

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY and PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON, APRIL 28, 2020
FROM:	SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME
SUBJECT:	HOUSING QUARTERLY REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home, that the following actions be taken with respect to this report:

- a) That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information;
- b) That this report **BE CIRCULATED** to stakeholders, agencies, and community groups including, but not limited to: Middlesex County, London Housing Advisory Committee, and the London Homeless Coalition.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- Housing Quarterly Report (CPSC: January 21, 2020)
- Municipal Council Approval Of The Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024, as Required Under The Housing Services Act, 2011 (CPSC: December 3, 2019)
- City of London Housing Services Review: Proposed Action Plan (SPPC: September 16th, 2019)
- Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan 5 Year Review and Update – Process (CPSC: June 17, 2019)

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023

City Council's 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan for the City of London identifies 'Strengthening Our Community' and 'Building a Sustainable City' as strategic areas of focus. The City of London's Housing Stability Action Plan and the work that has been initiated as part of the City of London's Housing Services Review is aligned with these strategic priorities by focusing on increasing affordable and quality housing options for individuals and families, reducing the number of individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless, supporting improved access to mental health and addiction services, and increasing opportunities for individuals and families.

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the City of London undertook two homeless prevention and housing related strategic initiatives both intended to review existing challenges as well as create strategies to improve system outcomes:

- In September 2019, City Council received and approved the Housing Services Review and endorsed a plan of action intended to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service delivery of housing services. The scope of this review includes the City's Housing and Homeless Prevention Services Divisions as well as the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) and London Middlesex Community Housing (LMCH).
- Concurrently, throughout 2019, the City completed a comprehensive community consultation process, which resulted in the creation of the **Housing Stability Action Plan (HSAP)**.
 - In December 2019, City Council approved the HSAP and it was submitted to the

province as required under the *Housing Services Act* and to the federal government to ensure alignment with Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy and the National Housing Strategy.

As outlined in the two staff reports to City Council regarding both the Housing Service Review (September 16, 2019), and the HSAP (December 3, 2019), Civic Administration has committed to provide City Council with regular updates on all housing activities across the City of London (including those organizations for which the City acts as the Shareholder, including HDC, LMCH) on an proactive and quarterly basis.

It was determined that more frequent reporting to Council and to the community would assist in greater understanding of issues, the complexity of service delivery and also demonstrate the growing and much needed connectivity between all housing and homeless prevention services to create better outcomes and resolutions for those most in need.

This report serves as the second quarterly report to City Council and intends to provide an update on housing activities that have been undertaken over the most recent period, including those priorities that were identified through the Housing Services Review. The following provides an overview of CPSC reporting timelines:

- CPSC, July 15th, 2020: Housing Quarterly Report #3
- CPSC, October 6th, 2020: Housing Quarterly Report #4
- CPSC, January 2021: 1st quarterly report for 2021
- The reports will also provide an update on the London Housing Services Review: Proposed Action Plan report including, as applicable, a recommendation of a revised approach for housing and homeless prevention services moving forward.

Reporting of activities and initiatives will be categorized under the four (4) Strategic Areas of Focus from the Plan, attached as Schedule 1 to this report. This report and future quarterly reports will also be used to provide updates on the implementation of the Housing Stability Action Plan, both current and subsequent to its review and concurrence from the provincial and federal governments.

HOUSING ACTIVITIES TO DATE

Housing Stability System Response to COVID-19 Mitigation

The emergence of the COVID-19 crisis has significantly shifted operations across the housing stability system. There is a recognition across the housing stability system that this is an extraordinary and unprecedented time, not just for the communities served by the City and its partners, but for every organization and household around the world. Slowing the spread of COVID-19 is a responsibility that is shared by all and keeping vulnerable communities and households safe during this crisis is paramount.

The housing stability system has shifted operations in an effort to keep communities and organizations safe while maintaining essential operations. Civic administration is in regular contact with key partners, agencies and senior levels of government to help manage operations during this crisis. The following provides an overview of the current state of operations:

- Under direction from senior leadership within the City of London, and in keeping with the Province of Ontario's declaration of a State of Emergency, the Homeless Prevention and Housing Services team has moved to providing minimal operations and essential services only.
- The Housing Access Centre (HAC) at Citi Plaza has remained open to the public, however, there is a focus on answering inquiries from clients and providers and processing urgent housing apps. There is no in-person access to the offices or front counter. HAC is available to the public through fax, email, and phone. Housing providers subsidy payments will continue as scheduled.
- The emergency shelter system has suspended all non-essential programming in an effort to protect clients, volunteers, community and staff. This includes:
 - Prioritizing individuals in shelter who are part of the COVID-19 vulnerable population and procuring 100 motel rooms to achieve physical distancing in shelter.

- Additionally, Homeless Prevention has operationalized an isolation space (up to 26 beds) for individuals who are experiencing homelessness who test positive for COVID-19 as well as a monitoring space (up to 30 beds) where homeless individuals who are awaiting test results to stay and quarantine.
- Food security for those experiencing homelessness continues to be a challenge which has been increased amid COVID-19 precautions. Homeless Prevention continues to work with community partners to identify and fill gaps to food access for those who are experiencing homelessness. This includes:
 - Organizing approx. 50 hot meals per day to homeless serving agencies as well as organizing the Center of hope to provide their food truck seven days a week at various locations across the downtown and old east village areas.
 - This work will support remaining providers who are still operating meal programs in the community.
- LMCH and HDC has closed its main offices to the public. Residents, clients and the public can still reach both organizations via telephone, email or through their website.
- Community housing providers are continuing to support their tenants, filling vacancies to the best of their ability and respond to emergency maintenance requests. Operations have shifted for staff to work remotely, and, in some instances, housing providers have made a digital rent payment option available to tenants.
- The Service Manager is working closely with housing providers to assess the potential financial risk associated with the impact on the housing providers and the City during the covid-19 situation.
- Rent-geared-to-income units will continue to be fully funded within existing budgets with vacancy units supported for up to two months.
- Currently the Service Manager is monitoring:
 - Current tenants ability to continue paying their monthly rent recognizing that many may have difficulty maintaining rent payments;
 - Extra costs incurred by housing providers related to covid-19;
 - The potential increased rent-geared-to-income (RGI) subsidy payments to housing providers as a result of RGI tenants loss of employment; and,
 - if there will be a financial impact to the City as part of the annual subsidy reconciliation process with the housing providers.
- At this point, it is too early accurately assess the full financial impact on housing providers.
- In regards to the affordable housing developing, the Government of Ontario has indicated that only residential construction projects that are already underway, with permits issued before a prescribed date, may proceed.
 - The result is that issuing new loans to assist with the creation of new Affordable Housing units will be paused until the COVID public health emergency ends.

Housing Stability Action Plan – Implementation Update

Since City Council received their last update with regards to the HSAP in January 2020, Civic Administration has begun developing an implementation plan, which will outline priorities, sequencing and specific action items. Civic administration has established a City-wide working group with the intention of identifying priority actions for each service and expected timelines. Civic Administration has also met with key partners from our indigenous communities, homeless prevention sector and housing sector to work through their potential contributions to HSAP.

However, prior to producing a formal implementation, there was recognition that the implementation of HSAP could shift based on the following items:

- 1) New investment from City Council through the Multi-Year Budget process; and,
- 2) The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) final approval of the plan.

With the City Council's approval of the Multi-Year budget on March 2nd, this report will connect

HSAP and how multi-year investment within homeless prevention and housing service areas will support many strategic priorities and actions within the HSAP. This report will also separate the strategies and actions that are moving forward using existing funding.

In regards to MMAH approval, the City of London received formal approval of the HSAP on March 24th, 2020.

Multi-Year Budget – HSAP Impact

Through the multi-year budget process, the housing stability system received \$73.3M in total additional investment to support multiple new initiatives aimed at supporting London and Middlesex’s most vulnerable with their housing stability challenges. The table below summarizes the additional investments.

Case Ref #	Case Description	Approved Additional Investments					
		Gross Investment (000's)				Gross Investment (000's) 2020 - 2023	Net Budget (000's) 2020-2023
		2020	2021	2022	2023		
2	Affordable Housing CIP	3,187	1,187	195	203	4,772	772
6	Coordinated Informed Response (Homeless Prevention)	1,613	1,655	1,697	1,738	6,703	6,703
7	Core Area Action Plan - Note 1 (Homeless Prevention)	7,200	1,000	1,000	1,000	10,200	4,000
10	HDC Funding for Affordable Housing	500	770	1,080	1,300	3,650	3,650
12	LMCH Infrastructure Gap	1,792	3,042	4,542	6,142	15,518	5,000
18	CMHC Co Investment	4,973	5,030	5,084	5,142	20,229	7,777
19	LMCH Operating Staffing & Security	1,306	1,651	1,872	2,112	6,941	5,675
21	LMCH Regeneration (Housing)	500	500	1,750	2,500	5,250	5,250
Total		21,071	14,835	17,220	20,137	73,263	38,827

Note 1 Portion of Core Area Action Plan Associated with Housing

HSAP - Priority Initiatives

The following provides an overview of initiatives and progress as it relates to the four strategic pillars of the HSAP. In many cases, these initiatives are developed in partnership with many key community stakeholders, with the intention to address housing challenges and create opportunities for those seeking housing stability. The HSAP is intended to be a five year plan, however many initiatives identified in the plan have begun.

Respond to the Homeless Crisis

Coordinated Informed Response (MYB Investment) - HSAP Alignment: 1.2.b.; 1.2.c; 1.4.c.

- London’s Coordinated Informed Response works with multiple service areas and organizations to support individuals who are street involved, sleeping rough and urban camping in finding safe alternative solutions focused on housing.
 - Response partners include London Police Service, London Cares and City Services such as Homeless Prevention, Municipal Bylaw Enforcement, Parks, Roads and Transportation, Social Services, Corporate Security and Service London.
 - The program started as a 16-week pilot program in September 2018, however, with investment provided through the multi-year budgetary process, this program will continue until 2023.
 - With approval through the Multi-Year Budget process, the services offered through the pilot will become longer term programming managed by Homeless Prevention.

Core Area Action Plan (MYB Investment) - HSAP Alignment: 1.2.a; 1.3.b.; 1.3.c.

- The Core Area Action Plan (CAAP) is a comprehensive approach to planning for the health and vitality of the Core.
- The CAAP recognizes the need to help with homelessness, health issues, safety and security, support businesses, and also the need to attract more people to the core.
- Expected outcomes from the multi-year budget’s Core Area Action Plan business case includes: establishment of 40 more daytime resting spaces; establishing 20 beds as stabilization spaces; and creating a four-year Core Area Ambassador pilot program.
- These Core Area actions are in addition to ones undertaken in coordination with other city-wide initiatives and ones funded through existing budget allocation. Such actions include

the establishment of supportive housing across the city, expanding the case management approach for helping vulnerable populations, and non-housing initiatives in the core, such as increasing incentive programs, by-law enforcement, street cleaning, and additional programming to attract more people to the core.

Coordinated Access System - HSAP Alignment: 1.1.b; 1.3.a.; 1.3.c.;

- London is a Reaching Home Community and is required to have a coordinated access system in place by March 31, 2022.
- Coordinated access is a way for communities to bring consistency to the process by which people experiencing or at risk of homelessness access housing and related services.
 - Core components of a strong Coordinated Access system include a Housing First approach; real-time data about the supply of and demand for housing resources; and a streamlined service delivery approach with access points to service, a standardized workflow for triage and assessment; prioritization; and vacancy matching and referral.
- Coordinated access makes it possible to take a comprehensive systems-based approach to addressing homelessness, rather than an agency-by-agency or program-centred approach.
- For clients, this integration can result in more effective and timely access to housing and housing supports, regardless of where someone first seeks services, access is based on vulnerability, eligibility and choice.
- The Housing Stability System has designed a local Coordinated Access System and is currently testing with key partners and individuals with lived and living experience.

Create More Housing Stock

Regeneration of London Middlesex Community Housing (MYB Initiative) - HSAP Alignment: 2.2.a

- Business Case # 21 - LMCH Regeneration was approved in the multi-year budget with a gross investment of \$5.3 million.
- These additional funds are intended to accumulate sufficient capital to cash flow the first stage of development
- In the coming months, civic administration will continue with site investigations to determine site selection, which is based on site constraints and development considerations including use, intensification, built form, etc.
- Regeneration is planned to be a multi-phased approach with approximately 20 units completed per phase. LMCH's target is the completion of 50 units by 2023.
 - Anticipation of new units and timelines are subject to funding, site feasibility, and the compatibility for intensification in the surrounding neighbourhood. LMCH, HDC and the City are working together to ensure maximum value and minimize any impacts to tenants and communities.

Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for Affordable Housing- HSAP Alignment: 2.1.c

- City Council approved an Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (CIP) in January 2020.
- The Affordable Housing CIP allows the City to take certain actions that are otherwise not permitted by Provincial legislation, including offering City incentive programs to private businesses.
- To encourage the development of affordable housing units and additional residential units (formerly known as "secondary dwelling units") the CIP includes two (2) loan programs.
- Business Case # 2 – Affordable Housing CIP was approved in the multi-year budget with a gross investment of \$4.8 million. Of the \$4.8 million \$4 million will fund the program in

the form of a revolving loan fund.

- The CIP programs are also considered the City's contribution for the purposes of Federal "co-investment" funding programs offered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).
 - Therefore the CIP programs may allow applicants access to additional Federal affordable housing funding.

Work with the private market to retain existing affordability in rental market (MYB investment) - HSAP Alignment: 2.1.a

- During the last quarter of 2019 and the start of 2020, HDC worked with its roster of partners to advance affordable housing developments to begin construction in 2020.
- The following two developments reflect the start of 56 new affordable housing units which were being finalized at the same time as the previous quarterly report.
- These developments were initiated before the multi-year budget approval and will advance with funding from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative with application for further funding through the CMHC Co-Investment Fund program.
- In addition, work is advancing on land development, including lands that were acquired through the allocation of City surplus properties to HDC.
 - Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU): YOU's development at 329-331 Richmond Street represents an affordable development focused on youth – with supports.
 - This new site will have a mix of affordable and market value one and two-bedroom units, totaling 35 units.
 - ZerIn Development Corp.: ZerIn Development Corp. is a provider of social housing who has been able to leverage their organization and holdings to support their next development at 440 Clarke Road.
 - This development will have a mix of one and two-bedroom affordable and market value units, totaling 21 units.

What is 'Bonusing' and how does it help with housing stability?

The City of London uses Bonusing, under Section 37 of the Planning Act, as a planning tool to secure more affordable housing units in exchange for allowing a developer to increase the height and density of their building beyond the current zoning restrictions.

HDC and the City have worked with private developers to advance 88 bonused new affordable units to date, with no additional cost to the municipality.

Provide Housing Supports

New Housing Stability Services to Support Low to Moderate needs - HSAP Alignment: 1.1.a; 1.5.a.

- City of London funds seven Housing First programs that provide intensive case management, housing finders and housing stability supports, primarily to chronically homeless individuals with high needs.
- Limited housing stability support exists for individuals only requiring light or moderate needs, representing a significant gap in the housing stability system.
- An opportunity exists to rapidly house lower and moderate acuity individuals thereby significantly reducing the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in London.
- On April 7th, 2020, City Council approved the program proposals from experienced and qualified proponents to provide the following Housing Stability Services. These include:
 - Rent Stability Program;
 - Rapid Rehousing Program; and,
 - Housing Identification Program.
- The housing stability programs will have capacity to serve a number of people in the homeless prevention system. This includes:
 - 300 people through the housing identification program
 - 100 low acuity individuals through the housing stability program
 - 200 moderate acuity individuals through the rapid re-housing program

- The Standard Form Occupancy Agreement (Head Lease) is intended to facilitate rapid delivery of affordable transitional housing with supports for up to 10 individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
 - The City of London Homeless Prevention team intends to match individuals and families from our coordinated access priority list to affordable transitional units in the private market leased by the City of London through the Standard Form Occupancy Agreement.
 - The supportive component of the housing placement will be aimed at supporting successful tenancy through life skills development and focused on housing stability.
 - The program's next steps will be to undertake an RFP to work with landlords across the city for this program with implementation expected by fall of 2020.

Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit - HSAP Alignment: 3.4.c

- The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) is a portable financial benefit program where grant funding is paid directly to low-income priority households that are on, or eligible to be on, a social housing waiting list, and to households in financial need living in private market housing.
- COHB is jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments as announced through the National Housing Strategy. COHB will begin on April 1st, 2020 and is expected to continue until March 31st, 2029.
- Civic Administration anticipates that, based on current funding allocations from MMAH, COHB will benefit 211 Londoners in 2020-21 and an additional 65 new clients in 2021-22 at an average benefit of \$364 per month.

Community Housing Bridging Pilot Program - HSAP Alignment: 3.1.b; 3.3.b.

- The Community Housing Bridge Program (CHBP) is a portable housing allowance that is available to individuals and families that are currently on the social housing waitlist.
- CHBP is a portable allowance is paid directly to participant (or pay directly to landlord based on applicant's choice), rather than being tied to a particular unit, or landlord. The portability of the benefit allows participants of the program greater choice in where they live, while they remain active on the waitlist for social housing.
- This allowance will provide financial support up to three years until social housing is obtained or applicant no longer active in centralized social housing waitlist.
- CHBP is fully funded by the Government of Ontario, Social Infrastructure Fund Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario and is expected to launch in summer 2020.

Simcoe Gardens Project - HSAP Alignment: 3.2.a.; 3.2.b.; 3.4.c.; 3.4.d.

- LMCH collaborated with Homeless Prevention and Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and Housing Services to establish rent-geared-to-income housing with supports project at Simcoe Gardens, 241 Simcoe Street, London.
- The project will provide Simcoe Gardens with mental health supports, housing stability services, and community development initiatives designed to promote health, employment, and social connections outcomes for participants.
- Additionally, LMCH is developing an evaluation to recognize successes and identify opportunities for improvement.
- LMCH is finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding with CMHA to confirm service delivery and complete capital and technology updates for the project.
- The partners involved in this project are agreeing upon a selection process to ensure that the program will provide housing stability services to community members who need it most.

Increasing Operating Staff and Security within LMCH (MYB Investment) - HSAP Alignment: 3.4.c.

- City Council approved the 2020-2023 Multi-year budget, including business case #19 - LMCH

Operating Staffing and Security, under the Additional Investment Business Cases.

- Business Case # 19 - LMCH Operating Staffing and Security was approved in the multi-year budget with a gross investment of \$6.9 million. This initiative will add 25 staff to strengthen LMCH across various departments.
- Over the next four years, LMCH will strengthen staff in Security (4), Tenant Services (6), Property Services (11), Finance and IT (3), and Community Development (1).
- The immediate focus of the organization is to enhance security to relieve strain on Police and site staff at high acuity buildings by providing increased tenant services through reductions in Community Relations Workers (CRWs) caseload, increased maintenance staffing to address work orders and a continuation of managing vacancy levels efficiently.

Increase Supportive and Specializing Housing Options – Indwell Community Homes - HSAP Alignment: 3.4.c.

- There are efforts being made to develop “specialized housing” being advanced by Indwell Community Homes at 744 Dundas Street.
- The intent is to advance this development for final approvals, funding, and construction start this year to provide additional permanent housing with supports.
- This work is being done in a unique partnership between Indwell, HDC and the City’s Housing and Homeless Prevention service areas, with support from CMHC, other City service areas and other sectors.
- The approved multi-year budget for the Core Area Action Plan (Business Case 7b) includes \$4,000,000 being identified and subject to council approval, be allocated to this specific development and HDC’s approved budget for Funding for Affordable Housing (Business Case #10a and 10b) will make a contribution to help support this initiative.

Transform System Service

Housing Stability Action Plan & Indigenous Homeless Prevention Strategy - HSAP Alignment 4.1.b.

- The City has supported the development of a community driven, Indigenous-led housing and homelessness plan - the Giwetashkad Indigenous Homeless Plan.
- This plan represents culturally sensitive perspectives of community members with lived and/or living experience and sets out a vision of home as a place of safety and belonging for all peoples.
- The City has received the draft version of this plan and has met with stakeholders to discuss alignment with the HSAP.
- The City has committed to meeting with indigenous stakeholders and authors of the Giwetashkad Indigenous Homeless Plan to support successful implementation.

Homeless Prevention Data Integration – SAMS and HIFIS - HSAP Alignment: 4.2.a.

- The Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) is a comprehensive data collection and case management system, used by the London Homeless Prevention Network.
- Exploration regarding how Ontario Works Team H could work collaboratively with the Homelessness Prevention Team by accessing the HIFIS database, began in the fall 2019.
- Access to the HIFIS database permits Ontario Works Team H and the Housing Access Centre to improve data quality, reduce process burden, streamline Ontario Works appointment requests, and helps support paper readiness, improving client services and housing goal achievement.
- Access to the HIFIS database by the network was granted in winter 2020. Training of staff on HIFIS remains a goal for spring 2020.

Full Operational Review of LMCH’s vacancy and unit restoration progress - HSAP Alignment: 3.4.c.

- LMCH continues to examine their vacancy process and is sharing best practices with other community housing providers.
- As of February 29th, the vacancy rate within LMCH for rentable units was 1.2% in active rental and a total vacancy rate of 3.9%, with the objective of reaching a 2% active repair and a 3% total vacancy rate.
- LMCH restored 96 units and leased 98 units to families in January and February of 2020.
- LMCH will continue to work on refining our process for vacancy management by collaborating with experts in community housing.

LMCH’s Comprehensive Pest Management Efforts - HSAP Alignment: 3.4.c.

- In late 2019, LMCH received permission to address elevated pest infestations at 241 Simcoe Street and 580 Dundas Street by temporarily halting new rentals.
- New rentals were accepted at Simcoe Street at the end of December 2019 with the project being completed at Dundas Street at the beginning of February 2020.
- Following the completion of the program, LMCH is now able to provide pest treatment to new infestations immediately and keep the pest situation in both buildings under control.
- A total of 26 of the pest cleared units have been rented in since January 1, 2020

NEXT STEPS

All related housing services areas will continue to deliver core operational responsibilities, as well as continue to shift operations to align with the recommendations within the Housing Service Review and the Housing Stability Action Plan.

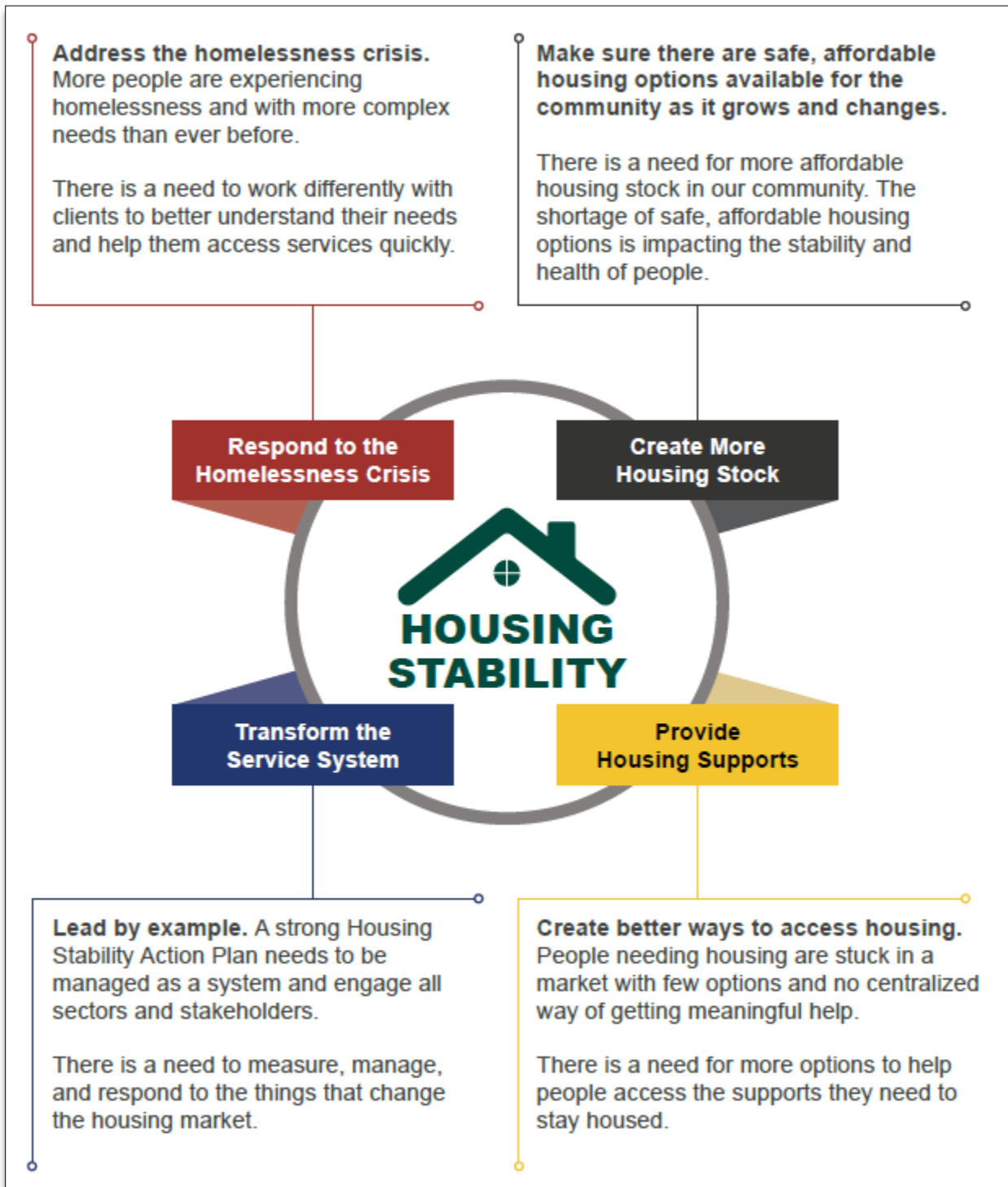
The next update for City Council is currently scheduled for July 2020.

SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
DOUG CALDERWOOD-SMITH MANAGER, STRATEGIC PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS	SANDRA DATARS BERE MANAGING DIRECTOR, HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEARNESS HOME

CC:

- Dave Purdy, Manager, Housing Services
- Craig Cooper, Manager, Homeless Prevention
- Gregg Barrett, Director, City Planning and City Planner
- Kevin Dickins, Manager, Employment and Income Supports
- Bryan Baar, Senior Business Administrator
- Stephen Giustizia, CEO, Housing Development Corporation, London
- Andrea Mackenzie, CEO, London Middlesex Community Housing

SCHEDULE 1



Housing Stability for All – Strategic Pillars

- The Housing Stability Action Plan sets a strategic vision of Housing Stability for All.
- Within the vision, there are four strategic areas of focus noted above.
 - Each strategic area of focus has a goal, result, strategies, actions, and measures that will guide the work of the community now and in the future.
- It is important to note that these pillars are interconnected and must be advanced in unison to advance the objectives of the Plan.