

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

2024 Progress Report – 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (Housing for All)

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Acting Director of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. That County Council receive Report HS 2025-03, entitled '2024 Progress Report – 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (Housing for All)' as information.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Service Managers are required to develop a 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to identify objectives and targets related to housing and homelessness, as well as actions to meet those objectives.
- This report serves as the County's Annual Progress Report, with respect to the specific actions that were taken in 2024 towards the goals and objectives of the current 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, entitled 'Housing for All', which was adopted by Council on August 14, 2024.
- Although the current plan was adopted mid-2024, many of the goals and objectives from the previous 10-Year Shelter Plan were incorporated into the new 'Housing for All' Plan. In light of this, the progress report focuses on the current Plan directives.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Following Council's review of the Annual Progress Report, a copy will be posted on the County's website and provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), in accordance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011*.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts associated with receiving the 2024 Annual Progress Report of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan as information.

Communications




This report provides details with respect to the annual report that is required in accordance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011*. In light of this, details contained in this report will be shared with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) and will be made available to the public upon Council’s consideration.

2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council’s vision of “Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future.” These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.

Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
<p>Goal 1.1 – 100% Housed</p> <p>Goal 1.3 – Community health, safety and well-being</p>		<p>Goal 3.2 – Collaborate with our partners and communities</p> <p>Goal 3.5 – Advocate for Oxford County</p>

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

In accordance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, Municipal Service Managers are required to develop a 10-Year Plan to identify objectives and targets related to housing and homelessness, as well as actions to meet those objectives. Housing and Homelessness Plans play a critical role in defining how Service Managers address housing and homelessness locally, including housing affordability, coordination of homelessness and related support services, and efforts towards ending homelessness. To demonstrate the progress towards the targets and objectives of the Plan, Service Managers are required to complete annual reports for Council's consideration.

On August 14, 2024, County Council adopted a new Housing and Homelessness Plan, entitled 'Housing for All 2024-2033', as presented in Report [HS 2024-09](#). The 'Housing for All' plan builds upon the County's previous 10-year Shelter Plan, with a new framework that considers current market conditions, housing/community needs and financial challenges. Overall, the new Plan considers varying strategies and actions to address critical needs across the housing continuum, including emergency shelters, community housing, transitional and supportive housing, market and affordable rental housing, and homeownership.

The 'Housing for All' Plan includes five main strategic directions, as follows:

1. Reduce Homelessness Through Prevention;
2. Support Housing Stability Through Collaboration;
3. Maintain and Improve the Existing Housing Portfolio;
4. Increase Affordable and Rental Options; and,
5. Advocate for Increased Investment.

These five directions are further defined by a set of key action items, with a set of progress measures to ensure each action is being implemented appropriately. Further details regarding the key directives of the Plan are provided in Attachment 1 of this report.

It should be noted that the proposed Plan is intended to provide overarching direction as it relates to the housing and homelessness system, with more specific implementation documents, including the Master Housing Strategy and proposed Homelessness Response Strategy, acting as the action documents to implement more specific changes to the system.

Comments

Progress on the directives of the 10-Year Plan is regularly monitored by staff to ensure recommendations remain relevant to community needs and align with the County's strategic priorities. The following summary demonstrates action in the five strategic areas of the 'Housing for All' Plan in 2024. Further details regarding the measures associated with each goal are provided in Attachment 2 of this report.

Housing for All Plan: Summary of 2024 Progress

Strategic Direction	Action Items	2024 Progress
<p>1. Reduce Homelessness Through Prevention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a Homelessness Response Strategy - Improve and increase access to emergency and transitional housing options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The emergency shelter in Tillsonburg opened for a second year, providing shelter for those experiencing homelessness starting on November 1, 2024. - A total of \$2.9 million from the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) was expended on various supports and services for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. - Staff presented initial findings from the consultation that was completed in support of the Homelessness Response Strategy and continued to work towards completion. - 59 individuals from the By-Name List were housed in transitional or permanent housing. - Council approved the development of 20 new transitional housing beds to support individuals from the By-Name List.
<p>2. Support Housing Stability Through Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve access to and coordination of services - Strengthen the system of supports through enhanced partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The County entered into arrangements with community partners to support and house individuals from the By-Name List. - The County, in collaboration with Community Partners, increased the hours of the Mobile Health Outreach Bus (MHOB) and the frequency of attendance at encampments. - The County Navigator continued to provide outreach and assistance to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. - Staff continued to provide in shelter support at the day space. - Staff supported Encampment Response in collaboration with Area Municipalities and Community Partners. - The County partnered with three new providers to create three new transitional homes. - A total of 230 households received a rent supplement or a portable housing benefit through the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB). - Geographic coordinates were implemented in Municipal 511 within the urban

Strategic Direction	Action Items	2024 Progress
		municipalities in support of local encampments response.
3. Maintain and Improve the Existing Housing Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustain community housing as mortgages expire - Continue to invest in repair and renewal of the County's housing portfolio - Implement a technology solution to support capital planning for community housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All existing rent-geared-to-income units were maintained under the County and non-profit/cooperative portfolios. - The County implemented Asset Planner to assist Housing Providers with understanding capital needs. - Building Condition Assessments (BCAs) were completed for various non-profit and cooperative housing providers. - Staff provided support and expertise to non-profit/co-operative housing providers with capital projects and RFP processes, as needed. - The County expended funds under the Repair Program to support critical repairs for a number of housing providers.
4. Increase Affordable and Rental Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the Master Housing Strategy as funding becomes available - Facilitate new affordable housing units through partnerships and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construction continued on the affordable housing project located at 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock, consisting of 52 rental units (including 37 at affordable rental rates). - Development approvals commenced for the affordable housing project located at 175 Springbank Road North, Woodstock, consisting of 45 rental units (including 23 at affordable rental rates). - Discussions continued for two prospective affordable housing projects in the Township of Zorra and Town of Tillsonburg, in support of the Master Housing Strategy. - Planning approvals were completed for the future affordable housing site located at 385-387 Dundas Street, Woodstock. - 14 affordable rental units were approved at 14 Harvest Avenue, Tillsonburg. - Lands were purchased in the Town of Tillsonburg to support the creation of up to 100 market and affordable rental units. - A total of 9 My Second Unit and 5 Repair Program applications were approved.

Strategic Direction	Action Items	2024 Progress
5. Advocate for Increased Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborate with other Service Managers and municipal organizations to advocate for sustained federal and provincial investment in new affordable housing programs - Work with local partners to advocate for increased investment in homelessness response and housing stability supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff attended ROMA and AMO, and continued participation in WOWC, HSC and OMSAA, particularly around joint housing and homelessness efforts. - Staff engaged with local Service Managers through OMSAA to support various regional advocacy messaging around the negotiation of the National Housing Strategy and various funding programs.

CONCLUSIONS

The 2024 Annual Progress Report includes details with respect to the action that has been taken towards the goals and objectives of the 'Housing for All' Plan.

Despite progress towards increasing the supply of transitional and affordable rental housing, as well as capacity building within the homelessness and housing stability service system, there are still challenges in relation to rising costs and limited supply of housing options with appropriate supports. Staff continue to explore alternative measures to improve the existing system, understanding that there is not a 'one size fits all' solution to address current housing and homelessness needs.

SIGNATURES

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Original signed by

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Acting Director of Human Services

Approved for submission:

Original signed by

Benjamin R. Addley
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: 2024 Housing for All: Our Plan at a Glance, August 14, 2024

Attachment 2: 2024 Annual Progress Report on the Housing for All Plan, February 26, 2025