



SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

REPORT TO:	WARDEN AND LAMBTON COUNTY COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT:	HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND SOCIAL PLANNING
PREPARED BY:	Ian Hanney, Manager
REVIEWED BY:	Valerie Colasanti, General Manager Stéphane Thiffeault, Chief Administrative Officer
MEETING DATE:	July 2, 2025
INFORMATION ITEM:	Housing and Homelessness Plan Progress Report

BACKGROUND

Under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, Service System Managers must provide an annual report to the public on the progress towards their housing and homelessness plans. The attached Progress Report highlights the work completed over the past year on the implementation of the County of Lambton's Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024.

DISCUSSION

The County of Lambton's Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024 frames the planning and delivery of housing and homelessness supports within the community. Each year, the County works towards the four strategic goals outlined by the plan to achieve the vision "Every person has an affordable, suitable and adequate home".

As a reminder, the following are the four strategic goals under the Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024:

1. Increase and sustain supply and appropriate mix of affordable housing;
2. Increase access to affordable housing and supports that meet people's needs to achieve housing;
3. Coordinated housing and homelessness service systems; and,
4. Ending homelessness.

In 2024, the local social services system continued to face overwhelming demand, particularly in homelessness prevention and housing stability services, as the national housing and opioid crises worsened. Through 2024, the number of individuals and families accessing homelessness services was consistently extremely high. Across several months, the inflow onto the local By-Name List ("**BNL**") was greater than 60 individuals, thereby placing tremendous pressure on already overwhelmed housing supports. Despite

these challenges, through strong partnerships and strategic investments, the County continues to make significant advances towards the goals of the Housing and Homelessness Plan while serving an extraordinary number of households who experience housing insecurity.

Some key accomplishments during the 2024 year include the following:

- Coordinated, intensive, multi-agency local efforts reduced youth homelessness by more than 50%.
- Over 200 unique individuals progressed into more permanent housing from an experience of homelessness.
- Council contributed \$3M to the affordable housing reserve. Supported through these funds, The Affordable Housing Seed Fund program was leveraged to complete pre-development work for new affordable housing developments for 3 non-profits.
- Council approved a 50-unit affordable housing development on Kathleen Avenue, with construction to start in 2025.
- Lambton launched the “Be Part of the Solution” community-driven campaign aimed at transforming the local dialogue on homelessness into one centered on actionable solutions.
- Submitted through the lead agency of the Canadian Mental Health Association of Lambton Kent, The County of Lambton, The North Lambton Community Health Centre, the Sarnia-Lambton Ontario Health Team, and Bluewater Health submitted the successful Lambton HART Hub application, that will be operationalized in 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no financial impact on the County Budget arising from this report.

CONSULTATIONS

Consultations have taken place with members of the County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee, the Coordinated Access Community Collaborative Table, the A Better Tomorrow Committee, the internal Social Services Division team, and numerous social service agencies in the community.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Delivering housing and homelessness services is 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:

- Strengthening the County's advocacy and lobbying efforts with other levels of government to raise the profile of the County and its needs to secure improved senior government supports, funding, grants, and other resources to meet emerging infrastructure and service needs;
- Consulting with the community and stakeholders on ways to increase housing options and affordability, and innovative programs and initiatives that focus on poverty reduction and promote social belonging;
- Supporting the development of a variety of affordable housing to meet demand;
- Implementing, monitoring and updating community health and wellness-related plans and priorities, including, but not limited to, the *Housing and Homelessness Plan*, *Community Safety & Well-Being Plan*, the Long-Term Care division's mission, vision, and values, *Age Friendly Community Planning framework*, Lambton Public Health's strategic priorities, *Lambton Drug & Alcohol Strategy*, *Lambton EMS Master Plan*, and *Child Care and Early Years 5-Year Service System Plan*; and
- Advocating for, and supporting access to, mental health and addiction services.

CONCLUSION

The County of Lambton's Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020 - 2024 frames the planning and delivery of housing and homelessness supports within our community. The development and distribution of an annual report via the County website fulfills the legislative requirement under the *Housing Services Act, 2011* to report annually on the progress of implementation efforts.

Direction regarding a refreshed Housing and Homelessness Plan is pending from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.