

**Reaching Home:  
Lambton County Community Plan  
2024–2028**

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## Introduction

In completing this template, communities are encouraged to develop comprehensive Community Plans that reflect the contributions of all funding partners, including other orders of governments, not-for-profit organizations, and the for-profit sector. The Community Plan does not preclude adjustments in priorities throughout the funding cycle; communities are still expected and encouraged to regularly review priorities for investment with their Community Advisory Board(s), including sub-project approval.

To support communities in completing their Community Plan, a Reference Guide has been developed. It is strongly recommended that this be reviewed prior to completing this template to ensure understanding of the requirements.

Please note that in communities that receive funding from both the Designated Communities (DC) and Indigenous Homelessness (IH) streams, ongoing and meaningful cross-stream collaboration is expected to support the achievement of community-level outcomes reflecting the needs of the whole community.

The Community Plan for Reaching Home must be approved by the DC or TH Community Advisory Board (CAB) before it is submitted to Infrastructure Canada.

Additionally, if your community has an Indigenous Homelessness (IH) Community Advisory Board (I-CAB), they must affirm that they have been engaged on the Community Plan before it is submitted. If your community is developing a joint plan with the IH stream Community Entity, both CABs must approve the community plan prior to submission.

In addition to the core elements required in this template, communities are welcome to share any other information and/or documents that they feel might provide further insight into their local context as it relates to housing and/or homelessness context.

## 1. Community Engagement

*As part of the community planning exercise, you must engage with community partners with the goal of understanding the needs of the local homelessness sector and identify local homelessness priorities using a coordinated, systems-based and data-driven approach.*

*Please describe the steps taken to engage your community partners in developing this Community Plan to ensure a community-based approach. Your response must include:*

- *Which partners were engaged;*
- *When and how engagement occurred; and*
- *What aspects of the Community Plan were discussed, as well as what aspects of the Plan (i.e., decisions, outcomes, next steps) were influenced by these discussions.*

**Note:** *Meaningful collaboration with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners and service providers, as well as the IH CE and I-CAB where applicable, is expected in the development of this Community Plan and must be explicitly referenced in this section. The Indigenous Partners in Your Community worksheet created for the Community Homelessness Report (CHR) may be helpful to complete this section. Please see [CHR: Reporting Tools e-course on the Homelessness Learning Hub](#).*

The County of Lambton has committed to engaging cross-sectoral community partners and individuals with lived experience in the development of the community plan. In March of 2023, over 170 community leaders from social services, healthcare, government, and the non-profit sector gathered for the “Stronger Together Summit”, a community conversation on housing, homelessness and addictions hosted by the County of Lambton. This day featured presentations from the County’s Social Services and Public Health Divisions, along with lived experts, and a speaker from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness.

The discussions facilitated through this gathering led to five community priorities, actioned by a Summit Outcomes Committee. This outcomes committee was comprised of members from the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce, Sarnia Missionary Church, Vision 74 Inc., The Rapids Family Health Team and a Lambton County Council member.

The top three priorities – affordable housing, public education, and advocacy– were progressed in 2024 through the County’s [collaboration with Flourish and Indwell](#) on affordable housing, the County’s [Be Part of the Solution Campaign](#), and a council reception with Lambton MPPs where councillors advocated for additional homelessness funding from the provincial government.

Beyond these activities, lived experts have been actively engaged for feedback on the County’s emergency shelter operations. In May of 2024, day-program participants at the County’s Housing and Homelessness Resource Centre were surveyed through an eight question semi-structured interview soliciting feedback and recommendations on

programming. The Social Services Division’s “A Better Tomorrow” Committee of lived experts has met once a month since 2022 to provide feedback on homelessness programs and policies, most notably assisting with the renewal of Lambton’s shelter standards. In the fall of 2024, the Community Outreach team surveyed individuals sleeping outside, to determine what changes to the shelter system or current services would incentivize these individuals to sleep inside and seek shelter in the approaching cold months.

In 2025, Lambton will continue to engage key partners through monthly case conferencing via the Community Collaborative Table (CCT), and quarterly meetings with the CAB and Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee. The CCT includes representation from the local Canadian Mental Health Association, adult and youth shelter providers, youth transitional housing, Ontario Works, the Sarnia Lambton Native Friendship Centre, and Lambton’s Homelessness Prevention Team. These providers are regularly engaged for support on system pressures, critical cases, and resource inventory maintenance, and are to be actively engaged in the County’s housing and homelessness planning.

## 2. Investment Plan

2.1 In the table below, please identify your community’s allocation of Reaching Home funding in the DC or TH and Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) streams from 2024-25 to 2027-28<sup>1</sup>.

|  | 2024-25     | 2025-26     | 2026-27     | 2027-28     | Total       |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Reaching Home Annual Allocation</b> | \$1,613,009 | \$1,613,009 | \$1,659,723 | \$1,659,723 | \$6,545,464 |

2.2 In the table below, please outline your planned division of DC/TH and CCI Reaching Home funding from 2024-25 to 2027-28 by activity area. Please note that it is acceptable that your community’s funding priorities change over time. This investment plan is to demonstrate that your community has a vision of moving forward for the allocation of Reaching Home funding.

| Activities area                         | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 | 2027-28 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Housing Services</b>                 | 37%     | 37%     | 38%     | 38%     |
| <b>Prevention and Shelter Diversion</b> | 21%     | 21%     | 21%     | 21%     |

<sup>1</sup> Communities on two-year agreement extensions should report on investment plans for 2024-25 and 2025-26 at this time.

|   |     |     |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <b>Client Support Services</b>                                | 19% | 19% | 18% | 18% |
| <b>Capital Investments</b>                                    | 0%  | 0%  | 0%  | 0%  |
| <b>Coordination of Resources and Data Quality Improvement</b> | 8%  | 8%  | 8%  | 8%  |
| <b>Administration</b>   | 15% | 15% | 15% | 15% |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | %   | %   | %   | %   |

2.3 In the text box below, please describe how Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) funding will be used to support coordinated and data-driven service delivery (e.g., supporting Coordinated Access, the Outcomes-Based Approach and use of HIFIS or existing, equivalent Homeless Management Information System).

The Community Capacity and Innovation funding will be used to support a homelessness system coordinator that facilitates the operations and continuous improvement of HIFIS, facilitating the local coordinated access system, and related costs. Adherence to the Outcome-Based Approach reported through the Community Homelessness Report, and local data coordination between service providers is also supported through this fund.

### 3. Cost-Matching Requirement

3.1 In the table below, please outline all funding for homelessness initiatives expected to be received from other funders from 2024-25 to 2027-28<sup>2</sup>. This includes both financial and in-kind contributions.

|  | 2024-25     | 2025-26     | 2026-27     | 2027-28     | Total       |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Reaching Home Annual Allocation</b> | \$1,613,009 | \$1,613,009 | \$1,659,723 | \$1,659,723 | \$6,545,464 |

<sup>2</sup> Communities on two-year agreement extensions should report on cost-matching for 2024-25 and 2025-26 at this time.

| <b>Projected Funding From Other Funders towards Homelessness Initiatives</b> |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Program Name and Funder</b>   | <b>2024-25 (\$)</b> | <b>2025-26 (\$)</b> | <b>2026-27 (\$)</b> | <b>2027-28 (\$)</b> | <b>Total (\$)</b> |
| Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing                            | 5,615,600           | 5,615,600           | TBD                 | TBD                 | 11,231,200        |
| Municipal  | 1,827,558           | TBD                 | TBD                 | TBD                 | 1,827,558         |
|  |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |
|  |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |
|  |                     |                     |                     |                     |                   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   |                     |                     |                     |                     | <b>13,058,758</b> |

3.2 If your anticipated community contributions are not projected to match funding from Reaching Home for each year, please explain the circumstances below and include a description of the steps you will take to meet the requirement.

Our community is on track to match Reaching Home funding in 2024-25 through 2025-26 by contributing more than our anticipated Reaching Home allotment each year from other funding sources. At this time, the Provincial Homelessness Program funding for 2026-27 has not yet been confirmed. While our municipal budget is confirmed on an annual basis, it is anticipated that our community will continue to contribute municipal monies in excess of our anticipated Reaching Home allotment distinct from additional sources of funding (i.e., Provincial).

#### 4. Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)

4.1 Using your 2023-24 CHR as a guide<sup>3</sup>, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024<sup>4</sup>. Any status updates since March 31, 2024, must also be reflected:

| <b>Minimum Requirement</b> | <b>Has the MR been met?</b>         | <b>Minimum Requirement</b> | <b>Has the MR been met?</b>         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| HIFIS MR 1                 | N/A                                 | HIFIS MR 3                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| HIFIS MR 2                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | HIFIS MR 4                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

<sup>3</sup> For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your Community Homelessness Report, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

<sup>4</sup> Communities with two-year agreement extensions are not required to complete section 4 at this time.

4.2 For each minimum requirement that has not yet been met (as identified in 4.1), complete a table below to describe how you will meet it by March 31, 2026. Please note that confirmation that communities are on track to do this will be required by October 31, 2025.

| <b>Minimum Requirement not yet met: [CE to add here]</b>                         |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?</b> | <b>Target date for completion</b> |
| N/A  | N/A                               |



## 5. Coordinated Access

5.1 Using your 2023-24 CHR as a guide<sup>5</sup>, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024<sup>6</sup>. Any status updates since March 31, 2024, must also be reflected:

| Minimum Requirement | Has the MR been met?                | Minimum Requirement | Has the MR been met?                |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| CA MR 1             | N/A                                 | CA MR 10            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 2             | N/A                                 | CA MR 11            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 3             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 12            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 4             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 13            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 5             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 14            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 6             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 15            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 7             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 16            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 8             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 17            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| CA MR 9             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | CA MR 18            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

5.2 For each minimum requirement that has not yet been met (as identified in 5.1), complete a table below to describe how you will meet it by March 31, 2026. Note that confirmation that communities are on track to do this will be required by October 31, 2025.

| Minimum requirement not yet met: [CE to add here]                         |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement? | Target date for completion |
| N/A   | N/A                        |

| Minimum Requirement not yet met: [CE to add here]                         |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement? | Target date for completion |
| N/A   | N/A                        |

| Minimum Requirement not yet met: [CE to add here]                         |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement? | Target date for completion |
| N/A   | N/A                        |

| Minimum Requirement not yet met: [CE to add here] |
|---|
|---|

<sup>5</sup> For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your CHR, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

<sup>6</sup> Communities with two-year agreement extensions are not required to complete section 5 at this time.

| What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement? | Target date for completion |
|---|----------------------------|
| N/A   | N/A                        |

*5.3 Describe how ongoing, meaningful collaboration on Coordinated Access between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners has or will take place as your community works to implement, maintain and improve a Coordinated Access system.*

The Sarnia Lambton Native Friendship Centre is a key partner and member of both the local Community Advisory Board, as well as the Community Collaborative Table that oversees Coordinated Access. Between the quarterly CAB meetings, and the monthly Coordinated Access meetings, there are ample opportunities to ensure meaningful collaboration and continuous improvement of the local coordinated access system.

Further specific steps taken to better promote equitable delivery of local service to indigenous households includes capture of indigenous data at key service engagements, several dedicated indigenous housing case managers supported through Reaching Home funds, inclusion of indigeneity in the local coordinated access prioritization matrix, and regular review of the local BNL resource inventory to ensure adherence to the matrix and capture of all available dedicated indigenous services. Collaboration and participation between indigenous and non-indigenous partners extend to various other related local tables, including ad-hoc situation tables for the purposes of case-conferencing.

## 6. Outcomes-Based Approach

6.1 Using your 2023-24 Community Homelessness Report as a guide<sup>7</sup>, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024<sup>8</sup>. Any status updates since March 31, 2024, must also be reflected:

| Minimum Requirement | Has the MR been met?                | Minimum Requirement | Has the MR been met?                |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| OBA MR 1            | N/A                                 | OBA MR 6            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| OBA MR 2            | N/A                                 | OBA MR 7            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| OBA MR 3            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | OBA MR 8            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| OBA MR 4            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | OBA MR 9            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| OBA MR 5            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                     |                                     |

6.2 For each minimum requirement that has not yet been met (as identified in 6.1), including those modified and new as of 2024-25, complete a table below to describe how you will meet it by March 31, 2026. Please note that confirmation that communities are on track to do this will be required by October 31, 2025.

| Minimum Requirement not yet met: MR 7  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?  | Target date for completion |
| <p>Add domestic violence shelters into system (pending HIFIS update where DV shelters can be clustered and hidden from HIFIS users.)</p> <p>Lambton has frequently engaged HICC, HIFIS, and BFZ-C to seek advice and examples on how domestic violence shelters have effectively and safely been introduced into HIFIS. Lambton is an active participant in several HIFIS-related best practice forums. There is a pending update from the HIFIS team that is purported to assist in this regard through a hidden cluster that does not subvert the intention of a centralized, unified BNL.</p> | December 31, 2025          |

6.3 Please describe how ongoing and meaningful collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners has or will take place as your community works to meet the OBA minimum requirements. In communities where the Designated Communities and Indigenous Homelessness streams co-exist, collaboration with the IH-CE and I-CAB (where applicable) is expected.

<sup>7</sup> For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your Community Homelessness Report, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

<sup>8</sup> Communities with two-year agreement extensions are not required to complete section 6 at this time.

New policies introduced through Coordinated Access are approved by the Community Collaborative Table, of which the Sarnia Lambton Native Friendship Centre is a key member. The Housing History policy referred to in OB MR4 will be subject to this feedback and approvals process. The inclusion of Indigenous status in the County's 2023 [Prioritization Policy](#) came from the direction of this table, alongside Lambton's Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee.

Following HIFIS optimization to meet OB MR 7, CCT and CAB will be engaged in a similar nature to approve the addition of domestic violence shelters to the coordinated access system.

## 7. Official Language Minority Communities

*The Government of Canada has a responsibility under the [Official Languages Act](#) to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs). Please describe the steps that you will take to ensure that the services funded under [Reaching Home](#) take the needs of the OLMCs into consideration, where applicable.*

The County of Lambton is committed to ensuring that we address the needs of people experiencing homelessness in their preferred official language

In combination with local multi-lingual staff, Lambton County will utilize a purchased third-party translation service in order to fulfil requests for services in minority languages. This service enables real-time translation services to clients accessing our homelessness prevention system. The service supports hundreds of minority languages, including French. Using a more affordable fee-for-service model, this contingency will greatly reduce the barrier that language can create in effectively serving our clients.

Specifically, our community has taken several steps including the following to ensure the needs of Official Language Minority Communities are met:

- Routinely create project-related documentations and announcements available for both the public and prospective project participants in both languages. This can include, but is not limited to: community notices, relevant policies and procedures, website and social media communications.
- As mentioned above, actively offer project-related services in both official languages and other minority languages as-needed.
- Encourage members of both official language communities to participate in the community planning activities and relevant tables.
- Provide our local homelessness services, where appropriate, in such a manner as to address the needs of both official language communities. This includes enabling service providers to offer service in French should there be a request and to track the instances of such requests to better understand local need.

## 8. Community Advisory Board—Designated Communities/Territorial Homelessness

**Note:** You may list more than one name/organization for each sector, and you may list a name/organization in more than one sector, as applicable.

(Lines below can be removed where not applicable)


| Sector  | CAB Members  |
|---|--|
| Infrastructure Canada (Ex-Officio Member)   | Katherine Girgis, HICC   |
| Community Entity (Ex-Officio Member)  | Ian Hanney, County of Lambton<br>Valerie Colasanti, County of Lambton                      |
| Provincial/Territorial government   |  |
| Local/Municipal government  |  |
| Indigenous government   |  |
| Individuals with lived experience of homelessness   |  |
| Indigenous Peoples, nations and organizations, Friendship Centres   |  |
| Indigenous housing organizations  |  |
| Youth and/or child-serving organizations, including Child Welfare agencies  | Michelle Holbrook, Sarnia-Lambton Rebound  |
| Organizations serving survivors of domestic violence and their families   | Jennifer Vansteenkiste, Women's Interval Home  |
| Seniors and senior-serving organizations  |  |
| Newcomers and newcomer-serving organizations  |  |
| The private sector  |  |
| Police and correctional services  |  |
| Landlord associations and/or the housing sector   |  |
| Health organizations, including hospitals and other public health institutions, and organizations focused on mental health and addictions | Rhonny Doxtator, CMHA Lambton-Kent<br>Kathy Bresett, North Lambton Community Health Centre |
| Veterans Affairs Canada and/or Veterans-serving organizations   |  |
| Organizations serving individuals experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness   | Myles Vanni, Inn of the Good Shepherd  |
| Other   |  |

**CAB Chairs or Co-Chairs (if applicable):**

I affirm that the above members of the CAB have reviewed the attached Community Plan, and that a majority of CAB members approve of its content.

Ian Hanney

Name

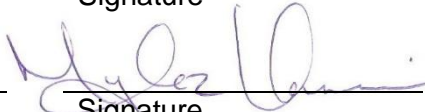
  
Signature

2025-01-31

Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

Myles Vanni

Name

  
Signature

2025-01-31

Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

Name

Signature

Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

## 9. Community Advisory Board—Indigenous Homelessness

**Note:** You may list more than one name/organization for each sector, and you may list a name/organization in more than one sector, as applicable.

(Lines below can be removed where not applicable)

| Sector  | CAB Members |
|---|-------------|
| Infrastructure Canada (Ex-Officio Member)   |             |
| Community Entity (Ex-Officio Member)  |             |
| Provincial/Territorial government   |             |
| Local/Municipal government  |             |
| Indigenous government   |             |
| Individuals with lived experience of homelessness   |             |
| Indigenous Peoples, nations and organizations, Friendship Centres   |             |
| Indigenous housing organizations  |             |
| Youth and/or child-serving organizations, including Child Welfare agencies  |             |
| Organizations serving survivors of domestic violence and their families   |             |
| Seniors and senior-serving organizations  |             |
| Newcomers and newcomer-serving organizations  |             |
| The private sector  |             |
| Police and correctional services  |             |
| Landlord associations and/or the housing sector   |             |
| Health organizations, including hospitals and other public health institutions, and organizations focused on mental health and addictions |             |
| Veterans Affairs Canada and/or Veterans-serving organizations   |             |
| Organizations serving individuals experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness   |             |
| Other   |             |



**Indigenous CAB Chairs or Co-Chairs (if applicable):**

(If Community Plan is not a joint plan): I affirm that the above members of the Community Advisory Board have been engaged on the Coordinated Access and Outcomes-Based Approach sections of the attached Community Plan.

**OR**

(If Community Plan is a joint plan): I affirm that the above members of the CAB have reviewed the attached Community Plan, and that a majority of CAB members approve of its content.

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 Name

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 Signature

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 Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

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 Name

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 Signature

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 Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

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 Name

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 Signature

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 Date (YYYY-MM-DD)