

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

2025 Progress Report – 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (Housing for All)

To: Warden and Members of County Council

From: Director of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. That County Council receive Report HS 2026-01, entitled ‘2025 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 2025 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.

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 2025 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 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 recommendations 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 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.

It should be noted that the 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 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 strategic areas of the 'Housing for All' Plan in 2025. Further details regarding the measures associated with each goal are provided in Attachment 2 of this report.

[Strategic Direction 1: Reduce Homelessness Through Prevention](#)

HART Hub

In 2025, staff continued to work with Community Partners to ensure the realization of the HART Hub/Wellness Centre. At this time, the temporary Wellness Centre is operating at 369 Huron Street, Woodstock, including four beds for withdrawal management and six beds for addiction supportive treatment. The new permanent Wellness Centre at 16 Graham Street, Woodstock, is currently under construction.

Community Partners are currently in the process of modeling the HART Hub, including the Oxford County Community Health Centre (OCCHC), with supportive housing units opening at the County owned building at 82 Finkle Street, Woodstock, and the Mobile Health Outreach Bus (MHOB), providing County-wide medical and outreach support to unhoused individuals.

Coordinated Access and By-Name List (BNL)

The County utilizes a coordinated access response to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness and living in encampments. The County's coordinated access system is comprised of several agencies that provide emergency shelter services (ESS), housing, addictions, and mental health supports within County. Most recently, the County added Woodstock Hospital as a community partner within the coordinated access system. This addition shows the significance of the intersection of health and housing when working with vulnerable populations.

Individuals and families can access the system through a no-wrong door approach at multiple access points, as listed below.

- Salvation Army (Woodstock, Tillsonburg, Ingersoll)
- Operation Sharing
- Domestic Abuse Services of Oxford
- Oxford County Community Health Centre
- CMHA Thames Valley Addictions & Mental Health Services
- Oxford County Human Services
- Indwell Supportive Housing
- Ingamo Homes
- St. Leonard's Community Services - London & Region
- Woodstock Hospital

The County recently added a second Community Access Navigator (CAN) to support the development of the By-Name List (BNL) through active engagement with individuals experiencing homelessness. At first contact, individual needs are assessed to determine appropriate referrals to support services. If consent is provided, individuals are added to the BNL. Once added to the BNL, the CANs work closely to connect individuals with supports, including housing assistance (i.e., first and last month's rent, rental or utility arrears, rent supplement, etc.) and ongoing case management.

It is important to note that as individuals connect with services and achieve housing stability, the BNL fluctuates. At the end of 2025, a total of 159 individuals were active on the BNL, showing an increase of 16 individuals from the end of 2024. Figure 1 shows the number of active individuals on the BNL per month in 2025, with the average being 169 active individuals in 2025. A total of 96 individuals were successfully housed from the BNL in 2025.

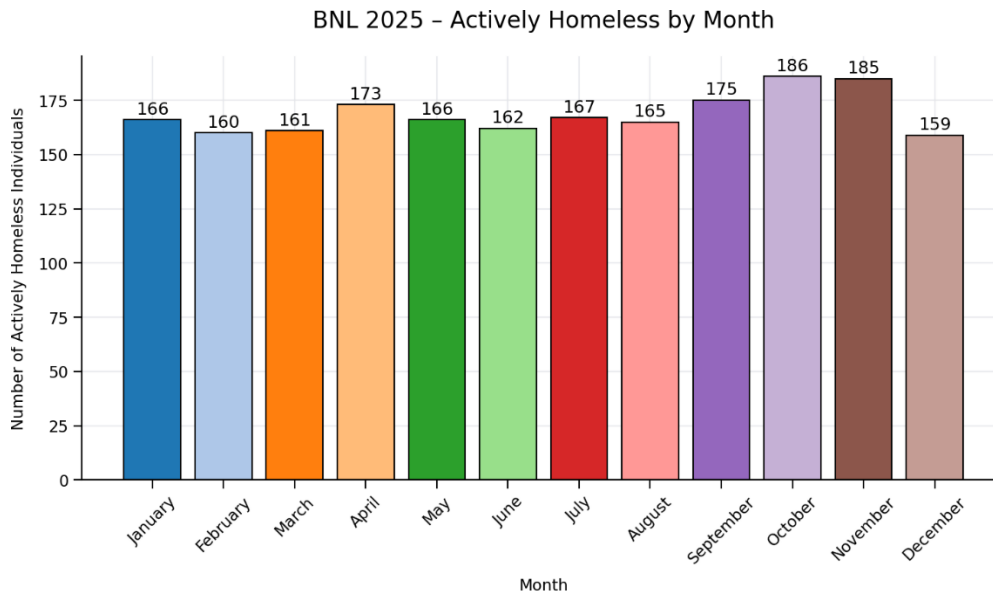


Figure 1 - Active Individuals on BNL by Month

Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)

As the County continues to strive for quality data to inform decision-making, staff initiated the implementation of HIFIS in 2025. HIFIS is a tool and Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) developed by the federal government and used by many communities across Canada. HIFIS enables service managers and organizations included within the coordinated access system to collect, manage, and report real-time data on homelessness, client progress and outcomes, and improve service delivery. The County has initiated a phased implementation of the HIFIS tool, with the first phase anticipated in Q3 2026.

Unsheltered Homelessness Response

The County maintains a coordinated response to supporting individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness and residing in encampments. The CANs, along with partner agencies, connect with unhoused individuals where they are, providing assistance and support, as needed. County staff, alongside Area Municipalities and Community Partners, also continue to work together to support long-term housing planning for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, including monitoring and collecting data for those residing in encampments. This coordinated response is critical throughout the colder months and is often the first point of entry into the coordinated access system.

In 2025, a total of 50 transitions to emergency shelter took place, as well as five transitions to permanent or transitional housing.

Built for Zero Canada (BFZ)

The County recently joined Built for Zero Canada (BFZ), a Federally funded program to assist communities in the fight to end homelessness. As a dedicated community within this program, the County will be working to reduce and end chronic homelessness. As a dedicated community, the County will have an opportunity to apply for available Federal grants to support various homelessness reduction initiatives.

Strategic Direction 2: Support Housing Stability Through Collaboration

Eviction Prevention Program

In late 2025, staff introduced the Eviction Prevention Pilot Program. The goal of this program is to provide in-home supports to households at risk of eviction (within the County's housing stock) to ensure tenancies are stabilized and eviction is prevented. Referrals to this program are vetted internally and range from a variety of concerns, including arrears, hoarding, guest management, cleanliness, food security, and financial stability. This program is designed to develop individualized plans with households at risk using a wraparound approach in coordinating service delivery partners.

Over the next several months, staff will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of this program, with the goal of improving housing stability among tenants in the County's housing stock, along with improving arrears, unit turnovers, and overall building maintenance.

Rent Supplement Program and Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

Investments in the County's rent supplement program and COHB continued in 2025. These programs play a pivotal role in keeping individuals and families housed, while maintaining affordable rents. In 2025, the County approved a total of 60 rent supplements through the private market, in addition to 28 COHB applications. There is currently a total of 260 households in receipt of rent supplement or portable housing benefit (COHB), with applications on-going.

Strategic Directions 3 & 4: Maintain and Improve the Existing Housing Portfolio & Increase Affordable and Rental Options

In 2025, the County approved approximately \$3.5 million through the competitive bidding process to incentivize and support the creation of up to 85 additional affordable and supportive housing units by 2028. These additional units are tailored to varying demographics, including seniors and individuals exiting chronic or episodic homelessness.

Maintaining and improving the existing housing portfolio is a key pillar of the Housing for All plan. As the County continues to invest in new development opportunities, the existing housing portfolio must be kept in a good state of repair. Working with community housing providers to support the viability of buildings continued in 2025. At the forefront of this work was ensuring that our non-profit housing providers were aware of the upcoming capital commitments to maintain buildings. In support of this, Building Condition Assessments (BCA's) were completed for six housing providers in 2025 as the County works towards entering into end of mortgage agreements.

The following table provides a summary of all progress made towards the actions in the Housing for All Plan.

Table 1: Housing for All Plan: Summary of 2025 Progress

Strategic Direction	Action Items	2025 Progress
1. Reduce Homelessness Through Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve and increase access to emergency and transitional housing options - Implement a Homelessness Response Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The emergency shelter in Tillsonburg opened for a third year, providing shelter for those experiencing homelessness starting on November 1, 2025. - 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. - 96 individuals from the By-Name List were housed in transitional or permanent housing. - HIFIS continued to be implemented.
2. Support Housing Stability Through Collaboration	<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 new agreements with Community Partners to support and house individuals from the By-Name List. - The County, in collaboration with Community Partners, continued increased hours of the Mobile Health Outreach Bus (MHOB) and the frequency of attendance at encampments. - The CANs 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 a new provider to create new transitional/supportive housing. - A total of 260 households received a rent supplement or a portable housing benefit through the COHB. - Geographic coordinates were implemented in Municipal 511 within the urban municipalities in support of local encampment response.

Strategic Direction	Action Items	2025 Progress
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. - A total of 6 BCAs were completed for various non-profit and cooperative housing providers. - Staff entered into end of mortgage agreements with a non-profit housing provider with this work continuing in 2026. - Staff provided support and expertise to non-profit/cooperative housing providers with capital projects and Request for Proposal (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"> - Occupancy was issued for the affordable housing project located at 785 Southwood Way, Woodstock. This development includes 52 rental units (including 37 at affordable rental rates). - Progress continued on the affordable housing project located at 175 Springbank Road North, Woodstock, consisting of 45 rental units (including 23 at affordable rental rates). - An RFP for the development of new affordable rental housing was issued, resulting in approvals for a new senior's project in Tillsonburg and a supportive housing development in Woodstock. - A joint RFP between the Town of Tillsonburg and Oxford County was issued for the development of new affordable home ownership units located at 31 Earle Street, Tillsonburg. - 82 Finkle Street, Woodstock (HART Hub) saw the creation of up to 18 supportive housing units through collaboration with OCCHC and Woodstock Hospital. - A total of nine My Second Unit and five Residential Repair Program applications were approved.

Strategic Direction	Action Items	2025 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 the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conference and continued participation in the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus (WOWC), Housing Services Corporation (HSC), and Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (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 2025 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 supportive 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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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: 2024 Housing for All: Our Plan at a Glance, August 14, 2024
Attachment 2: Annual Progress Report on the Housing for All Plan