, the city engaged with Ian De Jong of OrgCode Consulting. OrgCode Consulting is revered as being a reputable and evidence informed service. Gail said that they hired him to “bring the wealth of knowledge from his experience in other communities and countries.” Ian supported the City of Greater Sudbury in developing an encampment strategy. The encampment strategy included key pieces like intense collaboration between social services, police, by-law, and outreach teams. Additionally, OrgCode advised that the city must approach the encampment response in a way that is:

- Trauma informed,
- Harm reducing,
- Following a housing first approach,
- Strengths based,
- Motivational, and
- Culturally appropriate.

Raymond characterized the response, stating that it “... did a good job at stopping harsh interventions by authorities and really assisting people forward into housing,” Gail echoed this, explaining that “it supports [people] first. We try our best to ensure that the supports are adequate and meet the complex needs of each person.” By seeking the advice of an outside expert to advise the municipal response, the City of Greater Sudbury demonstrates a commitment to processes and practices that look at the issue holistically rather than by offering Band-Aid fixes. While addressing encampments has proven to be contentious in other communities, both Raymond and Gail emphasized that Sudbury’s council was very supportive of their new encampment strategy.

In addition to implementing the encampment strategy, council also unanimously approved several

new initiatives to tackle the issue. These initiatives included:

- (1) Adding a low-barrier women’s shelter (Safe Harbour House, operated by Elizabeth Fry Society).
- (2) Investing money into a flex fund. This flex fund can be accessed by social services staff or outreach teams, where money can be quickly given to an individual who may want to go back to their hometown, if they had left.
- (3) Investing money in a master lease to a landlord for up to 20 units.
- (4) Investing money into the renovation of 10 two-bedroom social housing units.
- (5) Investing in bridge housing. This was intended to free up shelter space when an individual had permanent housing secured. Bridge housing is, for example, using motel rooms as a stop-gap between homelessness and permanent housing to stabilize an individual.

It is clear that council and municipal staff recognize the role they can play in working towards a solution to the housing and homelessness crisis. While often levels of government can shroud their responsibility, claiming that it is not within their jurisdiction, the City of Greater Sudbury decided that this issue was too important to wait. The city assumed the cost of two very large projects that should be funded by the province, namely: the Act 3 Transitional Housing Program, and the supervised consumption site, which are being funded on a levy. In addition, the city has demonstrated its commitment to reducing homelessness by using available tools, including municipally owned land. For example, The City of Greater Sudbury donated the land for the new location for transitional housing project.



Gail and Raymond made it clear that the city listens and responds to the needs of the community. The new transitional housing project will provide 40 beds to the community (the project is currently operating 13 beds at a temporary location). When developing the project, the community voiced that housing with supports was needed. As such, the city entered a partnership with Health Sciences North who currently operates the program at the temporary location and will continue when it moves to the larger location. The supports are comprehensive, and include social workers, addiction specialists, and access to psychiatry and primary care. In addition, Ray said about 5 years ago there was a *“shift in the culture of the city.”* While there were several shelter options, none of them were considered low barrier and thus were not meeting the needs of some community members. The city had a consultation process which led to re-vamping the shelter model and taking a different approach to ‘modernize’ it. The *Off the Streets* shelter opened in November 2019, providing a low-barrier shelter for the community, which is connected to *Hope House* (a managed alcohol program), and a nurse practitioner clinic. With a commitment to listening to community need and the fostering of strong partnerships, the City of Greater Sudbury has exhibited an ability to be creative and efficient in the face of the housing and homelessness crisis.

When positing what has led to the City of Greater Sudbury’s success to date, Gail suggested, *“definitely the collaboration.”* Gail elaborated, saying

“we have a lot of people at the table with good hearts and good intentions, and who are willing to work together... I think there is a greater understanding that this impacts all of us.”

Both Raymond and Gail pointed to the success of the Homelessness Assessment Review Team (HART) which convenes the 14 community partners together to make decisions about the coordinated access system and prioritization. This enables deep collaboration and a unified understanding and acceptance of processes. Raymond highlighted that *“we try to close any side door [that an agency could use], so that actual prioritized persons in the community are the ones who are first offered services.”*


Furthermore, Raymond is the coordinator of the Homelessness Network Sudbury. The network, which follows a housing first model and is mandated to serve the chronically homeless population, is funded by the city. The network is housed by the Francophone Health Centre. Each of the six partnership agencies has one staff member funded by and dedicated to the network. Raymond said that the network is made up of diverse organizations, and *“... the diverse expertise in each organization’s mandate and the different lens that each person brings to the table lend enormous value to solving the problem.”* From Raymond’s knowledge, this kind of intense frontline partnership is unique. Additionally, the way in which the Homelessness Network Sudbury is connected to the municipality is incredibly valuable. This was underscored by Raymond, who said *“the city really depends on the Homelessness Network Sudbury as its eyes and ears on the streets... We constantly work closely with the city to let them know what is going on and what the needs are.”*

Sudbury continues to grapple with the challenges associated with the housing and homelessness crisis. However, there is a clear commitment by the local government and agencies to finding creative solutions despite constraints. While the city was originally profiled for its emergency response, it is obvious that the community is exploring all avenues and should be looked to for examples of following data, listening to experts, and strong collaboration.

4.3 City of Kingston, ON

Community Profile

City of Kingston population: 132,485

 The City of Kingston is the Service System Manager, meaning that it is responsible for administering social services

Member of Parliament: **Kingston and the Islands: Mark Gerresten**
(Liberal Party of Canada)
Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston: Scott Reid
(Conservative Party of Canada)

Member of Provincial Parliament: **Kingston and the Islands: Ted Hsu**
(Ontario Liberal Party)
Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston: John Jordan
(Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario)

Post-secondary institutions: **Queens University**
(31,000 student population)
Royal Military College
St. Lawrence College

Community known for: **Rich history and association with the military.**

The state of housing and homelessness:

Kingston has been in the media spotlight over the last number of years due to the contentious nature of the encampments and the city’s response. Like many communities since the pandemic, tenting has become more prominent with the unhoused and the shelters are near capacity (the point in time (PIT) count reported that they are typically at 75% capacity). The city’s PIT count in 2021 found that 134 individuals were living in absolute homelessness, 60 individuals were living in transitional housing, and 13 individuals were staying in a motel or at a friend’s residence.³⁴

The City of Kingston is also a Built for Zero community and therefore has a chronic baseline and a quality by-name list. The city has four permanent emergency shelters, including an adult co-ed shelter, a shelter for families, a transitional shelter for women, and a youth shelter. In addition, the City of Kingston has three permanent overnight drop-ins (one only for men), one seasonal winter overnight drop-in, and three daytime drop-ins. Of note, the Integrated

Care Hub provides daytime and overnight drop-in services, in addition to Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS), harm reduction supplies, meals, and wraparound services.

Kingston is known in Ontario for one of its solutions to ending homelessness through an organization called ‘Our Livable Solution’. The project, located in Portsmouth Olympic Harbour in the city, has 15 heated sleeping cabins (up from 10). The community has a common living space that has two washrooms, showers, a kitchenette, a meeting room, and a quiet room. Our Livable Solution also is positioned to work with community partners to coordinate care.

Like other cities, Kingston has various housing programs for acquiring or keeping housing. For example, the Homelessness Prevention Fund (HPF) provides a non-repayable one-time payment that is used for individuals or families to stay housed or to secure housing. The city also has social housing and oversees 2,003 rent-geared-to-income households.³⁵

Case study

The City of Kingston is being profiled for its collaborative Integrated Care Hub. However, the approach of the city is much more than initially meets the eye. For this report, Candice Christmas from *Support not Stigma*, Sayyida Jaffer from *Providence Centre for Justice, Peace, & Integrity of Creation*, and Ruth Noordegraaf from the *City of Kingston (Director of Housing and Social Services)* were interviewed. Several themes emerged from these discussions, which are central to the response in Kingston, including:

- (1) Using levers available within municipal jurisdiction,
- (2) Incorporating lived experience in operations and planning,
- (3) Being grounded in a strong harm reduction philosophy.

While the city has experienced similar effects of the housing crisis, Sayyida suggested that in fact, a partial explanation for the increases in numbers is that *“the pandemic has caused it to be more visible.”* Additionally, Sayyida explained that the city has an extremely low vacancy rate and consistent growth in its academic institutions without any housing commitments from the schools. Ruth added that there is also a lot of in-migration of individuals from larger cities who can afford to buy houses in the community, and that the City of Kingston is often characterized as a regional hub for jobs or opportunities leading to people from rural areas moving into the city. Sayyida and Ruth agreed that deeply affordable housing is being eroded, leading to housing precarity unseen before, with Ruth characterizing the current state as *“the perfect storm.”*

Notably, the City of Kingston is home to the Integrated Care Hub (ICH), run by Trellis HIV and Community Care. The ICH provides wraparound services including:

- (1) A drop-in centre where individuals can access food, harm reduction supplies, support, and community.
- (2) A rest zone.
- (3) Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) operated by StreetHealth Centre (part of Kingston Community Health Services KCHC).
- (4) Integrated care where community organizations provide access to social, economic, and community health services to those they serve.

The ICH was originally opened in the summer of 2020 as a pilot, funded by the City of Kingston and United Way of Kingston Frontenac Lennox Addington (KFLA). Despite largely providing healthcare services (with an additional drop-in) which is the responsibility of the province, Candice said *“almost all of the money was coming through the municipality at the beginning.”* The funding came from the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF). Due to extensive advocacy, and collaboration between the community and the municipality, the original location used Artillery Park, a recreation centre which was closed at the time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Although this was not imagined as a long-term solution, the city leveraged the resources that were available to respond to this community need. This is because the city recognized how integral as service like the ICH would be to their community, and thus enabled Trellis HIV and Community Centre to swoop into action rather than putting up additional hurdles.



Following the pilot project which used city funds and facilities, the municipality and agencies involved in the ICH advocated to the provincial government for health-care funding for the project. The ICH was successful in receiving \$4.6 million of operational funding in May 2022 through the *Ontario Roadmap to Wellness*, which will be allocated for continuing its life-saving services. While the city still provides some funding, this was pivotal for the continuation of the ICH's operations. As the ICH was using the recreational facility, Artillery Park, during Covid-19 lockdowns, it was important to find a more permanent location. The city established a lease agreement in the autumn of 2020 and relocated the ICH to a property that became its current home. From this adaptation and advocacy, it is clear that the municipality is supportive and understanding of the project and its benefits to the greater community. As Ruth said,

"a lot of overdoses have been diverted onsite... the success is a clear by-product of the new partnerships and agencies working together."

The City of Kingston has demonstrated innovation in how it addresses approvals to planning, using a more inclusive model. While it is important to balance perspectives of neighbours with the needs of the greater community, the harmonized by-law recently added a clause focused on the approvals of emergency housing. This allows housing to be built in more locations than previously zoned without having to go through the full application process that risks approvals being blocked, in certain circumstances. Additionally, while the planning process includes community consultation, Sayyida said that the City of Kingston has been effective at times at reminding people to focus on the building not the people using it. Sayyida referenced a planning meeting from early 2022 that focused on approving the new construction of a meal program location where *"the chair had to remind people multiple times that their comments were out of order with Ontario Human Rights."* As the city grapples with the housing crisis, the municipality has used available tools to combat NIMBY-ism. This enables the approvals of housing options across the

community which are integral to housing affordability for all residents.

Including the voices of people who have lived experience is important in Kingston's approach. This is exemplified by both the ICH's Community Support Program and the honorarium pilot project by the City of Kingston for their housing and homelessness committee.

The ICH's Community Support Program was developed initially out of necessity. Candice explained that during the Covid-19 pandemic, there were staff shortages due to quarantine protocol for close contacts. She said,

"either we closed the doors or found an alternative."

The service users at the ICH stepped up to fill in gaps in staffing which allowed the operations to continue and for people who have lived experience to have a say in services. Following best practice, the ICH was insistent on paying the individuals involved in the Community Support Program fair wages, paying the workers the same as the frontline staff. Candice underscored that *"it has been super successful... it is one unique feature of the hub that we are very pretty proud of."* She said that the program provides employment, experience, and can lead to the service user/employee receiving a letter of reference for future employment. Ruth echoed this and added *"it also helps people get a sense of community purpose and connection,"* which is important in individual journeys.

In addition, The City of Kingston is currently piloting a project which includes and compensates people with lived experience. In particular, the program pays people with lived experience to sit on the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee, which reports to council. Ruth explained that the philosophy behind this program is *"using lived experience to inform policy and programs."* And ensuring that the barriers of participating are mitigated through an honorarium. While this is a relatively small move, it does demonstrate a commitment to equitably including lived experience in decision making.

Finally, a commitment to harm reduction is central to the approach at the ICH. The eight principles of harm reduction include:

- (1) Recognize drug use is present in society and work to minimize its harmful effects.
- (2) Understand that drug use is a complex behavior and that some ways of using drugs are safer than others.
- (3) Prioritize the well-being of individuals and communities over complete abstinence from drugs.
- (4) Provide services and resources to people who use drugs without judgment or coercion to help reduce harm.
- (5) Involve drug users and their communities in creating programs and policies that serve them.
- (6) Empower drug users to share information and support each other in harm reduction strategies.
- (7) Recognize that social inequalities affect people's vulnerability to drug-related harm.
- (8) Acknowledge the real and tragic harm and danger associated with drug use.³⁶

While 'harm reduction' can be variable in how it is defined and implemented, Sayyida underscored that

"it is clear that the ICH doesn't treat harm reduction like a check list. It is actually their philosophy"

which builds relationships and trust. Candice characterized that the harm reduction philosophy is *"what makes the ICH so successful."* She said that meeting service users "where they are at" is at the heart of the ICH. Sayyida echoed this sentiment, stating that the *"intentionality of walking alongside individuals on their journey"* is what makes the service unique.


All of the interviewees noted that they thought the ICH model is working. To Candice, *"the problem continues to be demand,"* meaning that more low-barrier beds that follow the ICH model are necessary. A by-product of the hub model has been a small encampment located directly outside since there are fewer beds than individuals requiring low-barrier services. As such, several people sleep outside while still being able to access many of the shelter's services. In addition, Ruth suggested that the next step in the development of the ICH must be a *"continuum of care,"* addressing how an individual can move on from the ICH once they are stabilized. While it is clear that the ICH has its challenges, the suggestions by Candice and Ruth are additive rather than significant alterations to the philosophy or structure of the program.

Despite the persistent housing and homelessness crisis in Kingston, the community's resolve to tackle the issue remains unwavering as it employs diverse strategies. Notably, the City of Kingston has effectively leveraged its resources, while the community at large has showcased its dedication to amplifying the perspectives of those with lived experience and adopting a robust harm reduction philosophy.



4.4 Region of Waterloo, ON (Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge)

Community Profile

Region of Waterloo population:	535,154 ⁱⁱⁱ	 The Region of Waterloo is the Service System Manager, meaning that it is responsible for administering social services in the community (including the City of Waterloo, the City of Kitchener, and the City of Cambridge).
Member of Parliament:	Waterloo: Bardish Chagger (Liberal Party of Canada) Kitchener Centre: Mike Morrice (Green Party of Canada) Kitchener South-Hespeler: Valerie Bradford (Liberal Party of Canada) Kitchener-Conestoga: Tim Louis (Liberal Party of Canada) Cambridge: Bryan May (Liberal Party of Canada)	Member of Provincial Parliament: Waterloo: Catherine Fife (Ontario New Democrat Party) Kitchener Centre: Laura Mae Lindo (Ontario New Democrat Party) Kitchener South-Hespeler: Jess Dixon (Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario) Kitchener-Conestoga: Mike Harris (Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario) Cambridge: Bryan Riddell (Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario)
Post-secondary institutions:	University of Waterloo (student population, 42,000) Wilfred Laurier University (student population, 20,000) Conestoga College.	Community known for: A mixture of urban and rural landscapes, technology, academic institutions.

The state of housing and homelessness:

The region's most recent point in time (PIT) count found that 1,085 individuals were experiencing homelessness, with around 400 living rough, and around 600 experiencing hidden homelessness.³⁴ Waterloo Region is a *Built for Zero* community, meaning that it has a quality by-name list, a chronic baseline, and quality coordinated access.

Like other communities, the pandemic had a significant effect on housing and homelessness in the region. Encampments became more prevalent and more visible. In particular, a park in Kitchener, Victoria Park, has been in the media due to contentious decisions on evictions, and the recent case in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

To address community need, the region has been particularly innovative in finding solutions and has focused primarily on shorter-term solutions to date. For example, the region has a robust shelter system and drop-in services, has a well-known program called *A Better Tent City* which provides individuals experiencing homelessness with a tiny home, and is opening a hybrid shelter/outdoor model which will provide an additional 50 tiny homes to the community. The region also has several ways that they support longer-term solutions, including funds to assist with buying and keeping housing, incentives for building affordable housing, and several transitional and supportive housing projects.³⁵

Case study

This case study, focused on the Region of Waterloo, emphasizes how the community is tackling the housing and homelessness crisis through a plethora of approaches.^{iv} For this report, Chris McEvoy from the **Region of Waterloo** (Manager, Housing Policy & Homelessness Prevention), Brian Paul from **Supportive Housing Waterloo**, Janet Jones from **Cambridge Recovery Home** (board member), and Char Lee, Lesley Crompton, and Regan Brusse from the **Unsheltered Network** were interviewed. Several themes emerged, which are important in the Region of Waterloo's housing and homelessness response, including:

1. Improving the quality of homelessness data.
2. Responding and reacting to the immediate needs of the community through feedback from agencies.
3. Focusing on providing options to community members.

The Region of Waterloo experienced significant increases in the number of people experiencing homelessness between 2018 and 2021. The Point in Time count in 2018 found 333 individuals versus 1,085 individuals in 2021 experiencing homelessness. This indicates a significant increase in the region's homelessness. However, a few of the interviewees indicated that there is more to that number than meets the eye. Chris highlighted that in the 2021 PIT count, *"we used a different methodology, different definitions of who is experiencing homelessness and who is included..."* but that *"there was also very much a real increase in homelessness."*

While the increase in homelessness is incredibly concerning for the community, advocates for the unhoused underscored the importance of accurate data that reflects what they were seeing and hearing. The interviewees agreed that the PIT count increase was likely due to an actual increase coupled with better quality of data. Char said that from her

experience and knowledge, homelessness in their region didn't get significantly worse, but *"I think it was just noticed more."* Lesley stated that enhancing the data quality was *"a huge step forward, pushed largely by the community."* Understanding the actual number of people experiencing homelessness can inform better practices by the region and agencies. Thus, improving the data has the potential to be transformative in the Region of Waterloo's housing and homelessness response as having a better grasp of the population being served can lead to a more comprehensive plan.

Responding to the dramatic increase of people experiencing homelessness (both from the enhanced data quality and from the legitimate increase due to the housing crisis), the Region of Waterloo, its partners, and unaffiliated organizations doing housing and homelessness work have acknowledged the need for more comprehensive programs and initiatives. As a response to this, the region presented the *Interim Housing Strategy* to, as Chris explains, *"... both deal with the struggles and challenges in the crisis we're facing today, but also to invest in longer-term solutions as well."* The *Interim Housing Strategy*, which was approved by regional council in August 2022, includes provisions like:

1. Transitional housing: providing temporary housing to bridge the gap between being unhoused and having permanent housing.
2. Home-based support: providing rental assistance to make private-market rentals more affordable, which includes the scattered site supportive housing process.
3. Emergency shelter: expanding the shelter network (this will be elaborated on later).
4. Hybrid shelter/outdoor model: building 50 modular/tiny homes at a site that provides wraparound supports.

This strategy is meant to be a temporary stopgap that will be replaced by a longer-term plan, *The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness*, that is being developed by a consultant alongside the region, agencies, and the public. Several of the initiatives that are included in the Interim Housing Strategy are unique to the region. Brian stated that he, “give[s] kudos to the region for trying new things.” The interviewees made it clear that a significant facilitator of success has been advocacy by the public, grassroots organizations (like the Unsheltered Network), and agencies. Lesley explained that “the region has moved forward significantly in its response,” with Regan highlighting that “we have a very strong local social justice network that is very much in communication with the [local government],” which has been an important part of moving these issues forward. By identifying the needs of the community and responding to the calls of advocates and agencies, the region demonstrates a commitment to finding solutions that work.

Of note, the region has an expansive shelter system, which they have incorporated significantly in the *Interim Housing Strategy*. Chris mentioned that the previous response was a seasonal expansion and contraction to meet temporary needs during, for example, cold weather. However, this relied on temporary contracting non-profit organizations or faith-based organizations, which made the response slower due to the securement of staff, processes, and transition times. Thus, part of the strategy is to secure longer-term leases or purchases/capital investments by the region. Ultimately, Chris highlighted that

“we want to find the right-size shelter system... including ensuring that the system is meeting the needs of the people using them.”

Many of the interviewees agreed that the shelter system still needs work. However, Janet underscored that the “variety of shelter models is a definite strength of the region” as the shelter options (which include spaces for different demographics, a spectrum of tolerance for substance use, and various locations) allow individuals to choose a place that is supportive of their individual journey.

Janet suggested that while the variety is useful, that the sustainability of these options is in question due to funding. As the funding is largely from the region, there is often competition between shelters. As such, the longevity of the shelters providing options might require a collaborative and unified approach going forward.

Meeting the needs of shelter service users continues to be a priority by the region. Lesley mentioned that the “appropriateness of the shelter is as important as the number of spaces.” Chris emphasized a new partnership between the Region of Waterloo and Public Health called *Emergency Shelter Harm Reduction Integration Initiative (ESHRII)*. Public Health was tasked with creating an environmental scan and needs analysis of the shelter system to understand how shelters are incorporating harm reduction into their practices. They compiled a list of recommendations, which the region is now working on aligning with funding for shelters to incorporate in a coordinated way. An additional unique layer of the scan was to incorporate equity in the harm reduction approach, as agencies were reporting homogeneity in the demographics of individuals accessing harm reduction services. Chris said that the philosophy behind this approach was “... asking ourselves how we might shore up some of the supports and resources in the shelters,” which includes Indigenous harm reduction. Here, the Region of Waterloo acts on the calls from agencies and the community to not only add shelter space, but to be intentional in shelter processes.

While the *Interim Housing Strategy* is intended to be temporary, all interviewees expressed an urgency in finding longer-term solutions to addressing the housing and homelessness crisis. There was a concern that a focus on emergency shelters might detract from getting out of the current state. As Lesley said, “shelters are only for overnight. They aren’t sustainable for individuals who are trying to exit homelessness.” Brian offered that evidence shows that supportive housing “... is best practice when it comes to breaking the cycle of homelessness.” He said that an organization like Supportive Housing of Waterloo (SHOW) provides intensive supports that an individual needs to remain stably housed and can work with individuals on their own needs and goals.

Funds for supportive housing come from the service manager, the Region of Waterloo. The region has been, as Brian said, “... *really behind what we are doing.*” However, he hopes that more resources are allocated in the future for evidence-based practices like supportive housing. The idea of the region ‘trying new things’ was consistently brought up by interviewees. The Region of Waterloo was actually at the forefront of the push for supportive housing before many communities adopted the model. However, as the housing and homelessness crisis has become more acute, the allocation of the region’s limited resources has shifted to a two-pronged approach to balance investments. Chris said that provisions in the *Interim Housing Solution* like the Erb’s Road Outdoor Shelter, are being used to create a stopgap and additional option for service users while “... *we work on and develop affordable housing and supportive housing to support people.*” In fact, the region announced in 2021 that it planned to build 2500 new affordable housing units in the next five years, 500 of which were allocated to be supportive.

In addition, the region heard from supportive housing providers that they needed dedicated health supports for individuals living in supportive housing. The regional council secured funding to devote dedicated health supports through the community agency, Seguin Health. This ensures that wraparound services are available immediately when someone transitions into supportive housing. This was a direct response to feedback from supportive housing

providers and demonstrates the region’s commitment to evidence-based practices and listening to partners who serve the unhoused community.

Understanding that securing affordable and supportive housing takes time, the region has deployed a two-pronged approach to address immediate community need while working to provide longer-term solutions.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, the region is currently working on *The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness*, which will eventually replace the *Interim Housing Strategy*. Chris said that the ‘plan’, which (in March 2023) is in its early stages of development, will be co-developed with the community and highlighted that it is important that it address “*how we might work together as a community to end chronic homelessness in the region.*” A strategy which includes the voices of health system partners, correctional institutions, criminal justice organizations, lower tier municipalities, Indigenous partners, people who have lived experience, and other equity deserving groups are integral to the region’s planning. Understanding that the way forward must be bottom-up instead of top-down is central to the philosophy of the service manager and acts as a beacon of hope going forward.

The Region of Waterloo continues to grapple with innumerable challenges as it faces the housing and homelessness crisis. This case study has exemplified that this success and innovation is facilitated by a commitment to addressing both short-term and long-term needs, a strong network of individuals advocating for change, a commitment to strengthening and following the data, and a supportive council.



Chapter 5 Conclusions

The purpose of this report was two-fold: (1) to emphasize the responsibilities of different levels of government in addressing the housing and homelessness crisis, and (2) to spotlight the innovative approaches that four mid-sized Ontario cities have used to address the issue. Although it is evident that local governments have limited capacity to address the problem, they bear a significant burden of responsibility in funding and the implementation of solutions.

In section 2.4, we presented a range of expert-recommended strategies that municipalities can adopt to combat the housing and homelessness crisis. The case studies in chapter 4 provide tangible examples of the ways that mid-sized cities are approaching the issue, with the hope to inspire, motivate, and profile possibilities. No city has a perfect response to the housing and homelessness crisis, but the below list of lessons learned aims to demonstrate innovation and drivers of success.

1. Collaboration and collaboratives.

Collaboration is an important success facilitator because it enables organizations to work together towards a common goal, leveraging each other's strengths and expertise, and pooling resources to achieve outcomes that would be difficult or impossible to achieve alone.

In the context of collaboratives, organizations come together to address complex social problems such as homelessness. These collaboratives can take many forms, but they generally involve a network

of organizations that work together to develop and implement strategies to address issues. At the systems level, collaboratives can advocate for policy change and coordinate the efforts of various organizations to create systemic change. For example, a network might strive to change housing policy or advocate for an increase of funding for affordable housing. On-the-ground level, collaboratives can provide a platform for organizations to coordinate their services and work more effectively together.

2. The use of experts.

Outsourcing the expertise of lived experts was underscored as a valuable approach for informing policy and practice. By incorporating the perspectives and insights of people who have experienced homelessness, decision-makers can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and realities facing their communities.

These insights can help to shape policies and programs that are more effective and responsive to the needs of the homeless population. The perspectives and knowledge of lived experts can lead to more robust and effective policies and programs that are better able to address the complex challenges of homelessness.

3. Levers within the control of municipalities.

Municipalities have limitations on how they can fund and implement social programs. Having a supportive and willing council is integral to using the levers available, as exemplified by the case studies.

The options available, include:

- a) Purchasing, donating, or utilizing public lands for non-profit affordable housing.
- b) Using municipally owned facilities to provide locations for social services such as drop-ins, shelters, or consumption and treatment services (CTS).
- c) Allocating municipal funds towards important projects. Even though municipalities have fewer means of generating revenue, they can use municipal funds creatively. For instance, they can institute a levy to fund a project.
- d) Engaging in advocacy with other levels of government. Municipal governments have the power to advocate for more resources and policy changes from other levels of government.

4. Activation energy of municipalities.

Local governments have the ability to use municipal resources to support a project's initial launch, even if they are unable to maintain the project over the long-term. This can involve using municipal funds, lands, or facilities to enable a service organization to begin a project. Once the project has been initiated and proven successful, the municipality can advocate for the project to receive additional support from other levels of government.

5. Being grounded in high-quality data.

The case studies exemplify that cities must ground their housing and homelessness response in high-quality and meaningful data. This means that the response must be informed by accurate and comprehensive information about the nature and extent of homelessness in their community. Specifically, collecting data on the demographics, needs, and typology of homelessness is integral to a comprehensive response. To do this, communities need to work with service organizations and advocates to understand if the data is being represented correctly and must follow point in time (PIT) count data.

6. Being grounded in evidence-based practices.

Homelessness is a complex social issue that requires a comprehensive response from cities. In order to effectively address the issue, evidence-based practices like harm reduction and housing first must be used which recognize the complex needs and challenges faced by individuals. This ensures that the approach 'meets community members where they are at.'

At the same time, involving topic experts (such as academics and policy experts), can help decision-makers to develop evidence-based approaches that are grounded in research and best practices. This can help to ensure that policies and programs are based on the latest knowledge and understanding of what works in addressing homelessness.

Conclusions...

While it is evident that local governments in Ontario have limited capacity, there are still several strategies they can adopt to address the housing and homelessness crisis, as demonstrated by the case studies in this report. The lessons learned from

Wellington County (City of Guelph), the City of Sudbury, the City of Kingston, the Region of Waterloo (Cities of Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge), can help guide other cities in their efforts to tackle the housing and homelessness crisis.

By working together and implementing innovative strategies, local governments can make significant strides towards ending chronic homelessness and improving the lives of all community members.

References

- Ref. 1**
Source: Government of Ontario. (2021). Affordable and Social Housing.
from <https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/13-affordable-and-social-housing>
- Ref. 2**
Source: Harm Reduction Coalition. (n.d.). Principles of Harm Reduction.
<https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>.
- Ref. 3**
Source: Gaetz, S.; Barr, C.; Friesen, A.; Harris, B.; Hill, C.; Kovacs-Burns, K.; Pauly, B.; Pearce, B.; Turner, A.; Marsolais, A. (2012). Canadian Definition of Homelessness.
<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHhomelessdefinition.pdf>.
- Ref. 4**
Source: Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (n.d.). Types of Housing.
<https://ontario.cmha.ca/documents/types-of-housing/>
- Ref. 5**
Source: Government of Ontario (2017). Ontario Supportive Housing Best Practice Guide.
<https://amho.ca/wp-content/uploads/Best-Practice-Guide-English.pdf>.
- Ref. 6**
SOURCE: Peterborough Drug Strategy. (n.d.). About Us.
<https://peterboroughdrugstrategy.com/get-to-know-us/about/>
- Ref. 7**
Source: De Jong, I. (n.d.). 8 Tips to Add More Harm Reduction Practices to your Shelter.
<https://www.orgcode.com/blog/8-tips-to-add-more-harm-reduction-practices-to-your-shelter>
- Ref. 8**
Source: Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (2019). Fixing the Housing Affordability Crisis: A Review of the Challenges and Opportunities.
<https://www.amo.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/DOCUMENTS/Reports/2019/FixingHousingAffordabilityCrisis20190814.pdf>
- Ref. 9**
Source: Eidelman, G.; Hachard, T.; Slack, E. (2020). In it Together: Clarifying Provincial-Municipal Responsibilities in Ontario.
https://on360.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/In-It-Together-Clarifying-Provincial-Municipal-Responsibilities-in-Ontario_5FINAL.pdf.
- Ref. 10**
SOURCE: Speer, S.; Loewen, P.; Griffiths, R. (2018). Ontario 360 – Municipal Affairs – Transition Briefing.
<https://on360.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ON360-Municipal-Affairs.pdf>.
- Ref. 11**
Source: Graham, K. A., & Phillips, S. D. (1998). "Who Does What" in Ontario: The process of provincial-municipal disentanglement. Canadian Journal of Urban Research, 7(1), 21-43.
<https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/cjur/index.php/cjur/article/view/7858>.
- Ref. 12**
Source: Côté, R., & Fenn, M. (2014). Provincial-Municipal Relations in Ontario: Approaching an Inflection Point. Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto.
https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/81250/1/imfg_paper_17_cote_fenn_May_22_2014.pdf.
- Ref. 13**
Source: Schwan, K. and Perucca, J. (2022). Realizing the Right to Housing in Canadian Municipalities: Where Do We Go From Here? Make the Shift.
<https://make-the-shift.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Canadian-Municipal-Policy-Scan-FINAL.pdf>
- Ref. 14**
Source: Farha, L.; Schwan, K. (2020). A National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada.
<https://www.make-the-shift.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/A-National-Protocol-for-Homeless-Encampments-in-Canada.pdf>.
- Ref. 15**
Source: TNational Right to Housing Network (n.d.). Right to Housing Legislation in Canada.
<https://housingrights.ca/right-to-housing-legislation-in-canada/>
- Ref. 16**
SOURCE: Association of Municipalities of Ontario. (2022). A Blueprint for Action - An Integrated Approach To Address The Ontario Housing Crisis.
<https://www.amo.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/DOCUMENTS/Reports/2022/A%20Blueprint%20for%20Action%20-%20An%20Integrated%20Approach%20To%20Address%20The%20Ontario%20Housing%20Crisis%20Revised%202022-03-11.pdf>
- Ref. 17**
Source: United Nations. (1976). International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
https://treaties.un.org/doc/treaties/1976/01/19760103%2009-57%20pm/ch_iv_03.pdf.
- Ref. 18**
Source: Government of Canada. (1982). Constitution Act, 1982.
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-12.html>.
- Ref. 19**
SOURCE: Government of Canada. (2022). National Housing Strategy Act.
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-11.2/FullText.html>.
- Ref. 20**
SOURCE: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. (2017). National Housing Strategy: A place to call home.
<https://assets.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/sf/project/placetocallhome/pdfs/canada-national-housing-strategy.pdf?rev=7d7a4713-2f37-4cf0-a13e-68d278867630>.
- Ref. 21**
Source: Government of Canada. (2021). Engagement strategy on human rights reporting. Canadian Heritage.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/about-human-rights/engagement-strategy-human-rights-reporting.html>
- Ref. 22**
Source: Association of Municipalities Ontario. (2019). Fixing the Housing Affordability Crisis: Municipal Recommendations for Housing in Ontario.
<https://www.amo.on.ca/advocacy/human-services/fixing-housing-affordability-crisis-municipal-recommendations-housing>.
- Ref. 23**
SOURCE: Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (2021). Value for Money Audit: Homelessness.
https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en21/AR_Homelessness_en21.pdf.
- Ref. 24**
Source: A Way Home/Vers Un Chez-Soi. (2013). Appendix A: Homelessness and Housing Insecurity as an Urgent Municipal Concern. In A Way Home: Youth Homelessness Community Planning Toolkit.
https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/AWH%20Community%20Planning%20Toolkit-Appendix%20A_0.pdf
- Ref. 25**
Source: OMSSA. (2021). Service System Management in Ontario and Service System Manager Priorities.
https://omssa.com/docs/OMSSA_-_Service_System_Management_in_Ontario_and_Service_System_Manager_Priorities.pdf
- Ref. 26**
Source: Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. (2019). Community Housing Renewal Strategy.
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/community-housing-renewal-strategy>
- Ref. 27**
Source: Falvo, N. (2022). Homelessness: Increase Investment in Municipally Led Programs. In The Municipal Role in Housing.
<https://munkschool.utoronto.ca/research/municipal-role-housing>
- Ref. 28**
Source: Mitchell, L. (2022) All responsibility, little power: what can local government do to end homelessness?
<https://citiespeoplelove.co/article/all-responsibility-little-power-what-can-local-government-do-to-end-homelessness>
- Ref. 29**
Source: Dej, E.; Sanders, C.; Braimoh, J. (2021). Rewriting the Narrative on Homelessness in Mid-Sized Canadian Cities.
<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/BCNH-Summary-05312021.pdf>.
- Ref. 30**
Source: Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination. (2021). Guelph-Wellington 2021 Everyone Counts.
<https://www.wellington.ca/en/social-services/resources/Housing/Guelph-Wellington-2021-Everyone-Counts---PITCount-Infographic-AODAUUpdated.pdf>.
- Ref. 31**
Source: Wellington County. (n.d.). Homelessness and Housing Stability.
<https://www.wellington.ca/en/social-services/hs-housing-stability.aspx#A3>.
- Ref. 32**
Source: City of Greater Sudbury. (2021). 2021 Point in Time Homelessness Enumeration Results Report.
<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/live/homelessness-initiatives/reports-and-research/1/2021-homelessness-enumeration-report/>.
- Ref. 33**
Source: City of Greater Sudbury. (2021). Report Card on Homelessness 2021.
https://www.greatersudbury.ca/sites/sudburyen/assets/HOMELESSNESS_AR_2021_DIGITAL.pdf.
- Ref. 34**
Source: United Way Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. (2021). 2021 Results of the Urban Kingston Point-in-Time Count.
<https://www.unitedwaykfla.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021-Kingston-PIT-Count-Results.pdf>
- Ref. 35**
Source: City of Kingston. (n.d.). Housing Programs.
<https://www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/community-services/housing/programs>
- Ref. 36**
Source: National Harm Reduction Coalition. (n.d.). Principles of Harm Reduction.
<https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>
- Ref. 37**
Source: Region of Waterloo. (2021). Region of Waterloo completes engagement process to identify and support those experiencing homelessness.
<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/modules/news/index.aspx?newsId=b22ceaa-2181-404-f-b52b-5c162ba7999f#:~:text=Federal%20and%20Provincial%20Governments%20require,experiencing%20homelessness%20across%20the%20region.>
- Ref. 38**
Source: Region of Waterloo. (n.d.). Housing and Homelessness.
<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/housing-and-shelter.aspx>