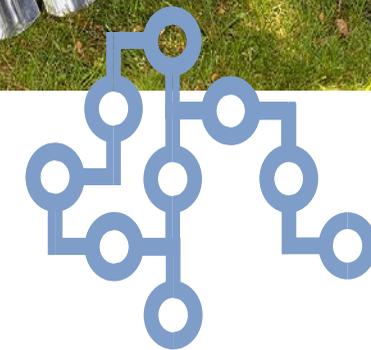


TAKING STOCK WORKING TOGETHER

2016 Progress Report



Introduction

The City of St. Thomas, in its role as the Service Manager for St. Thomas and Elgin County, is responsible for delivering social and community services throughout the City and the County. These services are delivered by St. Thomas – Elgin Social Services Department. As part of its mandate, the Department administers and delivers a range of housing and homelessness programs including existing social housing, new affordable housing, rent supplements, housing allowances, home repair assistance, homeownership down-payment assistance, funding for emergency shelters and transitional housing, and other homelessness prevention programs including the Housing Links for People (HeLP) program. As of September 2016, the City now also owns and manages 530 units of public housing as the result of the amalgamation of Elgin and St. Thomas Housing Corporation into the City's corporation structure.

The Social Services Department works in collaboration with the County of Elgin and area municipalities, with existing private sector and not-for-profit housing providers, with support services agencies, and with many individuals and organizations in the community to help meet the housing and homelessness prevention needs in support of residents of St. Thomas and Elgin County.

In the past, the Department has undertaken numerous reports and studies about community housing and homeless needs and has worked with organizations to implement many of the key initiatives from those studies.

As required in the *Housing Services Act*, City of St. Thomas Council approved a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan for St. Thomas and Elgin County in December 2013. The Plan was implemented on January 1, 2014. Service Managers are required in the *Act* to report annually to the public by June 30 on progress in achieving the recommendations in their Plans during the preceding year.

This is the 2016 Progress Report for St. Thomas/Elgin County.





Vision

St. Thomas and Elgin County recognize the importance of having affordable, adequate and appropriate housing for its residents. In co-operation with not-for-profit and private-sector partners in the community, and with support from federal and provincial levels of governments, St. Thomas and Elgin County will work towards meeting the housing and support needs of the community, with the elimination of long term homelessness as a key goal.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4
Increase housing supply options to meet projected needs.	Provide supports to keep people in the sustainable housing they currently have.	Enhance the current service system to prevent homelessness, and when homeless “rapidly” move people into stable housing.	Pursue community partnerships and broaden community awareness while advocating to senior levels of government to ensure stable housing and poverty reduction for all residents.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

Increase housing supply options to meet projected need

Seven recommendations with actions, targets, measures, and the detailed 2016 progress report are attached.

Progress in 2016

New Affordable Rental Housing:

1. Construction is underway on a 10-unit one-floor apartment building at 10 Wellington Street in Aylmer
2. Construction is underway on a 12-unit apartment building with elevator at 49 Myrtle St. in St. Thomas

Using funding available through the new SIF (Social Infrastructure Fund) program, thirty new households now receive Rent Supplements to help with housing affordability. This program runs to March 2020.

12 new one-bedroom units were completed at 207 Ross Street in St. Thomas in December 2016. All tenants receive supported housing services through CMHA.

The amalgamation of Elgin & St. Thomas Housing Corporation into the City's corporate structure in September 2016 offers new opportunities to increase housing supply options in St. Thomas and Elgin County.

\$100,000 was invested in the Housing Allowance component of the IAH program in 2016, providing an average of \$170/month to supplement rents for about 56 households in the private sector.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

Provide supports to keep people in the sustainable housing they currently have

Seven recommendations with actions, targets, measures, and the detailed 2016 progress report are attached.

Progress in 2016

\$426,961 in HeLP funding was allocated to assist low-income households with homelessness prevention supports. The funds were spent as follows:

- 46% for utility arrears (376 households)
- 20% for last/first month's rent (146 households)
- 16% for furniture (146 households)
- 11% for rent arrears (70 households)
- 5% for moving costs (59 households)
- 2% for other necessities

Through the IAH Home Repair Program, \$50,000 helped 5 homeowners and one multi-residential owner pay for new roofs (3) new roof and wall insulation (1), structural repairs (1), and furnace replacement (1).

\$545,148 in CHPI funding helped agencies provide client-centred supported housing as follows:

- YWCA Residence (17 beds)
- Harmony House (3 beds)
- Fair Winds (3 beds)
- Second Story (6 beds)
- Fresh Start (10 beds)
- CMHA residential care program (avg. 68 beds)

Central Apartments, Aylmer

A new program was introduced in 2016 at eight newly-renovated apartments above Central Restaurant in Aylmer. Through the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program, the Social Services Dept. provides rent supplements to four tenants who receive supports from Fresh Start Support Services along with mentorship by "intentional neighbours" in the other four units.

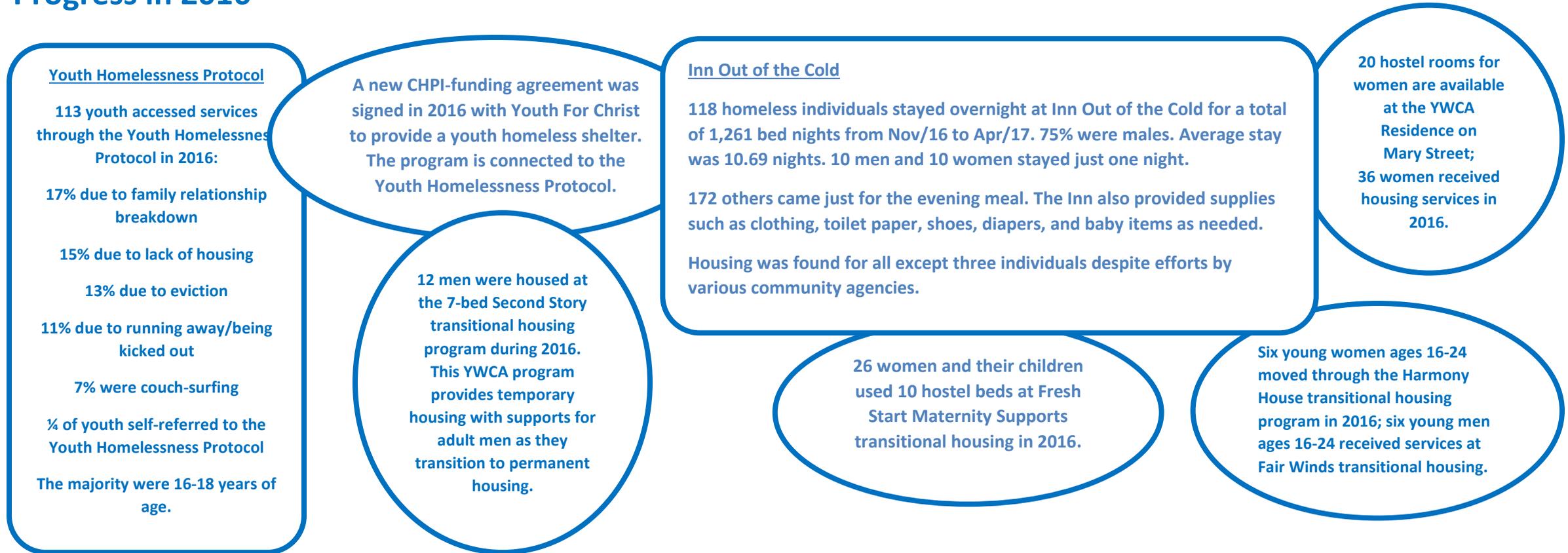


STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

Enhance the current service system to prevent homelessness, and when homeless, “rapidly” move people into stable housing

Five recommendations with actions, targets, measures, and the detailed 2016 progress report are attached.

Progress in 2016



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4

Pursue community partnerships and broaden community awareness while advocating to senior levels of government to ensure stable housing and poverty reduction for all residents

Thirteen recommendations with actions, targets, measures, and the detailed 2016 progress report are attached.

Progress in 2016

The Community Leaders Cabinet continues to collectively champion for a better quality of life for the community. The Cabinet meets quarterly.

The Poverty Roundtable for St. Thomas/Elgin continues to advocate for poverty reduction system and policy changes.

St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services opened a satellite office in May 2016 at West Elgin Support Services in West Lorne to provide services for people in western Elgin County.

The City of St. Thomas advocated to be selected as one of three sites for the Basic Income Pilot. The application was supported by City Council, County Council, and the Community Leaders Cabinet.

(Update: the three sites selected were announced by the Province in April 2017 as Hamilton, Thunder Bay, and Lindsay.)

Bridges Out of Poverty – 2016 results:

- 22 people graduated from 2 Getting Ahead programs
- A Circle Leader created a new business called Jazzy Esthetics
- 2 community awareness workshops were held
- 1 Circle Leader and 1 Circle Ally shared their lived experiences at the Poverty Roundtable in October 2016
- 2 Circle Leaders created programming at Connect Confed, a City-owned social housing complex
- A Circle Leader graduated from a tax course
- A Circle Leader began a veterinary assistant course
- A Circle Leader started work at Food Works