



**10
YEAR**

Housing and Homelessness Plan

2022
Annual
Progress Report
The County of Lambton

Acknowledgements

The County of Lambton would like to thank the following community partners for their participation on the Lambton County Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee:

Bluewater Health
Canadian Mental Health Association
Lambton-Kent
Children's Aid Society Sarnia-
Lambton Branch
Chippewas of Kettle & Stony First
Nation
Community Legal Assistance Sarnia
Community Living Sarnia-Lambton
Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration
Network
John Howard Society
Kettle & Stoney Point Housing
Lambton County Developmental
Services
Lambton Elderly Outreach
Lambton Public Health
Social Services Division

North Lambton Community Health
Centre
Ontario Provincial Police
Red Cross Sarnia-Lambton Branch
River City Vineyard
Sarnia Jail - Ministry of the Solicitor
General
Sarnia Police Services
Sarnia-Lambton Native Friendship
Centre
Sarnia-Lambton Rebound
The Inn of the Good Shepherd
The Salvation Army
United Way Sarnia-Lambton
Women's Interval Home

Foreword



**Valerie Colasanti - General Manager,
Social Services Division**

I am pleased to present the 2022 Progress Report on the County of Lambton's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (2014-2023). In 2022 Lambton County utilized many existing strong community partnerships and several new shared responses to address the elevated levels of housing insecurity and homelessness. A focus on enhanced system coordination, mobile and client-centered services, in addition to prioritized specialized supports better enabled our community to serve the most vulnerable. Of note, in 2022 new programming and resources were implemented to prioritize unsheltered individuals and young persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This report offers a summary of the collaborative and intersectoral work completed to address housing instability in our community, in addition to highlighting several positive stories from those that were helped by these efforts.



VISION

The County of Lambton's 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan frames the planning and delivery of housing and homelessness supports within our community.

Each year Lambton collaboratively works towards the four strategic goals outlined by the plan to achieve the vision that;

“Every person has an affordable, suitable and adequate home”.

STRATEGIC GOALS



#1

Increase and sustain supply and appropriate mix of affordable housing.



#2

Increase access to affordable housing and supports that meet people's needs to achieve housing stability.



#3

Establish a coordinated housing and homelessness service system.



#4

Ending homelessness.

HIGHLIGHTS

HOUSING PLACEMENTS

209

Individuals progressed out of homelessness and into more permanent housing.

SUCCESSFUL DIVERSIONS

104

Individuals diverted from entering the emergency shelter system.

SHELTER ADMISSIONS

470

Individuals accommodated through emergency shelter.

RGI ASSISTED HOUSEHOLDS

1085

Households assisted in rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units supported by the County.

GOAL #1



Increase and Maintain Supply and Appropriate Mix of Affordable and Adequate Housing

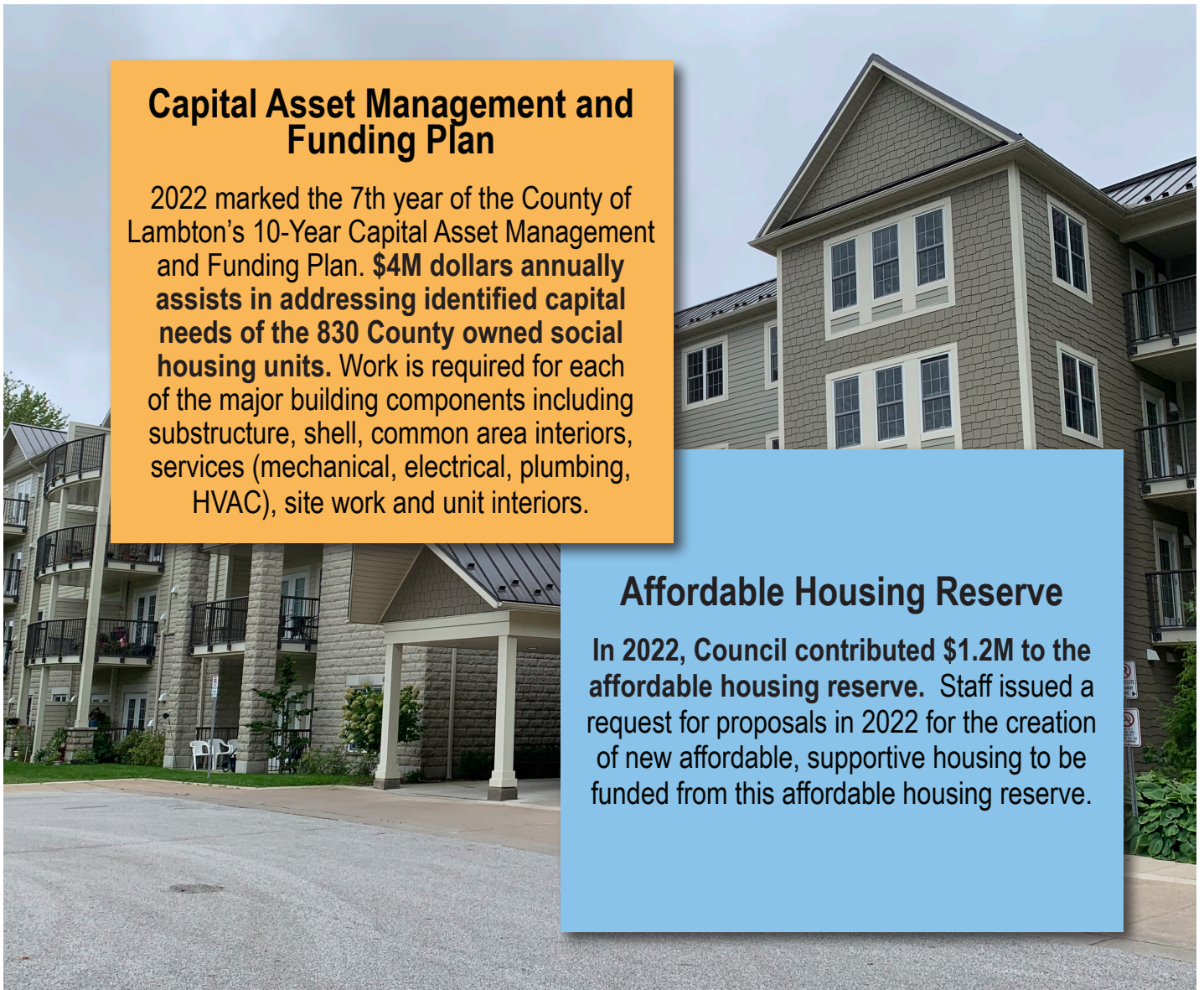
In 2022, the County of Lambton and partners advanced **Goal #1** through four key initiatives; the affordable housing reserve, the ongoing Capital Asset Management and Funding Plan, exploring supportive land use policies, and creating affordable housing.

Capital Asset Management and Funding Plan

2022 marked the 7th year of the County of Lambton's 10-Year Capital Asset Management and Funding Plan. **\$4M dollars annually assists in addressing identified capital needs of the 830 County owned social housing units.** Work is required for each of the major building components including substructure, shell, common area interiors, services (mechanical, electrical, plumbing, HVAC), site work and unit interiors.

Affordable Housing Reserve

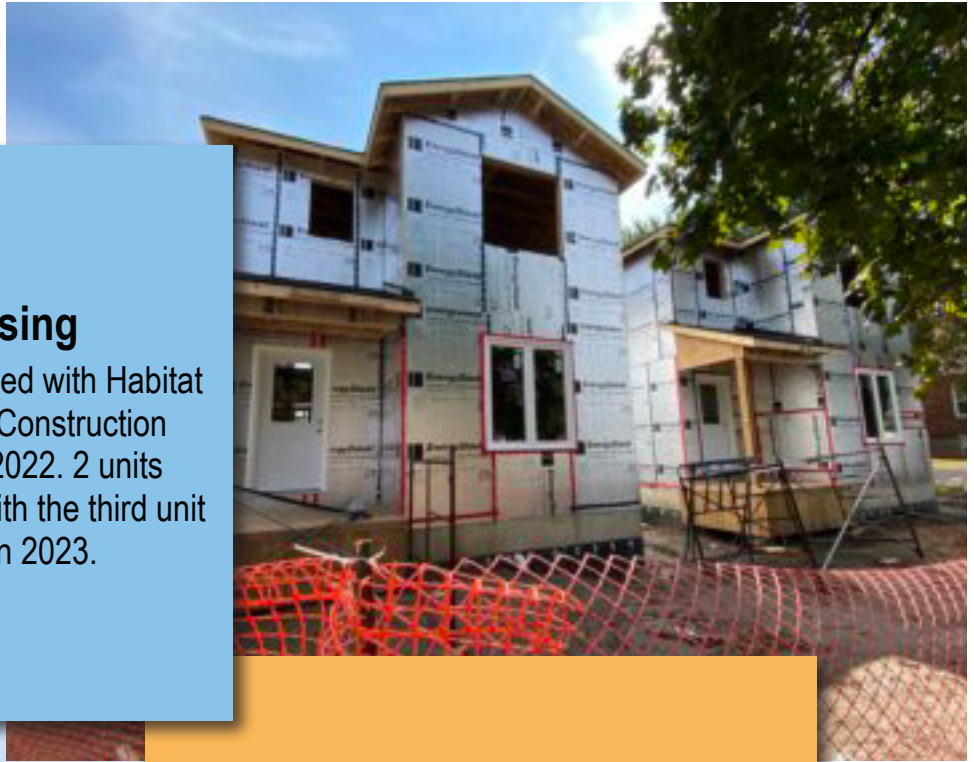
In 2022, Council contributed **\$1.2M to the affordable housing reserve.** Staff issued a request for proposals in 2022 for the creation of new affordable, supportive housing to be funded from this affordable housing reserve.



GOAL #1

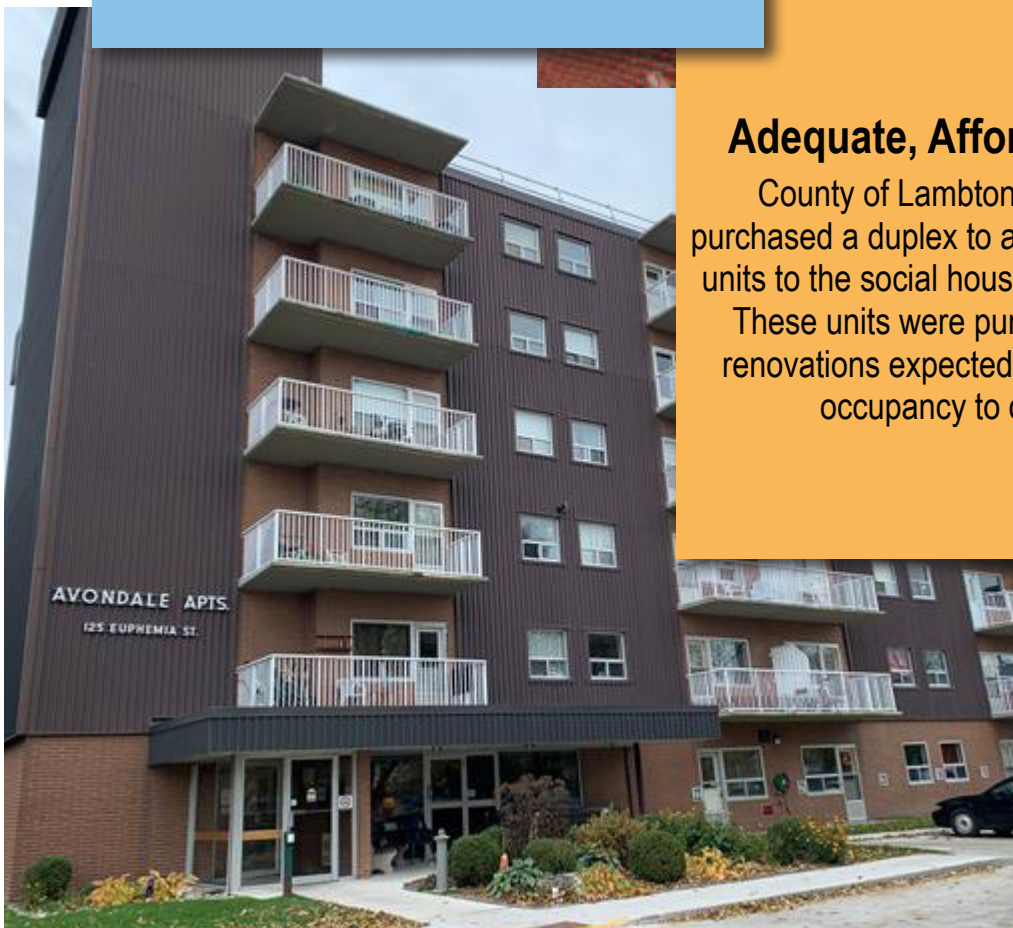
Affordable Housing

3 affordable units were approved with Habitat for Humanity prior to 2022. Construction occurred throughout 2021/2022. 2 units received occupancy in 2022 with the third unit expecting occupancy in 2023.



Adequate, Affordable Housing

County of Lambton Housing Services purchased a duplex to add 2 RGI one-bedroom units to the social housing supply in Lambton. These units were purchased in 2022 with renovations expected to be completed and occupancy to occur in 2023.



GOAL #1



Increase Access to Affordable Housing and Supports that Meet People's Needs to Achieve Housing Stability

The County of Lambton's Housing department offers a range of supports, services and subsidies to make housing units more affordable and sustainable throughout the County including land use policies and creating affordable housing.



156

households received the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB). Households were referred from the Centralized Waiting List, Integrated Team and Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society (CAS).

59

households received a Portable Housing Benefit (PHB).

128

individuals in 2022 on average were assisted monthly through the Housing Advocacy Program by the community support workers (CSWs). The four CSWs have caseloads that consist of many hard to serve individuals with complex needs. Services offered consist of regular check-ins with tenants; mediation of tenant conflicts and complaints; and assistance with budgeting and eviction prevention.

40

households received support through the Homemaker's Program (approximately). Program supports at risk members of the community to maintain their housing and independence.

GOAL #1

35

households were supported in 2022, through the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Lambton Poverty Reduction Program which is funded with Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing Social Infrastructure Funding (SIF) dollars.

6

households in 2022 received funds under the Homeownership Down Payment Assistance program. The program offers financial assistance to eligible households living in rental accommodations with one-time assistance in the form of a 20-year forgivable loan, for a 10% down payment to be used towards the purchase of a home with a maximum purchase price of \$300,000.

3

new builds funded in 2020. Housing partnered with Habitat for Humanity to fund the new builds. These builds began construction in 2021 and occupancy occurred for 2 in 2022 with the 3rd expected in 2023.

11

households in 2022 received funds under Lambton Renovates. The program offers financial assistance to eligible households requiring major repairs and rehabilitation to make the home safe while improving energy efficiency. Eligible renovations include but are not limited to modifications to increase accessibility, heating systems, foundations, and electrical systems.

GOAL #1

By 2024, an additional 75 affordable rental units will be built with the assistance of government funding. All of these new units will be barrier free or 10% will be fully accessible and common areas will be barrier free.

of affordable rental units completed with federal, provincial and/or county funding

Prior to 2022 there were **67 new affordable** housing units approved throughout the County of Lambton, which are progressing as follows:

Affordable Housing for Seniors - Maxwell Park Place

The County of Lambton Housing Services Department was successful in **securing \$1.8M in federal funding** under the National Housing Strategy Co-Investment Fund for the affordable housing development at Maxwell Park Place. These **24 affordable units** were approved prior to 2022. Construction started on this project in 2021 with occupancy expected late 2023.

Affordable Rent Geared to Income - (RGI)

244 Devine - County of Lambton Housing Services purchased a duplex at 244 Devine Street to add **2 RGI one-bedroom units** to the social housing supply in Lambton. Renovations expected to be completed and with occupancy expected in 2023.



Social housing providers will continue/enter into partnerships with the County to continue to provide RGI units at the end of their agreements/mortgage.

partnerships between social housing providers and the County of Lambton to provide RGI units (post mortgage/ agreement)

Two social housing providers have reached “end of mortgage” in 2022 and will be continuing in the community housing framework under a new service agreement. This will preserve the current RGI units in these projects.

SPOTLIGHT



Canadian Mental Health Association
Lambton Kent

Canadian Mental Health Association Lambton-Kent

Canadian Mental Health Association Lambton-Kent collaborates with the County of Lambton Social Services Division across four key housing and homelessness prevention initiatives: Youth Housing Program; Supportive Housing Program; Life Skills Worker; and, Lambton Poverty Reduction Program. CMHA integrates services offered across these programs to provide clients with wrap-around supports. Throughout the lifetime of the supportive housing program, there have been **zero evictions**.



SARNIA-LAMBTON
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

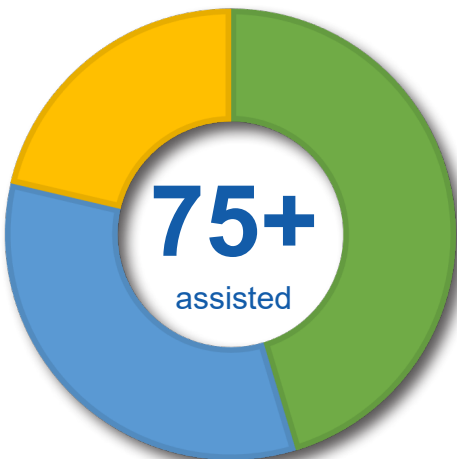
New Youth Housing Programs

This new program is being coordinated by both Sarnia-Lambton CAS and CMHA Lambton-Kent. The target population for CAS will be youth who are transitioning to adult services and aging out of the Society's care. The caseload for the program is **40 youth**. The agency works alongside a large population of young people who are either experiencing homelessness and/or at risk of homelessness due to the housing crisis and lack of affordable units in the County of Lambton. For CMHA the target population are youth who are struggling, have serious mental health illness and/or addiction issues and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. CMHA assists the program with a caseload of **16 youth**.



Supportive Housing Program

Provided **34 individuals** with supportive housing. Participants receive housing case management assistance as well as a portable supplement to assist with rent.



Life Skills Worker

The Life Skills Worker works collaboratively with Supportive Housing Programs and the community's shelter locations. Supports offered to clients include cleanliness skill-building, mediation of landlord-tenant conflicts, assistance facilitating bedbug remediation and other local services such as transportation to medical appointments.

The Life skills worker maintains a case load of 25 + individuals. The Lambton Poverty Reduction Program provides housing supplements to low-income households, through the support of the County of Lambton Housing Services Department. CMHA has secured 30 portable housing supplements.

GOAL #2



Supportive Housing Programs

The County of Lambton's Ontario Works department collaborates with a range of supportive housing providers, and administers supportive housing services to prevent housing loss among clients with intensive needs. These include:



Domiciliary Hostels

The Domiciliary Hostels program provides supportive housing with 24/7 care to adults with physical and/or mental disabilities who require assisted living.

In 2022, **34 individuals were supportively housed** through Lambton's two domiciliary hostels.

Homemakers Program

The Homemakers program provides services such as cleaning, laundry, meal prep, and shopping assistance to support increased quality of life and prevent housing loss. In 2022, **35 individuals were supported to maintain quality living** conditions through Homemakers.



GOAL #2

In partnership with North Lambton Community Health Centre, Literacy Lambton, and County of Lambton Ontario Works launched a new pilot called the **Living Well program** in the fall of 2022. The program is designed to engage people in enhancing their overall well-being including building both life and soft skills within a supportive group setting.

- There are a range of topics explored such as stress management and problem solving, healthy meal planning, personal care, budgeting and strategies to successfully gain and/or retain a home.
- Participants learn about themselves and gain skills to support long-term independence.
- The interactive learning experiences enhance the skills needed to promote life stability, build employment readiness and work toward individual goals.
- Those who completed the pilot continue to work with staff to achieve their longer-term goal of independence.

The findings from the fall pilot will be used to inform Living Well programming 2023.



Sara's Story

Background

Sara, then 19, began working with the Youth Housing Case Manager from Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society in September 2022. Sara is a member of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation and has a baby girl. Sara has experienced homelessness multiple times in her life. Most recently, in the summer of 2022, she left an unhealthy relationship and experienced invisible homelessness over the following several months.

Supports

Sara was able to secure a room rental which she stayed in from October 2022 until February 2023. She then secured a one-bedroom apartment for herself and her daughter. At that time, she was provided support from CMHA where she qualified for a housing subsidy. She has also been regularly meeting with other community supports such as Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and CMHA.

Outcomes

Sara has taken pride in her apartment and has worked hard to make it a home. Since her move, she has successfully completed her G1 test, completed multiple tests for schooling and is close to completing all her grade 10 credits at school.

GOAL #2

By 2024, 350 more households will be in receipt of affordability assistance.

of households in receipt of affordability assistance using new funding

Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) - **84 additional households** received COHB in 2022. Households were referred from the Centralized Waiting List, Integrated Team and Sarnia-Lambton CAS. The 2022/23 COHB allocation was **\$417,800**. At December 31, 2022 there were **156 households** in receipt of COHB with a total monthly entitlement of **\$61,000**.

By 2024, a minimum of 20 affordable rental housing units owned and/or operated by Indigenous organizations will be created and supports will be expanded.

of affordable rental housing units owned and/or operated by Indigenous communities and organizations completed and # of support services added

The Ontario Aboriginal Housing Supportive Services Corporation (OAHSSC) had **40 affordable units** approved prior to 2022. Currently OAHSSC has a zoning amendment application submitted to the City of Sarnia. Pending approvals, construction is expected to start in 2023 with occupancy in 2024.



Meetings with Indigenous communities and organizations will take place at least annually.

of meetings between County and Indigenous communities and organizations

The County of Lambton along with the Sarnia-Lambton Native Friendship Centre (SLNFC) has helped the enhancement of Coordinated Access and the expansion of local Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). The SLNFC has been integral to the planning of homelessness prevention initiatives in the community.

GOAL #2

By 2024, 80 more youth will be in receipt of affordable housing appropriate to their needs.

of youth receiving transitional housing, affordability assistance, Housing First for Youth

17 youth experiencing homelessness were placed into permanent housing in 2022, including through the two new youth programs in collaboration with CAS and CMHA.



Between 2020 and 2024, more people will be receiving supports and their tenancy will be retained.

of people receiving supports and have maintained their housing with new initiatives since 2020

There are various programs throughout the community such as Canadian Mental Health Lambton-Kent and the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Within the County of Lambton there are caseworkers and community support workers from Housing, Homelessness and Ontario Works assisting clients on life stabilization and life skills.

At the time of the writing of this report, returns to homelessness supported through County housing case managers from 2022 is below 9%.

By 2024, 130 more households will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (i.e., supportive housing).

of households in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (i.e., supportive housing) compared to 2019

There are scatter-site supportive housing programs within the County of Lambton that include affordability assistance. These programs are run through community partners such as: Sarnia-Lambton's Children's Aid Society, Canadian Mental Health Association Lambton-Kent, Sarnia Lambton Native Friendship Centre and the Inn of the Good Shepherd.

GOAL #2

By 2024, an additional 100 low-income homeownership units will be renovated/ repaired.

of low-income homeowners that received funding for renovation/ repairs

In 2022, **11 households** received funds under Lambton Renovates.



By 2024, an additional 30 households will be supported to purchase affordable ownership housing.

of households that received down payment assistance

In 2022, **6 households** received funds under the Homeownership Down Payment Assistance program. Housing Services department partnered with Habitat for Humanity (HFH) to fund 3 new builds in 2020. These builds began construction in 2021 and **occupancy occurred for 2** in 2022 with the third expected in 2023.

Facilitated connections between landlords and tenants will result in 150 housing placements by 2024.

of long-term housing placements as a result of facilitated connections between landlords and tenants

The Landlord Engagement Support Worker is a member of the integrated team. The role identifies new connections with landlords and assists in facilitating placements. The integrated team has progressed **82 households** into permanent housing.

An average of 50 tenants and 10 landlords will receive landlord and tenant education each year.

of tenants and # of landlords that received landlord and tenant education

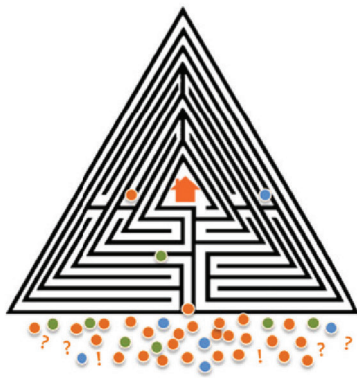
Through the Social Service Division Integrated team, individuals being placed into more permanent housing are offered tenancy skills training as part of their ongoing housing case management. This integrated team offered support to over **138 households**.

GOAL #3

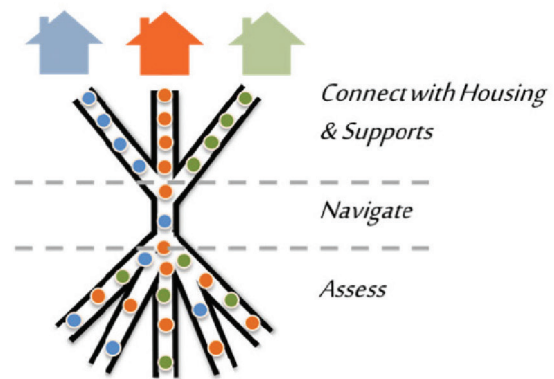


Establish a Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Service System

In 2022, the County of Lambton and partners advanced **Goal #3** through four key initiatives; developed a local homelessness prioritization; developed a Quality By-Name List; the continued expansion and quality improvement of HIFIS; and developed a coordinated access system.



Without
Coordinated Access



With
Coordinated Access

Future Focus

- Continue to test, develop, and expand the various modules in HIFIS while ensuring data quality
- Establish a Coordinated Access Community Collaborative Table (CCT)
- Collaborate and update a CCT Collective Caseload Inventory
- Develop new policies and procedures related to the Vacancy & Matching Referral process
- Implement 1/10 Homelessness Housing Priority (Social Housing) tracked via the CCT Resource Inventory
- Integrate quality improvement feedback in operational procedures

GOAL #3



Coordinated Access System Steps

1 SERVING PEOPLE AT RISK OR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

This includes individuals and families who are:

- Unsheltered (sleeping outside, vehicle etc.)
- Emergency Sheltered
- Temporarily Sheltered (couch surfing, motel etc.)
- At risk of homelessness

2 COMMUNITY ACCESS POINTS AND COMMON ASSESSMENT

Agencies trained to identify and assess people who are homeless, and are working with them to:

- Divert from emergency shelter when possible
- Assess needs and make connections to landlords, supports and available housing
- Continue to assertively engage with the individual and help remove any barriers to securing and maintaining housing

3 THE HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES INFORMATION SYSTEM (HIFIS)

The Homeless Individuals & Families Information System (HIFIS) was launched October 5, 2021. It is a secure shared database used by agencies within the Lambton County Homelessness System of Care (LCHSC).

The LCHSC includes agencies such as the County of Lambton, emergency shelter providers, transitional housing providers, and street outreach providers.

HIFIS is a comprehensive data collection and case management system. It helps us understand what is happening in our community and to work collaboratively.

4 LAMBTON COUNTY'S BY-NAME LIST (BNL)

Once assessed, people are added to Lambton County's By-Name List (BNL) in HIFIS.

The BNL is a real-time, up to date list of all people experiencing homelessness in Lambton County.

5 FOCUS AREAS

Matching to Available Resources

Lambton County's BNL matches dedicated support and housing resources, as they become available, prioritized to meet an individual or family's depth of need.

These resources may include affordable housing, supportive housing, transitional housing, rent supplements, support workers, financial assistance, rental search support and more.

GOAL #3



HIFIS Milestones Achieved in 2022



John's Story



Background

John became homeless after his landlord sold the home he had been renting for many years. He stayed with family and friends for a period of time, however, with his declining health and the pandemic he was unable to maintain this.

Supports

John was also in receipt of government pensions making it difficult to find a unit that was affordable for him despite his successful rental history and good credit. He entered emergency shelter at the Good Shepherd's Lodge in February 2022 and moved into the Overflow program within a couple of weeks. He had been diagnosed with cancer and was undergoing chemotherapy therefore required a suitable and safe place to recover. While staying at the overflow shelter, he was able to work with staff on site to complete a Social Housing application for the County of Lambton. His application was accepted in December 2022 as part of the Homelessness Priority Program and he was able to sign a lease for a rent-geared-to-income unit. John was assigned a community support worker as part of the Homelessness Priority program who was able to assist him with his move-in and would be available to provide ongoing tenancy supports.

Outcomes

John expressed excitement when he first moved to be able to cook his own meals again. He has been in his new home for four months now and has been supported by his CSW to access medical devices through Falls Prevention and Home & Community Care. The CSW has provided regular check-ins and has assisted John in accessing food boxes when he has been unable to get to the food bank. John continues with new cancer treatments however now has a safe place to go home to and heal.

GOAL #3



Current State as per By-Name List (BNL)

A BNL is a real-time list of those who are actively experiencing homelessness. It changes in real-time and the data below is a snapshot as of December 31, 2022.



233

individuals are experiencing homelessness in the County of Lambton.

24%

of households have Indigenous ancestry.

19%

of households are aged 16-24 years.

52%

of individuals are experiencing chronic homelessness

Chronic homelessness refers to when a household has a total of at least **6 months (180 days)** of homelessness over the past year - **or** - they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least **18 months (546 days)**.

37,827



Bed nights spent in housing 2022

25,796 - Permanent Adult Emergency Housing

1,856 - Permanent Youth Emergency Housing

16,175 - Additional Emergency Overflow (includes temporary congregate care sites)



SPOTLIGHT

County of Lambton was recognized by Built for Zero Canada for achieving a Quality By-Name List (QBNL) on September 28, 2022.

- Ten requirements of the By-Name list scorecard completed
- Three (3) months of reliable chronic By-Name List data achieved
- A baseline for the chronic active homeless number determined and set



By-Name List



In collaboration with Built for Zero Canada and our Coordinated Access Service providers, Lambton progressed and collected fulsome data for the By-Name List (BNL) throughout 2022.



The BNL is a real-time list of individuals experiencing homelessness in Lambton. This tool assists with prioritization of clients to housing resources and provides community-level data for identifying needs and advocating for individuals.



In October of 2021, Lambton launched the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) across local shelters in order to centralize BNL data collection. This shared system between shelters allows clients to receive multiple services under one common consent.

Lambton County has achieved a long list of quality domains, in addition to perfect data balancing, to attain a 'Quality By-Name List', thereby offering a high degree of confidence and accuracy in identifying households experiencing homelessness.

Why have a BNL?

Through the By-Name List, our community can more accurately assess who is entering our homeless system on an ongoing basis, equitably serve households based on community-developed prioritization, and maximize limited local resources available to serve the most vulnerable.

GOAL #3

Prioritization

In November of 2021, Lambton's Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee met to discuss and decide what criteria would determine how clients experiencing homelessness in the Coordinated Access System are prioritized for housing resources.

This meeting was facilitated by Lambton's Built for Zero Canada Improvement Advisor, who offered expertise and advised on best practices from other communities.

The following prioritization indicators were selected:



1. **Chronic Homelessness**
2. **Indigenous Identity**
3. **a) Youth b) Tri-morbidity c) Families**

The County's Homelessness Prevention Team and Housing Services department implemented a local housing policy in 2022 that ensures 1 in every 10 vacancies in County owned community housing units will be offered to households experiencing homelessness. Three households were successfully supported into community housing directly from an experience of homelessness through this initiative in 2022. All individuals receive ongoing intensive case management and have been supported to retain their housing.



Establishing local prioritization criteria specific to Lambton ensures that the most vulnerable members of our community are housed and connected to community resources the fastest.

GOAL #3

By 2021, a coordinated access process for housing and supports will be implemented.

Coordinated access process for housing and supports implemented

In 2022, all system mapping for coordinated access was completed. In early 2023 the Coordinated Access Community Collaborative Table (CCT) met for its inaugural meeting. This table will connect households experiencing homelessness with the appropriate resources.

By the end of 2020, a standardized assessment tool will be implemented among 100% of County funded homelessness service providers.

% of County funded homelessness service providers consistently using standardized assessment tool

Service Providers within the County utilized the VI-SPDAT tool to understand individual vulnerabilities to be better connected to appropriate resources. The VI-SPDAT is a survey administered both to individuals and families to determine risk and prioritization when providing assistance to homeless and at-risk of homelessness persons.

By the end of 2020, a By-Name List and joint prioritization, matching and referral process will be established.

By-Name List and joint prioritization, matching and referral process established

Our community established a prioritization framework utilizing a Coordinated Access system of care. The matching and referral process consists of the By-Name List matching resources as they become available, prioritized to meet a households needs.

By 2022, HIFIS will be implemented in 100% of service providers participating in coordinated access.

% of service providers participating in coordinated access that use HIFIS

Those agencies in system of care (coordinated access) are utilizing the HIFIS system. Work is underway to expand all agencies into the HIFIS system.

GOAL #4



Ending Homelessness

The County of Lambton's homelessness service providers and staff collaborated in 2022 to reduce the impacts of COVID-19 on individuals experiencing homelessness and focused on homelessness prevention interventions to keep clients stably housed.

Social Services Relief Funding

The County of Lambton received additional installments of the province's "Social Services Relief Funding" over the course of 2022 from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. This funding was crucial to expanding the shelter system's capacity during COVID-19 to meet drastically increased demand. Relief included:

SSRF Phase 4

\$2,560,800

SSRF Phase 5

\$1,130,200

- Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) protocols and personal protection equipment (PPE) across shelters and overflow
- **Securing permanent housing for clients through rent supplements and rent utility banks**
- The establishment of additional overflow shelter beds

Emergency Shelter Solutions

Additional overflow shelter beds, enabled by SSRF throughout 2022, were collaboratively run between staff at the Inn of the Good Shepherd and staff from The County of Lambton's Social Services Division. Clients staying at these shelters were offered daily meals, food boxes, and access to case management supports through teams such as CMHA and NLCHC.

GOAL #4

Housing First Model

Using a Housing First approach, participating agencies in Lambton County work together to assess people's housing related needs and connect them to available supports to find and keep housing.

Housing First is a program model, a systems approach, and a philosophy that recognizes housing as a basic human right and focuses on helping people experiencing homelessness obtain housing stability.

Stewart's Story

Background

A chronically homeless gentleman who was currently living rough in a park in 2022, was engaged by the County of Lambton's Outreach team and eventually connected to a community support worker.

Supports

A unit was brought forward by a landlord to the landlord engagement support worker with the County. Stewart seemed to be a good fit for the unit and a good fit with the landlord who is involved and actively engages with their tenants. He was approved for the unit, assisted with move-in and needs, pay directs, and Rental Assistance Program.

Outcomes

He later transitioned to Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit. It has been a successful tenancy with a team effort between the landlord bringing concerns/issues forward, landlord engagement support worker coordination, on-going tenancy support and regular CSW assistance.

GOAL #4



Homelessness Prevention Resources

The **Rental Assistance Program (RAP)** is administered through Ontario Works at the County of Lambton. Households approved for RAP receive a temporary rental supplement to meet the difference between their income and the rent of their unit.

RAP is a short-term homelessness prevention solution, to secure or maintain affordable housing while households are waiting for other rent solutions to begin. It prevents those who are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness from missing housing opportunities because they've just begun a new job or have just begun receiving appropriate supports.

RAP

- 126 households assisted in 2022
- 67 to secure housing
- 59 to maintain housing

MRB

- 941 households assisted in 2022
- Households primarily assisted to maintain housing

The **Municipal Residency Benefit (MRB)** is administered through Ontario Works to recipients of social assistance who are at imminent risk of homelessness. MRB may be provided to households who require assistance to access new accommodations that are sustainable, or prevent households from losing current accommodations.

SPOTLIGHT



Central Overflow Site

In December of 2021, the County and the Inn opened a temporary shelter. The purpose of this congregate care site - referred to as "Central Site" - was to create a more affordable shelter solution as the need for overflow beds decreased, and to offer centralized, on-site supports to clients through a collaborative network of homelessness service providers. Additional specialized supports were offered by community partners including on-site health supports from NLCHC and CMHA.

Open from December 29, 2021 – April 30, 2022

87

Unique individuals served.

2,227

Overnight stays supported.



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Lambton Kent



North Lambton
Community Health Centre



GOAL #4



Diversion

Diversion is a best-practice approach used to prevent individuals and families from entering emergency shelter, through offering timely homelessness prevention supports. These supports are specific to the household's situation, but may include services such as conflict mediation, or assistance with rental arrears.

Lambton County offers diversion at all access points where an individual presents having an experience of homelessness. In particular, this includes all emergency housing locations, community outreach workers and directly at service providers.



In 2022,
Lambton County facilitated:

104
successful diversions

616
instances of diversion services



A Better Tomorrow

“A Better Tomorrow” committee was developed to ensure the inclusion of lived and living experienced voices to service system design and delivery. This committee has so far examined and offered recommendations on items such as local shelter standards which provide guidelines for operating shelters within the County of Lambton.

Throughout 2022, the County of Lambton began recruitment for a lived experience committee to consult on homelessness prevention solutions and services in Lambton. Co-chairs from the Homelessness Prevention team and Circles Lambton team were selected to facilitate committee meetings and reach out to community members with lived experience of homelessness.

The committee's initial members were recruited and established on the committee's vision and purpose in December of 2021, and the group gathered together for the first time on January 13th of 2022.

Throughout 2022, the committee examined and offered recommendations on various policies and practices within the County of Lambton. This valuable feedback enables the inclusion of this essential perspective on strategy and front-line service delivery.

GOAL #4



Outreach Team

Lambton County introduced 2 new community outreach staff in July 2022. This team works closely with individuals who are sleeping rough. They offer assertive community outreach and progress individuals into more permanent housing.

This team was introduced in response to a significant increase in the number of households experiencing street-level homelessness. There are multi-disciplinary efforts being planned and coordinated with partner agencies such as **Lambton Public Health** and **North Lambton Community Health Centre** to ensure households are better connected to primary care services, are offered harm reduction tools and services, and can receive supports where they are.

Outreach Map

July to December 2022

Note: Indicators on map denote points of engagement



Sarnia Police IMPACT quote:

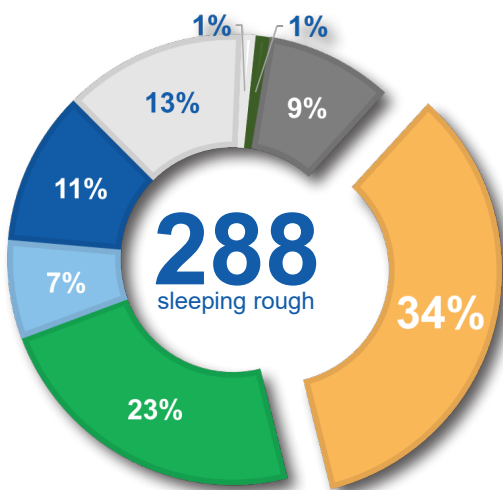
“With the support from our partners from the County of Lambton, the Sarnia Police Services IMPACT Team is better equipped to offer assistance to vulnerable people within our community suffering from substance abuse disorders, mental health illness, and homelessness. Together, we are able to offer supports to our vulnerable populations safely and effectively as we work in cohesion with our community partners from the County of Lambton to help those in need. This welcomed collaborative approach has already seen success in helping those in need and we will continue to build on these experiences in order to broaden our outreach to provide as much aid to people who will benefit from our interactions.” – Sergeant Miroslav Soucek, Sarnia Police IMPACT Team

GOAL #4



Reason for Sleeping Rough

Not every household chooses to access the available emergency housing solutions available within Lambton County. Community outreach staff are deployed to reach these households.



- 11% On service restriction from emergency housing
- 13% No available shelter bed
- 1% Unaware of emergency housing options
- 1% Chose not to stay in shelter, safety
- 9% Chose not to stay in shelter, personal relationships
- 34% Chose not to stay in shelter, substance use
- 23% Chose not to stay in shelter, mental health
- 7% Unknown/Declined to answer

156 # of Unique individuals

412 # of engagements

26% Proportion of Indigenous households

56 # of coordinated trips with partner staff

376 # of instances of harm reduction supplies offered

Data is from August 1st to December 31st, 2022.

Henry's Story

Background

Henry has been chronically homeless for many years. He spent time in various shelter programs but found it difficult to maintain his stays due his deteriorating mental health. Henry was living outside during the winter and became visibly homeless which caused concern from the community.

Supports

Henry asked for help from the County outreach workers to get out of the cold. Through partnership with the Inn of The Good Shepherd, he was placed in the temporary motel program. Henry was able to maintain his stay with regular help from outreach workers. Having a stable place made it easier for his mental health supports to check on him.

Outcomes

During his stay in the motel program Henry was able to stabilize and apply for a more long-term housing. Henry has signed a rental agreement and moved into his unit where his family is able to come visit him and provide ongoing support.

GOAL #4

By 2021, a diversion approach will be implemented within all emergency accommodations.

Diversion approach implemented in all emergency accommodation

Diversion was introduced system-wide in 2020. This process was significantly enhanced in 2021. The consistent application of diversion and its underlying best practices were further enhanced in 2022.

By 2023, a cross-sectoral protocol to coordinate discharge planning will be implemented.

Cross-sectoral protocol to coordinate discharge planning implemented

Ongoing discussions with both healthcare and justice system partners continue, to better promote integrated discharge planning between Provincially funded institutions. Lambton Elderly Outreach offers a scatter-site supportive housing program that supports eligible individuals experiencing homelessness in ALC beds to be placed and supported in various retirement home settings.



By 2022, 100% of households staying in emergency and transitional accommodations will have an assessment completed, an individualized housing plan developed, and an application/referral to housing services completed by 21 days from the time they presented for emergency services.

% of households who have completed an assessment, individualized housing plan, and application/referral to housing services by 21 days from the time they first presented for emergency services

All access point agencies are being given VI-SPDAT training to administer the assessment. The assessment is utilized 2 weeks after the individual comes into care.

GOAL #4

By 2024, an additional 160 households that were previously homeless will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports.

of households that were previously homeless that are in receipt of permanent supportive housing, Assertive Community Treatment, Intensive Case Management, or rapid re-housing (with affordability assistance)

There has been a significant increase in local housing case management capacity, including rapid re-housing and intensive case management by community support workers, in addition to the introduction of community outreach workers that offer affordability assistance and housing-related supports.



By 2024, an additional 45 youth will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports.

of youth that were previously homeless that are in receipt of permanent supportive housing, Assertive Community Treatment, Intensive Case Management, transitional housing, or rapid re-housing (with affordability assistance)

Two new youth programs have the collective capacity to serve youth on the BNL. Both programs are supported through rent supplements from the County of Lambton.

CONCLUSION



10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, 2022 Annual Progress Report

In 2022, our community continued to come together to address the housing crisis and resultant increase in households experiencing homelessness. Many of the new programs offered this year provided the necessary supports to assist the most vulnerable in our community to secure or maintain their home. Looking ahead, improved local tracking and data demonstrate a significant and growing need for the expansion of local housing solutions, including supportive housing. Further, collaboration with connected sectors including health and justice will greatly contribute to the goal of preventing and ending homelessness and ensuring housing stability for all members of our community.



Absolute Homelessness



Emergency Shelter



Transitional Housing



Supportive Housing



Social Housing



Private Market Rental



Home Ownership