



## SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>HOUSING SERVICES</b>
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>Kelly Hall, Manager</b>
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	<b>Valerie Colasanti, General Manager Ronald G. Van Horne, Chief Administrative Officer</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>April 21, 2021</b>
<b>INFORMATION ITEM:</b>	<b>Implementing Action Items from the Housing and Homelessness Plan</b>

### **BACKGROUND**

At its meeting on June 3, 2020, County Council supported the following motion from the May 20, 2020 Committee P.M. meeting:

*#7: Broad/Stark:*

- a) That the County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024 be approved.*
- b) That staff be provided with the authority to implement the recommendations contained within the County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020- 2024.*

*Carried.*

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council regarding implementing some of the action items identified in the Housing and Homelessness Plan.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Housing and Homelessness Plan includes the vision that "Every person has an affordable, suitable and adequate home." To achieve this vision, the Plan sets out four goals including the goal of increasing and sustaining a supply and appropriate mix of affordable housing. Several action items in the Plan are aimed at meeting this goal, including to:

- Support local municipalities to establish supportive land use regulations and incentives to reduce barriers and increase the supply of affordable housing

- Support local municipalities to create supportive policy environments for shared and supportive accommodation
- Promote second units as an opportunity to expand affordable rental housing.

In order to achieve this goal and implement some of the action items, the Housing Services Department secured the services of J. Consulting Group. The consultant will conduct background research on opportunities for municipalities to strengthen land use policies and provide incentives to support the creation of affordable housing. In addition to providing detailed policy description, an analysis will be completed to review the potential impacts, benefits and challenges of such undertakings.

J. Consulting Group will also complete a scan of current municipal by-laws and outline policy considerations around the creation of shared and supportive accommodation. Additionally, work will be undertaken to review and prepare educational materials related to secondary suites.

Lastly, J. Consulting Group has been asked to prepare a presentation to highlight the research, illustrate examples, benefits and challenges, and potential impacts, in order to provide information that will support municipalities in their efforts to reduce barriers to the development of affordable and supportive housing. It is anticipated a presentation will take place in the fall of 2021 to local municipal Chief Administrative Officers, Treasurers, Planners and interested members of council.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Housing and Homelessness Plan has no financial impact on the County budget. In order to achieve the recommendations included in the Housing and Homelessness Plan investment from the County of Lambton, other levels of government and community partners will be required.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

For the Housing and Homelessness Plan review, consultations took place with community groups, community agencies, consumers, local municipal staff and politicians, housing providers, County staff from various departments including Homelessness Prevention and Children's Services, Ontario Works, Housing Services, Planning and Development Services and Building Services.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

The updated Housing and Homelessness Plan is a legislated initiative delivered in keeping with the County's Mission to promote an enhanced quality of life through the provision of responsive and efficient services accomplished by working with municipal and community partners.

The activities of the Division support the Community Development Area of Effort #3 in the County of Lambton's Strategic Plan, specifically:

- Advocating in a manner that raises the profile of the County and its needs in order to secure improved government supports, funding, grants, and other resources.
- Developing programs and initiatives that address poverty reduction and promote social belonging.
- Planning for and responding to the ever-changing needs of an aging population, homelessness and retaining young people in the community while supporting their transition to being employed community members and future leaders.
- Actively pursuing joint opportunities with community partners that contribute to the well-being of the Lambton Community.

## **CONCLUSION**

The County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024 sets a strategic direction for housing and homelessness work over the next five year period. The plan reflects the anticipated needs of the County of Lambton and will require strong leadership and creativity, along with community and political support to be successful.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the growing crisis in the homelessness population and highlights the necessity for more affordable housing in our community. Increasing and sustaining a supply and appropriate mix of affordable housing will assist in meeting the needs of low and moderate income residents of Lambton County.