

**RE-VISIONING HOUSING AND  
HOMELESSNESS IN LAMBTON COUNTY:**

**COUNTY OF LAMBTON  
HOUSING AND  
HOMELESSNESS PLAN  
2020-2024**



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of the County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan was led by Vink Consulting in collaboration with the project team from the County of Lambton.



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Sarnia Lambton Rebound  
Red Cross Sarnia-Lambton Branch  
Ontario Provincial Police - Lambton Detachment  
Sarnia Lambton Children's Aid Society  
River City Vinyard  
Sarnia Police Service  
Ontario Health Team  
North Lambton Community Health Centre  
The Inn of the Good Shephard  
Bluewater Health  
County of Lambton Public Health Services

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# PLAN AT A GLANCE

## VISION:

*Every person has an affordable, suitable and adequate home.*

## GOALS:



**GOAL 1:**  
INCREASE  
AND SUSTAIN  
SUPPLY AND  
APPROPRIATE  
MIX OF  
AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING



**GOAL 2:**  
INCREASE ACCESS  
TO AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING AND  
SUPPORTS THAT  
MEET PEOPLE'S  
NEEDS TO ACHIEVE  
HOUSING STABILITY



**GOAL 3:**  
COORDINATED  
HOUSING AND  
HOMELESSNESS  
SERVICE  
SYSTEM



**GOAL 4:**  
ENDING  
HOMELESSNESS

## ACTION AREAS:

- Build more affordable, accessible, rental housing
- Partner with private sector to create mixed-income buildings
- Support sustainability of social housing providers

- Increase affordability assistance
- Support culturally appropriate housing and supports for Indigenous peoples
- Increase housing appropriate to youth
- Promote housing options for seniors
- Encourage housing with supports for people with disabilities
- Help with renovations of low-income ownership housing
- Help low-income individuals purchase affordable homes
- Facilitate support for landlords and tenants

- Expand collaboration and partnerships
- Implement Coordinated Access to housing and supports
- Strengthen homelessness system management and governance
- Expand training of service providers

- Expand prevention approaches
- Shift to housing-focused emergency and transitional accommodation
- Using a Housing First approach, increase housing and supports for people who have experienced homelessness

# ANTICIPATED TIMELINES AND KEY MILESTONES

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## GOAL 1:

### INCREASE AND SUSTAIN SUPPLY AND APPROPRIATE MIX OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- » By 2024, 75 more affordable rental units will be built with the assistance of government funding
- » Between 2020 and 2024, there will be an increase in the number of affordable units created as a percent of total units created
- » Non-Profit Social Housing providers will continue/enter into partnerships with the County to continue to provide Rent Geared to Income (RGI) units at the end of their operating agreement
- » A least one mixed-income building will be created by 2024
- » All social housing buildings will be maintained in a fair state of repair
- » By 2022, a rationalization analysis and regeneration plan will be developed for the social housing portfolio

## GOAL 2:

### INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SUPPORTS THAT MEET PEOPLE'S NEEDS TO ACHIEVE HOUSING STABILITY

- » By 2024, 350 additional households will be in receipt of affordability assistance
- » By 2024, an additional 130 households will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports
- » Between 2020 and 2024, more people will be receiving supports and their tenancy will be retained
- » By 2024, an additional 100 low income homeownership units will be renovated/ repaired
- » By 2024, an additional 30 households will be supported to purchase affordable ownership housing
- » Facilitated connections between landlords and tenants will result in 150 long-term housing placements by 2024

**GOAL 3: COORDINATED HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICE SYSTEM**

- » By 2021, a Coordinated Access process for housing and supports will be implemented
- » By 2022, 100% of homelessness programs funded by the County will be revised to align with best practices, outcomes and actions of the Plan
- » By 2023, a coordinated approach will be made by all system funders to align housing and homelessness investments with the Plan

**GOAL 4: ENDING HOMELESSNESS**

- » By 2021, a diversion approach will be implemented within all emergency accommodations
- » 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 within 21 days from the time they accessed emergency services
- » By 2023, a cross-sectoral protocol to coordinate discharge planning will be implemented
- » By 2024, 80% of people experiencing homelessness leaving institutions will be discharged into appropriate housing
- » By 2024, an additional 160 households that were previously homeless will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports
- » By 2024, Lambton will have reduced chronic and episodic homelessness by 50%
- » By 2025, Lambton will achieve functional zero chronic homelessness

# THE NEED FOR A RENEWED PLAN

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The County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan - 2014-2024 has provided direction for housing and homelessness services in Lambton County from 2014 to the time of writing this Updated Plan (Fall 2019). Since 2014, our community has seen many achievements related to the Plan's three strategic directions: Homelessness Prevention, Housing Stability and Sustainability.

The context has changed since 2014. The federal government has re-engaged with housing policy and funding in a significant way through Canada's first ever National Housing Strategy. The National Housing Strategy is a 10-year, \$40-billion plan to strengthen housing outcomes and cut chronic homelessness in half. The Province recently released Ontario's Community Housing Strategy and established an ambitious goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025.

Locally, economic growth has contributed to a boost in rental and ownership housing demand, higher rents and purchase prices, and tightened demand-supply conditions. Over the past several years we have seen an increase in the number of homeless individuals in our community as well as an increase in those at risk of becoming homeless. The waitlist for Rent-Geared-to-Income housing has almost doubled in the past year and the number of individuals staying in shelters has increased dramatically.

The Province requires Service System Managers to review their Housing and Homelessness Plan every five years. However, beyond this mandatory requirement, this review and update (2019) of the Plan provides an opportunity to renew the Plan based on the new context and additional knowledge about effective practices.

The updated Plan will provide a blueprint which will set the course for meeting housing need of the residents of Lambton County over the next five years. The actions in this Updated Plan influence the full spectrum of the housing continuum from absolute homelessness to private market housing for people of all ages and varying degrees of abilities. The Plan will focus our efforts as a community around key goals, like increasing the supply of affordable housing and ending chronic homelessness. This plan provides our community with specific actions – based on current and future need, best practices and insights from our community, as well as timelines and targets to progress towards its goals.

We know that achieving our goals will require the on-going commitment and involvement of all levels of government and all community partners to create a system of housing and support services that are easily accessible and responsive to individual needs.

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## AGAINST OUR PLAN

In the first County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan 2014-2024 the actions were framed in three strategic directions: Homelessness Prevention, Housing Stability, and Sustainability.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

#### HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

Under this strategic direction our community sought to provide homelessness prevention services, develop a system of care framework specific to special needs, develop innovative solutions to end homelessness, including the development of a Rapid Re-housing program for those who are homeless, and developing community systems that promote an integrated, cross sector approach to ending homelessness.

#### HOUSING STABILITY

Under this strategic direction the community sought to develop a “Housing First, Housing Right” service model, increasing supports to maintain housing for priority population groups (seniors, special needs, formerly homeless persons, and victims of domestic violence), explore options to create housing and support solutions for Indigenous peoples, individuals with developmental delays and physical challenges, increase access to accessible and/or supportive housing, expand housing options for lower income households, and increase involvement of private developers in expanding affordable housing options.

### HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2014-2019

- » Five Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funded pilots were implemented to address service gaps within Lambton County including service navigation, mental health and addictions, rural transportation and supportive housing for seniors
- » Through the Home for Good Program, Youth Transitional Housing was developed and 7 supported units opened in 2019.
- » The community continued to assist households who received rent subsidies under the Investment in Affordable Housing program that began prior to the development of the Plan (86 households) and has added to the number of households receiving rent subsidies through new federal-provincial programs (59 households)
- » The County has also invested in a Portable Housing Benefit. 35 households are receiving affordability assistance through this benefit
- » A new Mental Health and Social Services Team has been created as a two-year pilot; a collaboration between Canadian Mental Health Association and the County of Lambton’s Social Services Division
- » Community Support Workers provide outreach and support to tenants to improve their quality of life and maintain rental housing

## SUSTAINABILITY

Under this strategic direction, our community sought to increase community awareness, capacity, and resources to address housing and homelessness, build new housing stock, and maintain and preserve existing housing assets through renovations.

Since 2014, the County of Lambton has worked closely with community partners to provide homelessness services, deliver and maintain existing social and affordable housing, and increase the affordable rental housing stock.

- » 74 affordable rental housing units were developed
- » A partnership with the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services Corporation will see construction begin in 2020 to add an additional 20 affordable units
- » County Council has approved a 10-Year Capital Asset Management and Funding Plan that will result in a \$40 million investment to address the capital needs of the 830 County of Lambton owned social housing units
- » \$1.1M has been invested through the Social Housing Improvement Program to assist non-profit social housing providers address their capital needs



# LOCAL HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS CONTEXT

## RENTAL HOUSING

**3.8%**

Vacancy Rate 2018<sup>1</sup>

**\$950**

Alternative Average Market Rent 2019<sup>2</sup>

Average rents increased at approximately the rate of inflation between 2014 and 2018<sup>3</sup>

**51%**

of renter households cannot afford the median market rent<sup>4</sup>

**35%**

of renters were in core housing need, 4,455 households<sup>5</sup>

**599**

households are on the wait list for Rent Geared-to-Income housing<sup>6</sup>

**3,545**

estimated gap between the demand and supply of affordable rental housing units<sup>7</sup>

**1,850**

renters were at high risk of homelessness, spending more than 50% of income on rent and utilities<sup>8</sup>

**4.6%**

of new housing construction from 2014 to 2018 was intended for the rental market<sup>9</sup>

## OWNERSHIP HOUSING

**\$262,000**

2018 average house price<sup>10</sup>

**17%**

Average house prices increased by approximately 17% between 2014 and 2018, compared to an inflation rate of 7.8%<sup>11</sup>

**3,338**

estimated gap between the demand and supply of affordable ownership housing units<sup>12</sup>

**1,755**

owners in core housing need<sup>13</sup>

## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Number of people waiting for supportive housing, not including supportive housing targeted towards those exiting homelessness:

**22** – supportive housing for persons with physical disabilities

**28** – supportive housing for persons with mental health issues or addictions

**232** – supported independent living for people with developmental disabilities

**172** – group living for people with developmental disabilities (some people may be on both this list and list for supported independent living)<sup>14</sup>

## HOMELESSNESS

# 345

people were identified through surveys as experiencing homelessness, observed to be homeless, or known by agencies to be experiencing homelessness in Lambton County during the two-week enumeration period in 2018<sup>15</sup>

Homelessness in Lambton County takes a variety of forms. Of those surveyed:

**4%** were experiencing absolute homelessness

**30%** were emergency sheltered

**42%** were in hospital, correctional facilities, treatment centres, or staying with someone else temporarily, and

**18%** were in transitional housing<sup>16</sup>

Key sub-populations of people surveyed through the homelessness enumeration:

**20%** were identified as episodically homeless (3 or more episodes in a year)

**36%** were identified as chronically homeless (homeless for 6 or more months)

**26%** identified as Indigenous

**28%** were unaccompanied youth

**18%** were part of the LGBTQI2S community<sup>17</sup>

# 822

people stayed in emergency shelters in Lambton County in 2018<sup>18</sup>

# CONSULTATION RESULTS

A vital component in the review of the County of Lambton's 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan was a meaningful and comprehensive community engagement strategy. As part of this strategy, a broad range of stakeholders were invited, through various formats, to share their insights, ideas and experiences on the strengths, challenges, and gaps in housing and homelessness services across Lambton County, and to help determine priorities for the updated Plan.

From September to November 2019, stakeholders participated in the following engagement activities:

<p><b>FOCUS GROUPS</b></p> <p>with individuals with lived experience</p> <p><b>4 sessions with 34 participants</b></p>	<p><b>SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS</b></p> <p>with community stakeholders</p> <p><b>6 sessions with 57 stakeholders</b></p>	<p><b>TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS</b></p> <p>with local municipalities, Indigenous organizations, and other</p> <p><b>21 interviews</b></p>	<p><b>ONLINE SURVEY</b></p> <p>with stakeholders and residents</p> <p><b>208 respondents</b></p>	<p><b>COMMUNITY WORKSHOP</b></p> <p>with stakeholders</p> <p><b>75 participants</b></p>
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Key issues identified through the consultations included:

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- » The lack of affordable housing is a significant concern to the community
- » There is a desire for greater private sector engagement in affordable housing, yet several barriers exist
- » Sustainability of social housing is another key housing concern

## HOMELESSNESS

- » Shelters are typically full and there is a lack of other after-hours emergency support
- » Some clients are receiving service restrictions and are not able to access shelter; stakeholders reported that they are seeing more street homelessness
- » Lack of affordable rental housing is a major barrier to responding to homelessness, and some people face multiple barriers to accessing housing other than cost
- » People are being discharged from hospital and correctional facilities into homelessness
- » The closing of businesses and community services in smaller municipalities is making it difficult for low income households to maintain housing in these communities

## INDIGENOUS HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

- » Indigenous people are not well served by the current housing and homelessness system
- » Many Indigenous people face discrimination from landlords when seeking housing
- » There are waiting lists for affordable housing both on and off Reserve, resulting in more Indigenous people couch surfing because no housing is available/affordable
- » There are opportunities to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations

## HOUSING AND SUPPORTS

- » There are not enough supports for mental health and addictions
- » The supply of supportive housing for seniors and people with disabilities is inadequate
- » There are not any sober transitional housing for people recovering from addictions
- » Support services in rural areas is a concern for seniors
- » There is a need for more accessible housing

## HOUSING STABILITY

- » Some social housing tenants have high support needs
- » Some tenants lack the supports they need, resulting in evictions from multiple tenancies
- » There is a mismatch between shelter allowance rates and rent levels

## COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

- » Collaboration has increased, but there is a need for more formal coordination, including Coordinated Access to housing, services, and data sharing
- » Some agencies are feeling vulnerable under the current political climate and fear loss of funding

# **RE-VISIONING OUR RESPONSE**

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## **SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICE ANALYSIS**

The updated Plan aims to align with best practices. The Best and Promising Practices Report outlines the detailed findings of a review of best and promising practices in housing and homelessness. The Report includes resources that can provide guidance to the community in implementing these practices and service delivery models as part of the Plan. A summary is provided here. Refer to the Best Practices Report for the detailed plan.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

#### **TOOLS TO EXPAND THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

In addition to directly providing, or establishing partnerships to provide, affordable housing, there are many regulatory options, planning policies, and financial incentives that the County and local municipal governments can use to expand the supply of affordable housing.

#### **APPROACHES TO IMPROVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIAL HOUSING**

Strengthening social housing can involve a variety of approaches, including repairs, upgrades, expansion, or redevelopment, and often includes using accumulated equity to support these changes. Consolidation of providers may also take place where needed. Strengthening social housing also involves providing capacity building opportunities and support.

#### **AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE**

Affordability assistance can take several forms, all of which are already being used in Lambton County. Many households receive subsidized rents through County owned and non-profit social housing units or below market rents in affordable housing units. Rent supplements are also offered, which involve a contract between a private landlord and the County to subsidize the rents for residents who cannot afford market rent levels. Housing allowances and portable housing benefits are paid directly to the resident, so they can be used in the private market, and are portable. Different forms of affordability assistance are appropriate in different situations, but portable housing benefits are often a preferred option because they allow choice for the resident.

## **HOUSING AND SUPPORTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

### **HOUSING WITH SUPPORTS**

This is the combination of housing with supportive services designed to help persons with disabilities access housing and remain stably housed. Housing with supports can be found within a full range of housing types with distinct program elements and criteria. The support services provided include both clinical and non-clinical services, may take a variety of forms and may vary in intensity based on individual's needs.

### **HOMELESSNESS**

#### **SYSTEM APPROACH**

A system planning approach uses Housing First as a guiding philosophy and is a method of organizing and delivering services, housing, and programs that coordinates resources to ensure that efforts align with homelessness-reduction goals.

#### **HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION**

Ending homelessness requires an emphasis on prevention and a focus on quick returns to permanent housing. Prevention interventions should include structural-level initiatives to reduce the risk of homelessness; interventions aimed at those who are at imminent risk of homelessness or who have recently become homeless to avoid homelessness or moving out from homelessness as quickly as possible; and supports for individuals and families who have previously experienced housing to ensure it does not happen again.

#### **DISCHARGE PLANNING**

Effective discharge planning includes preparing someone who has lived in an 'institutionalized' setting, such as hospital, corrections facilities, child welfare facilities, addiction treatment facilities or mental health programs. Effective discharge planning should identify appropriate housing and prevent these individuals from falling into homelessness.

#### **DIVERSION**

A process that uses standardized questions and assistance with problem-solving to determine whether an individual or family seeking homelessness assistance can be safely stabilized in their current situation or alternative housing arrangements can be immediately identified to address their housing situation without entering emergency shelter.

## **LOW BARRIER, HOUSING-FOCUSED SHELTERS**

Communities should shift their focus from managing homelessness, with services that provide short-term shelter and basic necessities to individuals and families in crisis, to a system-wide emphasis on ending homelessness. However, when someone becomes homeless there may be a need for emergency shelter on a temporary basis. Anyone experiencing homelessness, who cannot be safely diverted from shelter, should be able to access shelter without prerequisites, and clients should be assisted to access permanent housing options as quickly as possible.

## **HOUSING AND SUPPORTS USING A HOUSING FIRST APPROACH**

Households that become homeless and are assessed as having mid or high acuity are assisted to return to permanent housing and provided with rental assistance and appropriate supports to help them achieve stability and increase their independence while living in permanent housing. The type and length of the support period is determined by the needs of the household.

## **RAPID RE-HOUSING**

Rapid re-housing is aimed at people with mid acuity who can live independently after receiving subsidies and supports. It includes affordability assistance and case management supports.

## **INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT**

Intensive Case Management is designed to support mid or high acuity clients who have more complex needs.

## **ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT**

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs provide longer-term case management and housing support to very high acuity homeless clients facing addictions and mental health. They include a multidisciplinary team of professionals that provide intensive support services to individuals with serious mental illnesses and complex needs.

## **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides long-term housing and supports to individuals who are homeless and experiencing complex mental health, addiction, and physical health barriers. It provides services to homeless clients who may need support for an uncertain length of time.

## **SYSTEM INTEGRATION**

Communities should strive to establish mechanisms that coordinate and connect programs, services and resources between the homeless-serving system and other key public systems and services. These include justice, child welfare, health, immigration/settlement, domestic violence and poverty reduction.

## **COORDINATED ACCESS SYSTEM**

### **COORDINATED ACCESS**

Coordinated Access is a community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and support services needed to end their homelessness (CAEH, 2018). Effective Coordinated Access processes include:

#### **STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT**

All service providers in the homelessness system use a common assessment tool to identify the acuity level.

#### **BY-NAME LIST**

A By-Name List is a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in the community. It includes data points that support prioritization and referral of households to available housing and supports. It allows the community to develop an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow at a system level, allows the community to monitor and evaluate system performance and advocate for resources necessary to end homelessness based on strong data on community needs.

#### **JOINT PRIORITIZATION, MATCHING AND REFERRAL PROCESS**

This involves establishing a set of criteria to determine a person's level of vulnerability and how they will be ranked and assigned for openings in housing and intensive supports programs rather than a chronological wait list, and shared referral processes and protocols used to connect an individual to the best service and housing intervention based on prioritization policy.

#### **DATA SHARING**

An information management system should be in place to collect and share information, including assessments and referrals, in real-time within a community, as well as program statistics. This information should be used for service planning. The no-cost federal Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) is one option for an information management system.

## EMERGING GAPS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE BEST PRACTICES

There are opportunities for Lambton County to build on best practice approaches that are already being used in the County as well as opportunities to strengthen the alignment of housing and homelessness services in the community with best practices.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**SYSTEM APPROACH** Tools to Expand the Supply of Affordable Housing – Local municipal housing policies follow the land use policies outlined by the County in its Official Plan, including provisions for an adequate supply of land, promoting secondary suites, and having policies that support various housing types. With updated direction set by the County's new Official Plan, there are opportunities to enhance local policies to further support affordable housing.

### APPROACHES TO IMPROVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIAL HOUSING

Lambton County has been investing in capital repairs for social housing, and this should continue moving forward. There are opportunities to take a system-wide look at the demands for social housing in comparison to the stock that is available and assess opportunities for redevelopment and expansion. There are also opportunities to continue to develop the capacity of the non-profit volunteer boards to effectively manage their housing.

**AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE** Affordability assistance is being provided in several forms in Lambton County, including a new Portable Housing Benefit. Efforts should be made to continue to expand the availability of affordability assistance, and in particular, portable housing benefits.

### HOUSING AND SUPPORTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**HOUSING WITH SUPPORTS** There is no community wide list of all people in need of supportive housing in Lambton County, nor is there Coordinated Access to the different housing and supports available in the community for persons with disabilities. Wait list information that is available, however, does indicate an urgent need for more supportive housing for people with a variety of disabilities in Lambton County.

## HOMELESSNESS

**SYSTEM APPROACH** Informal coordination between services in Lambton County is happening, but there are opportunities to assess the role that each program and service is playing and establish formal connections between programs and services to ensure they are all working together towards the goal of ending homelessness.

**HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION** Ending homelessness requires an emphasis on prevention and a focus on quick returns to permanent housing. Prevention interventions should include structural-level initiatives to reduce the risk of homelessness; interventions aimed at those who are at imminent risk of homelessness or who have recently become homeless to avoid homelessness or moving out from homelessness as quickly as possible; and supports for individuals and families who have previously experienced homelessness to ensure it does not happen again.

**DISCHARGE PLANNING** Homelessness service providers have been working closely with Bluewater Health to plan for housing and supports prior to hospital discharge for clients staying in the Inpatient Mental Health unit. There are opportunities to expand this approach to other units within Bluewater Health and to establish/strengthen discharge planning protocols with correctional facilities and child welfare organizations.

**DIVERSION** Lambton County has not yet implemented formal diversion services in shelters, where standardized questions are asked and problem-solving assistance is provided to determine the potential for clients seeking homelessness assistance to stay in alternative housing arrangements, rather than entering emergency shelter. This presents a significant opportunity for Lambton County to meet the needs of households experiencing a housing crisis outside of shelter, and an opportunity to prioritize shelter beds for those who need them most.

**LOW BARRIER, HOUSING-FOCUSED SHELTERS** There are opportunities to transition the shelters in Lambton County to low barrier shelters. Shelters in Lambton county are funded to assist clients in accessing permanent housing options, but more focus needs to be made on housing in the shelters to help clients move to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Implementing a diversion approach and strong housing focus in shelters should help address some of the issues related to lack of capacity in shelters.

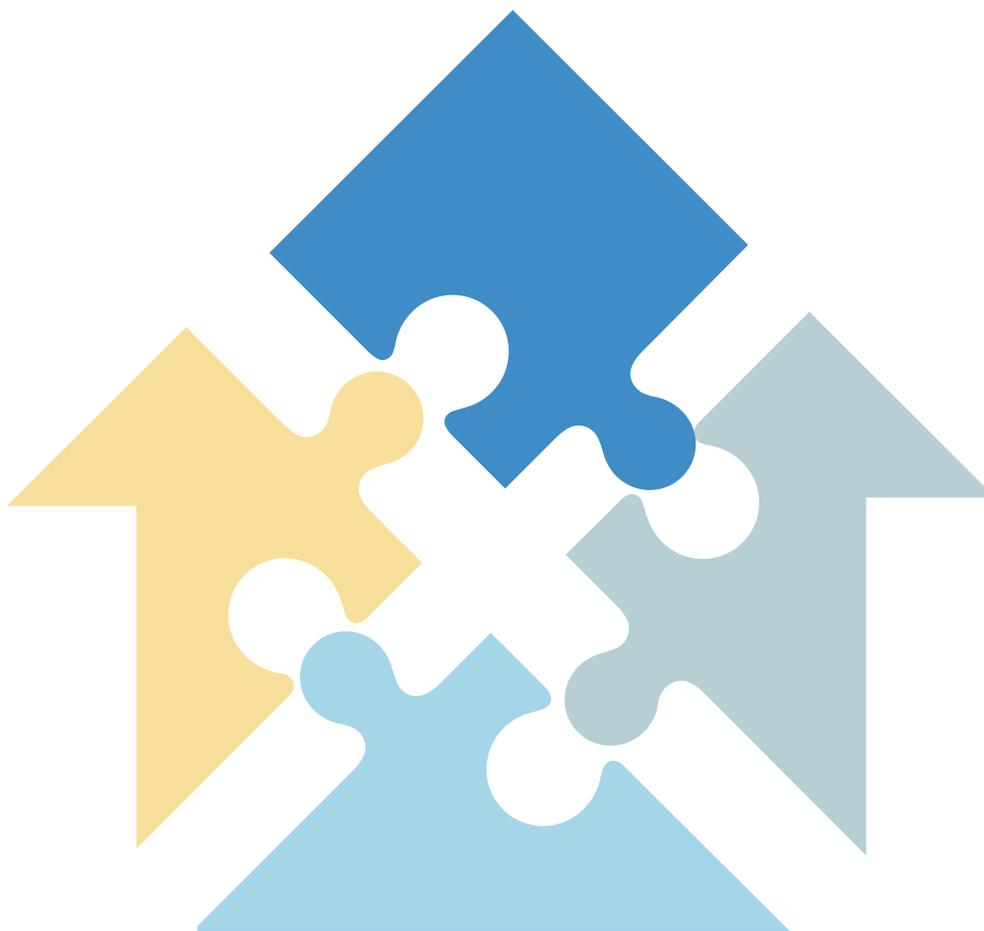
**HOUSING AND SUPPORTS USING A HOUSING FIRST APPROACH** Since the original Plan was prepared, Lambton County has implemented affordability assistance along with Intensive Case Management to assist individuals coping with mental health issues and addictions obtain stable housing and has added transitional housing for youth. More housing and supports of a variety of forms, including rapid re-housing, Intensive Case Management, Assertive Community Treatment, and Permanent Supportive Housing, are needed have adequate capacity in our housing and support system to address the needs of all those who are experiencing homelessness.

**SYSTEM INTEGRATION** There is currently some integration between the homeless service system and other service systems in Lambton County, (such as health, justice, child welfare and domestic violence), but the community should work

to establish additional mechanisms that coordinate and connect homelessness programs, services and resources with these other systems. Effective discharge planning processes should be a priority.

### **COORDINATED ACCESS**

**COORDINATED ACCESS** A Coordinated Access process for people experiencing homelessness is needed in Lambton County to streamline access and referrals to appropriate housing and supports for people experiencing homelessness. A Coordinated Access process would allow the community to understand how many people are experiencing homelessness, what their needs are, and what forms of housing and supports are required to end homelessness. As part of the Coordinated Access process, a common assessment tool should be adopted by all providers. A By-Name List of all people experiencing homelessness in the community should be created and maintained. The Coordinated Access process should include a joint prioritization, matching and referral process. An information management system should be established to collect and share information across the system.



# THE PLAN

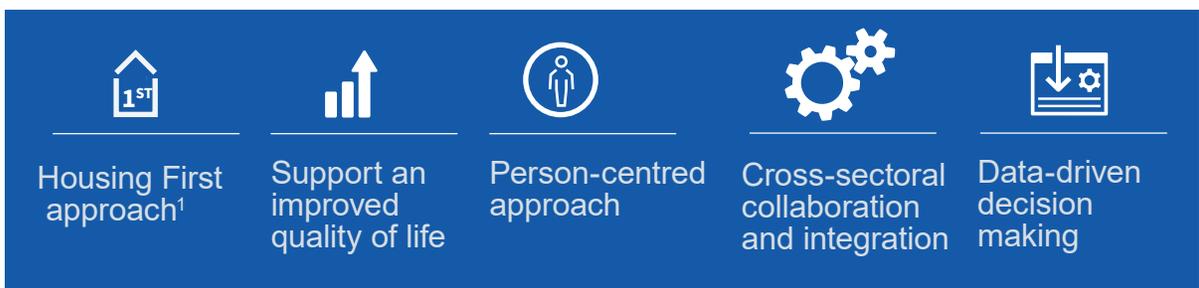
After extensive community consultations and a study of best practices, the updated Plan (2020 – 2024) outlines a new vision, guiding principles, goals, objectives and targets that meet the needs of our community.

## *VISION*

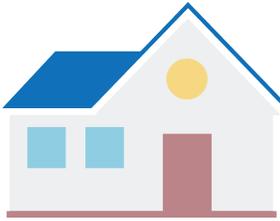
***EVERY PERSON HAS AN AFFORDABLE, SUITABLE AND ADEQUATE HOME.***

## *GUIDING PRINCIPLES*

The following principles will guide the implementation of the Plan:



<sup>1</sup> Housing First as an approach emphasizes that everyone has the right to safe, secure and stable housing without any preconditions of readiness, with access to supports needed to maintain it.



# **GOAL 1**

## **INCREASE AND SUSTAIN SUPPLY AND APPROPRIATE MIX OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

### **OUTCOMES AND KEY TARGETS:**

#### **INCREASED AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, RENTAL HOUSING, INCLUDING NON-PROFIT, CO-OP AND MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE RENTAL**

- » By 2024, 75 additional 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
- » Between 2020 and 2024, there will be an increase in the number of affordable units created as a percent of total units created
- » Non-Profit Social housing providers will enter into/continue partnerships with the County to continue to provide RGI units at the end of their operating agreement/mortgage

#### **GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO GENERATE MORE MIXED-INCOME BUILDINGS**

- » Increased partnerships between non-profits or municipalities with for-profit organizations in the creation of affordable housing
- » A least one mixed-income building will be created by 2024

#### **IMPROVED SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM**

- » All social housing buildings will be maintained in a fair state of repair
- » By 2022, a rationalization analysis and regeneration plan will be developed for the social housing portfolio

## ACTIONS

### **OUTCOME: INCREASED AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, RENTAL HOUSING, INCLUDING NON-PROFIT, CO-OP AND MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE RENTAL**

#### **1. LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO STRATEGICALLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING UNITS, INCLUDING ACCESSIBLE UNITS**

The costs associated with the development of affordable housing are substantial. Government funding is often required to build new affordable rental housing units. Our community will leverage funding from federal and provincial governments to support our efforts to increase the number of affordable rental housing units.

#### **2. SUPPORT LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES TO ESTABLISH SUPPORTIVE LAND USE REGULATIONS AND INCENTIVES TO REDUCE BARRIERS AND INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

A concerted effort is required on the part of all levels of government to reduce barriers and support the creation of affordable housing. The County's new Official Plan has provided a framework to support the creation of affordable housing across the County. At the local municipal level, there are opportunities for municipalities to strengthen their land use policies and provide incentives to support the creation of affordable housing. Policies that should be considered include:

- » Expedited development approvals for affordable housing
- » Reduced parking requirements for affordable housing
- » Flexible development standards for affordable housing
- » Pre-zoning for a broad mix of housing
- » Inclusionary zoning
- » Progressive zoning standards for second units
- » Permissions to sever surplus housing stock.

Local municipalities should also consider financial incentives, such as:

- » Development charge and municipal fee waivers
- » Property tax reductions/deferrals.

These could be implemented either through or outside of Community Improvement Plans for affordable housing. The County of Lambton will provide local municipalities with information and support to establish affordable housing policies and incentives. It will also continue to have discussions with developers regarding barriers to affordable housing development.

#### **3. SUPPORT LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES TO CREATE SUPPORTIVE POLICY ENVIRONMENTS FOR SHARED AND SUPPORTIVE ACCOMMODATION**

Affordable housing can take many forms, including rooming or lodging houses, boarding

houses, group homes, supportive housing, and institutional care homes. Zoning by-laws that restrict these forms of development in certain areas while allowing other housing of a similar scale can unintentionally limit the housing available to lower income individuals. The County will work with local municipalities to create more supportive policy environments for shared and supportive housing.

#### **4. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO USE SURPLUS COUNTY LAND FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Existing land owned by all levels of government and non-profit organizations can be a key resource to support the creation of affordable housing. Surplus properties owned by provincial and federal government agencies, boards and corporations must be purchased at fair-market value. The County has an opportunity to purchase these properties when they become available before they are offered for sale publicly, and “ear-mark” them for affordable housing. The County should consider purchasing some of these properties and later selling them, possibly at a discounted value, to non-profit or private sector developers to create affordable housing.

There is a need for the County to pre-plan for these opportunities so that it positions itself to secure these properties when they are deemed as surplus. The County will proactively engage with local provincial and federal government agencies, boards and corporations to identify properties that may be deemed surplus, investigate their potential for use for affordable housing, and plan to acquire these properties.

Non-profit groups, including faith-based organizations often have extra land that may be suitable for affordable housing. The County of Lambton will reach out to non-profit groups through information sessions and direct connections to explore opportunities to partner in the development of affordable housing. The County will also make information materials and contacts for further information easily accessible on its website so that interested groups can contact them.

#### **5. PROMOTE SECOND UNITS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING**

Second units are residential units located on a property with another dwelling unit and are one way to increase the supply of affordable housing. They may also be more viable than creating new purpose-built rental housing. The County will prepare education materials in partnership with lower tier municipalities on secondary units, both related to the addition of second units to existing properties and to promote the development of new ‘second suite-ready housing’.

#### **6. DEVELOP NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON PROFIT HOUSING PROVIDERS TO CONTINUE TO CONTRACT THEM TO PROVIDE RGI UNITS AT THE END OF THEIR OPERATING AGREEMENT/MORTGAGE**

Most social housing providers are reaching the end of their original program obligations and/or mortgage. Providers that were entirely funded by the federal government will no longer receive federal funding and their obligations to provide subsidized housing conclude. Providers that were either partially or entirely funded by the province must continue to provide rent geared-to-income housing after their original mortgage matures and they will continue to receive a subsidy, until they are actively removed from the

*Housing Services Act* (at the Minister's discretion). The County will develop new partnerships with social housing providers to support them in continuing to provide RGI units at the end of their agreement/mortgage.

## **7. SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING BY PROVIDING INFORMATION AND FACILITATION SERVICES**

The County of Lambton will promote affordable housing development by preparing educational materials and engaging in targeted educational outreach about affordable housing development. The education materials will cover information about funding and incentive programs and contacts for information and support. Outreach activities will include posting information on the County's website and communicating through social media. The County will also support new affordable rental housing by helping to facilitate affordable housing developments, including exploring potential partnerships, supporting organizations to navigate the application process, and providing and referring interested organizations to available tools and resources.

### **OUTCOME: GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO GENERATE MORE MIXED-INCOME BUILDINGS**

## **8. LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING AIMED AT COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN PRIVATE SECTOR AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO CREATE AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING.**

Affordable housing development in Lambton County has historically been undertaken by Non-Profit Housing Providers and private sector companies in isolation. Partnerships between non-profit housing providers and private developers provide an opportunity to create more new affordable housing and develop existing social housing. There are benefits of combining the assets and expertise of non-profit and for-profit organizations. Provincial and federal governments are also looking to expand these partnerships. Recent funding announcements aim to support greater collaboration between government, non-profit and private sector organizations. Lambton County should take advantage of available funding aimed at collaborations to support the creation of affordable housing.

## **9. SUPPORT AND PROMOTE NON-PROFIT/PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATIONS**

The County of Lambton has a role to play in the development of new partnerships between non-profit and private sector organizations. The County will support and promote non-profit private sector collaborations by sharing information about how partnerships have been structured in other communities with non-profit and private sector organizations that may be interested in partnerships. It will also help facilitate collaborations between organizations and will act as an advocate for collaborative housing developments.

## **OUTCOME: IMPROVED SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM**

### **10. LEVERAGE FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL FUNDING TO REPAIR EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS, AND RENOVATE TO SUPPORT ACCESSIBILITY.**

One of the key issues facing social housing is the risk of “losing” units as a result of the poor state of its repair. In order to make progress in addressing the affordable rental housing need, our community must ensure there is no net loss of existing social housing units. To help keep social housing units in a state of good repair, federal and provincial investments will be leveraged to support renovations and repairs to this housing.

### **11. SUPPORT SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDERS IN STRENGTHENING THEIR CAPACITY TO MAINTAIN SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR HOUSING.**

Overseeing social housing portfolios and planning for the future of these portfolios can be complex. Some non-profit housing provider boards would benefit from additional supports to strengthen their capacity around governance, board and staff succession planning, capital planning and tenant management. The County of Lambton will support social housing providers in these areas by providing tools and resources and leveraging existing supports available to the sector.

### **12. PREPARE A RATIONALIZATION ANALYSIS AND REGENERATION PLAN FOR THE SOCIAL HOUSING PORTFOLIO AND LEVERAGE THE EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING PORTFOLIO TO CREATE NEW AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING AND MIXED INCOME BUILDINGS**

As social housing buildings age and their agreements/mortgages expire, social housing providers need to look at their ongoing viability, review their options, and develop plans for moving forward. Some social housing providers may wish to consider retrofitting, selling or redeveloping some of the units or buildings. Regeneration and redevelopment are complex. The County of Lambton will support social housing providers in planning for the future by preparing a portfolio-wide rationalization analysis and regeneration plan. This will help inform opportunities to leverage the existing social housing portfolio to create new affordable rental housing and mixed income buildings.



## **GOAL 2**

# **INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SUPPORTS THAT MEET INDIVIDUAL NEEDS TO ACHIEVE HOUSING STABILITY**

### **OUTCOMES AND KEY TARGETS:**

#### **MORE HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE**

- » By 2024, 350 more households will be in receipt of affordability assistance<sup>19</sup>

#### **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SUPPORTS**

- » By 2024, more than 20 affordable rental housing units owned and/or operated by Indigenous communities and organizations will be created and supports will be expanded

#### **YOUTH HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- » By 2024, an additional 80 youth will be in receipt of affordable housing appropriate to their needs (subset of above<sup>20</sup>)

#### **SENIORS ARE ABLE TO ACCESS HOUSING THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO THEIR CHANGING NEEDS**

- » The County will engage in promotional activities related to seniors housing options

#### **MORE HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SUPPORTS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

- » By 2024, 130 additional households will be in receipt of affordability assistance with housing-related supports (not including homeless specific targets discussed in Goal 3)
- » Between 2020 and 2024, more people will be receiving supports and their tenancy will be retained

#### **PEOPLE LIVE IN WELL-MAINTAINED HOUSING**

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

**PEOPLE ARE BETTER ABLE TO ACCESS AFFORDABLE OWNERSHIP HOUSING**

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

**LANDLORDS AND TENANTS ARE BETTER CONNECTED AND SUPPORTED TO MAINTAIN SUCCESSFUL TENANCIES**

- » Facilitated connections between landlords and tenants will result in 150 long-term housing placements by 2024



## ACTIONS

### **OUTCOME: MORE HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE**

#### **1. LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING PORTABLE HOUSING BENEFITS**

Increasing the number of households receiving affordability assistance is a key method of increasing access to affordable housing. Our community will leverage federal and provincial funding to help increase the number of households receiving affordability assistance. This assistance may take many forms, including rent supplement agreements with private landlords, and housing allowances or portable housing benefits paid directly to the resident. The proposed Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit will be one of the key sources of funding to increase the number of households receiving assistance.

#### **2. SUPPORT THE POVERTY ROUNDTABLE'S EFFORTS TO ADOPT A LIVING WAGE CONCEPT IN LAMBTON COUNTY AND ADVOCATE FOR INCREASES TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE LEVELS TO ALIGN WITH MARKET RENTS**

There is a mismatch between market rents and the rent levels that are affordable to minimum wage earners and social assistance recipients. Our community has begun a process of determining and encouraging the adoption of a living wage in Lambton County. The Poverty Roundtable is leading this work. As a community, we will support the Poverty Roundtable's efforts to adopt a living wage concept in Lambton County. We will also support efforts to advocate for increases to social assistance levels to align with market rents.

### **OUTCOME: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SUPPORTS**

#### **3. WORK WITH THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY TO BUILD TRUST AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**

Indigenous households are more likely to live in core housing need and experience homelessness than non-Indigenous members of our community. Reasons for this can be traced back to historical trauma, oppression, racism and discrimination. As part of reconciliation efforts, our community needs to recognize and begin to address these disparities. The first step in this process will be to work with the Indigenous community to build trust and working relationships. This will include engaging in frequent interactions and communications and becoming involved in each other's community projects or activities.

#### **4. SUPPORT INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND EXPAND SUPPORTS FOR THOSE LIVING OFF RESERVE**

The County of Lambton has partnered with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services Corporation to develop 20 affordable rental housing units for Indigenous peoples. Construction for this development is anticipated to begin in 2020. Our community will continue to explore opportunities to support Indigenous communities and organizations in developing affordable housing and expanding supports.

#### **OUTCOME: YOUTH HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

#### **5. INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR AND ACCESSIBLE TO YOUTH**

Youth face distinct challenges in finding and maintaining housing. Youth may experience additional barriers accessing housing in the private rental market due to their inability to sign a lease under the age of 18 and a lack of rental history. Head leases, where the service provider holds the lease and sublets to the client, or convertible leases, where a service provider holds the lease in its own name at first, but the youth takes over after a period of time, are a couple of the approaches that can be used to help youth access housing in the private market. Other forms of housing appropriate for youth, discussed further under Goal 3, include transitional housing, Housing First For Youth and permanent supportive housing. Our community will continue to review and increase access to affordable housing options appropriate for youth.

#### **OUTCOME: SENIORS ARE ABLE TO ACCESS HOUSING THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO THEIR CHANGING NEEDS**

#### **6. ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS TO MEET THE HOUSING NEEDS OF SENIORS**

Seniors are a fast growing population in our community, and as individuals age their needs and capabilities change, and they may require different housing. Our community will continue to work towards encouraging and promoting a range of housing options appropriate to meet the housing needs of seniors. This may include seniors 'right-sizing' their homes, home modifications, active lifestyle accommodation, shared home ownership with supports, homeshare, Abbeyfield houses, life lease housing, caregiver support in the home, supportive housing, or retirement residences.

#### **OUTCOME: MORE HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE AND ASSOCIATED SUPPORTS (I.E. SUPPORTIVE HOUSING)**

#### **7. ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT INCREASES IN THE AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

Expanded supportive housing options for a range of population groups are urgently needed in Lambton County. This includes supportive housing for people with mental health issues, problematic substance use, acquired brain injury and developmental disabilities. The County of Lambton will encourage and support increase in supportive housing by working with Ontario Health Teams and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) funded agencies to coordinate the funding it administers for housing with health and children, community and social services funded supports.

## **OUTCOME: PEOPLE LIVE IN WELL-MAINTAINED HOUSING**

### **8. LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS TO RENOVATE AND REPAIR THEIR HOMES**

Some low income homeowners want to continue living where they are, but may require assistance to address repair needs or adapt the home because of a mobility limitation. The County of Lambton will continue to leverage federal and provincial funding to provide financial assistance to low income households to renovate and repair their homes to address or prevent their housing from going into disrepair and help improve energy-efficiency or accessibility. Some homeowners who have participated in Lambton's Home Renovation Program have struggled to arrange and manage the renovations they have received financial assistance for. The County of Lambton will explore opportunities to help facilitate the renovations in these situations.

## **OUTCOME: PEOPLE ARE BETTER ABLE TO ACCESS AFFORDABLE OWNERSHIP HOUSING**

### **9. LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO PROVIDE DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE TO LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS TO ALLOW THEM ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE OWNERSHIP**

Homeownership is out of reach of many households because saving for a down payment is often too difficult. Lambton's Homeownership Down Payment Assistance program offers financial assistance to help households living in rental accommodations purchase a home. The County of Lambton will continue to leverage federal and provincial funding to provide downpayment assistance to low income households to allow them access to affordable ownership housing.

### **10. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO ALLOW MORE LOW INCOME TENANTS TO ACCESS AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP**

Some low-income tenants may not be accessing affordable homeownership programs because they are not aware of options to receive assistance with purchasing a home, or they have been unable to obtain a mortgage after being pre-approved for a homeownership program. Homeownership education can help support low income tenants assess their options of renting versus owning and make decisions. The County of Lambton will explore opportunities to promote homeownership programs to market rent tenants and provide homeownership education to help more low-income tenants learn about and assess their options. The County will also explore opportunities to work with local credit unions to increase access to mortgages for low income households interested in homeownership.

## **OUTCOME: LANDLORDS AND TENANTS ARE BETTER CONNECTED AND SUPPORTED TO MAINTAIN SUCCESSFUL TENANCIES**

### **11. PROVIDE LANDLORD AND TENANT EDUCATION TO SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL TENANCIES**

Educating landlords and tenants is a proactive way to increase housing stability and prevent homelessness. Education should include information on landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities, tenancy and human rights laws, effective communication, maintenance, safety, and community resources and supports. RentSmart training is one option for providing both tenants and landlords with education aimed at increasing housing stability. A landlord association could also be established as a means of providing education to landlords. Our community will explore and implement various forms of landlord and tenant education to support successful tenancies.

### **12. FACILITATE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN LANDLORDS AND TENANTS**

The success of affordability assistance initiatives and Housing First programs for people who have experienced homelessness depend on the availability of rental housing for participants to live in. Private landlords are critical to providing this housing. An important component of many affordability assistance and Housing First programs is building and maintaining strong relationships with landlords who are willing to rent to program participants.

As part of the efforts to recruit landlords to rent to households receiving affordability assistance, the County of Lambton, along with community partners, will continue to explore potential partners and resources that can be leveraged to build and support the maintenance of these relationships. A coordinated approach to landlord engagement can be beneficial, as it can be confusing for landlords to work with multiple programs and contacts at the same time.

Financial resources are another important component of the landlord engagement strategy. The County of Lambton will continue to review potential financial incentives, such as guaranteed rent, flexible dollars, a mitigation fund to cover damages, unpaid rent, and short-term vacancy reimbursement. The County will also explore opportunities to use alternative lease arrangements to standard leases, such as a head lease, where the County or a non-profit organization holds legal title to a rental unit and subleases it to program participants, or a holding agreement, which reserves a rental unit exclusively for use of the program while still maintaining a standard lease agreement with the tenant.



## **GOAL 3**

# **COORDINATED HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICE SYSTEM**

### **OUTCOMES AND KEY TARGETS:**

#### **IMPROVED SYSTEM CAPACITY, COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION TO BETTER IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS**

- » By 2021, a Coordinated Access process for housing and supports will be implemented
- » By 2022, 100% of homelessness programs funded by the County will be revised to align with best practices and outcomes and actions of the Plan
- » By 2023, a coordinated approach will be made by all system funders to align housing and homelessness investments with the Plan.



## ACTIONS

### **OUTCOME: IMPLEMENT A COORDINATED ACCESS PROCESS FOR HOMELESSNESS SERVICES**

#### **1. IMPLEMENT A COORDINATED ACCESS PROCESS FOR HOMELESSNESS SERVICES AND EXPAND TO INCLUDE ACCESS TO OTHER HOUSING AND SUPPORTS, SUCH AS SOCIAL AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING. THIS WILL INCLUDE:**

- » Coordinated intake/access points to emergency accommodation, other crisis services and housing and supports, including 24-hour access to intake, and access/outreach for those not accessing emergency shelter
- » A standardized assessment tool to consistently identify individual needs
- » A By-Name List of everyone known to be experiencing homelessness in the community
- » A joint prioritization, matching and referral process to housing and supports
- » A data sharing and performance measurement process, including the implementation of a homelessness information management system, such as HIFIS 4.0
- » Establishing a Coordinated Access Committee to define and guide coordinated Access

Coordinated Access is an essential component of effective housing and homelessness service systems. Coordinated Access streamlines the process for people to access housing and support services. More information on key components of effective Coordinated Access processes is provided in the Best Practices section. Lambton County should begin by establishing a Coordinated Access process for housing and supports serving people experiencing homelessness and then explore opportunities to expand it to include access to other housing and supports, such as social housing and supportive housing.

### **OUTCOME: IMPROVED SYSTEM CAPACITY, COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION TO BETTER IDENTIFY AND RESPOND TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS**

#### **2. REFINE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION (RENT/UTILITY ARREARS) FUNDING MODEL TO STREAMLINE ACCESS, REMOVE DUPLICATION, BETTER TARGET AND PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE FOR PEOPLE AT IMMINENT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS**

Currently, households seeking assistance with rent or utility arrears may be required to visit several service providers to access funding. In addition, there is no data sharing protocols or program criteria that ensures households are not able to receive assistance from multiple service providers. There is also limited targeting and assessment to ensure that the funding is provided to households with the highest risk of homelessness. The County of Lambton will work with its community partners to refine the program model for rent/utility arrears funding. The updated model will streamline access and remove duplication between services. It will better target people at imminent risk of

homelessness by using a prevention assessment tool and aligning the program eligibility criteria with the profile of those known to be experiencing homelessness. The County will also explore opportunities to incorporate follow-ups into the program. The program should use the same homelessness information management system, such as HIFIS 4, as the other homelessness services funded by the County and/or participating in Coordinated Access.

### **3. DETERMINE OPPORTUNITIES TO INTEGRATE EXISTING ROLES WITH THE COORDINATED ACCESS PROCESS AND THE RAPID-REHOUSING PROGRAM**

Existing resources should be leveraged to help implement the actions in the Plan. Two resources that should be considered to support actions of the Plan are the Community Support Workers and the Connectors. Connectors should become integrated with the Community Access process. Opportunities for Community Support Workers to play a role in access or rapid re-housing should also be considered.

### **4. INCREASE COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICE SYSTEM AND OTHER SYSTEMS**

The community will work to increase collaboration and partnerships to help ensure appropriate supports are available for people at the right time and in the right place. The community will formalize existing partnerships and seek to build on these. One key sector the community will work to strengthen partnerships with is the health sector, and in particular, Bluewater Health.

### **5. REVIEW PROGRAMS THAT ARE HOUSING AND/OR SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS THAT SHOULD BE SERVED BY OTHER PROVINCIAL MINISTRIES**

Some of the funding and programs administered by the County of Lambton are being used to house and support people that fall under other provincial government mandates rather than the housing and homelessness mandates of the Service System Manager. Given the limited resources available to prevent and address homelessness, the County of Lambton will review its programs to determine populations being served and their support needs. Based on the reviews, the County will advocate for funding from other ministries to support these populations and develop plans to move away from using homelessness funding for these services, while ensuring appropriate housing for existing clients.

### **6. CONTINUE TO ENGAGE THE ONTARIO HEALTH TEAMS IN DISCUSSIONS TO IDENTIFY SERVICE COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Ontario Health Teams are being introduced to provide a new way of organizing and delivering care that is more connected to patients in their local communities. Under Ontario Health Teams, health care providers (including hospitals, doctors, home and community care providers) will work as one coordinated team. The County of Lambton and its community partners in housing and homelessness will engage the Ontario Health Teams in discussion to identify service collaboration opportunities, including those related to in-home supports for seniors and persons with mental health and substance use issues.

## **7. ESTABLISH A CROSS-SECTORAL DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK TO EVALUATE PROGRESS RELATED TO EACH TARGET OUTLINED IN THE PLAN**

Achieving our goals will require cross-sectoral collaborative action and integration of programs, services and sectors. As the Plan moves into implementation, the County of Lambton will work with community partners and stakeholders to define commitments, accountabilities, and actions required to achieve our goals as well as data collection and reporting requirements to evaluate progress. All program investments will be based on data and other evidence.

## **8. DEVELOP A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND ORGANIZE JOINT TRAINING BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDERS**

To continue to increase service capacity in the housing and homelessness system, the County of Lambton, in collaboration with community partners, will prepare a professional development agenda for the community and, along with partners, organize joint training between service providers in Lambton. Some of the areas for training and knowledge exchange are anticipated to include trauma informed care; Indigenous poverty, homelessness and history of colonial oppression; customer service; existing services in the community; and Coordinated Access, including the community's chosen standardized assessment tool.



# GOAL 4

## ENDING HOMELESSNESS

### OUTCOMES AND KEY TARGETS:

#### EXPANDED PREVENTION AND DIVERSION MEASURES TO BETTER SUPPORT PEOPLE TO REMAIN HOUSED

- » By 2021, a diversion approach will be implemented within all emergency accommodations
- » By 2023, a cross-sectoral protocol to coordinate discharge planning will be implemented
- » By 2024, 80% of people experiencing homelessness leaving institutions will be discharged into appropriate housing

#### PEOPLE IN EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS ARE SUPPORTED TO SECURE PERMANENT HOUSING

- » 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 within 21 days from the time they presented for emergency services

#### MORE PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS WILL RECEIVE AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE AND HOUSING-RELATED SUPPORTS

- » By 2024, Lambton will have reduced chronic and episodic homelessness by 50%
- » By 2025, Lambton will achieve functional zero chronic homelessness
- » By 2024, 160 households that were previously homeless will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports<sup>21</sup>. The targeted breakdown is as follows:
  - » 5 permanent supportive housing spaces for individuals with high acuity
  - » 5 Assertive Community Treatment spaces for individuals with high acuity
  - » 60 permanent and 60 time-limited Intensive Case Management spaces for individuals with high acuity
  - » 30 rapid re-housing spaces for individuals with mid acuity
- » By 2024, 45 youth will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (subset of above target<sup>22</sup>)
- » Between 2020 and 2024, the wait-time from application to receipt of housing and supports and/or services for individuals who have experienced homelessness will decrease
- » 85% of households that were previously homeless will not experience a loss of housing or an involuntary move

## WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY ENDING HOMELESSNESS?

### IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE?

The goal of ending homelessness is often disputed by those who say some level of homelessness has always been with us. Yet when setting this goal, it does not mean that there will never be people in crisis who need emergency housing. There will continue to be people who must leave home because of family conflict and violence, eviction or other emergencies, as well as those who simply face challenges in making the transition to independent living, so there will always be a need for some form of emergency housing services. Ending homelessness means something different – it means eliminating a broad social problem that traps people in an ongoing state of homelessness (chronic homelessness) and recurring homelessness (episodic homelessness).

The Canadian Definition of Homelessness argues:

“[The] problem of homelessness and housing exclusion refers to the failure of society to ensure that adequate systems, funding and support are in place so that all people, even in crisis situations, have access to housing. The goal of ending homelessness is to ensure housing stability, which means people have a fixed address and housing that is appropriate (affordable, safe, adequately maintained, accessible and suitable in size), and includes required services as needed (supportive), in addition to income and supports.”

Ending homelessness means doing things differently, and not simply managing the problem through emergency services and supports. When people come to depend on emergency services without access to permanent housing and necessary supports, this leads to declining health and well-being, and an uncertain future. An alternative is to look at approaches that emphasize prevention and/or interventions that lead to appropriate housing options with supports. Ending homelessness means that no one should be in this emergency situation for any longer than a few weeks.

This is an ambitious goal, but our community believes it can be achieved. Not today or even in the next couple of years, but it is achievable. It is going to take an enormous amount of work; a shift in the way our community has been approaching this issue and dealing with those experiencing homelessness. It is going to take systems thinking and the development of an integrated, co-ordinated approach to the issues by everyone involved in the delivery of services to those at risk of becoming homeless in our community. This Plan provides a road map to help us get there.

## WHAT IS FUNCTIONAL ZERO?

The Plan uses the concept of “functional zero” as the measurement for ending homelessness. Functional Zero is when we reach a state where we have more capacity in our housing and support system than we have people who are experiencing homelessness. It means that we have a system in place to ensure that homelessness is prevented whenever possible, and that experiences of homelessness are rare, brief, and nonrecurring. A community will have achieved functional zero when it has three or less people experiencing chronic homelessness in a month, sustained over six months.



## ACTIONS

### **OUTCOME: EXPANDED PREVENTION AND DIVERSION MEASURES TO BETTER SUPPORT PEOPLE TO REMAIN HOUSED**

#### **1. ESTABLISH SHELTER DIVERSION SERVICES**

Given limited resources to respond to emergency housing crises, shelter beds, like other homelessness resources, should be prioritized for those most in need. In addition, shelters should not be the only pathway to access the services needed to exit homelessness. To this end, our community will implement shelter diversion services into our emergency accommodations and throughout our homeless-servicing system so that our community can help residents maintain and regain housing without having to access emergency shelter services. This will involve using standardized questions and assistance with problem-solving to determine whether an individual or family seeking homelessness assistance can be safely stabilized in their current situation or alternative housing arrangements can be immediately identified to address their housing situation without entering emergency shelter.

#### **2. ESTABLISH DISCHARGE PLANNING PROTOCOLS WITH OTHER SYSTEMS SUCH AS HEALTH, JUSTICE, AND CHILD WELFARE AND SUPPORTS FOR THOSE TRANSITIONING FROM THESE SYSTEMS**

Many people experiencing homelessness have been discharged from institutional facilities such as hospitals, correctional facilities, child welfare facilities, and mental health and addiction treatment facilities. These systems did not adequately plan for their release, including ensuring housing arrangements and other services so that they did not become homeless. Our community will work with the health, justice and child welfare systems to establish discharge planning protocols to identify appropriate housing prior to discharge and prevent these individuals from becoming homeless.

#### **3. STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT THE HOUSING STABILITY OF PEOPLE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS**

Efforts to end homelessness will not succeed without having an effective response system that prevents homelessness where possible. A range of interventions are required to prevent homelessness. These include rental assistance, landlord mediation, and legal support. These also include other services to support people to stabilize their housing, such as life skills supports and mental health and addiction services.

A wide range of agencies and all levels of government can contribute to the prevention of homelessness. We will strengthen partnerships to support the housing stability of people at risk of homelessness. This will include solutions that are targeted to meet the unique needs of different population groups, including youth, Indigenous Peoples, and the LGBTQI2S community.

#### **4. CONTINUE TO PROVIDE HOUSING NAVIGATION SERVICES TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN ACCESSING SERVICES AND SUPPORTS IN THE COMMUNITY**

Navigating the many resources to find housing, financial assistance, health care and other support services can be difficult without help. There is a need to continue to link individuals and families with resources offered and needed services. Housing navigation services should link with any coordinated access systems to homelessness services established in the community, and should also support access to different services as required, such as primary care, developmental services, and financial assistance.

#### **OUTCOME: PEOPLE IN EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS ARE SUPPORTED TO SECURE PERMANENT HOUSING**

#### **5. TRANSITION SHELTER HOUSING TO HAVE A STRONG HOUSING-FOCUS AND ESTABLISH SUPPORTS TO ASSIST CLIENTS ACCESSING EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION TO GAIN HOUSING**

Shelters and transitional housing can play a key role in the community's efforts to end homelessness by ensuring that anyone experiencing homelessness, who cannot be safely diverted from shelter, can access shelter without prerequisites, and by focusing on long-term housing with clients from the time of entry all the way to becoming permanently housed. We will transition our shelters to be low barrier, which involves accommodating people regardless of substance use, criminal history, or other perceived barriers to entry, like previous non-compliance with a housing plan. We will also ensure our shelters are focused on housing by having practices to intentionally link clients to permanent housing resources and re-house clients as quickly as possible.

#### **OUTCOME: MORE PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS WILL RECEIVE AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE AND HOUSING-RELATED SUPPORTS**

#### **6. USING A HOUSING FIRST APPROACH, EXPAND HOUSING AND SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS**

Different housing interventions are appropriate for households with different levels of need. While a rapid-rehousing program providing affordability assistance and short-term case management supports may be appropriate for individuals with mid-acuity, Intensive Case Management is more appropriate for mid to high acuity clients with complex needs. Those with very high acuity complex mental health, addiction issues, and often physical health challenges require Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs or Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) to permanently end their homelessness. Our community will work to increase these housing solutions in Lambton County.

#### **7. REALLOCATE SOME OF THE PROVINCIAL COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION INITIATIVE FUNDING TO ESTABLISH A RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM**

The County of Lambton will explore opportunities to reallocate some of the provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding to establish a rapid re-housing program aimed at providing short-term case management supports along with affordability assistance to people experiencing homelessness with mid-acuity.

## **8. REFINE OPERATIONAL MODELS OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR ADULTS TO BECOME INTEGRATED WITHIN PERMANENT HOUSING WITH TRANSITIONAL WRAP-AROUND SUPPORTS**

As part of a homeless-serving system focused on ending homelessness, transitional housing is most effective when it is integrated within permanent housing, and clients can stay as long as they choose, although supports may be provided on a transitional basis, rather than place-based facilities. This does not necessarily mean closing existing transitional housing facilities, but may mean modifying the role they play within the system, for example a transitional housing facility could become Permanent Supportive Housing.

## **9. ADVOCATE FOR AND LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO EXPAND AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE LINKED WITH INTENSIVE SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX NEEDS**

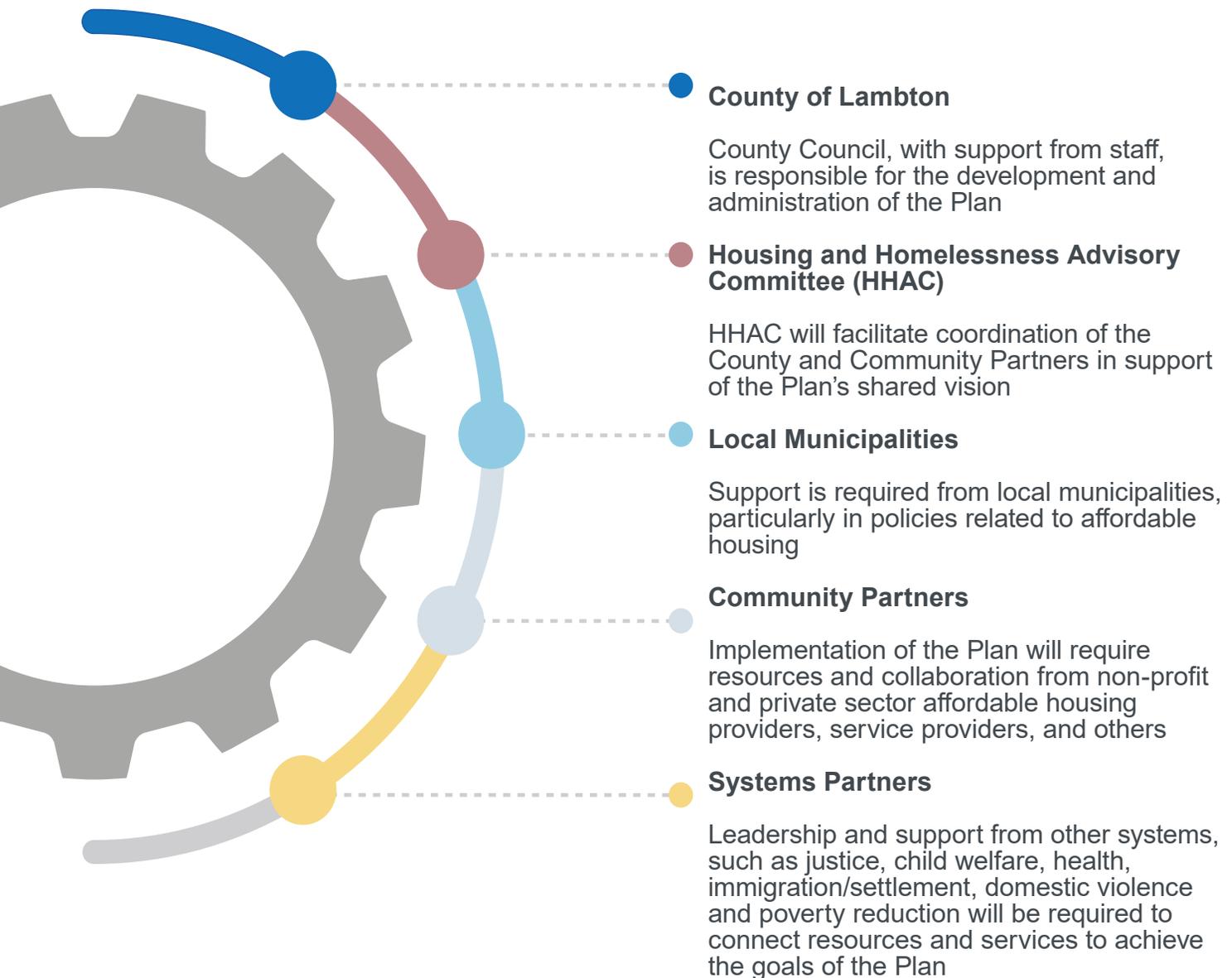
Ending homelessness in our community will require significant additional resources from a variety of sources for affordability assistance and supports for people experiencing homelessness, in particular for people with complex needs. Our community will advocate for additional resources, and leverage available federal and provincial funding, to expand affordability assistance linked with intensive supports for people with complex needs. This includes funding for scattered-site Intensive Case Management with affordability assistance and place-based Permanent Supportive Housing.

## **10. LEVERAGE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING TO EXPAND HOUSING AND SUPPORTS FOR PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

Certain population groups have higher levels of unmet housing needs and/or are overrepresented among the homeless population in our community. Youth aged 16-24, for example, comprised 28% of Lambton County's homeless population identified in our 2018 Homelessness Enumeration, whereas, nationally, youth represented 13% of those counted through Everyone Counts 2018, the second nationally coordinated Point-in-Time count of homelessness in Canadian communities. Indigenous Peoples and members of the LGBTQI2S community are also overrepresented among the homeless population. We need targeted efforts to address the unique needs of various population groups with unmet housing and support needs in our community. We will leverage federal and provincial funding to expand housing and supports to help house and stabilize individuals from the community's priority population groups.

# IMPLEMENTATION

Achieving the goals and outcomes of this Plan will require leadership, support, and collaborative action from a wide variety of stakeholders, including community partners, other governments and systems.



The following table outlines a work plan to implement the Plan, with recommended start and completion dates for each of the actions identified in the Plan.

ACTION	Implementation Start	Implementation Completion
<b>Goal 1: Increase and maintain supply and appropriate mix of affordable and adequate housing</b>		
Leverage federal and provincial funding to strategically increase the number of affordable rental housing units, including accessible units	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Support local municipalities to establish supportive land use regulations and incentives to reduce barriers and increase the supply of affordable housing	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
Support local municipalities to create supportive policy environments for shared and supportive accommodation	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
Explore opportunities to use surplus County land for affordable housing	Q2 2020	Initial Identification of land Q4 2020, Ongoing
Promote second units as an opportunity to expand affordable rental housing	Q3 2020	Q2 2021
Develop new partnerships with social housing providers to continue to contract them to provide RGI units at the end of their agreement/mortgage	2020	Ongoing
Support and promote the development of new affordable rental housing by providing information and facilitation services	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Leverage federal and provincial funding aimed at collaborations between private sector and community organizations to create affordable rental housing, such as the National Housing Strategy's "Co-Investment Fund"	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Support and promote non-profit – private sector collaborations by providing information, facilitation services, and acting as an advocate for collaborative housing developments	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Leverage federal, provincial and municipal funding to repair existing social housing units, and renovate to support accessibility, where feasible	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Support social housing providers in strengthening their capacity to maintain sustainability of their housing, including supports related to governance, succession planning, capital planning, and tenant management	Q3 2020	Ongoing

ACTION	Implementation Start	Implementation Completion
Prepare a rationalization analysis and regeneration plan for the social housing portfolio and leverage the existing social housing portfolio to create new affordable rental housing and mixed income buildings	Q2 2021	Q4 2021
<b>Goal 2: Increase access to affordable housing and supports that meet people's needs to achieve housing stability</b>		
Leverage federal and provincial funding to increase the number of households receiving affordability assistance, including portable housing benefits	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Support the Poverty Roundtable's efforts to adopt a living wage concept in Lambton County and advocate for increases to social assistance levels to align with market rents	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Work with the Indigenous community to build trust and working relationships	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Support Indigenous communities and organizations to develop affordable housing and expand supports for those living off reserve	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Increase affordable housing options appropriate for and accessible to youth	Q2 2021	Ongoing
Encourage and promote a range of housing options to meet the housing needs of seniors	Q1 2021	Ongoing
Encourage and support increases in the availability of supportive housing	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Leverage federal and provincial funding to provide financial assistance to low income households to renovate and repair their homes	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Leverage federal and provincial funding to provide downpayment assistance to low income households to allow them to access affordable ownership	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to allow more low income tenants to access affordable homeownership	Q2 2021	Q2 2022
Provide landlord and tenant education to support successful tenancies	Q2 2021	Q4 2021
Facilitate connections between landlords and tenants by engaging in landlord recruitment, housing placement services, landlord-tenant mediation, and relationship management with landlords	Q3 2020	Ongoing
<b>Goal 3: Coordinated housing and homelessness service system</b>		

ACTION	Implementation Start	Implementation Completion
Implement a coordinated access process for homelessness services and expand to include access to other housing and supports, such as social housing and supportive housing. This will include:	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
Developing a coordinated access model/planning framework	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
Coordinated intake/access points to emergency accommodation, other crisis services and housing and supports, including 24-hour access to intake, and access/outreach for those not accessing emergency shelter	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
A standardized assessment tool to consistently identify people's needs	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
A By-Name List of everyone known to be experiencing homelessness in the community	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
A joint prioritization, matching and referral process to housing and supports	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
A data sharing and performance measurement process, including the implementation of a homelessness information management system, such as HIFIS 4.0	Q2 2020	Q4 2022
Establishing a coordinated access committee	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
Refine homelessness prevention (rent/utility arrears) funding model to streamline access, remove duplication, better target and provide an effective response for people at imminent risk of homelessness, include follow-ups, improve data sharing and management	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
Determine opportunities for the Community Support Workers and Connectors to become integrated with the Coordinated Access process and the rapid-rehousing program	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
Increase collaboration and partnerships within and between the housing and homelessness service system and other systems	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Review programs that are housing and/or supporting people that should be served by other provincial ministries and develop plans to transition these services to other ministries and transition away from using homelessness funding for these services	Q2 2020	Q4 2020

ACTION	Implementation Start	Implementation Completion
Continue to engage the Ontario Health Teams in discussions to identify service collaboration opportunities, including those related to in-home supports for seniors and persons with mental health and substance use issues	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Establish a cross-sectoral data collection and reporting framework to evaluate progress related to each of the targets outlined in the Plan	Q2 2020	Q2 2020
Develop a professional development agenda and organize joint training between service providers, and coordinated access, including the chosen standardized assessment tool	Q3 2020	Professional Development Agenda complete: Q1 2021, Ongoing
<b>Goal 4: Ending homelessness</b>		
Establish shelter diversion services	Q2 2020	Q4 2020
Establish discharge planning protocols with other systems such as health, justice, and child welfare and supports for those transitioning from these systems	Q1 2021	Q1 2023
Strengthen partnerships to support the housing stability of people at risk of homelessness	Q3 2020	Ongoing
Continue to provide housing navigation services to support people in accessing services and supports in the community	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Transition shelters and transitional housing to have a strong housing-focus and establish supports to assist clients accessing emergency and transitional accommodation to gain housing	Q2 2020	Q2 2021
Using a Housing First approach, expand housing and supports for people who have experienced homelessness	Q3 2020	Ongoing
Reallocate some of the provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding to establish a rapid re-housing program	Q3 2020	Q2 2021
Refine operational models of transitional housing for adults to become integrated within permanent housing with transitional wrap-around supports, rather than place-based facilities	Q1 2022	Q4 2023
Advocate for and leverage federal and provincial funding to expand affordability assistance linked with intensive supports for people with complex needs	Q2 2020	Ongoing
Leverage federal and provincial funding to expand housing and supports for priority populations	Q2 2020	Ongoing

# PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOME MEASUREMENT PLAN

The following table outlines both the key targets and the other performance measures for the Plan. For each target/performance measure, it also outlines the indicators and data sources required for measuring and evaluating progress.

KEY TARGET OR PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
<b>Goal 1: Increase and maintain supply and appropriate mix of affordable and adequate housing</b>		
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	County of Lambton
Between 2020 and 2024, there will be an increase in the number of affordable units created as a percent of total unit units created	# of affordable rental and ownership units completed that meet the definition of affordable housing as a percent of total units completed (compare to 2020 as a baseline)	Local municipal building departments
Social housing providers will continue/enter into partnerships with the County to continue to provide RGI units at the end of their agreement/mortgage	# of partnerships between social housing providers and the County of Lambton to provide RGI units (post mortgage/agreement)	County of Lambton
Supportive planning and financial policies will be adopted by County and local municipal councils	# of supportive planning and financial policies approved by County and local municipal Councils	County of Lambton and local municipal planning departments
Vacant or government owned surplus properties secured for use for affordable housing	# of vacant or government owned surplus properties secured for affordable housing	County of Lambton

KEY TARGET OR PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Promotion materials developed for second units	Promotional materials for second units completed	County of Lambton and local municipal planning departments municipalities
Local municipalities will have adopted supportive planning policies for shared and supportive accommodation	# of local municipalities that approve supportive planning policies for shared and supportive accommodation	Local municipal planning departments
Educational materials prepared about affordable housing funding and incentive programs	Affordable housing funding and incentive program educational materials completed	County of Lambton
At least 2 meetings annually with non-profit organizations to explore opportunities to partner in the development of affordable housing	# of meetings between the County and non-profit organizations to explore opportunities to partner in the development of affordable housing	County of Lambton
Increased partnerships between non-profits or municipalities with for-profit organizations in the creation of affordable housing	# of partnerships between non-profits or municipalities with for-profit organizations in the creation of affordable housing (compared to baseline of 2020)	County of Lambton
A least one mixed-income building will be created by 2024	# of rental housing buildings completed with below average market rents and average market rent or higher	County of Lambton
All social housing buildings will be maintained in a fair state of repair	% of social housing buildings deemed in a "fair" state of repair as per building condition assessment	Social housing providers / County of Lambton
By 2022, tools and/or training will be provided to social housing providers related each of the following areas: governance, succession planning, capital planning, and tenant management	Tools and/or training provided to social housing providers on governance, succession planning, capital planning, and tenant management	County of Lambton
By 2022, a rationalization analysis and regeneration plan will be developed for the social housing portfolio	Rationalization analysis and regeneration plan for the social housing portfolio completed	County of Lambton

KEY TARGET OR PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
<b>Goal 2: Increase access to affordable housing and supports that meet people's needs to achieve housing stability</b>		
By 2024, 350 more households will be in receipt of affordability assistance	# of households in receipt of affordability assistance (RGI, rent supplement, housing allowance, portable housing benefit, Canada Housing Benefit, etc.) using new funding	County of Lambton
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	Indigenous communities and organizations / County of Lambton
Meetings with Indigenous communities and organizations will take place at least annually	# of meetings between County and Indigenous communities and organizations	County of Lambton
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	County of Lambton
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	County of Lambton, community partners providing supports
The County will engage in promotional activities related to seniors housing options at least annually	Promotional activities related to seniors housing options completed during the year	County of Lambton
By 2024, 130 more households will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (ie. supportive housing)	# of households in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (ie. supportive housing) compared to 2019	Supportive housing providers
Conversations with Ontario Health Teams and MCCSS funded agencies will take place at least annually	Conversations between the County and Ontario Health Teams and MCSS funded agencies completed during the year	County of Lambton
By 2024, an additional 100 low income homeownership units will be renovated/ repaired	# of low income homeowners that received funding for renovation/ repairs	County of Lambton
By 2024, an additional 30 households will be supported to purchase affordable ownership housing	# of households that received down payment assistance	County of Lambton

KEY TARGET OR PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
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	County of Lambton / landlord recruitment service provider
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	County of Lambton and community partners providing landlord and tenant education
<b>Goal 3: Coordinated housing and homelessness service system</b>		
By 2021, a coordinated access process for housing and supports will be implemented	Coordinated access process for housing and supports implemented	County of Lambton
By 2022, 100% of homelessness programs funded by the County will be revised to align with best practices and outcomes and actions of the Plan	# of homelessness programs funded by the County revised to align with best practices and outcomes and actions of the Plan	County of Lambton
By 2023, a coordinated approach will be made by all system funders to align housing and homelessness investments with the Plan	% of housing and homelessness investments from all system funders that align with the Plan	County of Lambton, Ontario Health Teams, and other system funders
A review of programs receiving funding for homelessness will be conducted by the end of 2020	Review of programs receiving funding for homelessness completed	County of Lambton
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	County of Lambton
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	County of Lambton
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	County of Lambton
A cross-sectoral data collection and reporting protocol will be established by 2021	Cross-sectoral data collection and reporting protocol established	County of Lambton and partners from other sectors

KEY TARGET OR PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
At least 4 training activities will take place for service providers annually	# of training activities for service providers during the year	County of Lambton and community partners
<b>Goal 4: Ending homelessness</b>		
By 2021, a diversion approach will be implemented within all emergency accommodations	Diversion approach implemented in all emergency accommodation	County of Lambton and community partners providing access to emergency accommod.
By 2023, a cross-sectoral protocol to coordinate discharge planning will be implemented	Cross-sectoral protocol to coordinate discharge planning implemented	County of Lambton and partners
By 2024, 80% of people experiencing homelessness leaving institutions will be discharged into appropriate housing	% of people experiencing homelessness leaving institutions not discharged to homelessness	Hospital, mental health and addictions facilities, correctional facilities, child welfare organizations
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	Emergency
By 2024, Lambton will have reduced chronic and episodic homelessness by 50%	# of people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness compared to baseline # of people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness on By-Name List (once established and community wide referrals to the list are established)	County of Lambton

KEY TARGET OR PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
By 2025, Lambton will achieve functional zero chronic homelessness	Number of people experiencing chronic homelessness (compared to three or fewer in a month, sustained over a six-month period)	County of Lambton
<p>By 2024, an additional 160 households that were previously homeless will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports. The targeted break-down is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 permanent supportive housing spaces for people with very high needs</li> <li>• 5 Assertive Community Treatment spaces for people with very high needs</li> <li>• 60 permanent and 60 time-limited Intensive Case Management spaces for people with high needs</li> <li>• 30 rapid re-housing spaces for people with moderate needs</li> </ul>	# 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)	County of Lambton
By 2024, an additional 45 youth will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (subset of above target)	# 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)	County of Lambton
Between 2020 and 2024, the wait-time from application to receipt of housing and/or services for people who have experienced homelessness will decrease	Average number of days from being added to the By-Name List to being housed (compared to baseline of when By-Name List is first established)	County of Lambton
85% of households that were previously homeless will not have experienced a loss of housing or an involuntary move	% of households housed through Housing First programs / off the By-Name List (once established) that maintained their housing	County of Lambton / Housing First program providers

# ABOUT THE TARGETS

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The targets in the Plan are ambitious, but achievable with on-going commitment and involvement of all levels of government and community partners. Achieving the targets will require the leveraging of additional resources from all levels of government and a range of sectors. The following section provides additional information about needs and how the quantitative targets were set in areas and where quantitative targets have been established.

## TARGETS RELATED TO INCREASING AND SUSTAINING THE SUPPLY AND APPROPRIATE MIX OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

We estimate that there is a current unmet need for 3,540 affordable rental housing units in Lambton County. The backlog in affordable rental housing can be addressed through a combination of new supply and affordability assistance in existing housing. Our Plan has established a target of creating 75 new affordable rental housing units with the assistance of government funding by 2024. While we know that this target is relatively small in comparison to the need, it is still an ambitious target given anticipated funding availability and rate of new development. New supply requires upfront government investment and takes time to develop. The target of 75 new affordable rental housing units over the next five years would allow us to achieve the same level of new units as we have been able to achieve over the past five years.

Funding has already been committed to create 20 units of affordable rental housing through a partnership with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services Corporation. Based on the community's funding allocation for the current phase (2019 to 2022) of federal-provincial affordable housing programs (Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)), the County has decided to target the funding towards affordability assistance and repair rather than creating new affordable rental housing. We also anticipate that funding in future phases of the federal-provincial affordable housing programs will be more heavily targeted towards affordability assistance rather than new affordable rental housing.

## TARGET RELATED TO HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE

As discussed above, there are 3,540 households with unmet needs for affordable rental housing. Our Plan establishes a target that by 2024, 350 more households will be in receipt of affordability assistance. Our target is largely based on what we project will be required to achieve functional zero chronic homelessness by 2025, but also includes affordability assistance for 50 additional households that are not necessarily experiencing homelessness, but are in need of affordable housing. Our projections of future needs for housing/program spaces to achieve the target of functional zero chronic homelessness by 2025 estimate that 300 households will require ongoing

affordability assistance along with the intensive housing focused supports they receive (either permanent supportive housing, Assertive Community Treatment or Intensive Case Management) between 2020 and 2024.

### **TARGET RELATED TO AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

As of 2016, 355 Indigenous households in Lambton County were in core housing need. This represents approximately 5.7% of all households in core housing need. Indigenous households have a higher incidence of core housing need (25.4%) than the total population in Lambton County (13.3%). The Plan establishes a target that by 2024, more than 20 affordable rental housing units owned and/or operated by Indigenous communities and organizations will be created and supports will be expanded. Twenty affordable rental housing units represents 26.7% of the total target of 75 new affordable rental housing units built with government assistance.

### **TARGET RELATED TO YOUTH ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Plan establishes a target that by 2024, 80 youth will be in receipt of affordable housing appropriate to their needs. This target is based on the fact that youth represented 28% of the County's homeless population based on the 2018 homeless enumeration, and assumes that a roughly equivalent proportion of the households (300 households) who have experienced homelessness, and who will receive affordability assistance, will be youth.

### **TARGET RELATED TO AFFORDABILITY ASSISTANCE AND ASSOCIATED SUPPORTS (IE. SUPPORTIVE HOUSING)**

Although a community-wide waiting list is not kept for supportive housing, we have the following information showing the number of people on waiting lists for supportive housing, not including supportive housing targeted towards those exiting homelessness:

- » 22 - supportive housing for persons with physical disabilities
- » 28 - supportive housing for persons with mental health issues or addictions
- » 232 - supported independent living for people with developmental disabilities
- » 172 - group living for people with developmental disabilities (some people may be on both this list and list for supported independent living)

The Plan has established a target that by 2024, 130 additional households will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports (not including homeless specific targets discussed in Goal 3). This target may be achieved through a combination of new builds and existing rental housing. This is an ambitious target and will require leveraging of resources from several sectors, in particular health and children, community and social services.

### **TARGET FOR REPAIR OF LOW INCOME HOMEOWNERSHIP UNITS**

In 2016, 335 owner households in core housing need were living in housing requiring major repairs. The Plan has established a target that by 2024, 100 low income

homeownership units will be renovated/repaired. This is based on what might be achievable based on available funding.

### **TARGET FOR HOUSEHOLDS SUPPORTED TO PURCHASE AFFORDABLE OWNERSHIP HOUSING**

It is estimated that the gap between the demand and supply of affordable ownership housing is 3,338 units. The Plan set a target that by 2024, 30 households will be supported to purchase affordable ownership housing. The target is based on what might be achievable based on available funding.

### **TARGETS RELATED TO ENDING HOMELESSNESS**

Our targets related to ending homelessness are intended to align with the provincial goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025. While this is an ambitious goal for our community, we believe it can be achieved. It will require our community to work differently in delivering services to people experiencing and at risk of homelessness, and require significant investments from a range of sectors, including housing and homelessness, health, justice, child welfare, and all levels of government. Our target: “By 2024, 160 households that were previously homeless will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports” is based on projections of future needs for housing/program spaces to achieve the target of functional zero chronic homelessness by 2025. The projections rely on the best available community information on demand and supply for homelessness services and affordable rental housing, as well as program suitability based on need/acuity and duration or frequency of homelessness. Local information was augmented by assumptions based on other communities who have been using standardized assessment tools to determine acuity of individuals experiencing homelessness. Based on program suitability by level of acuity, we estimate that the required breakdown is as follows:

- » 5 permanent supportive housing spaces for people with high acuity
- » 5 Assertive Community Treatment spaces for people with high acuity
- » 60 permanent and 60 time-limited Intensive Case Management spaces for people with high acuity
- » 30 rapid re-housing spaces for people with mid acuity

The projections are meant to inform decision-making, but should be updated as new and better information becomes available, such as after the community establishes a By-Names List and a common assessment tool to determine the acuity levels of individuals experiencing homelessness and as program changes occur.

## Endnotes

- 1 CMHC, Rental Market Survey, 2018 (1 bedroom apartment)
- 2 MMAH approved Alternative Average Market Rents, 2019
- 3 Vink Consulting calculations based on CMHC Rental Market Survey and Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index
- 4 Based on Statistics Canada data provided by MMAH - Common Local Indicators
- 5 Based on Statistics Canada data provided by MMAH - Common Local Indicators
- 6 Data provided by County of Lambton, 2019
- 7 Vink Consulting calculations based on Statistics Canada 2016 Census. Calculated by taking the 4,450 renter households in core housing need and subtracting out 910 households living in subsidized housing spending 30% or more of their income on housing, as we have assumed that they substantively have their housing needs met
- 8 Statistics Canada, 2016 Census
- 9 CMHC, Starts and Completions Survey, 2014-2018
- 10 Based on data provided by MMAH - Common Local Indicators
- 11 Vink Consulting calculations based on data provided by MMAH - Common Local Indicators and Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index
- 12 Vink Consulting calculations based on data provided by MMAH - Common Local Indicators and Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index. Based on the estimated number of owner households in Sarnia CA with a mortgage that are spending 30% or more of their income on their homes and cannot afford the affordable ownership house price (2,120 households) and applied the same percentage of owner households with a mortgage to the other municipalities not in the CA (resulting in an additional 1,218 households)
- 13 Based on Statistics Canada data provided by MMAH - Common Local Indicators
- 14 Survey of Supportive Housing Providers, 2019
- 15 County of Lambton, Homeless Enumeration Report, 2018
- 16 County of Lambton, Homeless Enumeration Report, 2018
- 17 County of Lambton, Homeless Enumeration Report, 2018
- 18 Data provided by County of Lambton, 2019 (total number of stays, not unique individuals)
- 19 This target includes the additional 80 youth that will be in receipt of affordable housing appropriate to their needs. It also includes the 160 households that were previously homeless that will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports. (The 160 households that were previously homeless that will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports include 45 youth who will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports).
- 20 These 80 youth are included in the 350 more households that will be in receipt of affordability assistance
- 21 This target includes the additional 45 youth that will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports
- 22 These 45 youth are included in the 160 households that were previously homeless that will be in receipt of affordability assistance and housing-related supports