

Recommended Actions

Strategic Direction 1.0

Increase housing supply options to meet projected need.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Increase the mix and supply of housing options, including the number of affordable rental units, market rental units, condo units, and affordable homes in the City of St. Thomas and the County of Elgin.

Actions	Targets	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
1.1.1 Encourage municipalities to work with private and non-profit builders/developers to ensure the construction of a mix of new housing and/or conversion of existing buildings with a focus on new units in the areas of highest demand and for the types of housing in areas of highest demand. This should include a portion of ownership housing priced below affordability levels and a specific focus on building one bedroom units in St. Thomas, including accessible rental units.	<p>Increase the supply of affordable one-bedroom rental units.</p> <p>Increase the supply of accessible apartments.</p> <p>Increase the supply of affordable condo apartments, townhouses and single family homes.</p>	<p>Number of new one-bedroom apartments created.</p> <p>Number of new accessible apartments created.</p> <p>Number of new affordable ownership condo apartments, townhouses and single family homes created.</p>	2014-24	City	Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) 2014 Extension was announced; 6 year program from 2014-2020; \$4,513,200 allocated to St. Thomas/Elgin; \$3,136,000 earmarked for new rental housing.	City Council approved three new affordable housing projects in July 2015 under the IAH program: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10 units at 560 Talbot (Capitol Theatre) 12 units at 207 Ross 10 units at 33 Elysian All are one-bedroom units.	City Council approved two new affordable housing project under the IAH or SIF Programs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10 units at 10 Wellington St., Aylmer 12 units at 49 Myrtle (11 units are affordable).
1.1.2 Encourage City and lower-tier municipalities to establish municipal incentives that promote the development of mixed density neighbourhoods.	<p>Establish new multi-residential tax class</p> <p>Reduce or eliminate development fees and other charges for affordable housing.</p>		2014-19	City/ County/ Twps	Increase in mix of new housing construction in St. Thomas; more condominiums, apartment buildings planned by private developers in 2014.	OW Director met with Elgin County Council in June 2015 and Aylmer Town Council in July 2015; encouraged municipalities to consider providing financial incentives for the development of affordable housing.	Work on an Affordable Housing Strategy is in progress.

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1.1.3 Permit secondary suites—all areas within St. Thomas and Elgin County should ensure their planning policies permit secondary suites/garden suites in single detached and row houses in compliance with Provincial direction.	All City and lower tier municipalities establish policies to permit secondary suites or garden suites.	Number of municipalities which have established policies.	2014-19	City/ County/ Twps			Work on an Affordable Housing Strategy is in progress.
1.1.4 All municipalities to include directions in their Official Plans that support the development of new affordable rental housing to meet the needs of their communities.	All upper and lower tier municipalities include provisions for the development of affordable housing in their Official Plans, to comply with the 2008 housing affordability targets.	All municipalities have established affordable housing targets in their Official Plans.	2014-19	City/ County/ Twps	Central Elgin reduced municipal property taxes for two social housing providers.		Work on an Affordable Housing Strategy is in progress.
1.1.5 Actively advocate for a commitment from municipal and provincial governments as well as school boards for a more flexible approach to consider the use of publicly owned land (including surplus school sites) for affordable housing, even if affordable housing is only a part of the redeveloped publicly owned sites.	Council/staff advocate or lobby to provincial gov't and school board to consider this request.	Examples of flexible new approaches achieved.	2014-19	City/ County/ Twps/ Prov/ Fed			
1.2 Increase the number of rent supplements available to low and moderate income families.	Expand RS program as funds become available. Increase number of portable RS.	Number of new RS units.	2014-19 As funding becomes available.	City/ Prov/ Fed		\$84,000 was invested in the Housing Allowance component of the IAH program to provide \$150/month in rent supplements to about 50 households in the private sector.	\$100,000 was invested in Year 3 of IAH Housing Allowance component. An average of \$170 per month was provided to support about 56 households in the private sector.

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							Using funding available through the new SIF (Social Infrastructure Fund) program, thirty new households have received Rent Supplement assistance to help with rent affordability. This program runs to March 2020.
1.2.1 Undertake strategic outreach to landlords to encourage them to rent to low-income households through the provision of Rent Supplements and/or ongoing tenant support from community workers, building on the model CMHA has developed for its clients. Where possible, accessible units should be a priority when entering into rent supplement agreements.	Increase collaboration with private sector landlords, and number of RS in private sector.	Number of new RS landlords. Number of new landlords partnering with the City.	2014-19	City		Several new private sector landlords entered into Housing Allowance or Strong Communities Rent Supplement agreements with the OW Dept. in 2015.	New private landlords entered into agreements in 2016 under the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program, the Housing Allowance program, and the new SIF Rent Supplement program.

Strategic Direction 2.0

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

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Ensure that a coordinated system of supports is available to those currently in sustainable housing.

Actions	Targets	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
<p>2.1.1 Continue to fund existing programs that help people maintain housing, evaluating effectiveness, enhancing where needed, as funds become available (such as Focus Fairview).</p>	<p>Continue to offer HeLP, LEAP and other homelessness prevention programs currently in place, monitoring, modifying and enhancing delivery as required.</p>	<p>CHPI Performance Indicator reports. Client satisfaction surveys.</p>	<p>2014-19</p>	<p>City/ Prov</p>	<p>\$460,000 in HeLP funding was allocated to assist low-income households with rent and utility arrears and other homelessness prevention supports. \$_____ in CHPI funding supports the following housing programs:</p>	<p>A new pilot program similar to Focus Fairview was opened by Elgin & St. Thomas Housing Corporation at a public housing complex on Confederation, called Connect Confed.</p>	
<p>2.1.2 Ensure that new programs and services are developed according to client-centred (not system centred) principles, using strategies and measurements devised by Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA).</p>	<p>Consider single point of entry, minimizing referrals to other sources, flexibility and coordination among services providers, using measures developed by OMSSA.</p>	<p>Alignment with OMSSA strategies and measurements.</p>	<p>2014-19 As funding becomes available</p>	<p>City</p>			<p>Client-centred principles guide the development of all new programs and services.</p>

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

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Ensure that a coordinated system of supports is available to those currently in sustainable housing.

Actions	Targets	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
2.1.3 Establish a Community Worker position to be shared between the public housing corporation, non-profits and co-op housing providers to provide residents with connections and assistance to access community support agencies with the objective of preventing evictions and promoting successful tenancies.	Improve understanding of the importance of housing stability Increase the number of successful tenancies.	Compare number of evictions, late rent, N4's reduced prior to program intervention. Number of interventions by worker with current tenants and actions taken to maintain housing.	2014-19 as funding permits	City	2 Housing Programs Coordinator staff in the OW Dept. provide community outreach services to assist social housing providers through eviction support interventions.		A third Housing Programs Coordinator position was added in the Social Services Dept. with the amalgamation of Elgin & St. Thomas Housing Corporation in Sept. 2016. Community outreach is one of the duties of this position.
2.1.4 Incorporate basic life/living skills, and financial literacy programs where possible in supports and services to people who are currently housed and for those in transition.		Number of evictions averted due to intervention.					Basic life skills, financial literacy, and other supports are provided at Fair Winds, Harmony House, Second Story, Fresh Start, YWCA Women's Residence, and various other transitional housing programs.
2.1.5 Endorse the need, and actively pursue funding for a Social Worker through the YWCA to support emergency and transitional housing residents in the community.	Increase the number of successful tenancies by emergency and transitional housing residents.	Number of residents securing stable housing and maintaining it for a period of at least six months.	2014 Dep. on available funding	City/Community			A Social Worker began work in 2016 at YWCA as part of the Youth Homelessness Protocol to work with homeless youth, funded through a \$360,000 3-year provincial Poverty Reduction grant.
2.1.6 Continue to provide, and expand where possible, funding for low to moderate income home owners to undertake emergency or essential home repairs to allow them to continue to live in their own	Assistance to at least 10 households per year.	Number of home owner households able to continue to live in their homes when necessary health/safety repairs completed.	2014-19	City/Community	The St. Thomas/Elgin Home Repair program ran from 2012-14; \$100,877 was provided to 21 households for	\$50,000 through the IAH Home Repair Program helped 7 homeowners pay for new roofs (4), major foundation repairs (1),	\$50,000 was provided to 5 homeowners and one multi-residential operator in 2016 under the Home Repair program for such

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homes.					emergency or essential repairs, mainly roof and furnace replacements or repairs.	furnace replacement (1), and sewer line repairs (1).	improvements as new roofs, wall insulation, structural repairs, and a new furnace.
2.1.7 Evaluate the current St. Thomas Home Repair Program for its effectiveness prior to 2015. If deemed effective in keeping these homeowners in their homes, continue/expand the program as federal/provincial funds become available.	Evaluation of effectiveness of program	Number of households assisted and housing retained	2014-15	City	<p>\$50,000 was allocated to continue the home repair program in 2015 through the Investment in Affordable Housing program.</p> <p>\$328,240 in IAH funding was allocated to ten residential care homes in St. Thomas and Elgin for the installation of sprinkler systems to comply with mandatory Fire Code requirements.</p>		\$50,000 per year has been allocated to the Home Repair program under the Investment in Affordable Housing Extension Program until 2019/20.

Strategic Direction 3.0

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

OBJECTIVE 3.1: Ensure that emergency and crisis services are accessible to persons experiencing episodes of homelessness, with a view to immediately setting goals, with supports, to move into stable, sustainable housing.

Actions	Targets	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
<p>3.1.1 Ensure existing programs and services that help people maintain housing and prevent homelessness continue, new programs and services are developed according to client-centred (not system centred) principles, evaluating effectiveness, and enhancing where needed, as funds become available. Use strategies to measure outcomes devised by OMSSA.</p>	<p>See 2.1.2 above</p>	<p>See 2.1.2 above</p>	<p>2014-19</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>A new Residential Care Homes delivery system was implemented on April 1, 2014 through a partnership between the City and CMHA Elgin Branch, increasing the level and quality of services for about 70 vulnerable residents.</p> <p>CMHA purchased additional crisis beds in the community to quickly house people in need of shelter and support.</p> <p>20 hostel rooms for women are available at the YWCA residence on Mary St.; 42 women were served.</p>		<p>Elgin and St. Thomas Housing Corporation was amalgamated into the City of St. Thomas’ corporate structure in September 2016 to provide better client-centred one-stop access to services including housing and homelessness services.</p>

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Actions	Targets	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
<p>3.1.2 Evaluate how attendance at Inn Out of the Cold, particularly for people regularly staying at the Inn Out of the Cold, is affected by the opening of the Second Story transitional housing and examine the need for increased services for the population served, including an evaluation of daytime programming, extending the season and the need for additional transitional or supportive housing.</p>	<p>Reduced use of emergency short-term housing.</p> <p>Shorten length of stay through rapid housing approaches</p> <p>Reduce recidivism</p>	<p>Quantitative/ qualitative evaluation – occupancy</p> <p>Ability to assess mental health and other issues and capacity to assist</p> <p>Review where people transition to, need for supports to obtain housing, etc.</p>	<p>Spring 2015</p>	<p>Community /City</p>	<p>61 individuals stayed at Inn Out of the Cold during the 2014/15 winter season; total of 706 bed nights; another 150 individuals came for hot suppers only; staff work with Second Story and YWCA to refer individuals to Second Story or other housing; CMHA and Oxford-Elgin Legal Clinic assist; CHPI funds from the City support the shelter operations; Inn staff is available year-round.</p>		<p>In 2016, 118 homeless individuals stayed overnight at Inn Out of the Cold for a total of 1,261 bed nights from Nov/16 to Apr/17. 172 others came just for the evening meal. The Inn also provided supplies such as clothing, toilet paper, shoes, diapers, and baby items as needed.</p> <p>Analysis of the need for increased services for the population served by Inn Out of the Cold is underway. An Expression of Interest for supported transitional housing funding was submitted to the Province.</p>

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Actions	Targets	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
<p>3.1.3 Determine how Second Story is addressing the transitional housing needs of men in the community, and what service gaps continue to exist for this population.</p>	<p>Reduction of service gaps.</p>	<p>Quantitative /qualitative evaluation re: occupancy</p> <p>Ability to assess mental health and other issues and capacity to assist</p> <p>Review where people transition to, need for supports to obtain housing etc.</p>	<p>Spring 2015</p>	<p>City/ Community</p>	<p>Second Story opened in November 2013; 7 hostel beds; 22 residents ages 16-69 housed from Dec. 2013 to Dec. 2014; CHPI funds from the City help support operations.</p> <p>Need identified for more housing for young men.</p>		<p>An analysis is underway to identify gaps and possible solutions.</p>
<p>3.1.4 Endorse recent youth homelessness recommendations. Implement Coordinated Service Protocol to Respond to Youth Homelessness, evaluate implementation, and determine how this protocol can be extended to other populations.</p>	<p>Youth protocol implemented and determine applicability/ revision for use with non-youth homeless.</p>	<p>Evaluation of youth inter-agency protocol system.</p>	<p>2014-19</p>	<p>CCYE/ Community /City</p>	<p>An inter-agency protocol was established through the Children’s Action network in 2013 to coordinate service provision for homeless youth; 44 homeless youth between the ages of 15 and 24 accessed resources through the protocol.</p> <p>7 young men moved through Fair Winds transitional housing for young men ages 16-24.</p> <p>4 young women ages 16-24 moved through the Harmony House transitional housing</p>		<p>The Youth Homelessness Protocol continues to provide effective services for homeless youth. Principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversion from the system if possible • Family reunification if possible • Harm reduction • Youth-centred • Informed consent and confidentiality • Collective impact • Responsiveness and immediate services

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					program.		YWCA provided training for community agencies on SPDAT, an acuity assessment tool. Social Services caseworkers attended the training.
3.1.5 Investigate a “Housing Help Centre” or a one stop social services delivery model and/or connections with health services. Expand the Housing Program Coordinator role and resources to meet increasing need and provide central access for people to go to for services.	Measure caseload and outcomes for people being served by the Housing Program Coordinator (HPC), and determine; need to enhance this service, community capacity to meet need; and model.	Evaluation or report on findings, including recommendations.	2014-19 dep. on funding available.	City/Community	Two Housing Programs Coordinators at the OW Dept. are able to access various programs and resources to help people find or sustain housing.		The idea of a Housing Help Centre is being investigated in cooperation with other community agencies. A one-stop social services delivery model was initiated with the amalgamation of Elgin and St. Thomas Housing Corporation into the City’s corporate structure in Sept. 2016.

Strategic Direction 4.0

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

OBJECTIVE: 4.1 Increase community partnerships and collaborations and actively advocate for a reduction in poverty and increased housing stability for all residents of St. Thomas and Elgin County.

Actions	Target	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
4.1.1 Examine opportunities for further service integration of health and social services and support community agencies in pursuing additional funding through the LHIN to address housing and support needs of persons with mental illness, addictions and undiagnosed mental illness.	Initiate and monitor the implementation of the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan including a review at 5 years	HHAG reports annually on Housing and Homelessness Plan progress through an Annual Report Card	2015-19	City/ Community/ LHIN/ Prov	A new residential care homes network was established, connecting health services with care homes operators; Central Community Health Centre now makes regular mobile unit visits to homes.		Opportunities are being pursued.
4.1.2 Expand collaborative priority-setting through the Housing and Homeless Action Group (HHAG). Effective planning of homeless-related mental health and addiction services, and housing supports, will require enhanced collaboration between the LHIN, the City and other community support organizations, including the Aboriginal community, Violence Against Women Agencies and Accessibility Committees.		City reporting annually on Provincially-prescribed Performance Measures			Community partners meet quarterly at the Housing & Homelessness Action Group table; HHAG is actively working to engage the LHIN.		HHAG has invited members of the local First Nations communities to participate. Collaborative priority-setting continues at the group's quarterly meetings.

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Actions	Target	Measure	Time frame	Resp.	2014 Progress Report	2015 Progress Report	2016 Progress Report
4.1.3 Encourage and support community initiatives for supportive housing. Seek capital funding through senior levels of gov't, coordinate funding with partners such as LHIN, CMHA etc.	Determining the need for housing, intended population, number of units, model of support, secure funds for capital and operating.	Supported housing needs assessment.	Ongoing 2014-19	Community/ City/ Prov	HHAG is actively working to engage the LHIN.		Applications have been made for capital and operational funding for new supportive housing initiatives.
4.1.4 Investigate ways to expand outreach of housing/homelessness services to the County i.e. Skype might be used by several agencies to provide remote access to prevention, as well as other services. Model may become a rural virtual "hub" shared by many community services, as well as those relocating to London.	Contact other SM re: outreach methods to rural/remote areas, evaluate for St. Thomas Elgin, determine appropriate implementation strategy for City and community programs.	Improved service to rural or remote areas in Elgin.	2015-19	City/ Community	OW Dept. opened a satellite office in Aylmer in Sept. 2014.		A second Social Services outreach office was opened in West Lorne in May 2016 to service West Elgin residents. An Ontario Works caseworker is based at the West Elgin shared services facility two days a week.
4.1.5 Increase opportunities for information sharing and cross training across agencies and volunteers to enhance knowledge understanding and communication	Increased inter-agency training.	Number of multi-sector training sessions system for sharing information and collaborative service provision opportunities.	Ongoing 2014-24	City/ Community		OW and Elgin St. Thomas Public Health managers meet regularly to share program information. Cross training of OW and ESTPH staff took place in 2015. Staff from outside agencies regularly present information at OW general	Regular information sharing and cross training among City Social Services and other communities agencies and organizations continues.

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						staff meetings; OW staff are regularly invited to present information at outside agency meetings as well.	
4.1.6 Advocate for policy change to build on the approach of the Ontario Child Benefit by developing an expanded range of income and services to be available to all low-income Ontarians.	Increased financial security for low-income residents.	Number and types of lobbying actions.	2014-2024	Com-munity, directly to provincial gov't (MCSS, and MoH/LTC) using appropriate and effective methods. Sector organizations and Municipal Councils (OMSSA/AMO /FCM)			
4.1.7 Advocate for the replacement of short-term coverage in Ontario Works with more appropriate financial support outside of the social assistance system for those who are temporarily unemployed.							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.

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4.1.8 Support the advocacy campaign for a healthy food supplement of \$100 monthly to all adults receiving social assistance in Ontario.							
4.1.9 Advocate for increased and stable funding from the Federal and Provincial governments in order provide new affordable rental housing units in the City and County.	Lobby through sector organizations and Municipal Councils (OMSSA/ONPHA/AMO/FCM/ CHRA) and directly to provincial gov't (MCSS, MMAH and MoH/LTC) using appropriate and effective methods.	Number of new affordable rental housing units.	2014-2024	City/Com-munity			
4.1.10 Advocate for Federal and Provincial government funding to maintain existing social housing stock in the City and County.		Examine change in federal funding for social housing.					
4.1.11 Advocate for increased Federal and Provincial funding for portable rent supplements, especially to meet the needs of the working poor.		# of new rent supplement units.					St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services Dept. supported the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA's) consultation paper to the Province on the subject of a Portable Rent Supplement. This new program will be introduced in the fall of 2017.
4.1.12 Encourage all existing social housing providers to reduce energy and water consumption/costs through the use of available grants	Reduce operating costs for social and affordable housing providers	# of new units using grants Energy efficiency of new units	2014 - 2024	City			\$791,533 was granted to St. Thomas/Elgin under SHEEP (the Social Housing Energy Efficiency Program) in 2016. Five qualifying social housing

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							providers used the funds to improve energy efficiency (new windows, doors, heat pumps) in units heated by electricity where the tenant pays hydro. The program will result in greatly reduced hydro bills for low-income tenants.
4.1.13 New affordable housing created with federal, provincial or municipal funds should be encouraged to exceed the energy efficiency requirements of the 2012 Building Code.							A Request for Proposals for new affordable housing issued in 2016 required proposals to exceed Building Code energy efficiency standards.