

**Subject: Integrated Transition to Housing Strategy Close Out**

**File Number: ACS2025-CSS-GEN-014**

**Report to Community Services Committee on 28 October 2025**

**and Council 12 November 2025**

**Submitted on October 17, 2025 by Clara Freire, General Manager, Community and Social Services**

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**Ward: Citywide**

**Objet : Clôture de la Stratégie intégrée de transition au logement**

**Numéro de dossier : ACS2025-CSS-GEN-014**

**Rapport présenté au Comité des services communautaires**

**Rapport soumis le 28 octobre 2025**

**et au Conseil le 12 novembre 2025**

**Soumis le 2025-10-17 par Clara Freire, Directrice générale – Services sociaux et communautaires**

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**Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Community and Social Services Committee recommend Council:**

- 1. Receive the updates on initiatives under the Integrated Transition to Housing Strategy (ITHS) for information; and**

- 2. Approve the close out of the ITHS as a standalone strategy and merge the ongoing initiatives into the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan Refresh, as detailed in this report.**

## **RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Comité des services sociaux et communautaires recommande au Conseil :**

- 1. de prendre acte des mises à jour concernant les initiatives de la Stratégie intégrée de transition au logement (SITL) à titre d'information; et**
- 2. d'approuver la clôture de la SITL à titre de stratégie indépendante et de fusionner les initiatives en cours à la mise à jour du Plan décennal de logement et de lutte contre l'itinérance, comme le décrit le présent rapport.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In July 2023, Ottawa City Council approved the Integrated Transition to Housing Strategy (ITHS) ([ACS2023-CSS-GEN-006](#)). The ITHS aims to transition single adult shelter clients to long-term housing, address immediate pressures in the shelter system and end the operation of Physical Distancing-Emergency Overflow Centres (PD-EOCs) in City-owned recreational facilities.

Since 2023 when the ITHS was developed, demand from single adults for shelter or transitional housing placements has grown by 62 per cent, and the number of single adult asylum claimant clients climbed by 452 per cent. Through the ITHS, the City initiated short, medium and long-term plans to address the exceptional level of inflows into the City's single shelter system. The demand for shelter placement was unprecedentedly high and the City and community partners needed to implement and extend various emergency strategies to ensure placement options remained available.

These short-term strategies had significant impacts in the communities where the spaces were converted to facilitate this emergency response. As the strategy was implemented it focused on achieving four main objectives:

- People who enter into homelessness are adequately supported and quickly rehoused and connected to the appropriate resources to remain stably housed;
- Intensive, wrap-around services are available to help people to transition to long term housing;
- Housing options exist which match the varying needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness; and

- Services and systems consider and respond to the unique and culturally relevant requirements for serving Indigenous community members experiencing homelessness in Ottawa.

Since implementing the strategy, staff and community partners have made significant progress in achieving its objectives. As stated above, a cornerstone of the emergency overflow strategy was to extend the use of community and recreation facilities until longer term, more permanent, elements of the plan could be implemented.

As of August 15, 2025 all PD-EOC locations were closed, returning recreation facilities to their intended purposes, marking the completion of the emergency response. This significant milestone was achieved by:

- Increasing permanent system capacity by over 700 beds between June 2023 and July 2025;
- Housing 738 PD-EOC clients between June 2023 and August 2025. This includes 157 PD-EOC clients that were housed through the Enhanced Housing Allowance Benefit (EHAB) pilot; and
- Opening 180 new supportive housing units between April 2023 and June 2025, with another 94 anticipated to open during Winter 2025/2026.

Over 5 years, the City has led and operationalized 12 PD-EOCs at 8 different locations and served over 5,500 individuals experiencing homelessness in Ottawa. Community and Social Services acknowledges and thanks Council, in particular the Emergency Shelter Crisis Taskforce, the residents of Ward 7, 12, 15 and 18, community partners and City staff for their collective effort to ensure the needs of the City's most vulnerable residents continued to be met through this period.

The ITHS has also initiated medium-long term initiatives, including the development of a:

- Newcomer Reception System that will provide tailored services specific to the needs of asylum claimant clients to ensure they can successfully integrate into the community, while also alleviating pressures on the existing shelter system.
- Supportive Housing Community Hub at 1245 Kilborn Place. In September 2025, the City hosted public engagement sessions to share updates and gather community input on the emerging vision for the site. Following additional consultation in 2026, a recommended concept and implementation plan will be

brought forward for Council approval in early 2027 by the Strategic Initiatives Department.

The above initiatives have also allowed the City to:

- Shift from an emergency shelter model to a more housing-focused model through the addition of new transitional housing facilities;
- Create a system with a broader spectrum of options designed to meet a client's unique needs;
- Implement a responsive and proactive approach with the resources needed to manage changes in demand; and
- Achieve cost efficiencies.

With these significant milestones completed, the City is now positioned to close out the ITHS and move towards ongoing monitoring of the updated system. As part of this ongoing work, staff will be moving long-term objectives into the refreshed 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan which will be presented to Council in Q1 2026.

The updated 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan will ensure the shelter system in Ottawa remains responsive to emerging needs. It will also continue to ensure people requiring emergency placement can be appropriately accommodated with the goal of rapid attainment of long-term housing.

In order to make sure sufficient resources are available to single adults experiencing homelessness through Winter 2025/2026, the City and community partners will:

- Leverage available shelter and transitional housing capacity, including over 100 beds system wide available as of September, and an additional 70 beds to become available at the St. Joseph Transitional Housing Program for asylum claimants before the end of 2025.
- Use of the community room at the St. Joseph Transitional Housing Program and re-activate the use of 250 Lanark Ave. if needed as overflow capacity
- Continue enhanced outreach that was implemented through this strategy to unsheltered individuals. Including distributing winter supplies like sleeping bags, clothing and handwarmers, and providing transportation and referrals to access safe space for shelter.

- Operate Drop-in day program services that now have expanded hours of operation, including one site with 24/7 service for those choosing not to access the shelter system.
- Continue Housing First to help people to move into long-term housing.
- Begin to operate 94 units of supportive housing which are anticipated to be opened during Winter 2025/2025.

Following the successes of the ITHS, staff are confident that Ottawa will remain responsive to the needs of vulnerable residents in the community. The City will continue to work with community partners through the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to build on those successes.

### **Funding Considerations**

A significant portion of the funding framework for the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is reliant on other levels of government.

Housing and Homelessness Services receives federal, provincial, and municipal funding through a variety of programs. It is standard process under most programs that funding commitments are made on a two-to-three-year basis and often aligned to election cycles. To ensure continuity of services, staff engage in long-term financial planning. Part of this work includes regularly updating plans to respond to changes when new programs are created or existing programs end.

In August 2025, the City received confirmation of \$112M of funding to cover expenses incurred between January 2025 and March 2027 through the Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP), representing only 43 per cent of funds requested. The funding guidelines also introduced new program directives that increase municipal contributions through a new scaled, cost-shared model. The cost share component will not result in new budget pressures for the City, as staff have planned to cover these costs through existing funding. Staff are completing an analysis on impacts of the confirmed funding but remain confident core shelter services can be maintained. However, many of the long-term, sustainable, solutions that were in the original IHAP proposal will not move forward.

In addition to IHAP funding, the City is utilizing Ottawa-Ontario New Deal funding to cover extraordinary shelter costs for non-newcomer shelter services. This funding is

slated to end in March 2026. Staff are currently examining potential impacts and planning to ensure core services continue should this funding not be extended.

Further, a primary mechanism that helps households exit shelter is portable housing benefits. The City received its 2025-2026 allocation of \$2.08M for the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) in September 2025, and it is a further decrease from the previous year's allocation of \$2.2M. As with other municipalities across Ontario, the funding is inadequate to meet demand. Staff are reviewing the implications of this funding decrease and identifying recommendations, which will be brought forward to Committee and Council for consideration in Q1 2026.

Staff continue to negotiate with the federal and provincial governments to ensure our response strategy is sufficiently resourced. As part of this work, staff are also working with other impacted municipalities such as Toronto, on a joint advocacy approach. Although there are risks that adequate funding may not be allocated from senior levels of government, staff are developing scenario-based responses to ensure continuity of core service offerings in the shelter system.

## **RÉSUMÉ**

En juillet 2023, le Conseil municipal d'Ottawa a approuvé la Stratégie intégrée de transition au logement (SITL) ([ACS2023-CSS-GEN-006](#)). La SITL vise à aider les personnes ayant recours à des refuges pour adultes célibataires à passer à un logement à long terme, à réduire la pression actuellement exercée sur le réseau de refuges et à mettre fin aux centres de distanciation physique et de débordement d'urgence dans les installations de loisirs municipales.

Depuis la création de la SITL en 2023, la demande en places de refuge et en logement de transition de la part d'adultes célibataires a augmenté de 62 pour cent, et le nombre de nouvelles arrivantes et nouveaux arrivants adultes célibataires parmi la clientèle a augmenté de 452 pour cent. Par l'entremise de cette Stratégie, la Ville a mis en place des plans à court, moyen et long terme afin de s'attaquer à la quantité exceptionnelle de nouvelles personnes dans son réseau de refuges pour personnes seules. La demande était si élevée que la Ville et ses partenaires communautaires ont dû mettre en œuvre et élargir diverses stratégies d'urgence pour assurer la disponibilité des options de placement.

Ces stratégies à court terme ont eu d'importantes répercussions sur les quartiers où se trouvent les espaces convertis dans le cadre de cette intervention d'urgence. Voici les quatre principaux objectifs de la Stratégie :

- Les personnes qui se retrouvent en situation d'itinérance reçoivent un soutien adéquat, sont rapidement relogées et mises en contact avec les ressources appropriées afin de demeurer logées;
- Des services complets sont disponibles pour aider ces personnes à trouver un logement à long terme;
- Des options de logement existent pour répondre aux différents besoins des personnes en situation d'itinérance ou risquant de l'être;
- Les services et systèmes tiennent compte des besoins uniques des membres des communautés autochtones en situation d'itinérance à Ottawa et sont adaptés à la culture autochtone.

Depuis la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie, le personnel et les partenaires communautaires ont réalisé d'importants progrès vers l'atteinte de ses objectifs. Comme il est mentionné plus haut, la pierre angulaire de la stratégie de débordement d'urgence était l'utilisation d'installations récréatives et communautaires jusqu'à la mise en place des éléments permanents et à long terme du plan.

Depuis le 15 août 2025, tous les centres de distanciation physique et de débordement d'urgence sont fermés. Les installations récréatives peuvent donc remplir leur fonction prévue, ce qui marque la fin de l'intervention d'urgence. Voici comment cette étape importante a été franchie :

- Augmentation de la capacité du système de logements permanents de plus de 700 lits entre juin 2023 et juillet 2025;
- Mise en logement de 738 personnes ayant recours à un centre de distanciation physique et de débordement d'urgence entre juin 2023 et août 2025. Parmi ces personnes, 157 ont bénéficié du projet pilote d'allocation de logement bonifié;
- Ouverture de 180 nouveaux logements avec services de soutien entre avril 2023 et juin 2025. L'ouverture de 94 logements supplémentaires est prévue pour l'hiver 2025-2026.

Sur une période de 5 ans, la Ville a dirigé et géré 12 centres de distanciation physique et de débordement d'urgence à 8 emplacements différents et a aidé 5 500 personnes en situation d'itinérance à Ottawa. La Direction générale des services sociaux et communautaires tient à remercier le Conseil, en particulier le Groupe de travail sur la crise des refuges d'urgence, les résidentes et résidents des quartiers 7, 12, 15 et 18, les partenaires communautaires et le personnel municipal pour leur effort collectif qui a permis de continuer à répondre aux besoins des personnes les plus vulnérables durant cette période.

La SITL a également permis le lancement d'initiatives à moyen et long terme, y compris les deux suivantes :

- Un Système d'accueil des nouveaux arrivants qui offrira des services adaptés aux besoins des nouvelles arrivantes et nouveaux arrivants afin d'assurer une intégration réussie dans la communauté et de réduire la pression exercée sur le réseau de refuges.
- Le carrefour communautaire de logements avec services de soutien au 1245, place Kilborn. En septembre 2025, la Ville a organisé des séances d'engagement du public afin de fournir des mises à jour et de recueillir les commentaires de la communauté concernant la vision pour le site. À la suite de consultations supplémentaires en 2026, une recommandation de concept et de plan de mise en œuvre sera soumise à l'approbation du Conseil au début de l'année 2027 par la Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques.

Les initiatives mentionnées ci-dessus ont également permis à la Ville de :

- passer d'un modèle de refuge d'urgence à un modèle axé sur le logement grâce à la mise en place d'installations de logement de transition supplémentaires;
- créer un système offrant de nombreuses options afin de répondre aux besoins uniques des usagers;
- mettre en œuvre une approche proactive et adaptative bénéficiant des ressources nécessaires pour gérer les changements dans la demande;
- réduire les coûts.

Ces étapes importantes étant franchies, la Ville peut désormais clore la SITL et passer à la surveillance continue du nouveau système. Dans le cadre de ce travail, le personnel intégrera les objectifs à long terme au nouveau Plan décennal de logement et de lutte contre l'itinérance, qui sera présenté au Conseil au premier trimestre de 2026.

Ce nouveau plan décennal permettra de s'assurer que le réseau de refuges d'Ottawa s'adapte en permanence aux besoins émergents. De plus, les personnes qui ont besoin d'un placement d'urgence bénéficieront de l'aide appropriée dans l'optique d'une transition rapide vers un logement à long terme.

Afin que les adultes célibataires en situation d'itinérance à l'hiver 2025-2026 aient accès aux ressources nécessaires, la Ville et ses partenaires communautaires :

- mettront à profit la capacité des refuges et des logements de transition, soit plus de 100 lits disponibles à l'échelle du réseau en date de septembre, ainsi que 70

lits supplémentaires qui seront mis à la disposition des demandeuses et demandeurs d'asile d'ici la fin de l'année 2025 dans le cadre du programme de logement de transition du boulevard St-Joseph;

- utiliseront la salle polyvalente du programme de logement de transition du boulevard St-Joseph et recommenceront à utiliser le refuge situé au 250, avenue Lanark, au besoin;
- continueront leurs efforts de sensibilisation accrue auprès des personnes sans abri dans le cadre de la Stratégie, y compris la distribution de fournitures pour l'hiver (p. ex. sacs de couchage, vêtements, chauffe-mains) et le transport et l'aiguillage vers des refuges;
- offriront des services de programme de jour libres qui ont désormais des heures d'ouvertures prolongées. Il existe d'ailleurs un emplacement ouvert en tout temps pour les personnes qui choisissent de ne pas recourir au réseau de refuges;
- continueront le programme Logement d'abord pour aider les personnes à trouver un logement à long terme;
- géreront 94 logements avec services de soutien, dont l'ouverture est prévue pour l'hiver 2025-2026.

Vu les réussites dans le cadre de la SITL, le personnel estime que la Ville continuera à s'adapter aux besoins des résidentes et résidents vulnérables de la communauté. Elle poursuivra sa collaboration avec ses partenaires communautaires par l'entremise du Plan décennal de logement et de lutte contre l'itinérance en vue de s'appuyer sur ces réussites.

### **Considérations en matière de financement**

Une importante part du cadre de financement du Plan décennal de logement et de lutte contre l'itinérance dépend d'autres ordres de gouvernement.

Les Services du logement et de la lutte contre l'itinérance reçoivent du financement fédéral, provincial et municipal par l'entremise de divers programmes. Les engagements financiers sont habituellement pris pour deux ou trois ans et correspondent souvent aux cycles électoraux. Pour assurer la continuité des services, les membres du personnel procèdent à une planification financière à long terme. Dans le cadre de ce travail, ils mettent régulièrement à jour les plans pour les adapter aux nouveaux programmes créés ou à l'achèvement de programmes existants.

En août 2025, la Ville a reçu la confirmation qu'elle recevrait un financement du Programme fédéral d'aide au logement provisoire (PFALP) de 112 M\$ pour couvrir les

dépenses engagées entre janvier 2025 et mars 2027; or, ce montant représente seulement 43 pour cent des fonds demandés. Les nouvelles lignes directrices du programme prévoient également une augmentation des contributions municipales par l'entremise d'un nouveau modèle de partage des coûts à l'échelle. La composante de partage des coûts n'entraînera pas de nouvelles contraintes budgétaires pour la Ville, car le personnel a prévu de couvrir ces coûts à l'aide d'un financement existant. Les membres du personnel s'affairent également à analyser l'incidence du financement confirmé, mais demeurent convaincus que les principaux services de refuge peuvent être maintenus. Bon nombre des solutions durables et à long terme qui faisaient partie de la proposition de financement dans le cadre du PFALP ne seront cependant pas mises en œuvre.

Outre le financement du PFALP, la Ville fait appel au nouvel accord Ontario-Ottawa pour couvrir les coûts de refuge extraordinaires pour les services de refuge fournis aux personnes qui vivent déjà au Canada. Ce financement devrait prendre fin en mars 2026. Le personnel étudie actuellement les possibles répercussions de cette situation et prendra les mesures qui s'imposeront pour assurer la prestation continue des services si ce financement devait prendre fin.

En outre, les prestations de logements transférables représentent un des principaux moyens qui aident les ménages à quitter les refuges. En septembre 2025, la Ville a reçu une allocation de 2,08 M\$ pour l'exercice 2025-2026 dans le cadre de l'Allocation Canada-Ontario pour le logement (ACOL). Il s'agit d'une nouvelle baisse comparativement à l'allocation de 2,2 M\$ de l'année précédente. Comme pour les autres municipalités de l'Ontario, ce financement n'est pas suffisant pour répondre à la demande. Le personnel est en train d'analyser les conséquences de cette baisse de financement et formulera des recommandations à l'intention du Comité et du Conseil au premier trimestre de 2026.

Le personnel continue de négocier auprès des gouvernements fédéral et provincial afin de garantir les ressources nécessaires à la stratégie d'intervention de la Ville. Dans le cadre de ce travail, le personnel collabore également avec d'autres municipalités touchées, comme Toronto, en vue d'élaborer une approche de mobilisation commune. Bien qu'il y ait des risques de ne pas recevoir un financement adéquat de la part des ordres de gouvernement supérieurs, le personnel est en train d'élaborer différents scénarios afin de garantir la pérennité des services de base du réseau de refuges.

## BACKGROUND

In July 2023, Ottawa City Council approved the ITHS ([ACS2023-CSS-GEN-006](#)). The ITHS is comprised of short, medium, and long-term initiatives to transition single adult shelter clients to permanent housing. It also addresses immediate pressures in the shelter system and aims to end the operation of Physical Distancing-Emergency Overflow Centres (PD-EOCs) in City-owned recreational facilities. Key initiatives of the ITHS include a targeted housing benefit (the "Enhanced Housing Allowance Benefit"), the creation of additional transitional housing capacity, and the long-term development of a Supportive Housing Community Hub.

In response to significant and unprecedented inflow into the single adult shelter system, driven primarily by asylum claimants, Council passed four [motions in November 2023](#). These directed staff to actively advance the option of a semi-permanent facility, explore options that could be made available to serve asylum claimants, increase capacity at existing PD-EOCs through the use of bunkbeds and develop a strategy for overnight warming spaces and other related winter services.

An update to the ITHS was received by Council in July 2024 ([ACS2024-CSS-GEN-008](#)), which outlined achievements under the Strategy to date, as well as new emerging pressures. Additional updates were subsequently released via memos including:

- A November 7, 2024 memo "Newcomer Reception System Update" in which staff described the creation of a permanent newcomer reception system which would include the development of Newcomer Reception Centres at two identified sites.
- A January 16, 2025 memo "Winter 2024-2025 Plan to Support Residents Experiencing Homelessness" provided an update on services available through the winter 2024-2025 and beyond.
- A March 12, 2025 memo "Newcomer Reception System & Integrated Transition to Housing Strategy Update" which outlined decreasing demand and new opportunities for overflow/transitional housing space, resulting in the elimination of the need to develop Newcomer Reception Centres at two previously identified sites.

As part of the above reports and memos, reference is made to ongoing negotiations with Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to solicit federal funding to create a permanent and sustainable newcomer reception system in Ottawa. The Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) is also a key component of the [Housing Services Long Range Financial Plan 2025-2030 Update](#), approved by Council in November 2024.

## **DISCUSSION**

The ITHS has two overarching goals:

1. Everyone who needs a shelter bed is able to access one.
2. Chronic homelessness is eliminated.

The City and its community partners have succeeded in providing sufficient permanent system capacity to meet current demands and have made significant strides to shift the system in a way which furthers efforts to eliminate chronic homelessness. As described in this report, the work to continue addressing chronic homelessness will merge into the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

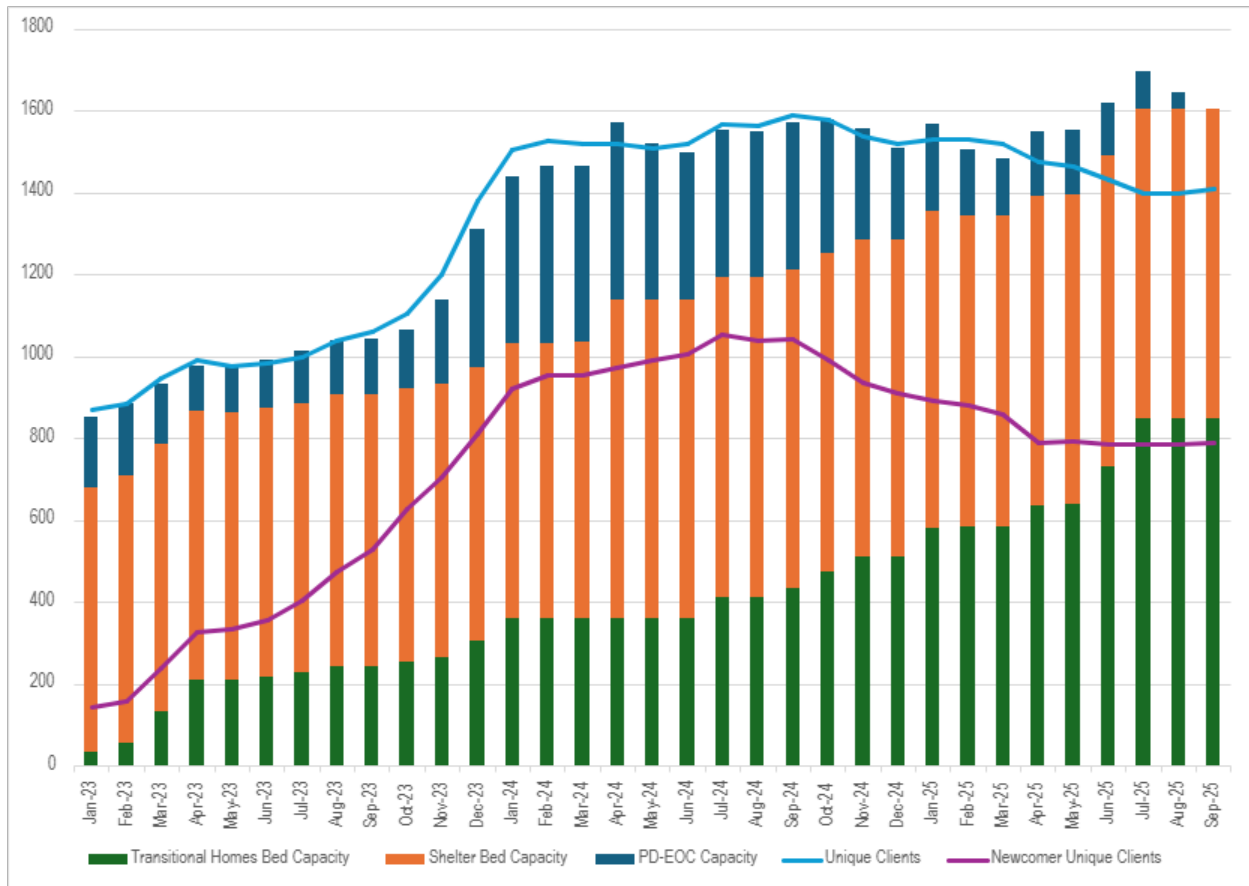
### **1.0 Historical and Current Context**

Beginning in January 2023, demand in the single adult shelter system grew to a peak in July 2024 and has since experienced a slight decline. The system continues to serve significantly higher demand than previous years. Specifically:

- Demand for single adults for shelter or transitional housing placements has grown by 62 per cent;
- The demand from single adult asylum claimants climbed by 452 per cent;
- Overall system capacity has increased by 84 per cent, including growth in transitional housing by 291 per cent (from June 2023).

See Table 1 below for more information.

**Table 1: Single Adult Shelter Capacity vs. Demand**



In addition to the above, the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness continues to grow. The estimated number of unsheltered individuals increased from 190 people, to approximately 510 people in October 2025. This represents a 168 per cent increase over 2019.

Additional data on the factors contributing to homelessness and initiatives to address homelessness in Ottawa are available through the [2024 Housing Needs Assessment](#), and the [2024 Progress Report](#) on the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

## 2.0 Achievements under the ITHS

As of August 15, 2025, all PD-EOCs locations were closed, returning municipal recreation facilities to their intended purposes. This significant milestone was achieved by offering new permanent capacity to meet demand and also by implementing systemic shifts that have created broad benefits, while continuing to focus on transitions to long-term housing.

The system is shifting from an emergency shelter model to a more housing-focused model through the addition of new transitional housing facilities. This model provides stable, temporary accommodations with consistent, on-site case management and housing services to encourage transitions to long-term housing and facilitate better overall outcomes for clients.

The initiatives are also creating a system with a broad spectrum of options designed to meet clients' unique needs. Such a system maximizes resources and outcomes by tailoring services to specific groups, such as asylum claimants.

The evolved system will also provide cost efficiencies through permanent solutions. Overflow mechanisms were largely unbudgeted and are less cost effective than permanent solutions.

The additional capacity created will enable a system that is intentional, responsive and proactive. It will provide the resources needed to manage changes in demand, including increased requests for shelter resulting from changes in international policies or seasonal fluctuations.

## **2.1 New Shelter and Transitional Housing Capacity**

Through the ITHS, the City and its partners were able to increase system capacity by over 700 beds between June 2023 and July 2025. This more than doubled available capacity for single adults and was the result of a number of initiatives outlined below.

***Relocation of Cornerstone Emergency Shelter for Women:*** In May 2024, Cornerstone Emergency Shelter for Women relocated to the former family shelter on Carling Avenue. The move allowed Cornerstone to more than double their capacity and to serve clients in a facility that was better aligned to operational requirements, including accessibility features.

***Pivoting of the YMCA Transitional Housing Program:*** With the lease of the Corkstown Transitional Housing Program for families, the YMCA was able to transfer out family clients and make their space available for single adult asylum claimants. Starting in October 2024, asylum claimant clients began transitioning from PD-EOCs to the YMCA Transitional Housing Program which now serves over 150 clients at the site.

Per the Council memo issued in March 2025, the City is working with the YMCA to convert additional unused office space for flexible transitional housing space that can be used to address ongoing pressures from on the shelter system from asylum claimants.

**Opening of the St. Joseph Transitional Housing Program:** In October 2024, the City purchased the former nunnery at 1754 St. Joseph Boulevard. Following minor retrofits to meet operational needs and fit-up requirements, clients started transitioning to the site in June 2025. The site will be able to accommodate up to 150 asylum claimants, as part of the Newcomer Reception System. Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI) Ottawa was selected to operate the site through a Request for Offer (RFO) process.

**Opening of the 230 Queen Street Transitional Housing Program:** This site will offer transitional housing for up to 140 single male and female adults experiencing homelessness, with a focus on newcomers, and is the first office-to-transitional housing conversion in Ottawa. After a year of construction to convert the space, the site started accepting clients in July 2025. This site is also operated by CCI Ottawa.

**Continued growth of Newcomer Transitional Homes:** This model uses residential homes across the City to accommodate up to 10 single asylum claimants at each site. Since 2022, the City has been working with newcomer transitional home providers, such as Matthew House and Stepstone House, to increase their capacity to address pressures from asylum claimant clients. The agencies offering this model of transitional housing now have approximately 340 beds for clients.

The purchase and operationalization of additional transitional homes was a component of the proposed Newcomer Reception System which is under consideration pending review of the 2025-2027 allocated IHAP funds.

## **2.2 Introduction of a Dedicated Newcomer Reception System**

The concept of a Newcomer Reception System was introduced in the [2024 ITHS Update](#) and was further refined in a Council Memo “Newcomer Reception System Update”, issued in November 2024.

Despite recent fluctuations in demand, the system continues to serve almost 800 single adult asylum claimants nightly and the need for a sustainable, coordinated service delivery model persists. This will also include defined processes and services offered through the settlement journey.

The development of a dedicated newcomer system will provide tailored services specific to the asylum claimant clients, ensuring they can successfully integrate into the community, while also alleviating pressures on the existing shelter system.

Through a competitive Request for Offers process, in October 2025, the City of Ottawa selected Refugee 613 on behalf of the Collective Impact Initiative for Refugee Claimants

(CIIRC) to co-lead and co-design the development of a Newcomer Reception System operating model for asylum-seekers. Engagement with sector partners is planned to start in fall 2025, with the design and development of the model occurring in early 2026. The model is intended to be fully implemented by the end of 2026 with comprehensive sector training to ensure rapid transitions from the shelter system to long-term housing.

### **2.3 Housing Initiatives**

The ITHS also included a priority on transitions to permanent housing, including through the below initiatives.

***PD-EOC Clients Housed:*** Between June 2023 and August 2025, 738 PD-EOC clients were housed. This includes 157 PD-EOC clients that were housed through the Enhanced Housing Allowance Benefit (EHAB) pilot. To date, all recipients of the benefit remain successfully housed and continue to integrate into their communities.

***Continued Development of Supportive Housing:*** Between April 2023 and June 2025, 180 new supportive housing units opened with another 94 anticipated to open during Winter 2025/2026. This was a medium-term priority of the ITHS.

***Development of a Supportive Housing Community Hub:*** In September 2023, Council approved the purchase of 1245 Kilborn Place. The intention is to develop a housing community hub that will include a range of different housing types, including supportive housing, social and health services, and other complementary uses that will benefit both residents and the wider community.

Since purchasing the property, City staff in the Strategic Initiatives department conducted background studies to help understand the current supportive housing need, the condition of the property and existing buildings, and completed initial internal and sector engagement.

In September 2025, the City hosted public engagement sessions to share updates and gather input on the emerging vision for 1245 Kilborn Place. These sessions provided residents with an opportunity to learn more about the proposed development, ask questions, and contribute feedback.

Later this year, the City will issue a Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) for project partnerships followed by two more public engagements in 2026 with the intention of bringing recommended concept and implementation plans forward for Council approval in early 2027 by the Strategic Initiatives Department.

### **3.0 Winter 2025/2026 Strategy**

Demand for single adult shelter services increases through the winter due to unsheltered residents coming indoors through the colder months. In order to ensure the needs of clients can be met, the City and community partners will take a four-pronged approach as outlined below.

***Available Shelter and Transitional Housing Capacity:*** As described in this report, permanent shelter and transitional housing system capacity has grown significantly over the last two years to meet demand. Following the closure of the temporary PD-EOCs and transfer of clients, as of September 1, 2024, there are approximately 100 beds available system-wide to serve new clients.

Further, renovations are underway at the St. Joseph Transitional Housing site for asylum claimants to add required emergency exit stairwells. Completion of this initiative is anticipated before the end of the year and would allow the operationalization of the remaining 70 beds at the site, creating additional capacity.

In addition, the YMCA is converting unused office space at their existing location into residential space to serve additional clients if/as needed. Exact capacity and timelines for this initiative are being developed with some capacity slated to come online early in 2026.

***Planning for Winter Overflow Capacity:*** CCI Ottawa, and the City are taking the necessary steps to operationalize the community room at the St. Joseph Transitional Housing Program to temporarily handle overflow, if needed. It is anticipated that this space can accommodate approximately 40 clients.

The City has maintained its License Agreement with the Federal Government for 250 Lanark Ave. and would operationalize the space if demand exceeds what can be addressed through the above strategies. The space can serve up to 60 clients.

***Services for Unsheltered Residents:*** Outreach agencies provide assistance to unsheltered individuals, including distributing winter supplies like sleeping bags, clothing and handwarmers. Outreach workers provide referrals and transportation to access shelter spaces, and housing-focused case management services to help people to move into long-term housing.

Further, at the end of 2023, Centre 507, a drop-in centre, expanded their operations. The site now offers 24/7 low barrier overnight warming and respite services including access to basic amenities, including warm space, snacks, hygiene facilities, and social

services. Shepherds of Good Hope also opened their low-barrier drop-in at 216 Murray St. in May 2025 and provides indoor access for clients seven days a week, 16 hours a day. These options provide vital alternatives to for those residents who choose not to access the shelter system.

In Q1 2026, Council will be presented with a report on the Downtown Safety Outreach Partnership. This initiative will increase visibility of outreach service delivery in the downtown core, and specifically in the ByWard Market, and develop localized strategies to assist the unhoused population and individuals with mental health and/or substance use challenges.

***Continued Supportive Housing Development and Housing First:*** The City and community partners continue to assist single adults experiencing homelessness to access long-term housing through the winter. Salus' Athlone and Capilano supportive housing developments are anticipated to be completed through the Winter and will be able to accommodate 94 residents in total.

Ottawa's Housing First program connects individuals experiencing chronic homelessness with case management services to assist with securing long-term housing, ongoing life skills and referrals to healthcare services or other community resources. In 2024, 398 individuals were housed through the Housing First program and efforts continue through 2025/2026.

#### **4.0 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan Refresh**

The City's current 10-Year Plan (2020-2030) is in the process of being updated and will serve as the mechanism for continuing to address priorities of the ITHS. With the closure of the PD-EOCs, and increased system capacity, the primary intent of the ITHS has been addressed, and ongoing work will be operationalized in the wholistic and integrated planning context provided under the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

The Housing and Homeless Plan Refresh is being co-designed with the Housing and Homelessness Leadership Table (HHLT), which was launched in June 2025 ([Memo: Housing and Homelessness Leadership Table](#)). The HHLT functions as a Department-Led Working Group, which is an advisory body of the City of Ottawa, providing advice to staff. It includes diverse representation from sectors including youth, justice, newcomer serving agencies, community health, gender-based violence, and housing and homelessness, as well as the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition, Alliance to End Homelessness (ATEH), Ottawa Community Housing, and Ottawa Social Housing Network.

The mission of the HHLT is to plan, design, and oversee the ongoing implementation of an integrated housing and homelessness system and related sectors to deliver affordable, suitable, and adequate housing choices and reductions in homelessness. As such, the HHLT also supports system planning, including the implementation of the refreshed 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. This will include policy reviews which will focus on limiting inflow and maximizing outflows from shelter.

### ***Status Update***

The refresh process was initiated earlier this year. Work on the refreshed 10-Year Plan has been organized into four phases:

- Phase 1: Current State Assessment (Q1, 2025)
- Phase 2: Consultation and Engagement (Q2-Q3, 2025)
- Phase 3: Strategy Development (Q2-Q4, 2025)
- Phase 4: Implementation (Q1, 2026 and beyond)

In the Current State Assessment phase, the findings from the [2024 Point-in-Time \(PiT\) Count](#) and the [2024 Housing Needs Assessment](#) were analyzed. Together, this laid the foundation for the Consultation and Engagement, and Strategy Development phases which have been undertaken concurrently, allowing for iterative feedback and adjustments throughout the process.

In the Consultation and Engagement phase, the housing and homelessness sector was engaged in May and June 2025, through a webinar and three in-person events which were attended by 155 sector leaders. Follow-up in person events took place in early October and were attended by 140 sector leaders. These events focused on identifying

and refining the sector's key priorities for the refresh, as well as establishing collective buy-in for the delivery of the plan.

Public engagement complemented sector engagement through the launch of the [Engage Ottawa](#) page. In May 2025, a public survey was launched and received 360 responses. In September 2025, one webinar and three in person open houses occurred. Public engagement has focused on informing, consulting, and involving the public in our work. The survey offered residents the opportunity to share their experiences, priorities, and ideas related to housing and homelessness and the webinar focused on providing an overview of roles and responsibilities related to the delivery of housing and homelessness services and clarified the purpose, scope and evolution of the 10-Year Plan.

The in-person open houses engaged residents to share their priorities and concerns through one-on-one and small group discussions and included other interactive feedback opportunities. Each open house had sector booths with representation from housing and homelessness partners as well as City booths with representation from a variety of service areas allowing residents to connect with people working across the housing and homelessness system. Information and data collected through public engagement is currently being analyzed and a "What We Learned" summary will be available in Q4 2025.

In addition to sector and public engagement, people with lived and living experience of homelessness and housing instability have been engaged throughout the refresh process as members of the HHLT. Additionally, people with lived and living experience have been engaged by the Alliance to End Homelessness's Expert Steering Team and contributed to the Engage Ottawa survey.

The Strategy Development phase has focused on co-developing the refreshed 10-Year Plan Framework, including the vision, mission, guiding principles, priorities, goals, objectives, outcomes, key performance indicators, and targets. This phase has been completed concurrently with the Consultation and Engagement phase, allowing key collaborators to contribute to the development and refinement of the refreshed 10-Year Plan.

The Implementation phase will begin with presenting the plan to Committee and Council for approval in Q1 2026 and will include a plan for communication, reporting, monitoring, and next steps in implementing the refreshed 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Plan.

## **5.0 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan - Funding Considerations**

The Housing Services Long Range Financial Plan (LRFP) 2025-2030 Update ([ACS2024-FCS-FIN-0011](#)) was approved by Council on November 13, 2024. Amongst other priority housing considerations, it outlines a high-level funding framework for new transitional housing facilities and further planned expansion to the Transitional Housing system, including those initiatives associated with the ITHS.

Following the completion of the updated 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan in Q1 2026 staff will begin to update the LRFP. The updated LRFP will be completed during the next Term of Council.

In the immediate term, staff will be working to determine funding allocations required for the short-term delivery of services through key funding programs including the IHAP, COHB and Ontario-Ottawa Agreement.

### **Federal Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP)**

A significant portion of the funding framework for the ITHS, as well the family shelter system, is reliant on funding from other levels of government, such as the Federal IHAP program. In 2024, under the former cost recovery model, the City received capital funding for the acquisition of 1754 St. Joseph, purchase of one scattered home, and fit-up to enable the transition of the YMCA from serving families to singles. These are all now permanent assets that will form part of the Newcomer Reception System.

The 2024 Federal Budget extended IHAP over three years beginning in 2024-25. With the renewal came new program directives and municipal cost share requirements, effective in 2025, that will have financial implications for the City.

#### *IHAP Program Directives*

The new IHAP program directives require cost-sharing based on whether the initiative is deemed sustainable and cost-effective, which considers whether a service is:

- Dedicated: Activities that are targeted to the housing needs of asylum claimants.
- Permanent: Activities that are intended to be an ongoing part of the response system, and that are not reliant on long-term federal funding to continue their operation.
- Coordinated: Activities that receive/send referrals through an integrated and standardized assessment and triage process.

The directives also introduce a funding model that gradually reduces federal contributions toward eligible expenses in the coming years. As illustrated in Table 2 below, by the 2026-2027 funding period, the municipal contribution will increase to 50 per cent for “non-sustainable and not cost-effective” activities.

**Table 2: Cost-Share Directives IHAP**

| Fiscal Year | Municipal Contribution if “Sustainable and Cost-Effective” | Municipal Contribution if not “Sustainable and Cost-Effective” |
|-------------|--|--|
| 2025-2026   | 5 per cent   | 25 per cent  |
| 2026-2027   | 25 per cent  | 50 per cent  |

The City can utilize existing housing and homelessness reserves to meet the cost sharing obligations under the grant agreement. These reserves were built through prior IHAP years when the program operated on a reimbursement model. This new approach will not be sustainable for the municipality to bear in the long-term.

In addition, the new IHAP directives restrict eligible program costs to services delivered specifically to asylum claimants defined as “any individual who has made a claim for refugee protection in accordance with Section 99(3) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, and whose claim has not been determined”. This means that funding will not cover services delivered to clients who have initiated an incomplete refugee claim, those who arrive to Canada with the intention to make a refugee claim and are preparing to make it, as well as those whose claim was approved.

Lastly, the program directives state that the targeted maximum length of stay is ninety (90) days. While City staff agree that the intent is to transition to long-term housing as soon as possible, low social assistance rates, current rental housing market and lack of portable housing benefits, mean that many clients will require services beyond 90 days.

Staff continue to negotiate with the Federal Government to address these concerns, in partnership with other municipalities such as Toronto. Following these discussions, staff will bring forward a report to Council outlining financial implications and recommendations for moving forward.

There is currently no commitment to renew the IHAP program past March 31, 2027.

## ***Funding Allocation***

The City has been in ongoing negotiations with IRCC since mid-2023 for IHAP funding of a newcomer reception system. A 2024 allocation was received under the previous IHAP, then in August 2025, the City received confirmation of \$112M of funding to cover expenses incurred between January 2025 and March 2027 under the new program. The City's initial proposal was \$261M, which means the City received only 43 per cent of its requested funding. It should also be noted that a portion of these funds are associated with ongoing services which serve asylum claimants (hotel and motel overflow and other emergency options) and are already committed. The result of this funding allocation has required a review of the overarching plan, and a scaling back of the proposed capital investments required to pivot to more cost-effective solutions such as new transitional housing sites, to serve singles and families over the long term.

Services for asylum claimants are the responsibility of the Government of Canada. Staff continue to advocate alongside other municipalities for funding that fully covers the associated costs. Following these efforts, a full financial analysis and summary of implications of the IHAP funding and resulting recommendations will be presented to Council in 2026.

## **Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)**

One of the most common ways that households exit the shelter system is through an offer of a portable housing benefit. COHB is a jointly funded, provincially delivered federal-provincial portable housing allowance program that is intended to increase the affordability of rental housing by providing an income-tested Portable Housing Benefit (PHB) directly to eligible households in need that are on, or are eligible to be on, the social housing waiting list.

The City's 2024–25 COHB allocation was less than expected, and all funding was fully utilized by February 2025. Following Council approval of the "2025 Update to Municipal Housing Allowance Programs and the Home for Good Housing Allowance Program" in April 2025, \$7.1 million in funding was allocated above the approved municipal budget for housing allowance benefits for the remainder of 2025. This covers the continuation of existing benefits while enabling staff to issue approximately 25 new benefits each month, sustaining continued outflow from the emergency shelter system

On September 18, 2025, the City was advised that its 2025-2026 COHB program allocation is \$2,085,000 with an estimated 205 households being targeted for the program. This is 54 fewer new households that could be onboarded than the previous year.

Early estimates indicate that by Q3 2026, the COHB or municipal funds will be fully expended thereby limiting the ability to deliver new housing benefits.

Staff are reviewing the implications of this funding decrease and identifying recommendations, which will be brought forward to Committee and Council for consideration in Q1 2026.

### **Ontario-Ottawa Agreement:**

In March 2024, through the Ontario-Ottawa Agreement, a commitment of \$120 million in provincial funding over three fiscal years (\$40 million in each of the 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26) was announced to help address financial pressures in the City's shelter system. The funding was conditional on federal funding over the same period to address the increasing number of asylum claimants accessing the City's shelter system.

In the fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25, the City met the requirements for this funding by securing funding through the federal IHAP program to meet the provincial cost-share requirements of the program. This additional funding allowed staff to accommodate the demand from non-newcomers in the shelter system and implement several enhancements to the shelter system as part of the ITHS, noted in this report.

This funding is slated to end in March 2026. With the federal IHAP commitment confirmed over the next two years, staff anticipate that the final installment of the Ontario-Ottawa Agreement funding will be secured. Staff are working with internal and community partners to assess core needs and plan for various financial scenarios if funding is not continued past March 2026.

### **Next Steps**

Housing and Homelessness Services receives federal and provincial funding from a variety of sources. It is standard process under most programs that funding commitments are made on a two-to-three-year basis and often aligned to election cycles.

Renewed or replacement programs are regularly introduced when the term-end approaches. Multiple funding sources are anticipated to require renewal over the next two years, as noted above.

Staff continuously review funding opportunities that align to local needs. With the anticipated funding shifts, staff will undertake a full review to adjust funding sources to align with opportunities available for the time periods. It is anticipated that new funding sources introduced to replace former programs would provide an opportunity to sustain services introduced with funding programs such as IHAP, Ontario-Ottawa Agreement and COHB.

Staff are in the process of conducting a full financial analysis that considers program allocations, the implication of new provincial and federal funding directives and potential funding program expirations. Funding commitments from other levels of government will be required in order to maintain the services and successes outlined in this report. This is also confirmed in the Housing Long Range Financial Plan, due for updating during the next term of Council.

Other measures are also underway to address shelter system pressures and facilitate access to permanent housing. In the coming months, staff, in conjunction with Housing and Homelessness Leadership Table, will be:

- Preparing a *Shelter System Inflow and Outflow Strategy* to be brought forward to Committee and Council in Q1 2026. It will recommend policy and program changes to decrease inflow into and increase outflow from the shelter system, in line with a housing-focused approach.
- Organizing continued advocacy campaigns with other municipalities to federal and provincial funders to ensure sufficient capital and operating funding to meet ongoing and emerging needs.
- Ensuring capital and operating spending is available to meet core service delivery requirements within the shelter system through scenario-based planning.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Since the start of the ITHS strategy in 2023, staff have worked with community partners to ensure residents in Ottawa could be placed in the shelter system if needed, and the success of this strategy has resulted in creating new permanent shelter and transitional housing capacity.

The success of the ITHS was possible through the leadership of Council, collaboration across City departments, with residents and community partners.

For many communities, particularly Ward 12 (Rideau-Vanier) and Ward 18 (Alta-Vista), there were ongoing impacts for local residents whose community centres were used for overflow shelter. As well, Ward 7 (Bay) hosted a PD-EOC temporarily, and Ward 15 (Kitchissippi) hosted a PD-EOC in a non-City owned facility. The Community and Social Services Department appreciates each Ward Councillor's leadership, and residents' patience and understanding over the past several years.

Community and Social Services (CSS) would like to thank Council for their ongoing support, in particular, the Emergency Shelter Taskforce for their leadership in raising awareness and the collective commitment to addressing the unprecedented demand for and shortage of shelter beds in Ottawa.

CSS would also like to recognize all the staff that served clients directly at the PD-EOCs every day and night, and to the staff across 15 different service areas who facilitated the ongoing operations and relocations of PD-EOCs, as well as the establishment of Ottawa's new, permanent transitional housing facilities.

Finally, the City is grateful to all the community agencies who served clients through this period of rapid change and unprecedented demand, and who have been instrumental in implementing new and sustained services to ensure the system meets the needs of residents experiencing homelessness.

As the City moves forward with an updated 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan in 2026, staff will continue to work together with community partners to make significant progress in addressing housing and homelessness needs.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications at this time as the initiatives under the ITHS are funded by existing operating and capital budgets. Should additional municipal funding be required, staff will bring forward recommendations and reports to Committee and Council for consideration.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to receiving and approving the report recommendations.

## **CONSULTATION**

The City will continue to engage and collaborate with the community housing & homelessness sector partners and with community service agencies with subject matter expertise to shape, refine and implement the initiatives outlined in this report. The City will also continue its work with the Housing and Homelessness Leadership Table to deliver and implement the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

All initiatives arising from the 2025 Integrated Transition to Housing Strategy are implemented according to all applicable legislation. This includes the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, 191/11 (IASR)* of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA)* in addition to following the requirements of the City's Accessibility Design Standards (ADS), where applicable.

## **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The City of Ottawa owns assets for the purpose of delivering service. As a service delivery organization, the City can and does also provide service using assets owned by other entities.

For the assets the City owns, the City's Comprehensive Asset Management (CAM) Program guides decisions regarding the management of these assets with the objectives to derive service delivery at optimal cost, over the life cycle of each asset.

The intent of the CAM Program is to support the City to effectively manage existing and new infrastructure to maximize benefits, reduce risk, and provide safe, reliable and sustained levels of service to community users. This is done in a socially, culturally, environmentally, and economically conscious manner.

When the City commits to the acquisition of new assets, consideration must also be given to the City's commitment to fund, or obtain revenue from other entities, to cover capital and operating expenses related to future operations, maintenance, and asset renewal. It must also account for future depreciation when reviewing long-term financial sustainability. When reviewing decisions regarding City-owned assets, it is useful to consider the cumulative value and lifecycle costing, both capital and operating.

For example, consideration for the additional renewal costs the City will incur as part of the acquisition of facilities is outside the scope of the Housing LRFP update. In accordance with the City's CAM program, these additional renewal costs should be

included when considering the City's needs for the development of the tax-supported long range financial plan.

All City-owned facilities related to the delivery of Housing Services are included as part of the inventory of assets and financial forecasts included under the Community and Social Services Asset Management Plan.

### **DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS**

Staff will advance the above initiatives within existing delegated authority and report back should additional delegated authority be required.

### **INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS**

The 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan highlights specific population needs, further compounded in intersectional identities. Implementation has and would continue to consider the Women and Gender, and Indigenous Policy Considerations as outlined under the 2023 ITHS.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are risk implications, which have been identified and explained in this report and are being managed by the appropriate staff.

### **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

Community and Social Services remains committed to the strategic priority "A city that has affordable housing and is more livable for all". The work in this report strives to promote and address safety, social and physical well-being for single adults and families at risk of and experiencing homelessness.

### **DISPOSITION**

Housing & Homelessness Services will engage cross-departmentally, with the HHLT and with community partners with subject matter expertise to coordinate the implementation of the initiatives identified in this report. The 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan Refresh will be brought to Committee and Council in Q1 2026 for approval.