

Peterborough
10-year housing & homelessness plan

Progress Report 2014



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Progress Report 2014

Introduction

Everyone needs a home. Home should be a shelter from the world: a place to rest, work, play, and raise a family. But for people who are homeless, or whose homes are unaffordable or in poor repair, not having a safe and secure home can impact everything: their health and wellbeing, education, work and relationships.

In 2014, the City of Peterborough launched a plan to address the needs of people across the housing continuum – from homelessness, to maintaining tenancies, to homeownership. The 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan (the Plan) was approved by City Council in November 2013 and endorsed by County Council in December 2013.

2014 marks the first year of the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. Over the next nine years, the City will continue to engage, partner and leverage resources to build a housing and homelessness system to meet community needs, and will be accountable to the community and the province through annual Progress Reports.

About the Progress Report

This Progress Report highlights the progress made in 2014 for nine out of the 20 commitments in the Plan. Future reports will focus on efforts to build on this progress and work toward the outcomes for the remaining 11 commitments. This first Progress Report represents a small step toward understanding the real impact of the Plan on people in the Peterborough region. It's a baseline report, which means it establishes a set of statistics that we will look at over time to measure change.

This report is also part of a larger conversation. In developing the Plan, we called on the views and experience of many contributors and stakeholders: elected officials, agency partners, advocates and community members. We are continuing that conversation through this Progress Report.

As an annual report, the Progress Report takes its place alongside other reports about the Peterborough region, including:

- The Affordable Housing Action Committee's Housing is Fundamental
- The Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough's Vital Signs Report
- The Peterborough Social Planning Council's Quality of Life report

The vision for the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan is:

"We will eliminate long-term homelessness and ensure quality housing that all residents can afford by:

- Engaging those in need;
- Enhancing community and partner involvement; and
- Leveraging resources from the community, the private sector and the government."

Providing People-Centred Service

Commitment 1: Engage members of the community, including people who use housing and homelessness services

How we're making progress under this commitment:

1. Engaging the community on the new Housing Choice Rent Supplement program.

What it means: The Affordable Housing Action Committee (AHAC) promoted a municipally-funded rent supplement for low-income tenants. When the opportunity arose, AHAC members helped research and plan the program, which City and County Councils approved.

2. Engaging the community to set new funding priorities for housing and homelessness services.

What it means: AHAC, the Homelessness Support Services Coordinating Committee, the Supportive Housing Network and township representatives identified priority populations and made recommendations. City staff took this input into consideration in their recommendations to Council about funding for housing and homelessness services.

3. Getting community feedback from people who use housing and homelessness services.

What it means:

- a. Guests and volunteers of the Warming Room described what did and didn't work well in the first year of the program.
- b. Clients of Social Services and the Housing Resource Centre provided feedback on changes to the Housing Stability Fund.
- c. Tenants in social housing completed a resident satisfaction survey. The results were shared with the social housing providers.

! **337**
households provided
feedback on housing
and homelessness services

Municipal Reports and Approvals related to the theme "Providing People-Centred Service"

Reports to the City of Peterborough Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and the Joint Township of Selwyn and County of Peterborough Accessibility Advisory Committee:

- Provided information on the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Peterborough. (Reports AAC14-005 and AAC14-005A)



Creating Housing Affordability

Commitment 6:

Expand rent supplements

How we're making progress under this commitment:

1. Creating a new rent supplement program to help low-income tenants.

What it means: The new Housing Choice Rent Supplement program supports 98 low-income tenant households across the City and County of Peterborough. They were successfully enrolled in a program that provides a monthly payment of up to \$250 to help pay their rent.

Commitment 7: Maximize use of government and private sector resources for new affordable rental housing

How we're making progress under this commitment:

1. Providing municipal incentives to build new rental units in the City of Peterborough.

What it means: The Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan program offers incentives to housing developers in the City of Peterborough. These incentives can include waivers, exemptions and/or refunds of municipal fees, as well as grants and property tax incentives, in exchange for creating rental units with rents that are Average Market Rent or lower.

2. Pointing the way to successful multi-unit development in the Peterborough region.

What it means: The Supply Sub-committee of the Affordable Housing Action Committee and the Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network created a document designed to help developers who want to build new affordable housing. The Road Map for Housing Developers outlined information on applying for permits, approvals and government incentives at all levels – federal, provincial and municipal.

3. Building affordable housing into the bottom line.

What it means: Development charges are collected by the City of Peterborough to help pay for important services like roads, police, fire and transit. For the first time, the City has added a new affordable housing charge. Funds paid under this charge will go toward incentives for building new affordable housing.



Municipal Reports and Approvals related to the theme "Creating Housing Affordability"

Reports to the Joint Services Steering Committee (JSSC):

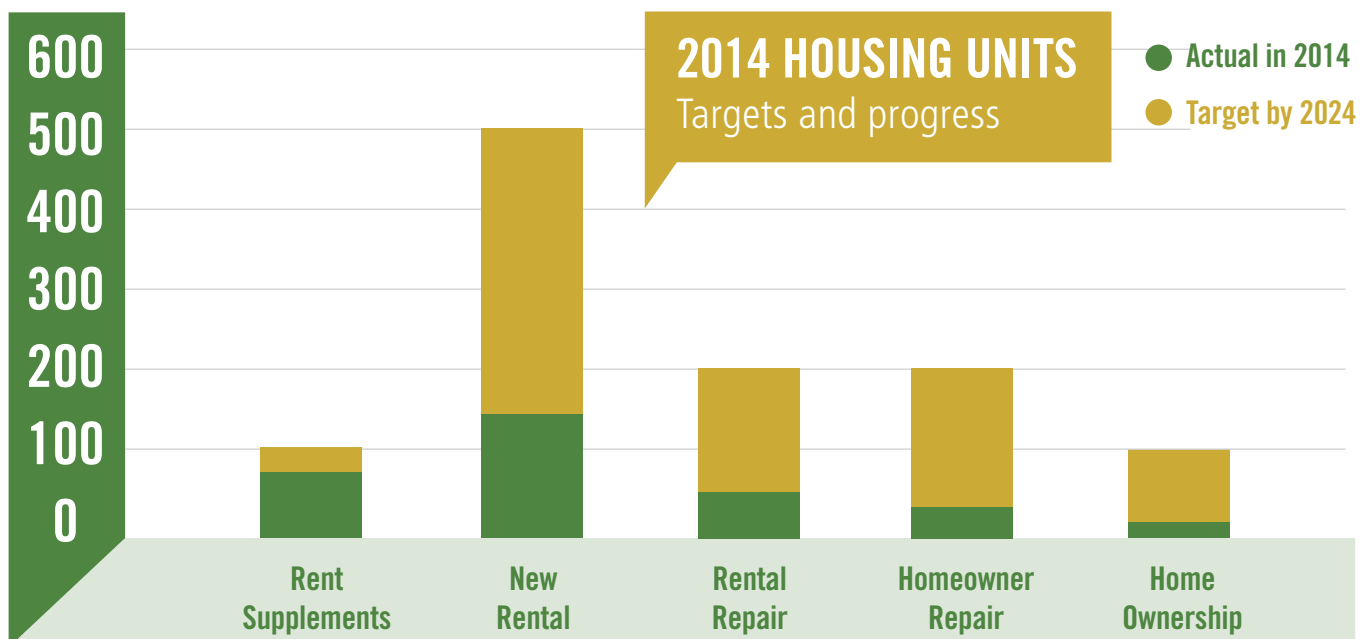
- Recommended endorsement of the Housing Choice Rent Supplement program, to be funded in part by the City and County of Peterborough. (Report PLHDJSSC14-001) - Approved by Council
- Provided information on the End of Operating Agreements for Social Housing. This report outlined strategic issues for planning for the future of social housing in Peterborough City and County. (Report PLHDJSSC14-002) - Approved by Council
- Recommended endorsement of a proposal for the use of Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) funding from the original program and from the program extension for the development of affordable housing. (Report PLHDJSSC14-003) - Approved by Council

Reports to the Committee of the Whole recommended approval of municipal incentives to create affordable rental housing:

- 42 units at 21 Barnardo Avenue, now called Hazelbrae Place. (Report PLHD12-007 and PLHD14-005) - Approved by Council
- 41 units at the former Knox United Church. (Report PLHD14-003) - Approved by Council
- 65 units at The Mount Community Centre. (Report PLHD14-004) - Approved by Council



48.1% of renter households paid more than 30% of their income on rent in 2013



Peterborough Housing and Homelessness Plan

Infographic of a few key indicators

The statistics in this infographic are compiled from a range of sources. Depending on where the data comes from: e.g. National Household Survey vs. a City-led program survey, the timeframe and sample size we're looking at can be quite different. For a complete list of sources, go to www.peterborough.ca/housing

Lessons Learned and Looking forward to 2015

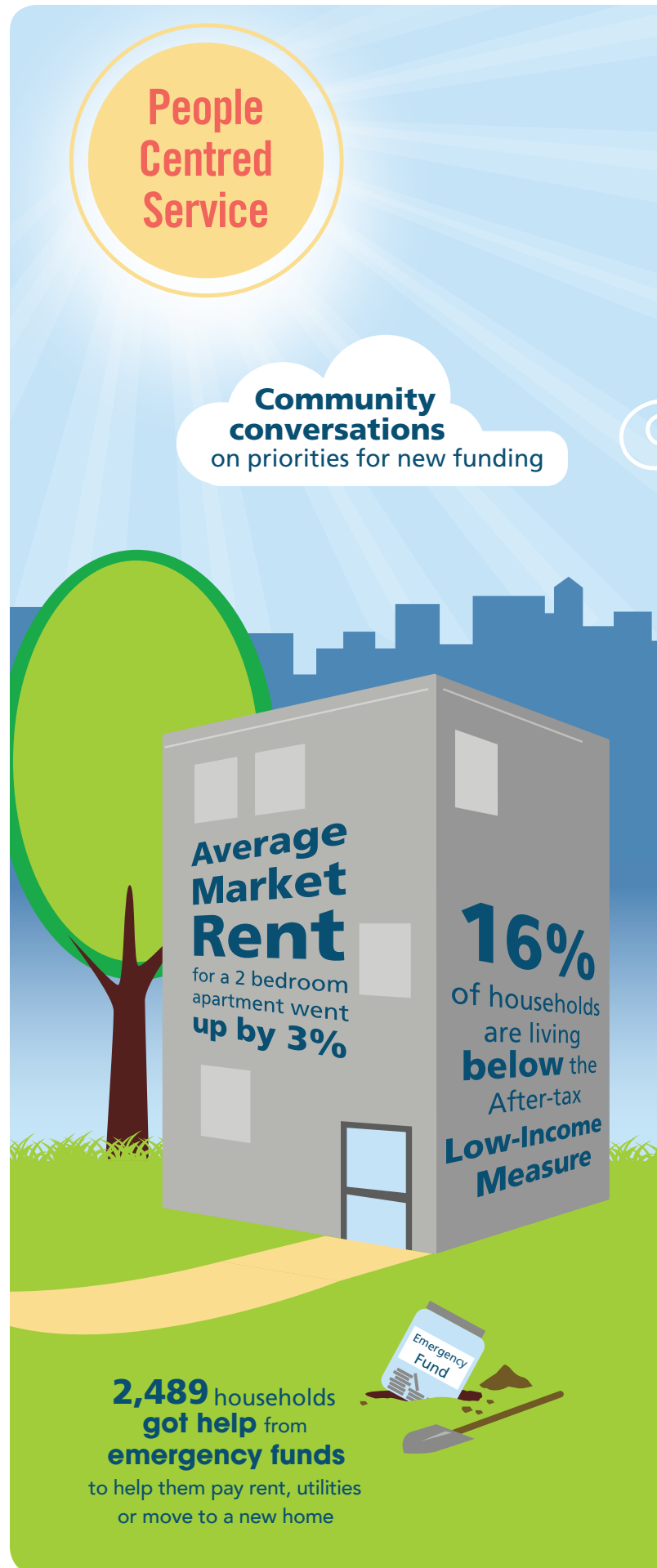
Some of the statistics we have used to measure our progress so far don't tell us enough about actual outcomes for people: about what changed, for whom, and by how much.

For example, one way to understand whether housing and homelessness initiatives are helping to reduce homelessness is to look at the number of nights people stayed in a shelter. These are called "bed nights". But homelessness is a big, complex issue. It isn't always possible to draw a direct line between an initiative, e.g. more intensive help for people who are homeless, and an outcome, e.g. a decrease in the number of bed nights in shelter. There are lots of reasons for this. Some programs that are dedicated to stabilizing people are offered in-shelter. This means people stay longer to participate in the program, which is a good thing, but translates to a "negative" statistic: increased bed nights.

One commitment in the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan is specifically dedicated to looking at what we do with statistics: how we collect data, how we share it, and how we use it to measure our progress. The City looks at this work as part of the commitment to providing people-centred service, because tracking, collecting and measuring outcomes means engaging with people who use housing and homelessness services.

In 2015, we will continue to work toward measuring and understanding housing and homelessness outcomes for people in the Peterborough region, so that we can continue to improve in the future.

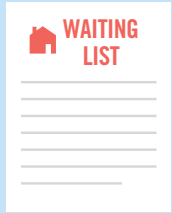
Housing and homelessness in the Peterborough region - At a glance



337

households provided **feedback** on housing and homelessness

Community input into the new **Housing Choice Rent Supplement**



There are **0.9% more** households on the **waiting list** for Rent Geared to Income assistance. About 200 households move into **RGI housing** every year

Housing First Working Group launched



Since 2004, there has been an average **increase of 70 more** rental units per year

80 households received a loan to help with a downpayment on a house since 2008

3% fewer renter households are in **core housing need** than in 2006.
2006: 6,385
2011: 6,171

Resale house prices went up by **1.1%**
2013: \$256,415
2014: \$259,334

Occupancy of **shelter beds** went up **6%** from 2013.
2013: 20,790
2014: 22,037

4% more applications to **evict** for non-payment of rent were filed in 2013 than in 2012.

12% more households are getting **help to pay their rent**

48.1% of renter households paid more than 30% of their income on rent in 2013.

EVICTED
2012: 458
2013: 477

Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Housing Stability

Commitment 13:

Maintain and enhance housing stability

How we're making progress under this commitment:

1. People at risk of losing their housing are getting emergency financial help and coordinated, wrap-around services.

What it means: The Housing Stability Fund (HSF) program provided emergency funding to people/households that required assistance with last month's rent, rent arrears, fuel/hydro arrears, and moving expenses. A total of 2,489 households were helped in 2014.

The Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT) helped people with complex challenges who were at risk of homelessness. Staff from health, housing, homelessness, mental health and other community support agencies came together and coordinated supports to keep people housed. From January to June, 2014, HCRT supported 32 clients.

2. Making the case for more funds to prevent homelessness in Peterborough City and County.

What it means: After continuous advocacy involving municipal leaders, community members and agency partners, the province announced their intention to reinvest one-time transitional funding into the overall Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) funding structure. Through an additional \$42 million province-wide funding, \$1.5 million was allocated to help people in the Peterborough region for 2014-15.



Commitment 14:

Improve discharge planning from institutions, specifically hospital and correctional facilities

How we're making progress under this commitment:

1. Helping prevent homelessness for people who are leaving the hospital or correctional facilities.

What it means: City staff worked with community partners and the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE-LHIN) through an initiative called Health Links. This initiative coordinated supports for people whose mental health, addictions or behaviour compromises their housing. The goal of the initiative was to put the right supports in place, in the community, for when the patient was discharged from the hospital.

City staff met with correctional facility staff to improve discharge planning processes from the Central East Correctional Centre (CECC). This included the development of an intake screening tool and guidelines for coordinating support between CECC and the Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT) before an individual is discharged.

Commitment 16:

Pursue collaborative priority-setting among funders in homelessness services

How we're making progress under this commitment:

1. Collaborating with the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE-LHIN) to set funding priorities.

What it means: The CE-LHIN announced dedicated services and rent supplements for 8 people who are experiencing mental health and addictions challenges. City staff and community agencies collaborated to coordinate use of this new funding.





Municipal Reports and Approvals related to the theme "Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Housing Stability"

Reports to the Joint Services Steering Committee (JSSC):

- Recommended provincial and municipal homelessness funding allocations for 2014. (Report CSSSJSSC14-002)
- Approved by Council
- Provided information on the status of the Discretionary Benefits and Housing Stability Fund expenditures for 2014. This report also outlined the need for support for the Housing Stability Fund program. (Report CSSSJSSC14-003)
- Approved by Council
- Recommended approval of funding priorities for homelessness prevention under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). (Report CSSSJSSC14-007)
- Approved by Council

! **12%**
more households are
getting help
to pay rent.



Transitioning Out of Homelessness

Commitment 17:

Develop and implement a “Housing First” program model

How we’re making progress under this commitment:

1. Creating a model for Housing First in the Peterborough region.

What it means: City staff led a working group to develop a local Housing First model, building on the experience and knowledge of nine agencies and service providers. Housing First looks at permanent housing as a first step toward recovery, and potentially, self sufficiency.

2. Providing minimal-barrier shelter for people who are homeless in the winter.

What it means: The Warming Room is a minimal-barrier, seasonal program that serves many people who can’t or choose not to stay at the emergency shelters. People who stay at the Warming Room may otherwise be without safe shelter, and many could benefit from a Housing First program that provides intensive support in permanent housing.

On an average night in the 2014-15 winter season, 18 people stayed at the Warming Room, but on many cold nights the number rose to 20-25. In the winter of 2013-14, a total of 100 people stayed at the Warming Room.

The model, dedicated staff, committed volunteers and community support contributed to the Warming Room’s success.

Commitment 18:

Enhance Brock Mission facility and services

How we’re making progress under this commitment:

1. Planning for improvements at Brock Mission Men’s shelter

What it means: An assessment was completed of the building owned by Brock Mission men’s shelter. A working group looked at ways to redevelop the shelter to include transitional housing. Funding support from City and County was requested in 2014.

Commitment 20:

Enhance supports that prepare people to move out of emergency shelters and to secure and retain their housing.

How we’re making progress under this commitment:

1. Helping bridge people’s transition from shelter to permanent housing.

What it means: Social Services staff worked closely with staff from the shelters and community agencies and successfully connected people with supports before they left the shelter. This helped to ensure that fewer people fell through the cracks as they transitioned between shelter support and into permanent housing.

2. Running a Life Skills program helped people staying in learn how to live independently and increase their success in retaining housing.

What it means: 23 people took part in sessions on coping skills, financial literacy and community resources, communication, anger management and hygiene. Staff from Canadian Mental Health Association of Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge led sessions that were aimed at improving housing outcomes for people who are homeless.

3. Providing a rent supplement to help youth living at Abbott House.

What it means: Abbott House is a transitional housing program of the YES Shelter for Youth and Families. In 2014-15, seven young adults participated in a graduated rent supplement program. In this program, YES holds up to six months of rent supplement in trust for the residents. While they are at Abbott House, they have the support of a mentor to learn life skills and budgeting. If they stay the entire year, they will have developed life skills, gained a landlord reference and saved up to \$1,350 to help with their next steps.

Municipal Reports and Approvals related to the theme “Transitioning Out of Homelessness”

A report to the Joint services Steering Committee (JSSC):

- Provided information on the status of the Winter Weather Response pilot program (the Warming Room) that operated from November 2013 to April 2014. This report also recommended a Winter Weather Response program and funding for program delivery for 2014-15. Report C55JSSC14-004) – Approved by Council.

▶ **2,489** households
got help from
emergency funds
to help them pay rent, utilities
or move to a new home





Peterborough 10-year Housing & Homelessness Plan Progress Report 2014

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alternative formats upon request.