

Housing Stability Plan

Draft Strategies and Actions

Draft Date: October 17, 2019

The Housing Stability Plan

Strategy Map



Vision

Housing stability for all.

Strategic Priorities	Strategies
Responding To The Homelessness Crisis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work collaboratively across systems to address the needs of individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness. 2. Create a robust outreach system and rapid response to support individuals sleeping rough or urban camping. 3. Provide the right level of support at the right time to decrease inappropriate use of emergency services. 4. Prevent individuals and families from entering homelessness. 5. House and re-house individuals and families experiencing homelessness rapidly.
Creating, Retaining, and Enhancing Housing Stock	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create and retain affordable housing stock. 2. Revitalize and modernize social housing to create sustainable community housing. 3. Increase supportive and specialized housing options for households at risk of or experiencing chronic homelessness. 4. Explore and implement alternative models of housing to meet the specific needs of the London market. 5. Build and maintain partnerships and engage stakeholders towards affordable housing solutions.
Accessing, Securing, and Retaining Housing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a coordinated intake and centralized access system to connect individuals and families to the best housing stability solutions to meet their needs. 2. Implement coordinated access to mental health and addictions services and supports. 3. Support positive movement within a range of housing options and services based on the needs and interests of individuals and families. 4. Strengthen the support for individuals and families in need of affordable housing through enhanced delivery of housing stability services. 5. Integrate and expand the housing stability approach to other services and sectors. 6. Lead social and community housing modernization integrating new regulatory access, supports, and management plans into current service delivery. 7. Promote community engagement, integration, and belonging in neighbourhoods where individuals and families reside.
Leading a New Housing System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Redesign and implement a new housing system to better help clients avoid homelessness and achieve housing stability. 2. Use data to drive decision-making to respond in real-time to the housing stability needs of individuals and families. 3. Modernize service delivery and ease the administrative complexity for individuals and families to access housing stability services. 4. Be a local and national leader in housing stability.

The Housing Stability Plan

Strategy Map



ACTION NEEDED NOW

- We need to address the homelessness crisis. More people are experiencing homelessness and with more complex needs than ever before.
- We need far more affordable housing stock in our community. The shortage of safe, affordable housing options is impacting the stability and health of people across our community.
- We need better ways of accessing housing. People needing housing are stuck in a market with few options and no centralized way of getting meaningful help.
- We need better ways and more options to help people access the supports they need to stay housed.

ONGOING ACTION NEEDED

- We need to make sure there are safe, affordable housing options available for our community as it grows and changes.
- We need to make sure existing investments in housing are not lost. Government investments in housing, like roads and other infrastructure, need to be well maintained and managed while new developments occur.
- We need better ways to measure, manage, and respond to the things that change our housing market.
- We need to lead by example. A strong housing stability plan needs to be managed as a system and engage all sectors and stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: RESPONDING TO THE HOMELESSNESS CRISIS



What We Heard... There is a homelessness crisis in London.

The public told us there needs to be a focus on:

PREVENTION

- “We need to prevent the crisis from happening.”
- “Prevention is cost effective.”
- “Opportunities exist to focus on prevention.”
- “Focus on prevention measures that are immediate when housing loss occurs. This is a critical intervention time.”

DECREASED EMERGENCY SHELTER USE

- “The focus needs to be on minimizing shelter use and the length of time in shelter.”
- “Integrating a Housing First focus into shelters is a good step forward.”
- “Focus on shelter diversion.”
- “Encourage a culture shift in shelters towards assertive engagement and support to secure housing.”

OUTREACH

- “We’ve seen a dramatic increase in those sleeping rough and urban camping. The need has increased significantly.”
- “Lots of people sleeping rough. The plan needs to ensure nobody falls through the cracks.”
- “Increase outreach services.”
- “Stronger collaboration and partnerships to provide outreach supports.”

DIVERSION

- “We need to focus on diversion, so we can prevent folks from ending up in emergency shelters in the first place.”
- “Diversion work is currently taking place and is quite successful, especially for family shelters.”
- “A diversion strategy is important because it is a huge part of prevention.”
- “Increase access to more rigorous diversion processes and options.”

COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

- “Minimize the amount of times people have to tell their story.”
- “No matter what door or number you call, you should be getting the same information.”
- “Moving towards centralization and collaboration is critical.”
- “Collaboration and partnerships are key to solving homelessness.”

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: RESPONDING TO THE HOMELESSNESS CRISIS



London
CANADA

What We Know... There is a homelessness crisis. In London more people are experiencing homelessness and with more complex needs than ever before.

388

emergency shelter and violence against women emergency shelter beds are available in London.

100%

of emergency shelters are operating at capacity. Shelters are full each night and individuals and families are staying in emergency shelter for longer periods of time.

300

people are on London's By-Name List, which includes individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and high use of emergency shelter and/or urban camping.

200

individuals are sleeping rough and urban camping.

10 & 10

10 daytime and 10 overnight resting spaces are in place to support individuals who need a place to rest, sleep, shower, eat, and engage with service providers.

Unknown

There are many individuals and families in London that are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: RESPONDING TO THE HOMELESSNESS CRISIS



What We Will Do... To respond to the homelessness crisis.

OUR GOAL:

Meet the immediate needs of individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

OUR RESULT:

Reduce the number of individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Strategy #1:

Work collaboratively across systems to address the needs of individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Our Actions:

- a. Triage and prioritize participants system-wide to support effective and efficient use of resources.
- b. Develop a centralized system for individuals and families in need of short-term and long-term permanent housing stability.
- c. Implement a community-wide communication strategy on how services are to be provided in London.
- d. Maximize provincial and federal funding to meet agreement requirements and to enhance housing stability.

Strategy #2:

Create a robust outreach system and rapid response to support individuals sleeping rough or urban camping.

Our Actions:

- a. Increase integration with outreach agencies and city service areas to support individuals and families living rough.
- b. Engage key partners in the Coordinated Informed Response, including those with lived experience.
- c. Operationalize the Coordinated Informed Response city-wide to house individuals and families living rough.
- d. Rapidly house individuals and families sleeping rough or urban camping.

Strategy #3:

Provide the right level of support at the right time to decrease inappropriate use of emergency services.

Our Actions:

- a. Increase system capacity and availability of services to meet the housing stability needs of individuals and families in crisis.
- b. Work with LPS/EMS to establish an engagement protocol to support individuals living rough or urban camping.
- c. Increase supports located within other sectors to prevent discharge to shelter or homelessness.

Strategy #4:

Prevent individuals and families from entering homelessness.

Our Actions:

- a. Improve diversion practices to better assist individuals and families to secure housing.
- b. Implement eviction and prevention programs to support people from entering homelessness.
- c. Establish a mobile diversion and prevention team that supports individuals throughout the City.

Strategy #5:

House and re-house individuals and families experiencing homelessness rapidly.

Our Actions:

- a. Implement unique opportunities to support rapid re-housing options.
- b. Strengthen the current housing finder role.
- c. Engage landlords to increase rental opportunities for rapid rehousing.
- d. Provide financial supports to assist individuals to secure housing.

*What resonates with you?
Is there anything missing?
How can you help?*

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: **CREATING, RETAINING, AND ENHANCING HOUSING STOCK**



What We Heard... London needs to build more housing stock and maintain the housing stock it has.

The public told us there needs to be a focus on:

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- “We need new affordable housing in London.”
- “Build more affordable housing, with a cap on top rent.”
- “We need many more affordable homes and apartments built. It must be a priority.”
- “If we do not have safe, clean, affordable housing options the issues are not going to get better.”

SUPPORTIVE AND SPECIALIZED HOUSING

- “Housing provided with an understanding of where people are at.”
- “Offer different and more housing with supports.”
- “The priority is to add units with supports.”
- “Enhance supportive housing stock and other low-barrier housing options.”

INNOVATION

- “Mixed housing is more effective, but hard to do. This is where innovation comes in.”
- “We need to look at innovative solutions. Not the same old, same old.”
- “Implement new ways of managing and building new units or new housing models.”
- “Look at successful models in other cities.”

TOOLS

- “The goal needs to be funding for more affordable housing, which is a major barrier.”
- “Require builders to incorporate a certain percent of rental units as affordable.”
- “Better incentives for developers to create and keep housing affordable.”
- “Make it easy for homeowners to convert part of their house into affordable housing.”

COMMUNITY HOUSING

- “Ensure community housing recognizes the diverse populations who need it.”
- “We need to be thinking about changing the structure of community housing.”
- “We need a new way. It’s a difficult system to navigate.”
- “Need improved maintenance for community housing.”

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: CREATING, RETAINING, AND ENHANCING HOUSING STOCK



What We Know... We need far more affordable housing stock in our community.

3,000

new affordable housing units are needed in London.

300+

units need to be created each year to close this gap.

5-7

years is the average wait time for social housing. The demand for social housing has grown 70% over the last two years.

2.1%

rental market vacancy rate. This equates to virtually no available rental housing stock that is affordable.

88%

of those entering social housing have complex needs.

14%

of Londoners are in core housing need. London ranks 4th nationally for individuals and families living within Core Housing Need.

→ There is very little movement in the housing market.

→ The private housing market is becoming increasingly unaffordable due to rising rents, falling rental vacancy rates and average income not keeping pace.

→ ODSP / OW Shelter Rates are inadequate to the true average market rent in London-Middlesex.

→ A limited amount of new affordable housing is being built annually.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: CREATING, RETAINING, AND ENHANCING HOUSING STOCK



What We Will Do... To create, retain, and enhance housing stock.

OUR GOAL:

Sufficient supply and range of housing stock exists to help build strong communities.

OUR RESULT:

Increase affordable quality and mixed housing options.

Strategy #1:

Create and retain affordable housing stock.

Our Actions:

- a. Establish relationships within the private market to retain and enhance existing stock.
- b. Develop surplus lands to include affordable housing.
- c. Advance new financial and development tools for affordable housing.
- d. Create and implement the municipal housing toolbox.
- e. Advance affordable housing through development charges.
- f. Explore opportunities to stimulate new affordable housing through government legislation.
- g. Establish rental conversion policy to limit conversion of rental housing to condominium housing.
- h. Initiate official plan and zoning amendments to allow for appropriate intensification of Housing Regeneration Sites.
- i. Continue to advocate for the Assessment Growth Policy as a funding source opportunity.

Strategy #2:

Increase supportive and specialized housing options for households at risk of or experiencing chronic homelessness.

Our Actions:

- a. Explore transitional housing options that support vulnerable populations that are currently underserved in London.
- b. Develop a supportive housing model based on the unique needs of individuals and families.
- c. Engage experts and leaders in the field towards developing new supportive housing models.
- d. Work across sectors and systems to create supportive housing solutions for persons at risk of homelessness.

Strategy #3:

Revitalize and modernize community housing.

Our Actions:

- a. Support existing plans for the regeneration of community housing.
- b. Leverage funding available across all levels of government in order for providers to have maximum access to capital funding.
- c. Support sector-wide long-term capital planning through a portfolio view of capital requirements to address renovation needs.
- d. Test new technologies or solutions that reduce operating costs in an environmentally sustainable manner and are resilient to climate change.
- e. Build capacity and enhance support to boards through governance and skill development training and advisory.
- f. Implement tools needed to stabilize rent-geared-to-income stock in lieu of end of operating agreements and end of mortgage.
- g. Reduce barriers for alternative housing accommodations to be offered as part of the social housing stock.

Strategy #4:

Explore and implement alternative models of housing to meet the specific needs of the London market.

Our Actions:

- a. Engage experts to determine the ongoing and specific needs and best practices required in London.
- b. Establish a regular update of the guidelines to affordable housing models.

Strategy #5:

Build and maintain partnerships and engage stakeholders towards affordable housing solutions.

Our Actions:

- a. Create partnerships to develop new models of affordable housing.
- b. Work with government programs to create new affordable housing supply.
- c. Explore foundations, land trusts, and other means to attract private investment to affordable housing.
- d. Support and advance the non-profit sector in housing development.

*What resonates with you?
Is there anything missing?
How can you help?*

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: **ACCESSING, SECURING, AND RETAINING** **HOUSING**



What We Heard... Londoners need supports to find housing and stay housed.

The public told us the focus needs to be on:

COORDINATION AND CENTRALIZATION

- “Having centralized intake to be able to divert ensures that clients end up in the best spot possible.”
- “Tools or system (maybe triage?) to assess individuals. It should be short and intensive.”
- “Design centralized access to formally serve a diverse range of clients (triage, case management).”
- “Work with other agencies to ensure the best possible support.”

HOUSING FIRST

- “Focus should be on prioritizing who should be using Housing First programs.”
- “Housing First is a good model, but it isn’t for everyone.”
- “Need to expand Housing First to beyond chronically homeless individuals.”
- “Housing First strategy has to be flexible enough to account for different kinds of groups.”

COMMUNITY BELONGING

- “Establish a sense of community from the beginning. It shouldn’t be an afterthought.”
- “Encourage neighbourhood belonging through scattered site housing.”
- “Strengthening skills based on self-determined goals such as education, family, and social integration.”
- “Intentional community building.”

HOUSING STABILITY

- “Need to look at eviction. We need to keep people housed.”
- “Education needs to be part of this strategy so that people are aware they are about to become homeless or precariously housed.”
- “It would be good to offer more supports to landlords. Relationship building is critical.”
- “Intensive case management specifically focused on housing stability.”

CONNECTION TO SUPPORTS

- “Integration into other processes in hospitals and jails is important, these discharges are complex.”
- “Need to get all community agencies together so everyone is on the same page about how things are going to work.”
- “Once people are housed we cannot leave them alone without supports.”
- “Spend more money on supports to ensure people that are getting housed, stay housed.”

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: ACCESSING, SECURING, AND RETAINING HOUSING



What We Know... We need better ways and more options to help people access the supports they need to stay housed.

1,050

households were supported to maintain their housing between January and June 2019 through Housing Stability Bank loans for rental arrears. Many individuals and families do not require emergency shelter to resolve their homelessness.

400

individuals and families have been successfully housed with support through Housing First programs in London in the last five years. This is getting harder as fewer private market rental units are available.

Unknown

The result of the housing crisis negatively impacts all service sectors.



Individuals and families require access to a range of supports and services based on their unique needs.



Individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness may also be experiencing co-occurring issues related to physical health, mental health, addictions, or trauma.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: **ACCESSING, SECURING, AND RETAINING HOUSING**



What We Will Do... To support accessing, securing,
and retaining housing stock.

OUR GOAL:

Meaningful opportunities to secure and maintain stable housing.

OUR RESULT:

Individuals will secure housing that meets their needs.

Strategy #1:

Implement a coordinated intake and centralized access system to connect individuals and families to the best housing stability solutions to meet their needs.

Our Actions:

- a. Engage VAW sector to find better ways to integrate housing stability solutions.
- b. Develop a seamless touchpoint for individuals and families in need of short-term and long-term permanent housing stability.
- c. Develop and implement a needs assessment as a part of the intake process to better understand the individuals we serve and their unique housing needs.
- d. Revise the current locally-driven priority systems for social housing to better reflect need.

Strategy #2:

Implement coordinated access to mental health and addictions services and supports.

Our Actions:

- a. Reengage relevant sectors to assist in supporting individuals who present with tri-morbidity.
- b. Strengthen partnerships with the health community to explore additional opportunities for continuity of care in community housing communities.

Strategy #3:

Support positive movement within a range of housing options and services based on the needs and interests of individuals and families.

Our Actions:

- a. Work with individuals and families to determine what their support needs are to achieve community belonging, improved employment, and stable housing.
- b. Support housing providers to help tenants reach their community of choice.
- c. Continue to expand offerings of existing programs to individuals and families engaged in the private housing market.

Strategy #4:

Strengthen the support for individuals and families in need of affordable housing through enhanced delivery of housing stability services.

Our Actions:

- a. Review evidence and best practices that respects a tenant's community of choice.
- b. Provide education and supports for property managers and tenants to improve housing stability.
- c. Implement an Eviction Prevention Strategy.
- d. Partner with community housing providers to develop an eviction prevention strategy to support housing stability.
- e. Develop and implement additional housing programs that align with individual needs.

Strategy #5:

Integrate and expand the housing stability approach to other services and sectors.

Our Actions:

- a. Continue to invest in Housing First programs to meet the needs of the community and assist individuals and families to move towards housing stability.
- b. Partner with organizations in a variety of areas to assist individuals and families to remain housed.
- c. Adopt, in conjunction with community organizations, a housing stability approach to help individuals and families to remain housed.

Strategy #6:

Lead social and community housing modernization integrating new regulatory access, supports, and management plans into current service delivery.

Our Actions:

- a. Explore the role of community housing providers in supporting housing stability and preventing homelessness.
- b. Consult with community housing providers on an ongoing basis to determine how to support excellence in maintaining housing stability and preventing homelessness.

Strategy #7:

Promote community engagement, integration, and belonging in neighbourhoods where individuals and families reside.

Our Actions:

- a. Work with housing providers to connect residents to supports, services, and resources in their community.
- b. Work to increase income and provide employment opportunities for individuals and families.

*What resonates with you?
Is there anything missing?
How can you help?*

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: **LEADING A NEW HOUSING STABILITY SYSTEM**



What We Heard... The system needs to be easier to navigate.

The public told us the focus needs to be on:

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

- “Coordinated strategies are important from a systems perspective.”
- “Standardize forms, tools, and language to ensure collaboration and working together.”
- “People often get lost navigating the system.”
- “Work together as one system towards one shared goal.”

DATA SHARING

- “Sharing data and information.”
- “We need better data sharing.”
- “A centralized database that collects and displays real-time data.”
- “There is a data piece to this. Looking forward to something in the Plan.”

SYSTEM REDESIGN

- “Make it easy to navigate the system.”
- “Improve the prioritization process. Have more conversations about what it means to be ‘vulnerable’.”
- “Have a coordinated system to provide proper supports that is based on assessments.”
- “We need a unified approach to housing and homelessness.”

LONDON AS A LEADER

- “Make London a leader in this!”
- “Solutions don’t require a great capital investment. But, they do require willpower and bold leadership.”
- “We need a unified approach to housing and homelessness.”
- “Goals and outcomes need to be met. Accountability is important.”

MODERNIZATION

- “There needs to be improved technology to better manage the system.”
- “Hope to have transparency with the waitlist.”
- “If we continue to add priority cases we will never house individuals. We need a new way.”
- “Streamline the process and the system.”

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: **LEADING A NEW HOUSING STABILITY SYSTEM**



What We Know... We need to lead by example. A strong housing stability plan needs to be managed as a system and all sectors and stakeholders need to be engaged.

- ➔ Housing instability impacts all sectors such as labour market, health, corrections, education, etc.
- ➔ All orders of government have made housing stability and affordability a priority.
- ➔ The work related to housing stability requires engagement of and partnerships with multiple sectors to address the needs of individuals and families.
- ➔ All sectors need to work together towards a common goal of housing stability for all.
- ➔ There is a need for a user-friendly system for individuals and families who require support to attain or retain housing.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: LEADING A NEW HOUSING STABILITY SYSTEM



What We Will Do... To lead a new housing stability system.

OUR GOAL:

Strong, sustainable, and integrated housing stability solutions developed collaboratively to respond to local needs.

OUR RESULT:

Increase in the ability of the housing stability system to address community needs.

Strategy #1:

Redesign and implement a new housing system to better help clients avoid homelessness and achieve housing stability.

Our Actions:

- a. Establish a 24/7 coordinated access system by March 31, 2022.
- b. Create a community-based housing stability leadership Working Group across the city of London to guide the implementation of system change.
- c. Create shared standards of practice between Homeless Prevention and Housing.
- d. Better alignment of existing priority lists within the housing stability system.

Strategy #2:

Use data to drive decision-making to respond in real-time to the housing stability needs of individuals and families.

Our Actions:

- a. Develop a robust data culture to ensure decisions are informed by local intelligence.
- b. Publish an annual report that provides the community with an assessment of current homeless prevention and housing efforts.
- c. Advance a system approach that supports evidence-informed decision-making, transparency, and accountability through consistent evaluation and reporting of housing stability plan outcomes to the community.
- d. Establish cross-functional teams that regularly discuss changes to the housing market and determine the needs of priority populations.

Strategy #3:

Modernize service delivery and ease the administrative complexity for individuals and families to access housing stability services.

Our Actions:

- a. Modernize and transform the Housing Stability System with a focus on better assessing clients' needs and triaging those who are the highest priority with the right service in a timely manner.

Strategy #4:

Be a local and national leader in housing stability.

Our Actions:

- a. Articulate a clear vision for the delivery of housing stability for all.
- b. Manage through strong, sustainable governance.
- c. Participate in national initiatives to solve homelessness.
- d. Share results of programs through report publishing, community engagement and education and training opportunities.
- e. Work with local agencies to support engagement with individuals with lived experience and foster opportunities for peer support in the community.
- f. Continue to make the efforts of the homeless prevention division and housing services division visible in the community.

*What resonates with you?
Is there anything missing?
How can you help?*