



**10 - Year Housing and
Homelessness Plan**

2014 - 2024

Mid-Point Review

Needs Assessment

December 2019

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December 2019

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Introduction

In 2013 the City, in collaboration with community partners, developed the first 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan entitled, Our 10-Year Plan: A Home for Everyone 2014-2024. The Plan identified priorities to improve access to affordable and supportive housing, increase housing affordability and ensure support services were available to meet people's needs. Since the inception of the plan much has changed in our city, province and country.

As we embark on the mid-point review of the Plan, the City has undertaken an updated needs assessment. It is essential to understand our current landscape, in order to be able to effectively respond to our local needs, and address the gaps in housing options and support services needed to improve our housing and homelessness system. An adequate supply of safe, affordable housing and a broad range of supports are essential for a thriving community.

The City of Ottawa has been an innovative leader in developing strategies that respond to our community's unique housing and support needs.

Over the last six years, we have made progress in creating a housing system that is better integrated, operationally effective and responsive to people's changing needs. However, despite the successes of the first six years of the Plan, many Ottawa residents continue to live in poverty, experience housing insecurity and are at risk of and/or experiencing homelessness. Many others fill up our emergency shelter system nightly or wait for access to deeply affordable housing on the Centralized Wait List.

For equity groups such as seniors, youth, women, LBGTQ2S people, and other groups such as the Indigenous community, there is the need for deliberate focus and intentional strategies.

Through the refresh of the 10-Year Plan we have identified new strategies and tactics to help us accelerate the Plan's progress, in addition to concrete actions, new targets and measurable outcomes to help us gauge and report on our progress over time.

As we enter into year seven of the Plan in a competitive rental market, with increasing demand and complexity of need across the housing and homelessness sector, it will take the combined and collaborative efforts of all levels of government, community partners, other stakeholders and Ottawa residents to improve our housing system.



Vision

A city where everyone has a place to call home.



Mission

Work with our partners to strengthen Ottawa's system of housing and supports to promote vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities.

Needs Assessment Process

A Needs Assessment is an essential component of the review and update of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The Needs Assessment provides an opportunity to reflect on our local context as it relates to housing and homelessness in our City, including changes that have taken place since the inception of the Plan six years ago. This needs assessment focused on two main areas:

1. The City of Ottawa's changing landscape in areas such as population, demographics, economic characteristics, housing starts, rental market and tenures.
2. The City of Ottawa's current housing and homelessness services system, demand, capacity and needs.

The review provided a framework to identify local demands, needs and gaps, resulting in the ability to make informed recommendations on the types of strategies and actions required in the short and long term, to effectively respond to the needs in the community.

The following questions helped guide this Needs Assessment:

1. What has changed since the inception of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness in 2014?
2. What are the current and projected housing supply needs in the City of Ottawa?
3. What is the current housing and homelessness services demand across the housing continuum in the City of Ottawa?
4. What are the gaps in the housing and homelessness service system in Ottawa?

Sources

Consultations:

Over 2019, the City consulted extensively with community partners, housing providers, tenants, people with lived experience, the public, and City staff from several departments. The feedback received was crucial to inform the development of the Needs Assessment by identifying changes in our local context, service gaps, and the challenges residents face in accessing the housing options and support services they need.

Data:

Data from Environics Analytics' DemoStats database was a major contributor to this report. DemoStats uses Environics Analytics, Statistics Canada, Oxford Economics, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Equifax and Canada Post data to build estimates and projections for over 750 variables.

A variety of other sources were used to draft the Needs Assessment and are listed at the end of this document. It is important to note there may be discrepancies in the data due to the original source. The Needs Assessment was created using the most current, relevant, data including custom Statistics Canada data tabulations, Environics Analytics data, and rental market analysis data.

SECTION 1

City of Ottawa Landscape

Part 1: Population

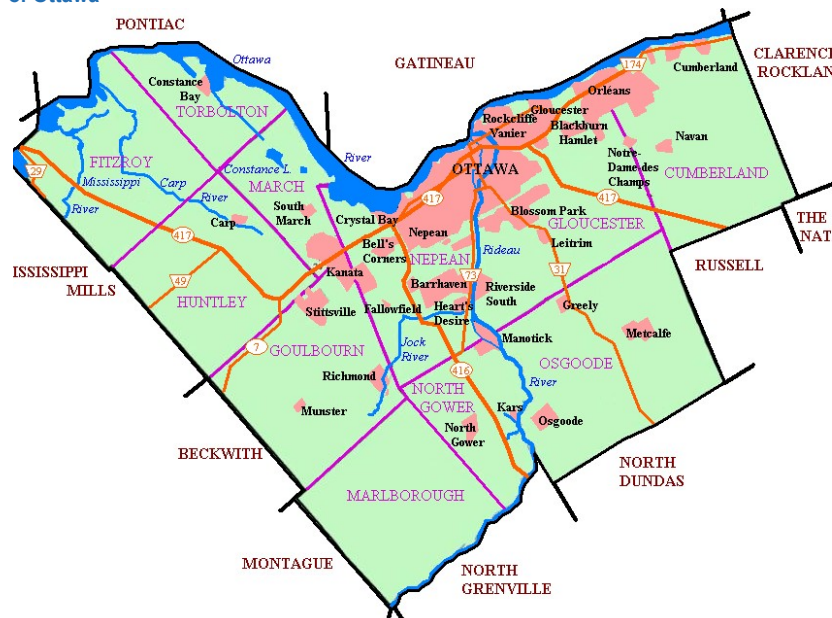
- 1.1 City of Ottawa**
- 1.2 Demographics**
- 1.3 Migration**

1.1 City of Ottawa

Founded in 1826, the City of Ottawa is the fourth largest city in Canada and the Nation’s Capital. In 2001, 10 local municipalities and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton were amalgamated to become one city. The City of Ottawa is comprised of 2,796 square kilometers of urban, suburban and rural areas, spanning 90 kilometers from east to west. The urban area is the most populated, with 55 per cent of the population of Ottawa residing there.

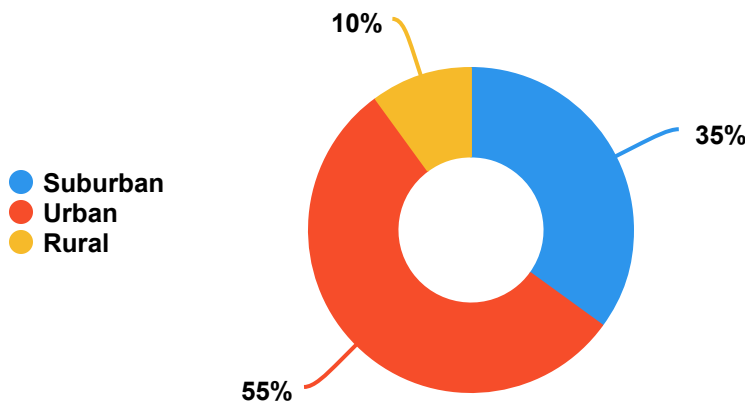
Ottawa is a fast-growing city, that experienced a 29.6 per cent increase in its population over the 20-year period of 1996 to 2016. In 2019, the population is estimated to have reached over 1 million people. This number is anticipated to grow by 11 per cent, reaching over 1.1 million by 2029.

Figure 1: City of Ottawa



Source: Wiki

Figure 2: Proportion of the population by geographic area

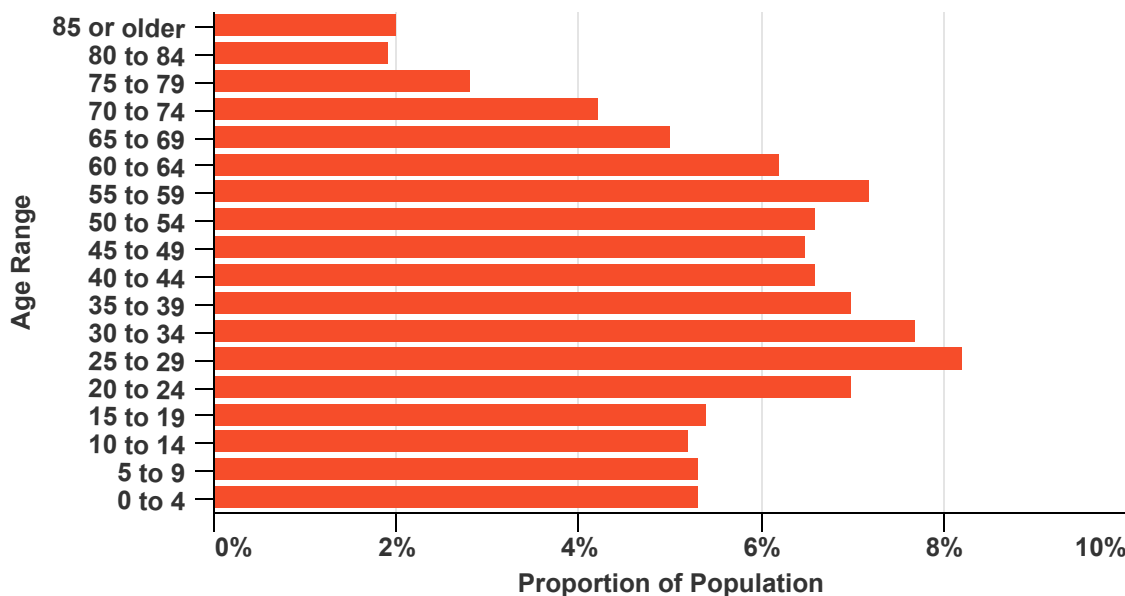


Source: Ottawa Insights, 2016

1.2 Demographics

Ottawa borders Gatineau, Québec, and together they form the National Capital Region. Given its proximity to the province of Québec and Ottawa’s Franco-Ontarian history, it is unique in that 38 per cent of residents speak both English and French. The median age of Ottawa’s population is 39 years. The greatest proportion of the population is classified as young (20 to 34 years) and mature adults (35 to 64 years). However, based on projections the population over the age of 65 could grow from 16.1 per cent to 20.1 per cent of the population by 2029. An aging population can lead to decreased household size, which would directly affect housing supply.

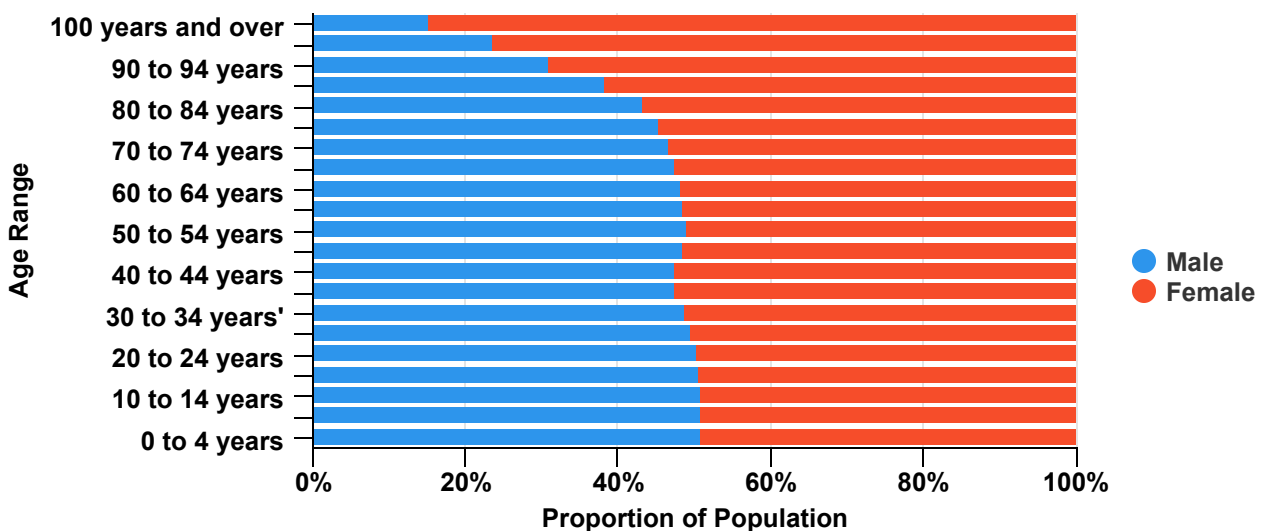
Figure 3: Proportion of the population by age



Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

The ratio of males to females in Ottawa’s population is close to 50 per cent. This can be seen across the lifespan until the age of 65, at which point females begin to outnumber males. As age increases, the ratio of females to males quickly grows. According to Census 2016 data, older women in Ottawa are more likely to live on low income (10.4%) compared to older men (8.3%).

Figure 4: Gender trends over the lifespan



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

1.3 Migration

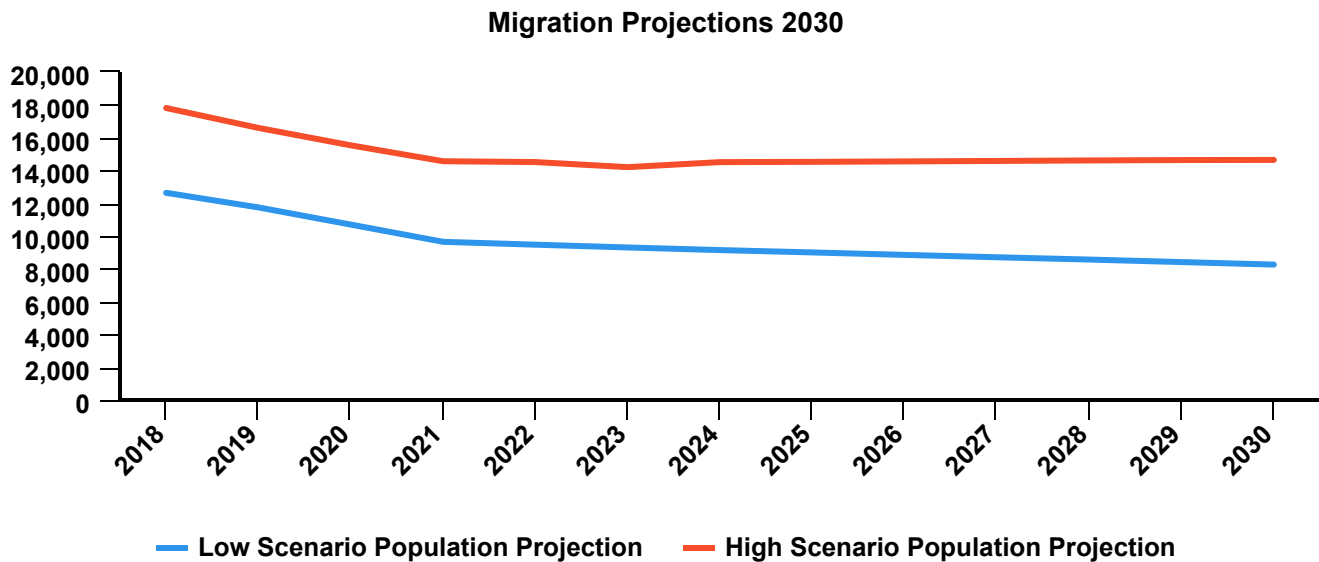
Migration has contributed to Ottawa's population increase, as individuals and families continue to settle in Ottawa from across Canada and other countries. From 2016 to 2017, the net number of people moving to Ottawa was 13,415 a 35.7 per cent increase from the year before. This was the highest net migration to Ottawa since 2001.

Figure 5: City of Ottawa Net migration of individuals by age group to the City of Ottawa, 2014 to 2017

Year	0 to 17	18 to 24	24 to 44	45 to 64	65+	Total
2014-2015	1,230	1,688	3,237	415	87	5,827
2015-2016	2,467	2,210	4,621	110	480	9,888
2016-2017	3,295	2,542	6,390	585	603	13,415

Source: City of Ottawa, 2018 Annual Development Report

Figure 6: Migration Projections 2018-2044 (low and high scenario projections)



Source: Growth Projections for the New Official Plan : Methods and Assumptions for Population, Housing and Employment 2018 - 2046

Part 2: Labour Force

2.1 Education

2.2 Employment

2.3 Commute

2.1 Education

Ottawa residents are highly educated, with 65.5 per cent of the working-age population obtaining some form of post-secondary education. This is higher than the national average of 56.8 per cent. As a result, many Ottawa residents have achieved higher levels of education and are more affluent than the average Canadian.

Figure 7: Educational attainment of household population 15 years and over

Educational Attainment	Ottawa Percentage	Canada Percentage
No Certificate, Diploma or Degree	10.84%	16.71%
High School Certificate or Equivalent	23.63%	26.51%
Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate or Diploma	3.88%	9.36%
College, CEGEP or Other Non-University Certificate or Diploma	20.26%	19.93%
University Certificate or Diploma Below Bachelor	1.64%	2.43%
University Degree	39.75%	25.05%
Bachelor's Degree	24.77%	16.95%
Above Bachelor's	14.97%	8.11%

Source: Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

Data from the 2016 Census shows that Ontario employees with a bachelor degree earn 55 per cent more per year than those with a high school diploma. Of note, is that 39.8 per cent of Ottawa's residents over the age of 15 have a university degree, in comparison to only 25.1 per cent of the Canadian population.

2.2 Employment

Of Ottawa's estimated 840,517 working-aged population, defined as 15 years and over, 68 per cent are participating in the labour force. Out of the entire female working-age population, 64.1 per cent are in the labour force, versus 70.7 per cent of working-aged males. The unemployment rate in 2018 was 4.6 per cent but has risen to an average of 5.03 per cent in 2019 based on the first ten months of the year.

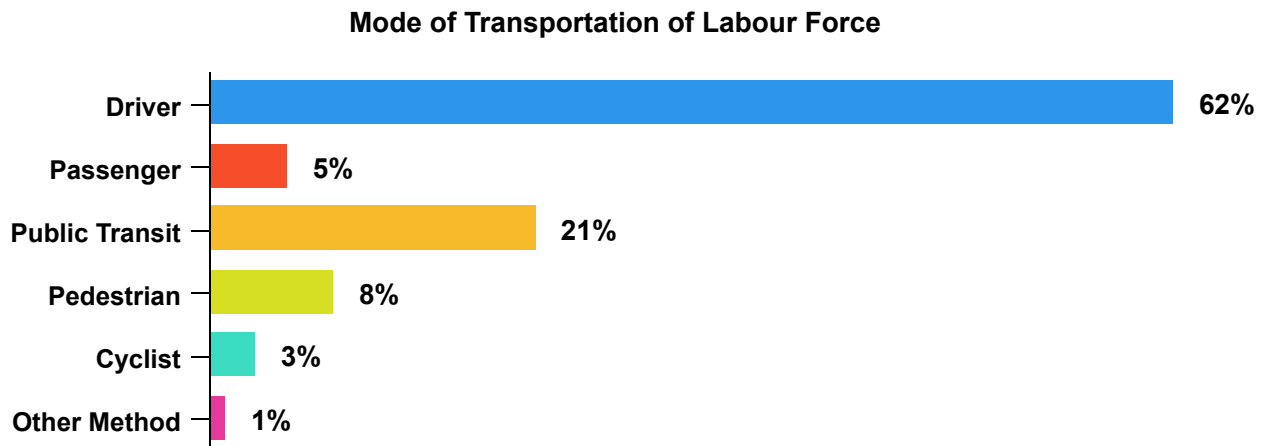
The federal government is a major contributor to Ottawa's economy, both directly and indirectly. The public sector, including the three levels of government and government-funded organizations such as universities and hospitals, make up 30 per cent of the economic activity and employ one-third of residents in the National Capital Region. The private-sector also benefits by providing goods and services to a stable government sector.

Ottawa's highly educated residents fuel 1,750 companies employing 68,000 people in knowledge-based industries including communications technology, software, aerospace, defence and security, digital media, life science and clean technology.

2.3 Commute

The majority of the labour force (84.0%) works in a fixed location. The remaining population either works from home (7.2%), has no fixed workplace address (8.2%), with the remainder (0.5%) working outside of Canada. For those who do travel to a place of work, 67.5 per cent are commuting by car, either as a driver or passenger. According to 2019 estimates, another 21 per cent of the employed labour force is using public transit. The City of Ottawa is anticipating an increase in public transit use with the opening of Phase I of the Light Rail System, which runs 12.5 kilometres East-West, with 2.5 km of track running underground through the downtown core. The introduction of Phase I and future phases of the Light Rail System may also contribute to shorter commute times. Statistics from the 2016 Census show that 58 per cent of the Ottawa labour force is commuting for up to 30 minutes.

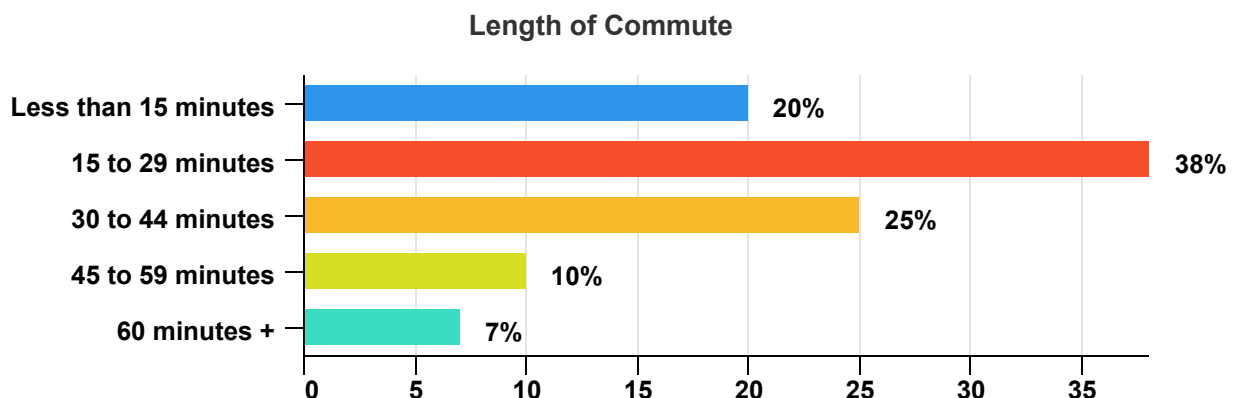
Figure 8: Mode of transportation of labour market



Source: Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

The relationship between transportation and housing affordability should not be overlooked. Some of the affordable neighborhoods in Ottawa where housing is less expensive, are in less central locations, which may lead to higher transportation costs. The introduction of Light Rail Transit makes the surrounding neighborhoods more appealing and may lead to an increase in land value, market rents and housing prices.

Figure 9: Length of commute



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016

Part 3: Household

3.1 Household Population and Projections

3.2 Household Demographics

3.3 Household Income and Projections

3.4 Low Income Population

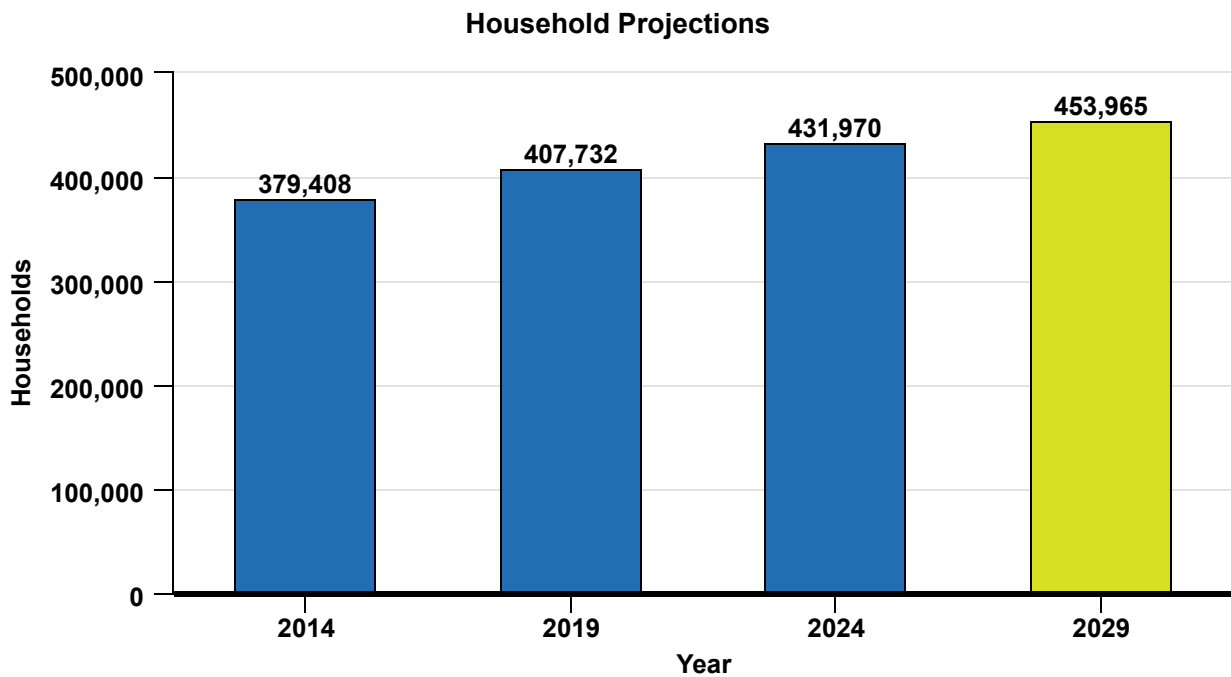
3.5 Core Housing Need

3.1 Household Populations and Projections



There are an estimated 404,400 households in Ottawa in 2018. It is anticipated that over the next ten years the number of households will increase by 11.3 per cent to 453,965 households.

Figure 10: Household projections, 2014 to 2029

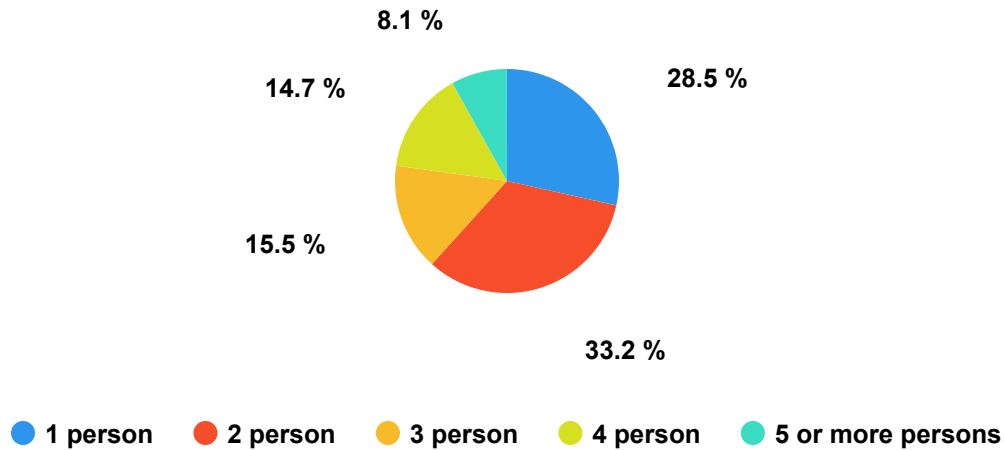


Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2014, 2019, 2024 & 2029

3.2 Household Demographics

With nearly two-thirds of households occupied by one (28.5%) or two persons (33.2%), it is understandable that the average household size is 2.5 persons. The size and distribution of households is not expected to change significantly over the next ten years. Out of all households, 66.1 per cent identify as a family. A family is considered a couple with or without children at home or a single parent. Coupled families tend to have two or more children (62.2%) at home, while it is more common for lone-parent families to have only one child at home (59.0%).

Figure 11: Proportion of the population by household size

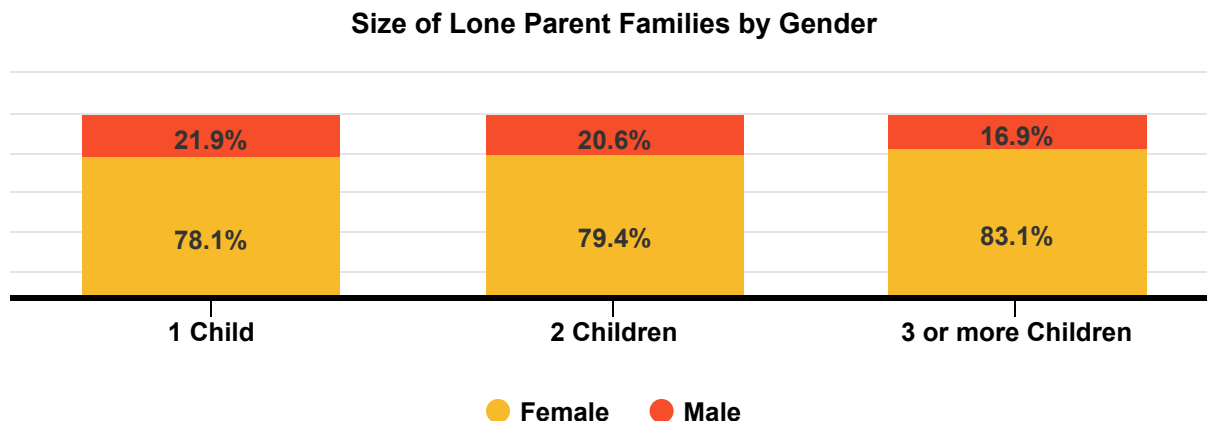


Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

Over three-quarters of lone-parent family households are led by a female parent or guardian. As the number of children in the family increases, so does the percentage of homes led by female parents, with 83.1 per cent of families with three or more children being led by a female as the lone parent.

Lone-parent households have increased vulnerability to low income than coupled households. In 2015 across Canada, 34.5 per cent of lone mothers and 13.7 per cent of lone fathers lived on a low income. As the number of children increases, so do the pressures, including financial pressures, lone parents face.

Figure 12: Size of lone-parent families by gender, 1 - 3 children or more

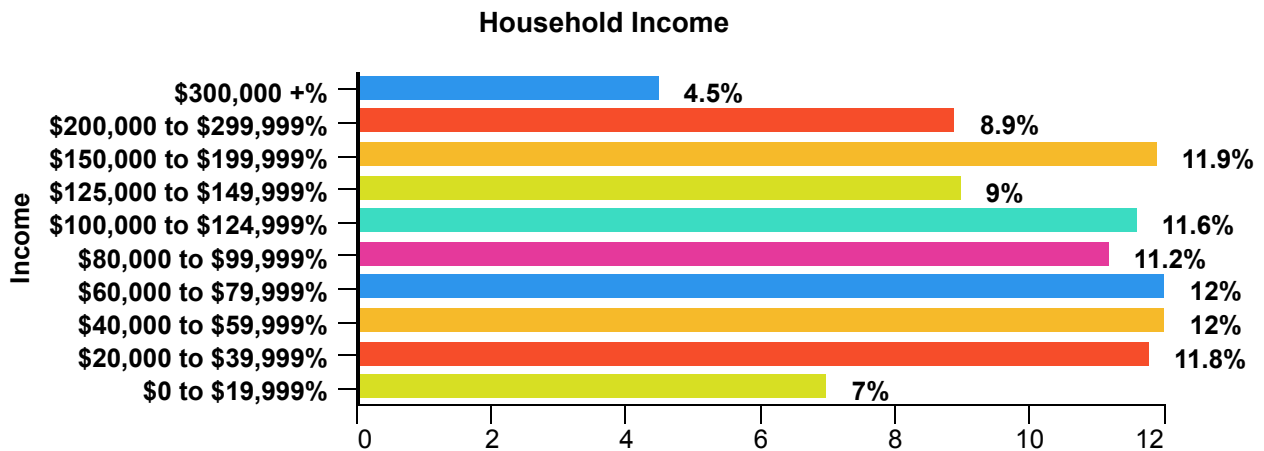


Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

3.3 Household Income and Projections

The federal government, and a flourishing tech industry have benefited Ottawa with a stable job market. The median household income in 2019 is estimated at over \$87,000 a year. The largest proportion of households earn between \$40,000 and \$79,000 a year.

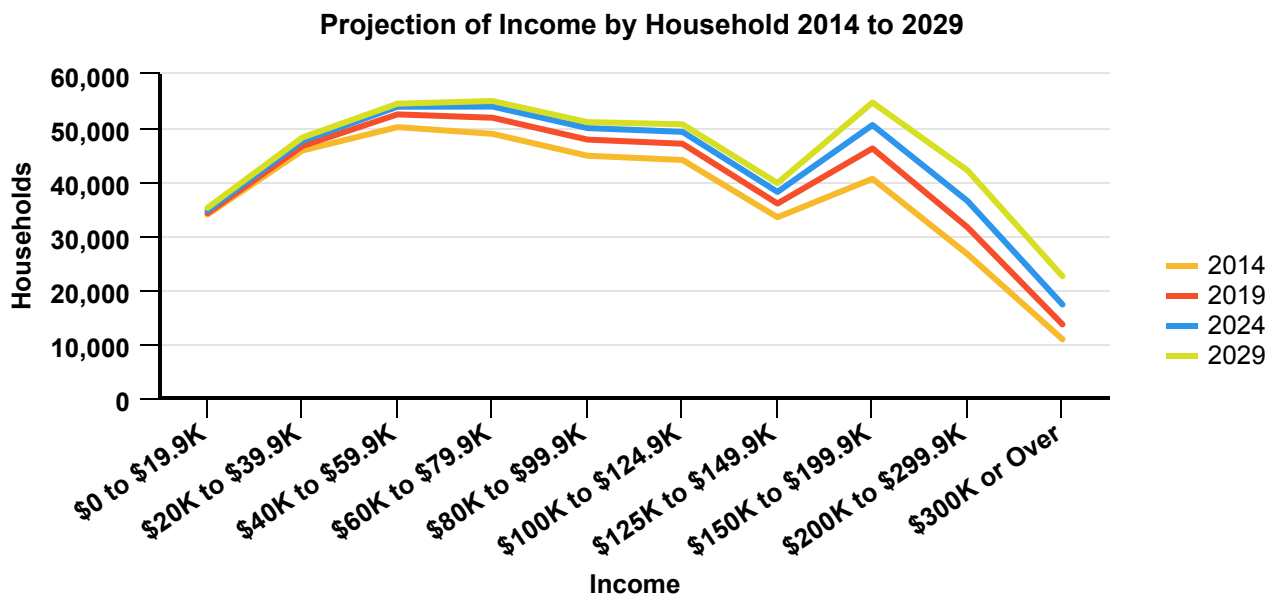
Figure 13: Household income, \$0 to \$300,00 or over



Source: Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

Projections estimate that in the next ten years the proportion of households earning an income of \$150,000 to \$199,999 will be equal to that of households earning \$60,000 to \$79,999. The most significant increase, based on the ten year projection estimates, would see households making over \$300,000 increasing by 65.4 per cent.

Figure 14: Projection of income by household, 2014 to 2029



Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2014, 2019, 2024 & 2029

3.4 Low Income Population

On the other end of the income spectrum, many of Ottawa's residents rely on government supports to survive. Ontario Works provides both financial and employment assistance to those in financial need. For people with disabilities needing support to cover living expenses, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) provides income and employment supports to recipients.

The number of Ontario Works cases has decreased since 2017, when it reached a high of almost 20,000. In Ottawa, according to Ontario's Social Assistance Operations Performance Report, as of July 2019, there was a total of 43,737 cases and 70,266 beneficiaries receiving social assistance. This works out to a monthly average of 18,347 Ontario Works and 25,389 ODSP cases over a seven-month period.

Based on 2019 averages, recipients of Ontario Works were mainly single individuals with 27 per cent living with children and 62 per cent without. The majority, 93 per cent of Ontario Works recipients live in rented accommodations; of the 93 per cent only 8.4 per cent live in subsidized housing.

Unlike Ontario Works cases, the number of ODSP cases continues to rise. However, similar to the demographics of Ontario Works cases, the majority of cases are singles living with (9%) and without (81%) children. Of the 79.4 per cent of renters, 81.8 per cent rented in the private market, while the remaining 18.2 per cent rented in subsidized housing.

Low income affects more than just those who access supports in the community and from the government. The Low-Income measure (LIM-AT) as defined by Statistics Canada "is a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted household income, where "adjusted" reflects the fact that a household's needs increase as the number of household members increases. A household is living on low income if its after-tax income is less than half of the median after-tax income of all households in Canada". The LIM-AT threshold for Canadian households ranges from \$22,133 for a single person to \$58,558 for a 7 person household.

The 2016 Census identified that 12.6 per cent of Ottawa's total population falls below the Low-income measure. Based on a custom Statistics Canada Data tabulation that looked at household income, Ottawa households making less than \$59,136 are considered low income, this represents 124,255 households. Of these, 79,274 households are spending 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs and 40,258 households are spending 50 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs. There is a need to support low income households with housing affordability.

3.5 Core Housing Need

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation describes a household in core housing need as one whose dwelling is considered unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable and whose income levels are such that they could not afford alternative, suitable, and adequate housing in their community. “Acceptable housing” refers to housing that is:

1. Adequate

Dwellings that do not require any major repairs by the household.

2. Suitable

Dwellings with enough bedrooms for the size and make up of the household.

3. Affordable

Dwellings that cost less than 30% of before-tax household income.

Across Canada, 1.7 million households are in core housing need, living in homes that are inadequate, and/or unaffordable. Factors that influence the incidence of core housing need, include income, low vacancy rates, competitive rental markets, high shelter costs, and the overall increase in costs of living. Ottawa's low income population disproportionately makes up much of the City's total population that is in core housing need. Within the low income population, 63% of households are considered to be in core need (79,274 / 124,25). The low income population is in a much greater need of affordability assistance compared to other income thresholds.

Figure 15: Household Incomes (Low, Moderate and High) and Core Housing Need

Household Income and Core Housing Need						
	Low Incomes (<\$59,136)	%	Moderate Incomes (\$59,137 - \$111,844)	%	High Incomes (>\$111,845)	%
Household spending 30%+ on housing	79,274	63	17,023	14	2,319	1
Household spending 50%+ on housing	40,258	32	1,243	1	not a significant number	n/a

Source: Statistic Canada, Ontario's Consumer Price Index, 2019 estimates

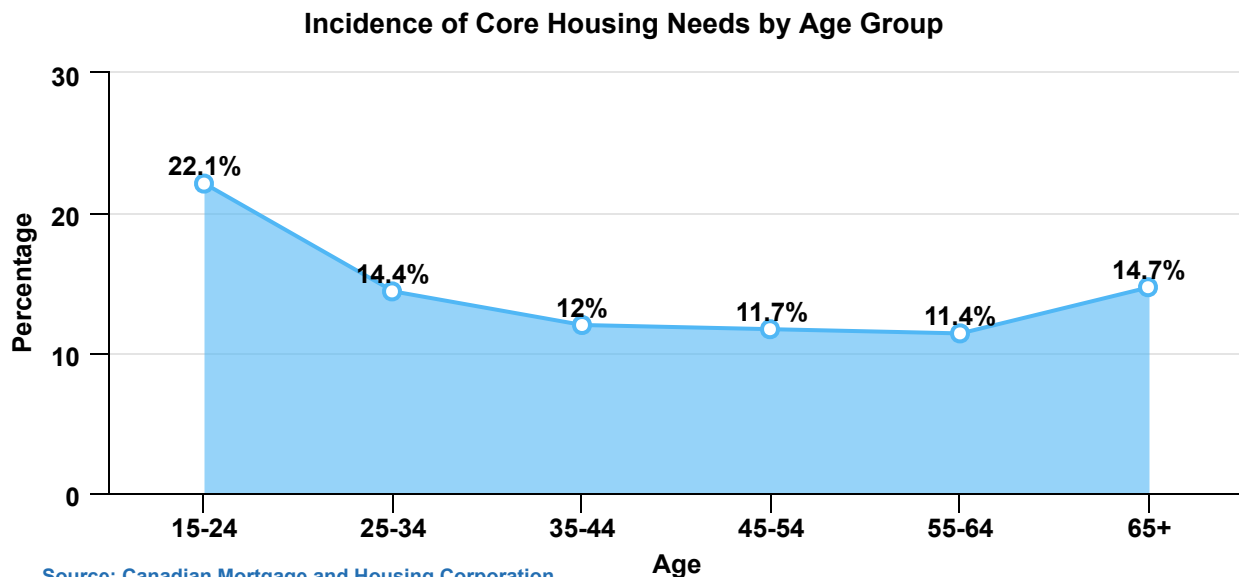
Core Housing Need

The incidence of renters who pay more than 30 per cent of their before-tax household income on housing is also much higher among renters (42.3%) compared to owners (14.1%). The gap between renters and owners could be attributed to renter households having a lower household income compared to owner households. Additional controls are placed on owner households to ensure that they are in good financial standing to afford their home at the time of purchase.

The incidence of core housing need varies across different dimensions of the population. According to the 2016 Census, 13.7 per cent of the 65+ population, 28.2 per cent of single parent families, and 34.9 per cent of recent immigrants (last 5 years) were in core housing need. These populations face much higher rates of core housing need compared to the general public and therefore face significant barriers to ensure housing security.

In Ottawa, the median income for men was \$11,543 a year higher than for women. This income gap is a major contributor to why women face a higher incidence of core housing need, especially when in single lone-parent families.

Figure 16: Incidence of core housing needs by age group, 15-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+



Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Families, especially lone-parents, are disproportionately represented among the population in core housing need. It is estimated that 28.2 per cent of lone-parent families are in core housing need and numerous reports indicate an even greater over representation of female led-lone parent families. Families experiencing core housing need face significant financial challenges to ensure a basic standard of living, putting additional strain on everyone in the household.

Like families, newcomers to Canada face challenges trying to start a new life and secure housing that is adequate, suitable and affordable. As Canada's capital, Ottawa experiences sustained immigration and welcomes people from around the world. Over the last decade, it is estimated that over 38.2 per cent of newcomer households were spending more than 30% of their income on shelter costs. This high proportion indicates newcomers face additional challenges compared to the general population in securing housing.

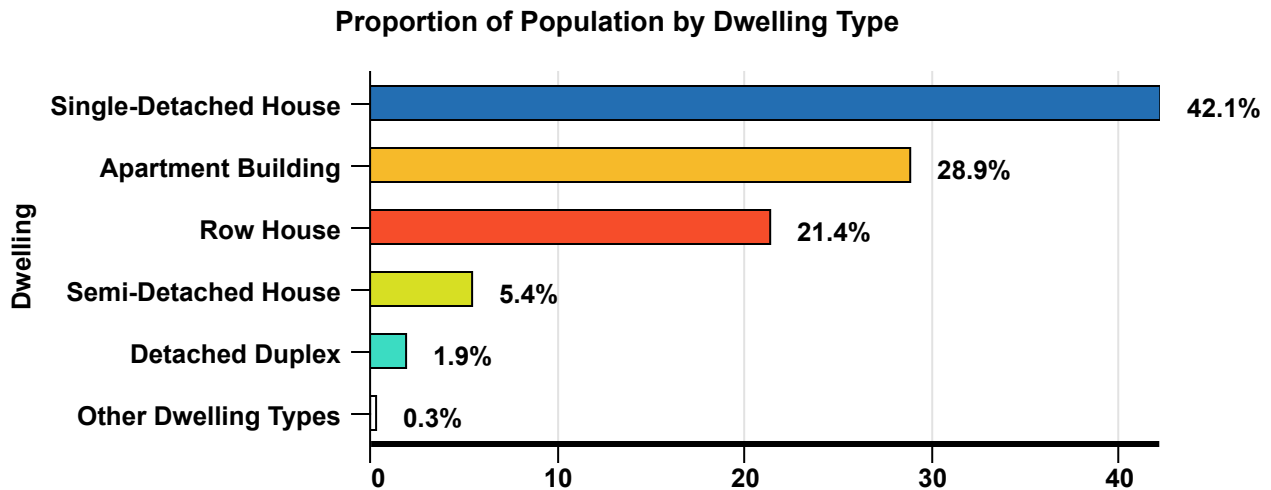
Part 4: Housing

- 4.1 Dwelling Tenure**
- 4.2 Housing Starts**
- 4.3 Housing Completions**
- 4.4 Dwelling Conditions**

4.1 Dwelling Tenure

Of the estimated 407,732 households in Ottawa, 65.4 per cent are owned by the occupants and 34.6 per cent are rented. The predominant (42.1%) housing type in Ottawa is a single-detached house. The remainder of housing occupants live in row houses, semi-detached houses, detached duplex or other dwelling types. This distribution of household type is projected to remain consistent over the next ten years.

Figure 17: Proportion of population by dwelling type



Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

Figure 18: Inventory of housing units by tenure, City of Ottawa, 2018

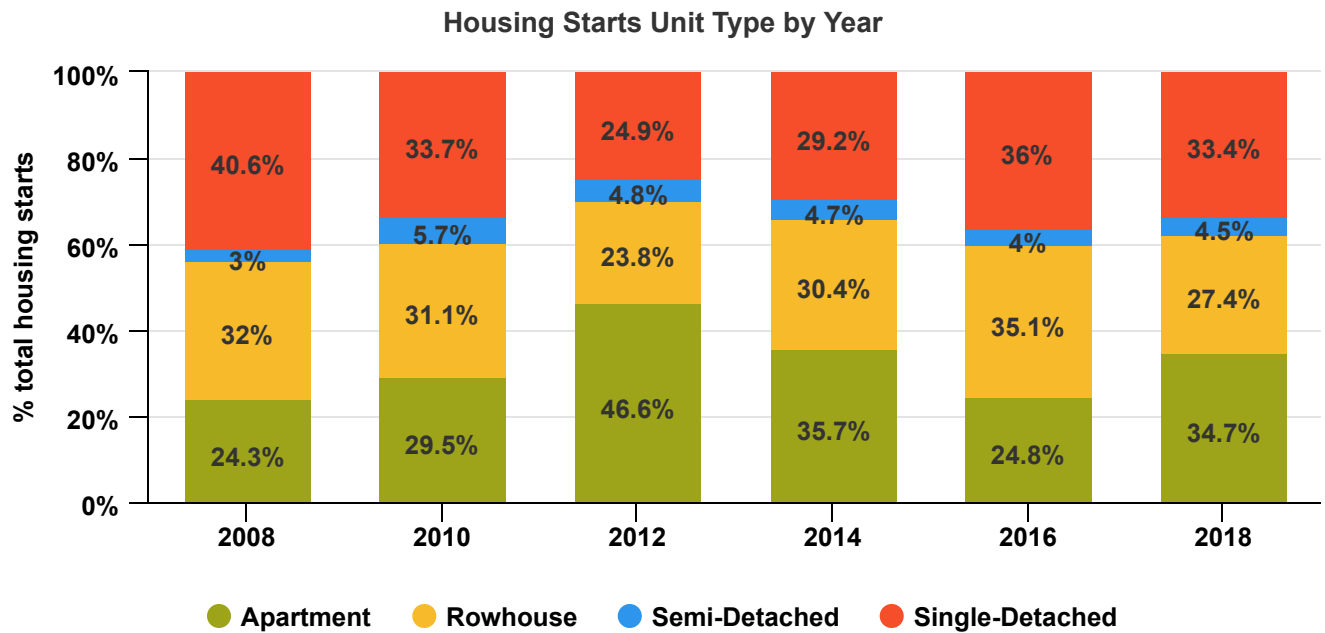
Inventory of Housing Units by Tenure						
	All	Apartments	Row Houses	Semi-Detached	Single-Detached Homes	Movable Dwellings (e.g. Mobile Homes)
Owner	270,802	27,309	55,478	17,477	169,613	925
Renter	132,887	91,886	26,422	4,775	9,644	160
Total	403,689	119,195	81,900	22,252	179,257	1,085

Source: City of Ottawa Annual Development Report, 2018

4.2 Housing Starts

Housing starts in 2018 totalled 6,950 units, a 1.5 per cent increase from 2017. This was the highest number of starts in a single year, since 2008. The most noticeable change over the years is the type of structure being built. In 2008, single-detached homes made up 40 per cent of the housing starts, and apartments just 24 per cent. Ten years later the most predominant starts were apartments, making up 34.7 per cent of the housing starts, with single-detached homes at 33.4 per cent.

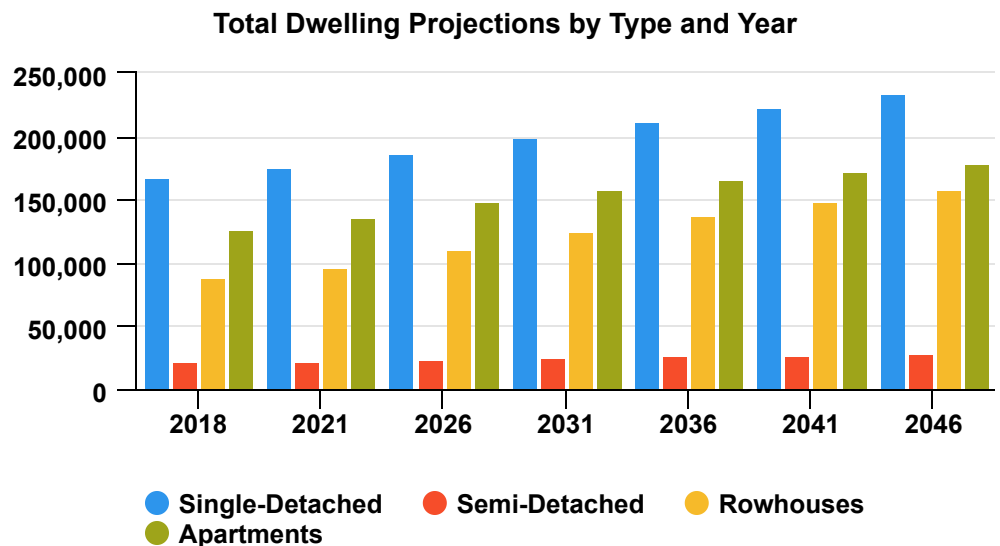
Figure 19: Total and proportion of housing starts, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018



Source: City of Ottawa Annual Development Report, 2018

Figure 20: Projected housing starts by dwelling type, 2018, 2021, 2026, 2031, 2036, 2041, 2046

According to the Growth Projections for the New Official Plan, Methods and Assumptions for Population, Housing and Employment 2018 to 2046 report, new dwelling units are projected to be comprised of 34 per cent single-detached, 3 per cent semi-detached, 36 per cent rowhouse, and 27 per cent apartments.



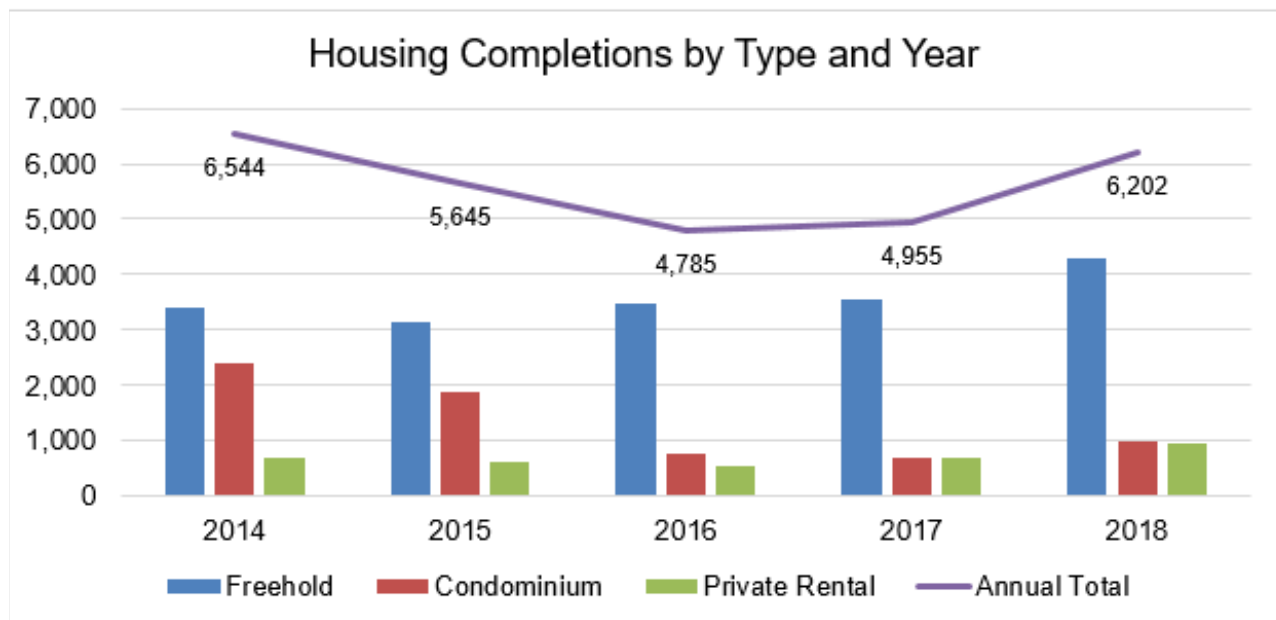
Source: Growth Projections for the New Official Plan, Methods and Assumptions for Population, Housing and Employment

4.3 Housing Completions

It is important to note that housing starts do not account for every kind of new dwelling. Every year property owners pull permits to change existing houses, and multi-residential buildings into new units. In 2018 alone, there were 8,381 residential unit permits issued.

While 2018 saw an increase in housing starts there was a slightly smaller number of completions at 6,202. Over half of these completions (69%), were built for the purposes of owning. Completions can be broken down even further into freehold housing, condominium and private rentals. Despite making up only 15.8 per cent of the total number of completions, the condominium completions are seeing the most significant increases. From 2017 to 2018, condominium completions increased by 42 per cent.

Figure 21: Housing completions by intended market, 2014 to 2018



Source: City of Ottawa Annual Development Report, 2018

Despite the many housing starts, in order to meet the housing demand that will naturally increase as the population grows, construction of new housing needs to take place. According to the recent Rental Market Analysis' Rental Market Forecasts the supply of housing units has maintained a relatively stable linear growth in the City of Ottawa, and the report forecasts that the stock of dwellings will continue to increase by about 5,600 per year with the shift in construction moving away from single-detached homes and towards apartments and row houses. If the current construction rates continue and are considered against current demographic forecasts, it is estimated that by 2031 there will be a gap of approximately 18,000-19,000 dwellings available in Ottawa. In this scenario, average apartment rents would be expected to rise by 41 per cent in the period between 2018 and 2031. This would result in almost 25,000 more households living in unaffordable dwellings by 2031.

4.4 Dwelling Conditions

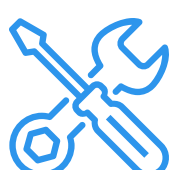
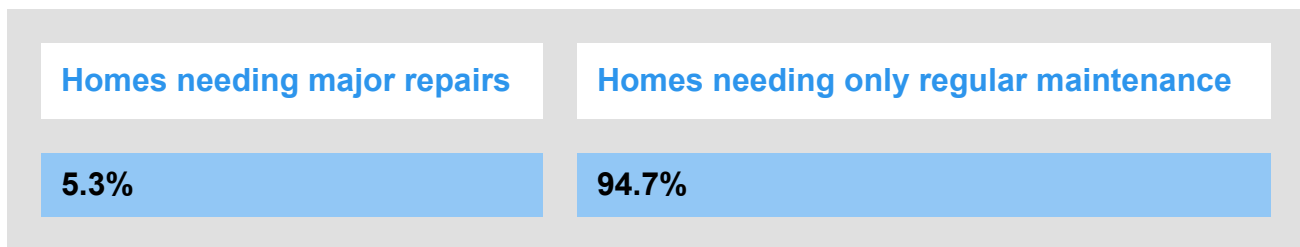
The rental housing stock in the City of Ottawa is aging, almost half (46.2%) of Ottawa’s existing housing stock was built prior to 1980. According to the City of Ottawa’s March 2019 Rental Market Analysis over half (62%) of Ottawa’s rental units are at least 40 years old.

Figure 22: Age of housing stock between 1961 and after 2016

Period of Construction	#	%
Built Before 1961	67,992	16.68
Built Between 1961 And 1980	120,517	29.56
Built Between 1981 And 1990	62,413	15.31
Built Between 1991 And 2000	46,775	11.47
Built Between 2001 And 2005	29,561	7.25
Built Between 2006 And 2010	30,974	7.60
Built Between 2011 And 2016	29,039	7.12
Built After 2016	20,461	5.02

Source: Environics Analytics, DemoStats 2019

Major repairs are needed in some of Ottawa’s oldest neighbourhoods, such as the Glebe, Chinatown and Hintonburg which were built prior to 1946. One in every ten homes in Overbrook and Carlington, established post-World War 2, requires major repairs. Repairing a home can be a costly investment that homeowners or landlords may not be able or willing to afford.



Part 5: Affordability

5.1 Market Ownership

5.2 Rental Market

5.3 Vacancy Rate

5.1 Market Ownership

From 2017 to 2018, Ottawa experienced a 3.8 per cent increase in the average price of a home. In 2018, the average price of a home was \$407,600. During the previous period (2016 to 2017) the average price of a home increased 5.7 per cent. These increases from 2016 to 2017 was a significant annual leap in the price of a home as over the previous five years the price increase was only 2.2 per cent (2011 to 2016).

A significant proportion of households that are owner-occupied are in core housing need (14.1% in 2016). Affordability is an issue across the city regardless of housing tenure type. The increase in housing prices and the new mortgage ‘stress test’ have created barriers for low income households to access the ownership market. The mortgage stress test also further strains the rental market because households that may have previously entered the ownership market, are staying in rental housing.

5.2 Rental Market

Renting is a reality for 34.6 per cent of Ottawa residents. Supply and demand for rental housing has been increasing at different rates. Between 2016 and 2018, the total rental market supply increased by approximately 1 per cent, while the population living in rental accommodations grew 2.9 per cent. As a result, the population per rental rose from 2.05 residents to 2.07 in the City of Ottawa during that time period. Renters have faced increases in rental prices, from 7.8 per cent in 2016 to 11.2 per cent in 2018.

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2018 Rental Market Report, an individual looking to rent will expect to pay on average \$1,174 a month although, based on the City’s recent Rental Market Analysis, local rents are much higher. A sample of 2,214 online apartment listings extracted from October to December 2018, revealed that the asking average rent is \$1,572 across all bedroom/apartment types (bachelor, one, two and three bedrooms).

Figure 23: Market rent listing by bedroom type, 2018

Type/Listings/Avg Rent					
Apartment	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
Asking Rent	\$1,174	\$1,401	\$1,674	\$1,977	\$1,572
Number of Listings	207	755	977	275	2,214
Average Rent	\$838	\$1,036	\$1,335	\$1,419	\$1,734
Row Housing					
Asking Rent	\$906	\$1,380	\$1,862	\$1,926	\$1,737
Number of Listing	4	11	23	23	61
Average Rent	\$937	\$978	\$1,278	\$1,441	\$1,408
Single-Detached Housing					
Asking Rent	\$1,050	\$1,819	\$2,525	\$2,948	\$2,714
Number of Listing	2	14	47	106	169
Average Rent	\$1,424	\$1,097	\$1,358	\$1,737	\$1,645

Source: City of Ottawa Rental Market Analysis. PRISM Economics and Analysis, 2019.

Rental Market

Rooming Houses

Rooming Houses offer an affordable housing option for Ottawa residents, as many people cannot afford the rising cost of living and increasing high rents. Rooming Houses are an option for low income households who would otherwise either be living in the City's community shelters or on the street.

A rooming house means a residential unit, other than a group home, retirement home or converted retirement home. It is a building, usually privately owned, containing eight or more bedrooms which are rented out individually with tenants sharing common space such as kitchens and washrooms. Many tenants living in a rooming house live in poverty, have physical and mental health illnesses and/or addiction issues. Housing Services estimates that the typical cost for a room in a rooming house is between \$500 and \$550.

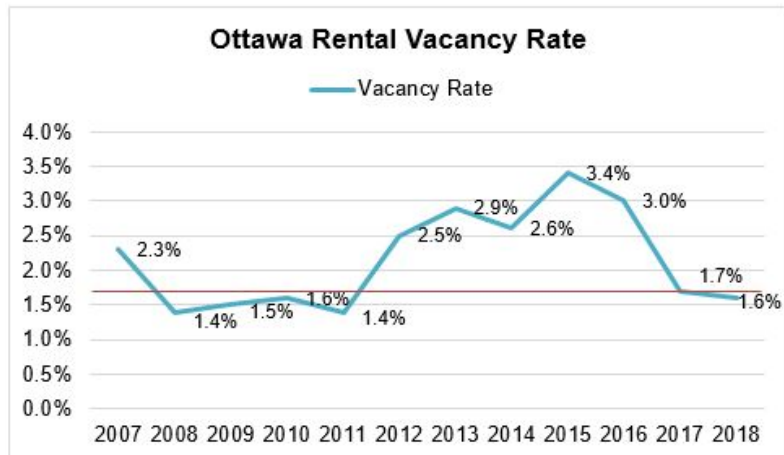
There are currently 93 licensed rooming houses within the city, with approximately 1, 274 units. Rooming Houses are licensed under Schedule 26 to the Licensing By-law (2002-189, as amended), which is administered and enforced by By-law & Regulatory Services. Rooming Houses must comply with applicable zoning, building and property standards requirements, comply with all applicable fire regulations, all applicable health regulations, and be in a sanitary condition.

Rooming House licenses expire annually. Renewal notices are provided to licensees approximately six (6) weeks prior to the expiry date. As a City, we need to ensure that Rooming Houses comply with standards as set out in the Residential Tenancy Act and are in compliance with the provisions under which they are licensed. In addition, due to the needs of tenants that reside in rooming houses it is important that they have access to the community and social supports they need to stay safe and stably housed.

5.3 Vacancy Rate

Rental prices have been increasing and risk increasing further if vacancy rates continue to decline. A healthy vacancy rate is considered to be 3 per cent. Ottawa has seen vacancy rates at near historic lows where the average vacancy rate as of October 2018 was 1.6 per cent. High demand neighborhoods experience even lower vacancy rates than the average. In the popular neighborhood of South Westboro, vacancy rates have been 1.5 per cent or less for nine years in a row.

Figure 24: Vacancy Rates, 2007 - 2018



Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Low vacancy rates are a result of increased demand which is outpacing supply. As indicated in the 2019 Rental Market Report Analysis, should current construction rates continue against the current projected population growth, it is estimated that by 2031 there will be a gap of approximately 18,000 to 19,000 dwellings. Many factors can influence supply and demand leading to fluctuating low vacancy rates, these include:

- Aging infrastructure: The rental housing stock for the City of Ottawa is aging, with most (62%) of the rental units built before 1979 (City of Ottawa Rental Market Analysis, 2019).
- Migration: People who migrate to other cities tend to rent within the first five years following their arrival, according to the City of Ottawa Annual Development report; net migration to Ottawa increased by more than 30 per cent from 2016 to 2017.
- Job market: Ottawa, an official bilingual City, is home to vast federal government job opportunities and a booming tech industry which is attracting many talented workers who are choosing Ottawa as a place to build their careers and lives.

The rising popularity of short-term rental units has also placed increased stress on the rental housing system by removing housing stock from access by residents. According to the Ottawa Rental Market Analysis report, the total number of short-term listings increased by over 2,800 between 2016 and 2018, reaching 6,278 in 2018. Rental units that are exclusively short-term rental units increased an incredible 254 per cent in the same time period, to 1,236 in 2018. Rental units as short-term rentals is appealing due to revenue opportunities for owners. The overall revenue experienced in Ottawa from short-term rentals reached \$39.8 million in 2018.

Between 2015 and 2018, the City had seen an 186 per cent increase in the number of property complaints received by residents with a mention of short-term rentals, or more commonly known as AirBnB. Recently, emerging trends around short-term rentals prompted the need for a comprehensive study by the City to create a regulatory framework for various forms of rental accommodation in the city that best serves the needs of residents and the local economy. The study and extensive consultations resulted in a proposed regulatory framework which was approved by City Council in November of 2019. This new regulatory framework, scheduled to be implemented in early 2020, is designed to enhance regulatory compliance with property standards and necessary maintenance while minimizing the impacts of enhanced regulation and enforcement on the viability and affordability of private market rental accommodations.

SECTION 2

City of Ottawa Housing Service System

Part 1: Housing Service System

- 1.1 Housing Service System Continuum**
- 1.2 Homelessness, Emergency and Short-Term Housing**
- 1.3 Residential Services and Supportive Housing**
- 1.4 Community Housing**
- 1.5 Market Housing and Affordable Home Ownership**
- 1.6 As We Heard It, Consultations**

1.1 Housing Service System Continuum

Housing Services works with over 130 community partners, including not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, as well as the federal and provincial governments, to strengthen the city’s system of housing and support services and create a system that is inclusive and responsive to people’s needs and promotes vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities. (See figure 25 :Housing Continuum and Services)

Ottawa’s housing and homelessness system provides a range of options from emergency shelters, supportive and transitional housing, to community housing and market housing. The system is a framework, a system of assets, services and programs delivered in collaboration with community partners. The system is flexible and viewed as a continuum of services, which is responsive to people’s unique needs as they change over time.

Figure 25: City of Ottawa, Housing and Service System - Continuum

Emergency and Short Term Housing	Supportive Housing	Social Housing	Affordable Rental Housing	Affordable Home Ownership	Market Rental and Ownership Housing
Housing Programs					
Street outreach programs Diversion services Emergency shelters Day programs/drop-ins	Housing First Supportive housing Social housing (rent-geared-to-income) Rent supplements and housing allowances		Affordable housing capital funding and land acquisition Home ownership down payment assistance Low-income home owner repair/renovation funding		Household can support market housing costs

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

The following section (2) of the Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment is the result of a review of each component of the City's Housing Service System. The review gathered and analyzed information to better understand the current state for each component, specifically as it relates to the system's objectives, current capacity, demands, pressures and gaps.

1.1.1 Service System Supports

As depicted in Figure 25, the City's housing services system provides a range of housing options which also includes the integration of housing supports to help individuals with the supports they need at various stages through their housing journey.

The City, through 64 contracts, with 26 not-for-profit organizations provides funding for programs and services for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness which helps keep people housed, and assists people experiencing homelessness to become and remain stably housed. The following key service areas includes:

- Outreach Services
- Supports in Shelters (Diversion and Shelter-based Case Management)
- Housing Based Case Management (HBCM) following the Housing First service model
- Supports in Supportive and Transitional housing
- Rooming House Supports
- General Housing Assistance (including housing search, housing loss prevention, financial trusteeship services, resource centres in social housing)
- Outreach to people staying on the streets and in-reach to correctional institutions and psychiatric hospitals

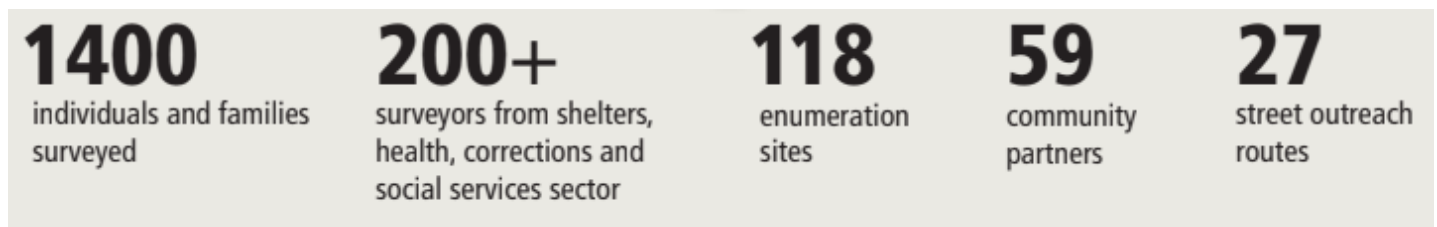


1.2 Homelessness

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. This state is most visible in Ottawa’s emergency shelters and with people living on the streets. Less visible forms of homelessness may include people being discharged from correctional institutions, hospitals, or the child welfare system with no stable place to go. Hidden homelessness, sometimes known as couch surfing, is also less visible because the individual temporarily has a place to stay but does not have immediate prospects for continued residency or permanent housing. Given the nature of homelessness it can be hard to get a clear and complete picture of how many people are homeless in a community at any given time.

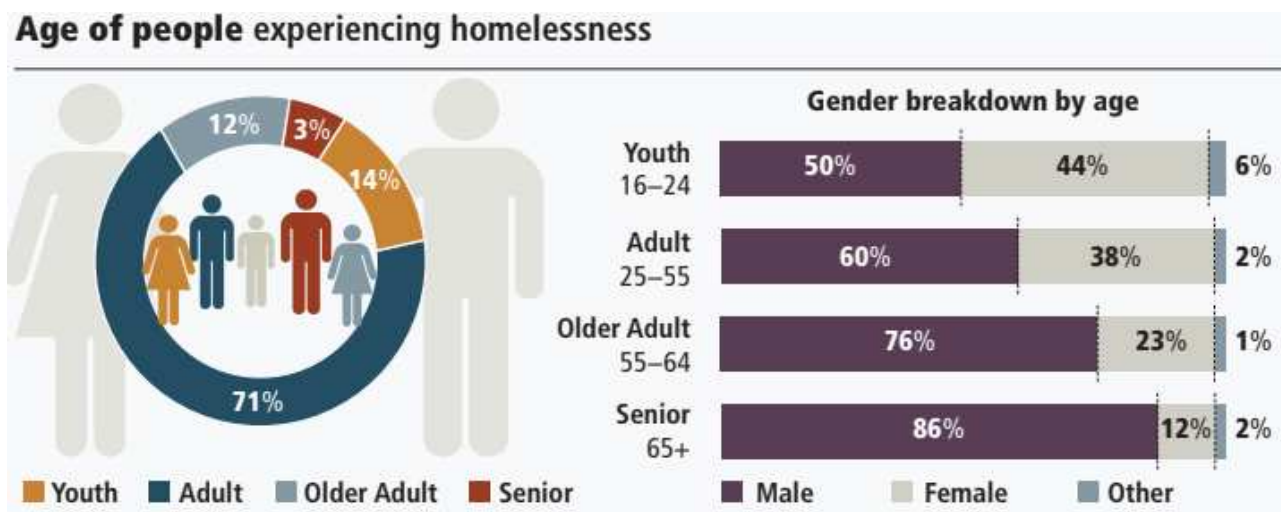
Point-in-Time Count (PiT)

To create a baseline count and increase our understanding of those experiencing homelessness, the City, in collaboration with 59 community partners conducted a Point-in-Time Count (PiT) over a 24-hour period on April 19 and 20, 2018. The PiT Count survey was administered to individuals over the age of 16 who were experiencing homelessness to enhance the City’s understanding as it relates to the demographics, needs and realities of people experiencing homelessness in our community.



The age range of respondents was 16 to 81 years of age , with the average age being 40 years. Survey results validated a concern expressed by shelter operators in that the population they are serving is aging. Similarly, 26 per cent of survey respondents were over 50 years of age. Additional key demographic information gathered from the PiT Count revealed the age and gender of people experiencing homelessness as follows:

Figure 26: Age of people experiencing homelessness

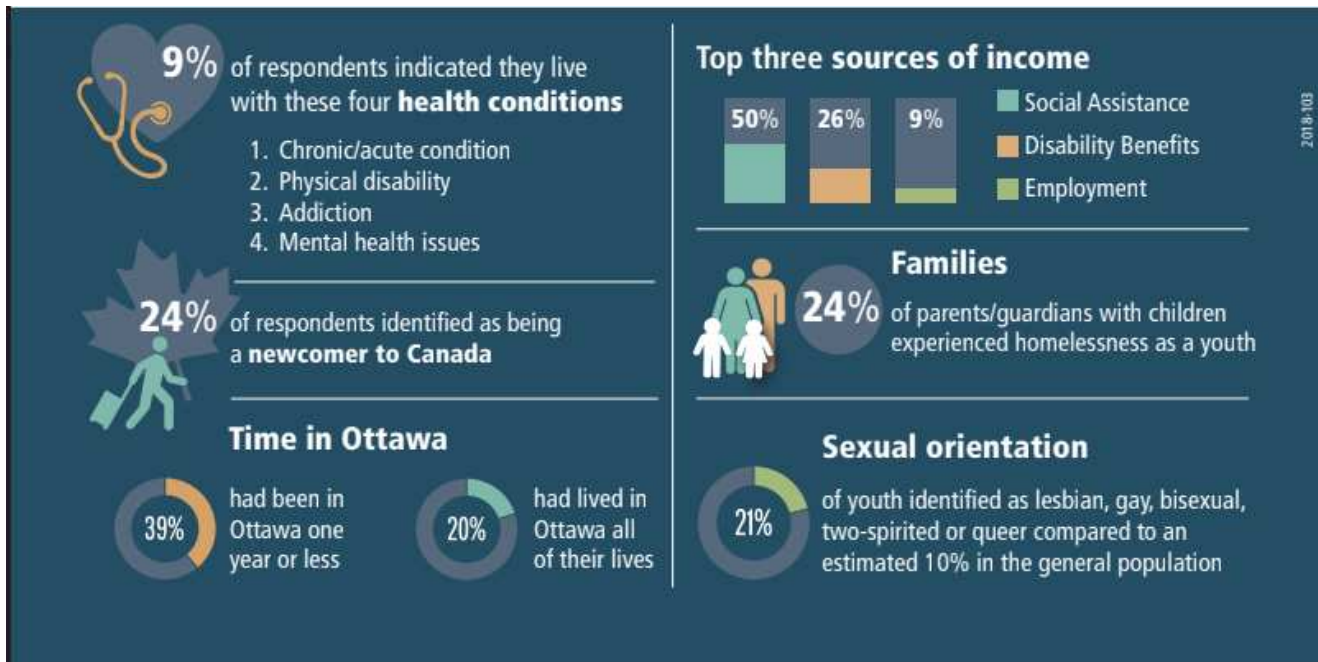


Source: City of Ottawa, Point-in-Time Count

Point-in-time Count

Results of the survey indicated that 60% of the respondents identified as male, 33 per cent were female and 6 per cent identified as transgender. Thirteen per cent identified as non-heterosexual and 21 per cent of the youth surveyed identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirited or queer, compared to an estimated 10% in the general population. Also, 24 per cent of respondents identified as a newcomer to Canada. While the survey was administered in several different types of programs and services, 67 per cent percent of survey respondents were individuals and families accessing emergency and Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters, with 67 per cent being chronically homeless.

Figure 27: Point-in-Time Count, respondents overview



Source: City of Ottawa, Point-in-Time Count

People generally experienced 2.7 different episodes of homelessness per year, with most people having their first experience of homelessness at age 27. On average, people had experienced 206 days of homelessness in the last year (2018). In addition, the majority of people that are experiencing homelessness have been in Ottawa for a year or more.

Figure 28: Point-in-Time Count, top reasons for housing loss



Source: City of Ottawa, Point-in-Time Count

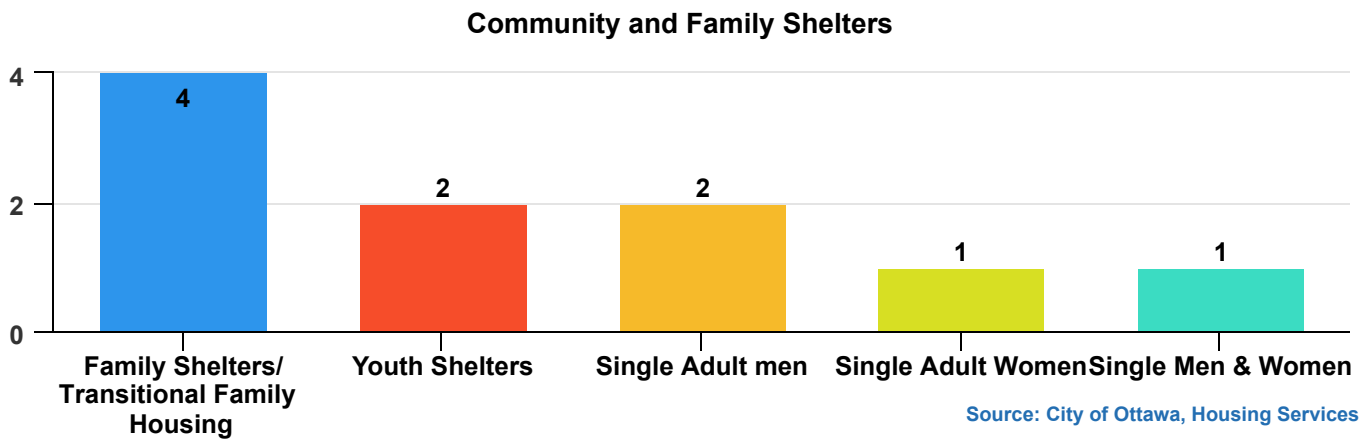
1.2.1 Emergency and Short-Term Housing

Emergency and short-term housing includes emergency shelters and transitional housing which play a vital role in the continuum of housing and homelessness services. The objective of emergency housing is to provide safe, short-term, accommodations with varying levels of support.

The City of Ottawa emergency shelter system provides people experiencing homelessness with temporary, safe, and secure emergency shelter services (e.g. beds, meals, personal supports) with the goal of helping people stabilize and find suitable, affordable housing.

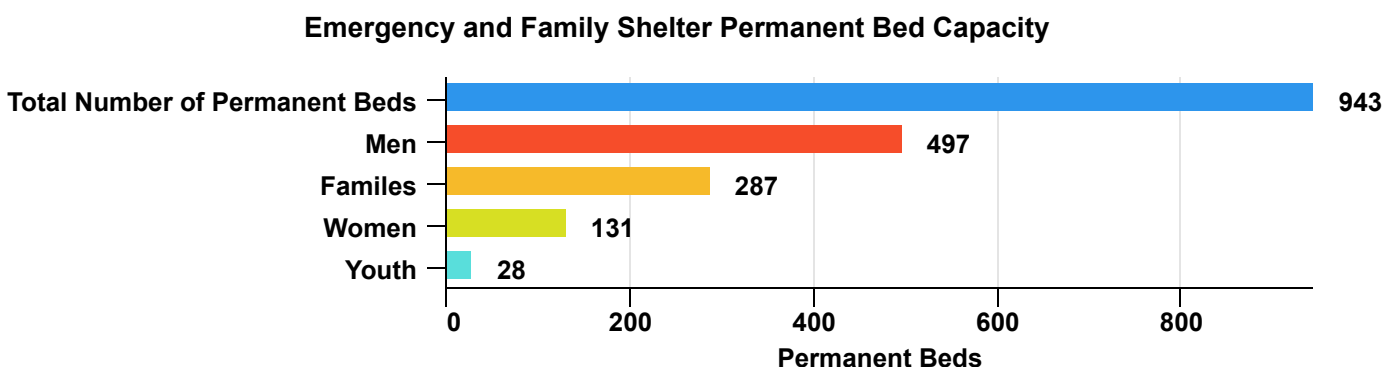
The City's Community and Family Shelter branch partners with ten community shelters/transitional housing programs run by eight organizations, operates and owns one family shelter and contracts with hotels/motels to offer off-site lodging when the emergency shelter system is at capacity. The emergency shelter system also acts as overflow for the provincially funded Violence Against Women (VAW) sector and for extraordinary events in the City including fires and floods.

Figure 29: Number of community and family shelters, 2018



The total system capacity includes 967 permanent beds with 53 per cent designated for single men, 30 per cent for families, 14 per cent for women, and 3 per cent for youth. The table below provides the actual number of permanent beds available per population group and does not account for any overflow beds. Overflow beds are used when the system is at capacity, and account for an additional 422 beds available to respond to emergency shelter placement needs for single individuals.

Figure 30: Community and family shelters, permanent bed capacity by population group, 2018



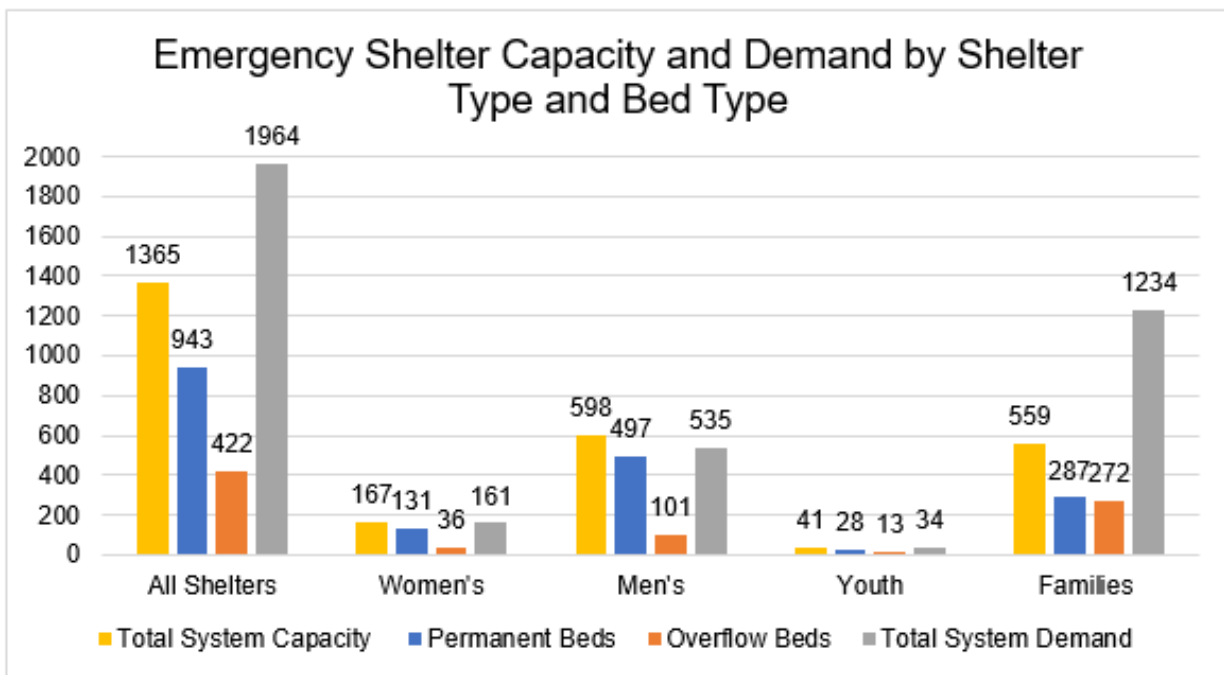
Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.1 Emergency and Short-Term Housing

In 2018, there was a 6.5 per cent increase in the number of unique people using an overnight emergency shelter, compared to 2017 (7,453 unique people to 7,937 unique people). When analyzing the number of beds being requested on a nightly basis, it clearly reveals that nightly demand surpasses the shelter systems permanent bed capacity, which results in shelter providers having to regularly resort to using overflow spaces.

During 2018, all shelters were using overflow beds to meet the demand. The chart below (Figure 31) outlines the demand by bed type and shelter type, while the table (Figure 32) outlines the capacity gap of permanent beds based on nightly occupancy in 2018.

Figure 31: Emergency shelter capacity and demand by shelter type and bed type, 2018



Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

Figure 32: Community and family shelters gap - demand vs. capacity, 2018

Shelter Type	Shelter Permanent Bed Capacity	Average Nightly Occupancy	% Above Permanent Bed Capacity
All Shelters	943	1964	108%
Men	497	535	8%
Families	287	1,234	330%
Women	131	161	23%
Youth	28	34	21%

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.1 Emergency and Short-Term Housing

In order to help manage shelter capacity and demand the City, in collaboration with the largest community shelters, developed and standardized a process for “diverting” new clients from using emergency shelters, in situations where the client has safe and appropriate alternative accommodation.

From 2018 to 2019, the number of successful diversions dropped significantly from 707 in 2018 to 399 in 2019, the lowest annual number since the adult/youth diversion strategy was implemented in 2015.

Figure 33: Number of unique clients and alternatives to emergency shelter, 2019

Alternative To Emergency Shelter	Unique Clients	Percentage
Returned To Existing Housing (Current Tenancy)	93	23%
Community Shelter - Québec	11	3%
Residential Care Facility, Long Term Care	19	5%
Originating Community - Inside Ontario	71	18%
Originating Community - Outside Ontario	23	6%
Staying With Immediate or Extended Family	70	18%
Staying with Friends	54	13%
Other – Re-housing (7 days), Incarceration, Acute Care	58	14%
Totals	399	100%

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

The decrease in diversions can be attributed to the overall increase in emergency shelter requests, particularly as it relates to newcomers who, in most cases cannot be diverted as no other alternatives exists.



1.2.2 Demand - Emergency and Short-Term Housing

Homelessness is unquestionably a complex issue, and can be attributed to a variety of individual, systems and structural factors.



Individual factors

- Personal circumstances or events such as family breakdown, domestic violence, addictions, mental health, physical health issues



Systems failures

- Failure in systems/public institutions to protect people from homelessness such as a lack of discharge planning from hospitals, corrections, child welfare system



Structural factors

- Economic or social issues such as a lack of adequate housing or income



The demand for emergency shelter beds has grown steadily over the past five years. From 2014 to 2018 the City saw an increase of 23.3 per cent in unique people using an overnight emergency shelter. In 2018, nearly 8,000 unique people, representing 5,474 households used an overnight shelter, and this number is likely to have increased in 2019.

Figure 34 below provides a summary of emergency shelter stays by unique people.

Figure 34: Number of people using an overnight shelter, 2014- 2018

Total number of people using an overnight emergency shelter in Ottawa 2014 to 2018						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% change (2014 - 2018)
Total People	6,438	6,763	7,118	7,453	7,937	23.3%
Single Men	3,013	2,939	3,082	3,182	3,228	7.1%
Single Women	904	913	958	885	934	3.3%
Single Youth (18 and under)*	374	380	286	254	222	-40.6%
Family Units	696	772	874	975	1,078	54.9%
-Individual Family Members	2,253	2,616	2,850	3,217	3,640	61.6%
Total Nights	504,106	500,140	524,796	655,703	716,947	42.2%

*Includes stays in designated youth shelters and off-site motel placements.

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.2 Demand - Emergency and Short-Term Housing

Figure 35 below provides the average length of shelter stay experienced by each population group. The overall average length of stay for all client groups has increased 15.4 per cent, from 78 days in 2014 to 90 days in 2018. The length of stay for single men has decreased by 6.2 per cent (from 65 days in 2014 to 61 days in 2018) and for women increased by 5 per cent (from 60 days in 2014 to 63 days in 2018). One of the largest increases in the length of stay can be seen in families, with a 16 per cent increase, from 106 days in 2014 to 123 days in 2018.

Figure 35: Average length of stay in days, 2014-2018

Average length of stay (LOS) in days						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% Change (2014-2018)
Overall Average	78	74	74	88	90	15.4%
Single Men	65	65	61	58	61	-6.2%
Single Women	60	59	59	64	63	5.5%
Single Youth	39	33	47	54	56	43.6%
Families	106	93	94	124	123	16%

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

Highest Demand - Families

Single men make up the largest group of individuals who experience homelessness in any given year, averaging 3,089 individuals between 2014 and 2018. However, between 2017 and 2018, they represented the lowest increase in unique individuals across all population groups. The number of women and families have historically remained comparatively lower than single men. Although in 2018, there was a slight increase of 5.5 per cent in the number of unique women, and a significant increase of 16 per cent in the number of family units using an overnight shelter.

The emergency shelter system has experienced a significant and sustained increase in demand for shelter placement by families since the inception of the 10-Year Housing and Homeless Plan, most significantly since 2016. The number of individual family members increased by 61.6 per cent over the five-year period from 2014 to 2018, with the number of family households increasing by 55 per cent over the same period of time. Families, similar to other client groups, experience homelessness due to a variety of structural, system failures or individual factors. Much of the increase in family homelessness in Ottawa can be directly attributed to an increase in migration within Canada and/or immigration to Canada, both from abroad and from refugee claimants from the United States.

1.2.2 Demand - Emergency and Short-Term Housing

Reason for homelessness experienced by families

Families, similar to other population groups experience homelessness for a variety of reasons. The table below (Figure 36) captures the reasons for service identified by families at the time of emergency shelter placement. From 2014 to 2018, the main reasons identified by families for requiring emergency shelter placement are:

- Fleeing abuse
- Newcomer to Ottawa
- Relocation to Ottawa
- Lost housing
- Family breakdown

The largest number of family households seeking emergency shelter placement are newcomers to Ottawa, which accounted for 48 per cent of all households (162 households) in 2018. This is an increase of 26 per cent from 2014 when newcomers accounted for only 37 per cent (47 households) of all family households. When combined with the number of families who indicated they relocated to Ottawa from within Canada (66 households) or 8 per cent in 2018, the number of people who are new to Ottawa increases to 54 per cent of the total number of households seeking emergency shelter. This percentage is expected to increase further when 2019 numbers are finalized. These increases can be attributed to the immigration changes implemented and proposed by the United States. Since that time, Canada and Ottawa have experienced an influx of irregular border crossers from the United States resulting in increased demand and pressures on the City's emergency shelter system.

Since 2014, the number of households that have indicated they lost their housing as a Reason for Service has decreased from 219 households in 2014 to 162 households in 2018. Not all households that declare this as a reason for service have lost housing due to non-payment of rent, some were staying temporarily at friends/family, others voluntarily gave up housing due to issues around maintenance, pests, and others were displaced due to large scale renovations.

The City of Ottawa provides temporary overflow lodging for families when the provincially funded Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters are at capacity. In 2018, the City's family shelter system provided service to over 134 families as the VAW shelters, continue to face capacity pressures. The use of the family shelter system as VAW overflow has fluctuated between 2014 to 2018.

Figure 36: Reasons for service, family households, 2014-2018

Reasons for service - Family Households										
	2014	%	2015	%	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%
Fleeing Abuse	103	17%	94	15%	132	17%	136	18%	90	11%
Emergency Response	9	2%	10	2%	9	1%	7	1%	13	2%
Family Breakdown	70	12%	57	9%	47	6%	51	7%	42	5%
Health Issues	0	0%	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	7	1%
Lost Housing	219	37%	218	34%	202	27%	185	24%	162	20%
Newcomer (asylum seeker, new immigrant, refugee claimant, refugee, sponsorship breakdown)	47	8%	53	8%	137	18%	211	28%	394	48%
Relocation (within Canada)	86	15%	128	21%	121	16%	111	14%	66	8%

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.2 Demand - Emergency and Short-Term Housing

Families are also experiencing the highest average length of shelter stay at 123 days in 2018, compared to single men, women and youth, whose average length of stay ranges from 56 to 63 days. Family homelessness is a growing concern in the community and is placing significant strain on the family shelter system, in terms of the City’s capacity to meet the need and resulting financial pressures for overflow capacity.

Ottawa’s current permanent family shelter bed capacity (287 beds) cannot meet the increased demand for service that the City has seen since 2016. The City has increasingly turned to its overflow capacity, which means placing families in hotels/motels. Even with adding new overflow capacity, over the last two years there has been daily limited placement capacity. Families are waiting longer periods of time for a rent-geared-to-income housing offer and living in small hotel/motels rooms often without adequate space and cooking facilities.

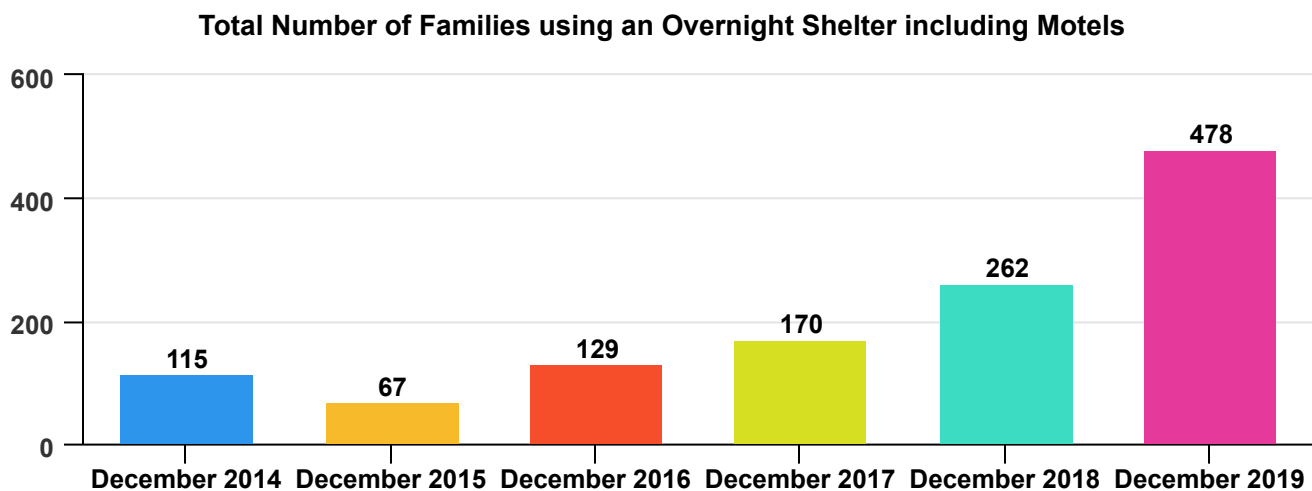
Figure 37: Average nightly occupancy of families in off-site motels, 2014-2018

Average Nightly Occupancy of Families in Off-Site motels						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% Change (2014-2018)
Families	97	79	92	181	219	126% (122)

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

The Community and Family Shelter branch continues to see an increase in the need for emergency shelter beds and off-site motels. As of December 16, 2019, there were a total of 478 families using an overnight shelter or motel. This is an increase of 92 families (23.8%) over the same week in 2018. To date, the 2019 nightly average in motels is 296 families compared to 214 in 2018.

Figure 38: Total number of families using and overnight shelter and motels, Decembre 2014-2019



Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.3 Chronic Homelessness

One of the key priorities of the City’s 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is to end chronic homelessness by 2024. Ending chronic homelessness means reaching “functional zero” levels of homelessness and striving towards “absolute zero” levels of homelessness.

FUNCTIONAL ZERO



Functional zero is achieved when a community has three or fewer people experiencing chronic homelessness over three months. It is a state where there is enough services, housing and shelter beds for those in need and experiences of homelessness are brief and nonrecurring.

ABSOLUTE ZERO



Absolute zero refers to a state where there is access to supports and housing and no one experiences homelessness, an absolute end to homelessness for all.

According to the Homeless Hub, “Chronic homelessness refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year (i.e., have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation).”

<p>Men</p> <p>The number of men experiencing chronic homelessness has decreased by 2.5 per cent from 2014 to 2018, from 358 to 349 individuals.</p>	<p>Women</p> <p>The number of women experiencing chronic homelessness has increased by 14.6 per cent from 2014 to 2018, from 82 to 94 individuals.</p>	<p>Youth</p> <p>The number of youth experiencing chronic homelessness increased by 60 per cent from 2014 to 2018. Youth chronic homelessness remains low and this change represents a shift from five to eight individuals.</p>	<p>Families</p> <p>Families experiencing chronic homelessness has grown by 180 per cent, from 95 families in 2014 to 266 families in 2018.</p>
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Figure 39: Number of people experiencing chronic homelessness, 2014-2018

Number of People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% Change (2014-2018)
Single Men	358	362	352	315	349	-2.5%
Single Women	82	86	91	97	94	14.6%
Single Youth	5	-	5	11	8	60%
Families	95	78	87	234	266	180%

A dash (-) indicates less than five.

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.3 Chronic Homelessness

Figure 40: Average length of stay in days, chronic homelessness, 2014-2018

Average length of stay in days – Chronic Homelessness						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% Change (2014-2018)
Single Men	280	277	273	271	275	-1.8%
Single Women	270	276	266	252	271	0.4%
Single Youth	213	-	234	238	214	0.5%
Families	256	252	251	263	272	6.3%

A dash (-) indicates less than five.

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

A lack of specialized supports (i.e. addiction treatment programs, mental health supports) to address the multiple barriers and complex needs of these individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, including the ongoing local challenges regarding the lack of supportive and affordable housing, rising rents, and declining vacancy rates have resulted in limited changes in the number of households experiencing chronic homelessness and contribute to an average length of stay of 258 days in shelter (across all client groups).

Housing First

Despite these challenges, the ongoing efforts and interventions of the City’s Housing First program have no doubt lessened the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness in our city. Since April 2015, through the Housing First program, the City has successfully housed 1,101 chronically homeless individuals (single adults and youth) with an 80 per cent housing retention rate.

Housing First is an evidence-based approach to ending chronic homelessness, which is built on the premise that everyone is housing-ready and as such, people who are homeless with complex needs should receive immediate access to permanent housing with the appropriate level of support to remain housed.

The City’s Housing Services - Housing First Program



Partners with **13** organizations to deliver Housing First services



Providing **7** programs for adults and **3** for youth



77 Housing Base Case Managers and **5** peer support workers



Supporting up to **1,300** people (adults and families) at any given time

1.2.3 Chronic Homelessness

At emergency shelters, people are assessed for eligibility for the Housing First program using a common assessment tool. Eligibility is limited to those who are chronically (180 days of homelessness in the past year) or episodically homeless (currently homeless and have experienced at least three periods of homelessness in the previous year) and have been assessed as having either high or moderate acuity.

Acuity speaks to the severity of a presenting issue. When expressed numerically through an acuity assessment, a high number represents more complex, co-occurring issues that are likely to impact a person’s housing stability. In Ottawa, the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) is utilized to assess a client’s acuity and supports are provided accordingly. The SPDAT is not used for Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness due to concerns around the cultural sensitivity of the tool. There are also separate versions of the SPDAT specific to families and youth.

The City’s Housing First program assesses an individual’s acuity and prioritizes entry into the Housing First program that has available space. The City maintains a by-name list of people experiencing homelessness and uses this list in the prioritization and matching of people to Housing First Services.

Despite the ongoing efforts of staff and community service providers, chronic homelessness remains a reality in our community. As of October 31, 2019, on the City’s by-name list for the Housing First Program a total of 373 single adults were experiencing chronic homelessness, of those 40 per cent were assessed as high acuity, 43 per cent medium acuity, and 17 per cent as low acuity .

Figure 41: Chronically Homeless Active Adults, October 2019

Chronically Homeless - Adults					
Non-Indigenous Single Adult	High	Moderate	Low	No SPDAT	TOTAL
Active	51	54	21	247	373

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

Figure 42: Chronically Homeless Active Youth, October 2019

Chronically Homeless - Youth					
Non-Indigenous Unaccompanied Youth	High	Moderate	Low	No SPDAT	TOTAL
Active	1	1	2	23	27

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.2.3 Chronic Homelessness

Figure 43: Chronically Homeless Families, 2014-2018

Chronically Homeless Families in the Family Shelter System							
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Change (2017 vs. 2018)	5 Year Average
Family Units - Total	95	78	87	234	266	13.7% (32)	152
Family Units - Housed	89	74	78	204	117	-45% (-87)	112

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

As the number of families experiencing chronic homelessness continues to grow, the City has implemented a number of strategies to increase capacity and create flow in the family shelter system, to reduce the use of hotels and motels and encourage quicker access to permanent housing as follows:

- Increased access to housing subsidies by moving capital funding into operating funding.
- Created flexibility in the rent supplement and housing allowance funding envelopes under the municipal Housing and Homelessness Investment plan to respond to changing market conditions.
- Provided, since 2016, housing allowances (portable subsidy which provides housing choice in the private market) to families in the shelter system. These tiered housing allowances (\$250 for the first family member and \$50 for each additional family member) assist with housing affordability in the private market housing
- Entered into an operating agreement and provided capital funding for a new 20 room transitional family housing program operated by Catholic Centre for Immigrants effective December 2018.
- Approved custom Average Market Rents for both the rent supplement and housing allowance programs to remain competitive within the private market to ensure families have maximum access to available market units.
- Reduced the costs of providing family emergency shelter by leveraging shelter funding through Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program where offsite shelter services function as transitional housing.
- Required all family households in the shelter system that have a Local Priority Status of "homelessness " to select all social housing communities on the Centralized Wait List, suitable to their family size and required families to accept their first offer of housing effective September 2017.

In addition to the strategies above the City has:

- Undertaken a cost benefit analysis of the capital and operating costs to open a new family shelter
- Exploring opportunities to add three new floors of transitional family housing to the National Capital YM/YWCA to respond to capacity needs.

1.2.4 Homelessness Service System Key Gaps

Families, single men, women and youth in a housing crisis or new to the community will continue to turn to the emergency shelter system and homelessness support services while they apply and wait for rent-geared-to-income housing or find alternate affordable housing. Ottawa has responded to the increased demand for emergency shelter placement through diversion practices, repatriation where suitable, securing additional overflow lodging options, and implementing key changes in the delivery of family shelter services to create flow and momentum in the system.

Funding for emergency shelter solutions is a component of the funding under the provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. This funding, the consolidation of five separate funding streams was cut and capped when transferred to the City in 2013. Previously, funding for emergency shelter services was cost-shared with the province 80/20. Although the City has had increases to the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding, these have not kept pace with the demand for shelter services and needed homelessness programming. This results in the City annually having to absorb the cost of any overspending in the delivery of shelter services.

A high percentage of people enter the shelter system due to housing loss. Although the City invests \$3.5 million in direct housing loss prevention services and an additional \$8 million in practical financial supports (funding for rent/utility arrears, payment of first/last month's rent, moving and essential home furniture) through Housing Benefits delivered by Employment and Social Services, there is a need to increase investments in prevention supports to reduce the incidence of people entering into homelessness. The current state of the rental market continues to be challenging for households living on low incomes, with rising rents, rento-victions and people giving up housing due to issues of pests and poor maintenance.

Since the inception of the Plan, demand for emergency shelters continues to increase. The City's community and family shelters has at time been at full capacity with the ongoing need to use overflow services. There is a lack of housing solutions to reduce the shelter length of stay resulting in chronic homelessness and lack of permanent shelter beds to respond to the demands.

The city of Ottawa is experiencing historic low vacancy rates with increasing rental costs in the private market. The gap between the available affordable housing supply and those in need is growing. This lack of available, affordable housing in the city is creating a backlog in the shelter system as there is decreasing movement from shelters into housing.

Housing First programs that provide housing and support services to chronically homeless individuals are also operating at capacity. Currently there are 1,368 individuals (singles and family households) on the City's Coordinated Access list waiting to be matched to a Housing First program. The City requires increased investments in Housing First case management support, peer workers, capital and operating funding for supportive housing, and housing subsidies to assist people to exit homelessness.

1.3 Residential Services Homes & Supportive Housing

Residential Services

Residential Services Homes are a form of supportive housing provided within the City's housing service continuum. Residential Services Homes, are staffed residences offering a safe and supportive residential living environment for adults. Residents typically have psychiatric, developmental or physical illnesses/disabilities. The City subsidizes the stay of approximately 1,000 eligible residents through purchase-of-service agreements with operators of 23 privately owned and two not-for-profit Residential Services Homes located in Ottawa's urban and rural areas.

These residences provide long-term housing to adults who require some supervision and services to maintain their independence in the community. Services include meals, 24-hour urgent response, medication management, light housekeeping/laundry, referrals and social and/or recreational activities.

While the homes' contracts are administered by Housing Services, the City's Employment and Social Services provides intake, assessment and admission services and monitors each subsidized tenant's financial eligibility. Individuals applying for subsidies may self-refer and/or be referred by families, doctors, hospitals, and other community agencies.

Supportive Housing

In Ottawa, supportive housing is an important part of a broad system of housing options for people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Ottawa. The Homeless Hub defines Permanent Supportive (or Supported) Housing (PSH) as housing that "combines rental or housing assistance with individualized, flexible and voluntary support services for people with high needs related to physical or mental health, developmental disabilities or substance use. It is one option to house chronically homeless individuals with high acuity. Usually, Permanent Supportive Housing units are in one home or building. It could include rooms in an individual house or several or all units of a building. PSH units can also be scattered-site units depending upon the acuity of the individual and the availability of the supports (provided either through home visits or in a community-based setting)."

Supportive Housing

There are many different program models of supportive housing which vary depending on the needs of the people who live there. Some offer 24/7 supports on site while others have supports on site in the day and evening, with on-call after hours assistance. Programs may be coed, while others are for only single men, women, or youth. Some supportive housing programs are quite specialized and offer innovative services such as managed alcohol, managed opioid programs, and specialized services for people with acquired brain injuries. Each supportive housing program's philosophy is client-driven and strengths-based, respectful of the tenant's right to self-determination and emphasizing individual choice, harm reduction, health promotion and recovery.

Through the Action Ottawa program, the City provides capital funding and incentives to increase the supply of supportive housing in the city. Since the inception of the plan in 2014, the City has assisted not-for-profit organizations to construct 287 supportive housing units, with another 87 in various stages of development.

Access to new supportive housing programs, built after 2014 and funded by the City, is through the Housing First Coordination function, which prioritizes entry into housing for individuals who are chronically or episodically homeless and assessed as having either high or moderate acuity levels/needs. However, individuals may also apply for other subsidized supportive housing units through the Social Housing Registry of Ottawa, who maintains a wait list for these units.

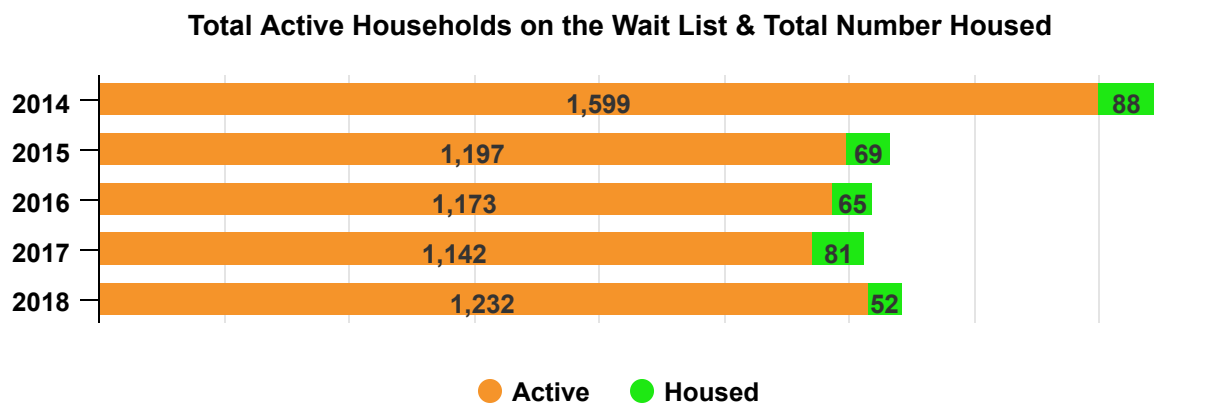
In addition to capital funding to support the development of new supportive housing, ongoing operating funding is provided to operations at 21 supportive housing locations, providing upwards of 725 spaces for residents in need (this excludes Residential Services Homes). In addition to these spaces, there are also spaces contracted and funded through the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.

From April 2015 to September 2019, 279 adults and 38 youth have been successfully housed in new supportive housing programs that have been constructed. There continues to be significant ongoing demand for supportive housing options and programming in the city.

Supportive Housing

Ottawa's housing system has not kept pace with the demand for supportive housing. Single individuals are the largest household type on the Wait List for supportive housing followed by seniors. Since 2014, on average, 5.5 per cent of the households on the Wait List for supportive housing have been housed. As of December 31, 2018, the total number of people on the Wait List for supportive housing was 1,232 households. Of these households, 52 were housed in 2018, this represents 4.2% of households and is below the overall average noted from previous years.

Figure 44: Number of active households on the Centralized Wait List for supportive housing, total number housed, 2014 to 2018



Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Figure 45: Number of active households on the Centralized Wait List by household type and number of active households housed, 2014 - 2018

Number of Active Households on the Centralized Wait List - Household Type and Number of Active Households Housed					
Household Type	2014 Active / Housed	2015 Active / Housed	2016 Active / Housed	2017 Active / Housed	2018 Active / Housed
Single Adult	1 346 / 78	1 042 / 62	1 010 / 57	978 / 74	1 045 / 48
Senior	132 / 1	96 / 3	113 / 2	118 / 5	133 / 2
Household with Children	89 / 8	40 / 4	33 / 5	23 / 2	30 / 2
2+ Adults	32 / 1	19 / 0	17 / 1	23 / 2	24 / 0

Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

1.3.1 Supportive Housing Key Gaps

The City recognizes the importance of providing a variety of supportive housing options to ensure residents have the supports they need to remain housed. Supportive housing is essential to reduce the cycle of homelessness and poverty among people who need assistance in maintaining independent living. Supportive housing significantly reduces the isolation and loneliness that are often the consequences of living with mental illness and other disabilities. Increasing wait times to access supportive housing can lead to enhanced crises, declining physical health, worsening mental health and addictions and increased financial pressures on other parts of the system such as emergency shelters.

There are long wait lists to access rent-geared-to-income housing and/supportive housing in our community forcing residents to access emergency shelter services until a community housing unit or subsidy becomes available. Funding for new affordable and supportive housing has not been able to keep up with the increased demand in a city with a growing population.

The total number of people on the Wait List for subsidized supportive housing units was 1,233 at the end of 2018, with only 52 individuals securing a supportive housing unit that year. Over the first five years of the Plan, 287 new supportive housing units were completed, with another 87 in development.

There continues to be a growing gap and need for supportive housing. However, in addition to requiring new funding for capital, new sources of operating funding are required which can average between \$600K to \$800K annually per project. Some projects, depending on the level of on-site medical supports needed, can require upwards of \$1 million annually in operating funding.

There is a need to create close linkages with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) to leverage funding so that new supportive housing is resourced adequately to respond to the complex physical health, addiction and mental health needs of people.

The City continues to see increasing complexity in the needs of the population who are experiencing homelessness. Acquired brain injuries, developmental disabilities, mental health concerns and the use of opioids require specialized interventions and other supports to secure and retain housing. The City needs to continue to support innovative approaches such as managed alcohol and managed opioid programs, in addition to ensuring that there is a gender and equity lens applied when developing new supportive housing.

1.4. Community Housing

For many residents of Ottawa, finding a suitable and affordable rental unit in the private market is beyond their means and they are forced to seek support from the City for housing. Community Housing provides affordable, secure and safe housing options for residents in need. The City's Community Housing (formerly known as Social and Affordable Housing) includes Social Housing, Affordable Housing, Rent Supplement and Housing Allowance subsidies.

Social Housing (rent-geared-to-income)

Social Housing is highly subsidized (rent-geared-to-income assistance) affordable rental housing that was constructed under federal and provincial programs over the last six decades. The ongoing responsibility for social housing administration and funding was transferred from the Province of Ontario to the City of Ottawa (and other municipalities) via the *Social Housing Reform Act in 2001*, now the *Housing Services Act 2011*, which is commonly referred to as devolution. Ontario is the only province where social housing is the responsibility of municipalities, and represents a cost to the City's tax base of \$81.2 million annually. This subsidy provided by the City reduces the cost of housing so that households pay 30 per cent of their pre-tax monthly income for rent.

Affordable Housing

New Affordable Housing refers to housing built since devolution (2001) and administered by the City but not governed under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*. These new affordable housing developments provide mixed income communities with a range of building types, tenant profiles and levels of support. Rents are not rent-geared-to-income, rather they are typically set at 80 per cent of the average market rent and are affordable to households at the first to fifth income deciles. Many of these new units are not affordable to people living on very low incomes so the City will often provide rental subsidies to increase affordability and allow for greater access of people living on low to moderate incomes. New affordable housing providers are not provided with any ongoing operating subsidy.

Rent Supplement

The Rent Supplement program provides rent-geared-to-income assistance to qualifying households. The City contracts with private and not-for-profit landlords who are willing to participate in the program. The household pays approximately 30 per cent of their gross monthly income as rent to the landlord and the remaining portion of the monthly rent is paid directly to the landlord by the Rent Supplement Program.

Housing Allowance

Housing Allowances provide low income households with financial support to help lower their rental costs. This benefit is \$250 for a single person and \$50 for each additional family member. It is portable anywhere in the city of Ottawa. Housing allowances in the Housing First program can be up to \$600 per month.

1.4.1 Community Housing Landscape

The City’s Community Housing branch oversees the ongoing administration of the Community Housing portfolio to ensure housing remains viable over the long-term, subsidy payments are provided, and housing provider operations and legislative responsibilities are maintained.

The City’s Community Housing portfolio is comprised of 52 housing providers, and 16 affordable housing providers including not-for-profit housing corporations, cooperatives and rent supplement landlords, that provide affordable rental units to more than 19,500 low income households.

Ottawa Community Housing Corporation (OCHC) is Ottawa’s largest non-profit housing corporation representing approximately two thirds of the total community housing stock under the administration of the City of Ottawa, as Service Manager. The City of Ottawa is the sole shareholder of OCHC, a corporation that operates and manages an estimated \$2.5 billion asset. As a not-for-profit corporation, OCHC is governed by a Board of Directors composed of community volunteers and members of City Council.

The rent-geared-to-income housing units and rent supplement units account for most of the Community Housing portfolio, providing low income, eligible residents with deeply subsidized rental units usually calculated based on the income of the household, where households pay not more than 30 per cent of their pre-tax monthly income towards rental housing costs.

The Housing Services Act, 2011 requires the City of Ottawa, as a Service Manager, to maintain 16,502 rent-geared-to-income units under its administration. The legislative reference is as follows:

1. The prescribed number of households whose income is no greater than the household income limit; and
2. The prescribed number of high need households

Housing Service Act

Minimum Service Level Standards

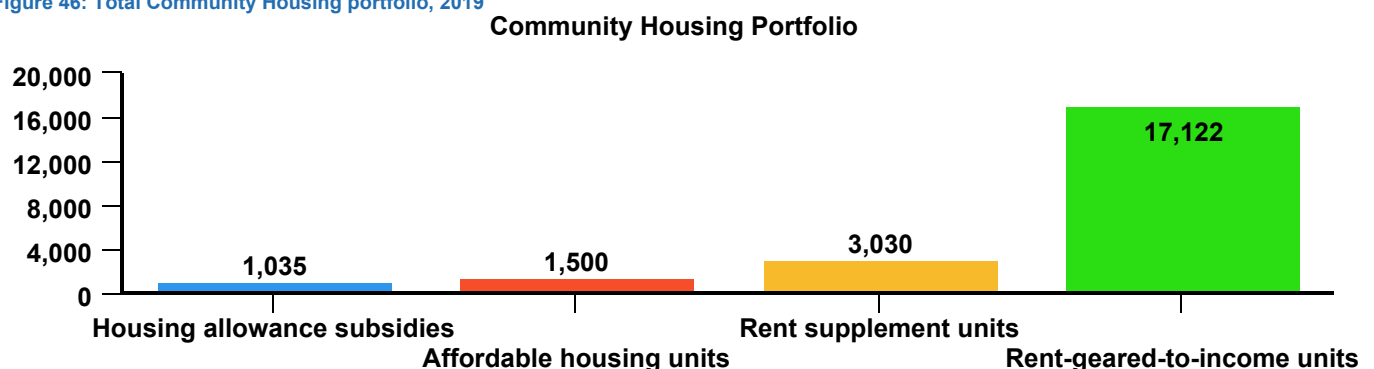
Service Levels, rent-geared-to -income assistance, s 40(1) of the Act

Section 19 – for each Service Manager set out in Schedule 4 of the Act

HSA O. Reg 357/11 Schedule 4

Item 24 – City of Ottawa 16,502 households at or below household income limit.

Figure 46: Total Community Housing portfolio, 2019



Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

1.4.2 Affordable Housing

Increasing the supply of suitable, adequate and affordable housing is a key priority of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. Improved access to affordable and suitable housing provides opportunities for people to improve their well-being, stability and fully engage in their communities.

Available and affordable housing has become increasingly scarce in Ottawa's high demand rental market. Residents are increasingly in search of housing that is suitable and affordable in a housing market that is plagued with challenges, resulting in housing being out of reach for many. Many factors can be directly linked to the lack of affordable housing in the rental market, which includes but is not limited to low vacancies, aging stock, high rents and most recently the emergence of short-term rental accommodation in private dwellings such as Airbnb.

Short-term rentals have grown rapidly, with a 254 per cent increase since 2016 and this has changed the landscape of the rental market industry, resulting in a reduced stock of housing units available for long-term rental. Prism Economics and Analysis, a consulting agency with expertise in housing policy and market analysis predicts that "by 2031, up to 1.85 per cent of the rental stock could be short-term rentals if the current growth trends were to continue.

Affordable Housing Supply (Housing Services - Continuum)

In 2002, the City initiated the Action Ottawa Affordable Housing Program which leverages various federal and provincial programs to build new affordable housing. Affordability under the program is defined as rents that are at or below 80 per cent (below-market-rent) of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's average market rent (AMR). In 2018, 80 per cent of average market rent in Ottawa was \$939.20.

The Action Ottawa program provides capital grants of up to \$120,000 per dwelling unit for a project or a specific number of affordable units within a larger project (e.g. ten units funded in a 50-unit project);

- Additional capital grant funding up to \$30,000 per dwelling unit for a total capital grant of \$150,000 per dwelling unit may be considered for accessible units, supportive units or larger units (i.e. units of four or more bedrooms).
- Relief from municipal development charges (excepting the transit portion), planning application fees and parkland levies.
- Reduced municipal property taxes (equivalent to the residential rate).
- Grant in lieu of building permit fees.
- Grant in lieu of school board development charges.

The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa manages applications and the Wait List for low to moderate income households interested in the Below Market Rent units.

Since 2011, over 1,500 new affordable housing units have been built. Since the inception of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness plan in 2014, the City has developed over 516 new affordable housing units, with another 389 units in various stages of development, and an additional 266 units approved in 2019.

Affordable Housing

Figure 47: Number of affordable and supportive housing units built, 2014-2019

Number of Affordable Housing Units Types Built Since 2014							
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Supportive Units	11	34	42	48	78	39	252
Affordable Units	95	0	6	98	42	32	273
Total # Units	106	34	48	146	120	71	525

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

Figure 48: Number of affordable and supportive housing units under construction

Number of Units Under Construction	
Affordable Housing Units	347
Total # of Units	389

Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

Figure 49 and 50 below provide a sample view of projects currently under development (under construction or planned).

Figure 49: Affordable housing project under construction



Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

Figure 50: Supportive housing project planned



Source: City of Ottawa, Housing Services

In addition, several initiatives are underway to help advance the development of affordable housing. The City is currently updating the City's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to include a new Affordable Housing Strategy as a recommendation and will be exploring new policy directions such as Inclusionary Zoning and Community Improvement Plans to develop additional tools that promote and create affordable housing in the city.

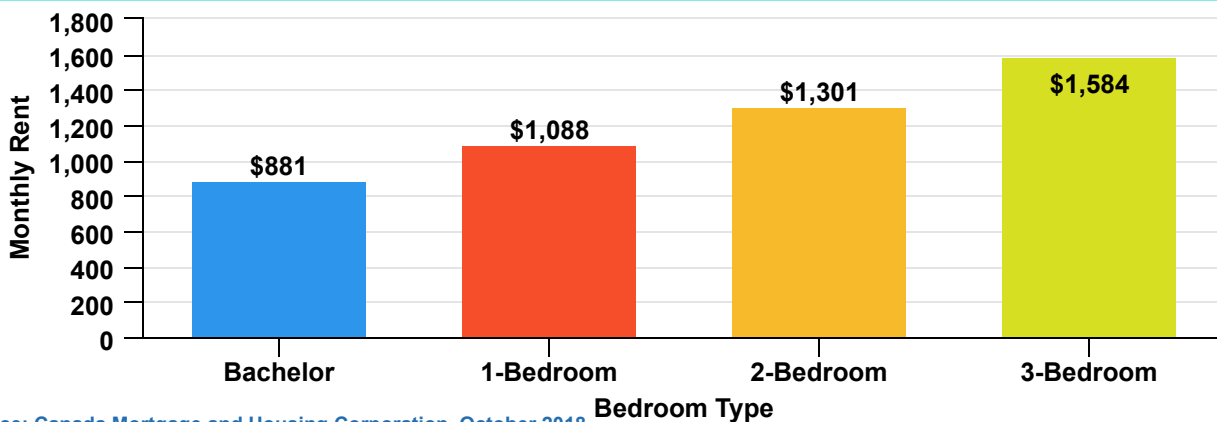
Community Housing Landscape

Housing Allowance

Despite Canada's stable and strong economy, many Ottawa residents still struggle with monthly shelter costs. Typically, housing is considered affordable when monthly housing costs do not exceed 30 per cent of a household's before tax income. Shelter costs for renters include rent and utilities and for home owners these can include other ownership costs, like mortgage interest, property taxes and maintenance. According to 2016 Census data, 42 per cent of renters spend more than 30 per cent of their income on shelter costs and account for more 113,000 residents. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) reported an average market rent of \$1,174 for all bedroom types in October 2018 for Ottawa.

Figure 51: Average market rent by bedroom type, Ottawa 2018

Average Market Rent by Bedroom Type

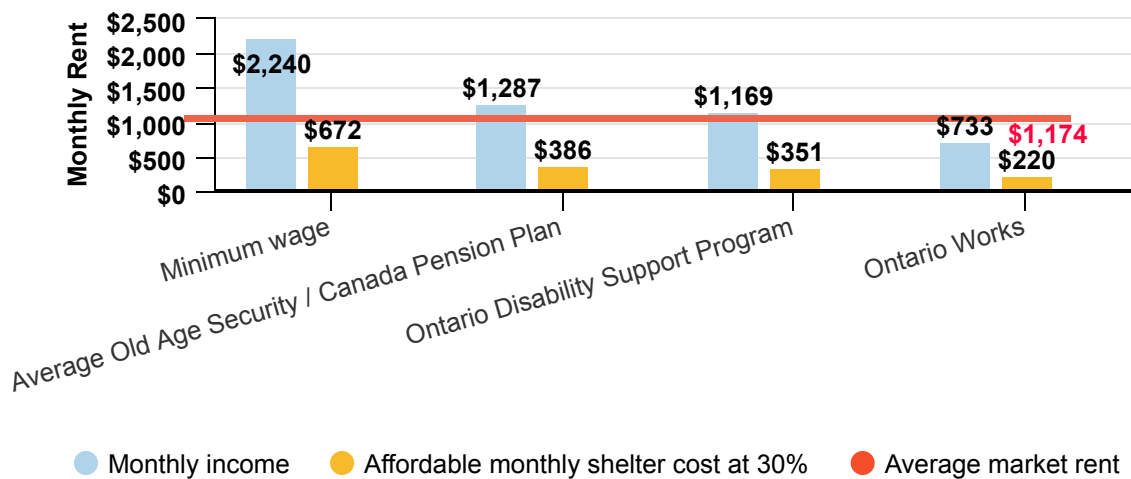


Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, October 2018

The current minimum wage is \$14 per hour and there are currently over 70,000 residents in Ottawa in receipt of social assistance benefits. Residents living near or below the poverty line simply can't afford rent. The graph below (Figure 52) illustrates a single individual's income compared to Ottawa's average market rent. It also illustrates what affordable shelter cost would be at 30 per cent of the total monthly income.

Figure 52: Example of maximum monthly income in comparison to monthly affordable shelter cost

Maximum Monthly Income Vs. Monthly Affordable Shelter Cost



Community Housing Landscape

Housing Allowances

The City oversees and administers a variety of programs to help increase access to affordable housing and close the affordability gap. In 2011, the City introduced the Housing Allowance program to help residents obtain housing in the private rental market.

Ottawa provides a tiered Housing Allowance subsidy which grants \$250/month for a single person and \$50/month for each additional family member to assist with monthly rent. Under the City's Housing First program, housing allowances can be up to \$600/month depending on the cost of accommodations. Currently, the City's Housing Allowance programs are operating at or near capacity and any open programs are targeting families in the family shelter system, chronically homeless single shelter users, Indigenous peoples, and people exiting psychiatric hospitals or correctional facilities with no fixed address.

Housing allowances promote choice by providing households with the flexibility to locate their own rental unit in the market. Once a suitable rental unit is found the housing allowance program provides a fixed monthly benefit payment to the household towards the rent of that unit. This subsidy is paid to the household or the landlord and is portable, meaning that households who continue to meet the eligibility criteria can move to another suitable unit within Ottawa and the housing allowance can move with them to the new rental unit.

New funding is needed to continue to offer housing allowances within the City's housing system to reduce the incidence of family homelessness, chronic homelessness, street homelessness and overall homelessness. Many of the people accessing the City's singles emergency shelters need a housing subsidy to not only enter the rental market but to maintain stable housing over the long-term. Low social assistance rates and low minimum wage, coupled with a high demand competitive rental market, rising rents and decreasing movement from community housing means that more people living on low incomes may enter homelessness and exits from shelter to housing will continue to decrease.

Community Housing Landscape

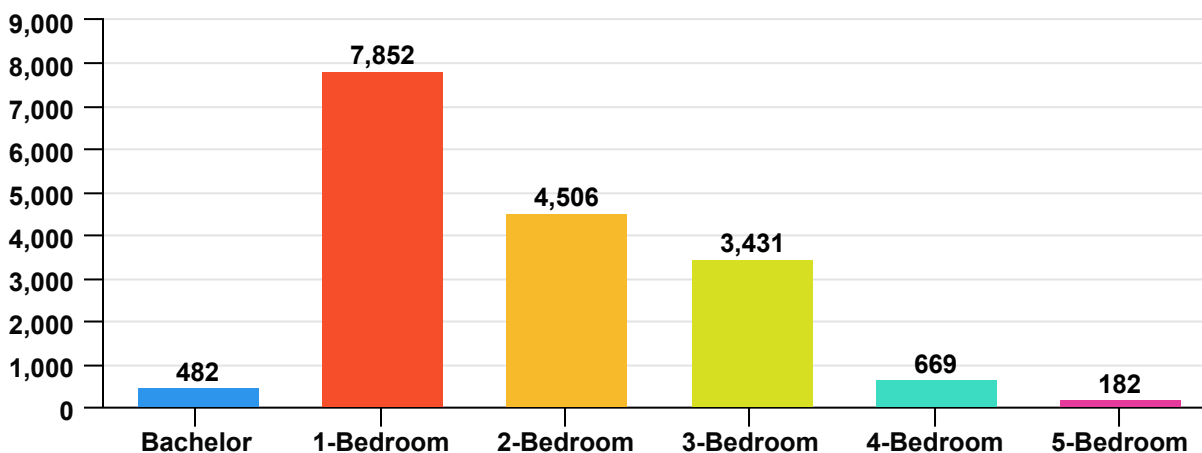
Social Housing

The rent-geared-to-income housing portfolio accounts for a total of 17,122 units. Of these units, 46 per cent are one bedroom units and 26 per cent are two bedroom units. Since 2014, there has been a steady decline in the availability of larger three, four and five bedroom units. Currently, three, four and five bedroom units account for only 25 per cent of the rent-geared-to-income housing portfolio, this reduces to 5 per cent of units when only four to five bedroom units are counted.

Many factors have contributed to this lack of availability for larger units, including minimal outflow from those currently living in larger rent-geared-to income units, the reduction in the number of new three to five bedroom rental units being built, as well as the demolition of such units in the market as they have reached the end of their life cycle. This has had significant impacts and disadvantages for larger families who face longer wait times, or continue to live in inadequate, under housed situations.

Figure 53: Number of rent-geared-to-income portfolio by bedroom size, 2018

Rent-Geared-to-Income Portfolio – Unit Count by Bedroom Size



Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

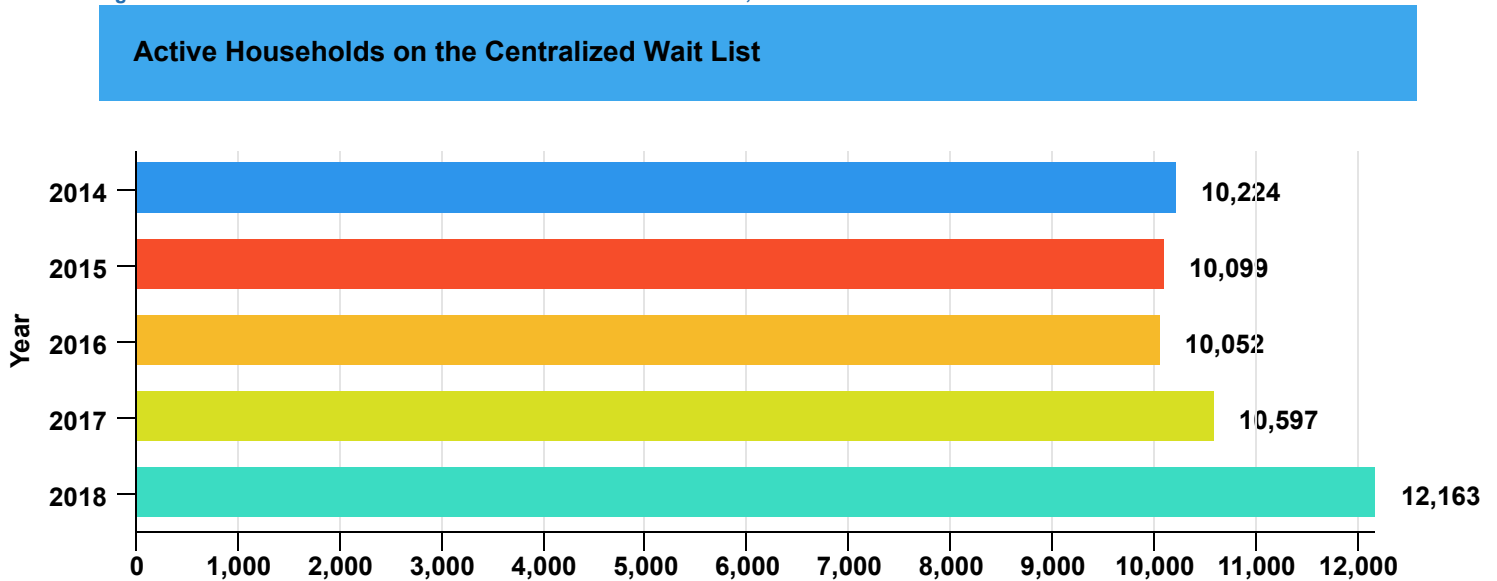
Community Housing Landscape

Demand, Community Housing (affordable and social housing)

Access to Community Housing, is via the Centralized Wait List (CWL). The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa manages the CWL on behalf of the City of Ottawa. The Registry manages applications for social housing, and rental affordability programs (rent supplements, affordable rental housing and supportive housing).

Over the last four years, the average number of households on the Centralized Wait List was 10,627 and has remained relatively static. However, 2018 saw an increase of 14.8 per cent from the previous year (2017). This increase is indicative of the current housing market where rents continue to increase and vacancy rates are at an all-time low. In 2015, the rental vacancy rate was 3.4 per cent, plummeting to 1.6 per cent in 2018.

Figure 54: Number of active households on the Centralized Wait List, 2014-2018



Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

The total number of active households on the Centralized Wait List includes applicants in "absolute housing need" (currently not receiving any financial housing supports) and those who are currently in receipt of a rent-geared-to-income housing subsidy waiting for a transfer to another rent-geared-to-income unit. As of December 31, 2018, there were 2,696 households in receipt of rent-geared-to-income assistance waiting for a transfer.

For many years, there have been discussions at the local level to better define and clarify the number of households on the Centralized Wait List. There is a growing momentum to only have households on the Centralized Wait List that are in absolute housing need and are without any ongoing financial housing supports. The ability to remove households who wish to transfer to another rent-geared-to-income assistance unit from the Centralized Wait List will provide a clearer picture of those households who are in absolute financial need. Recent changes to legislation, *under the Housing Services Act, 2011* now provides the ability for the City to have a separate wait list for people who already live in rent-geared-to-income housing, but for a variety of reasons (they are over housed, safety, medical needs etc.) are requesting a transfer to another unit or community housing provider. The City will establish this new process and separate the list by the end of 2020.

Community Housing Landscape

Demand, Community Housing (affordable and social housing)

Annually, there are up to three times as many people who apply for rent-geared-to-income housing as there are housing offers made. In 2018, just over 1,500 households received an offer of rent-geared-to-income housing versus the 4,835 households that applied. From 2014 to 2018 the number of new applications has increased by 12.7 per cent, active applications by 19 per cent and the number of households housed has reduced by 5 per cent. The number of people who are moving from rent-geared-to-income housing to market rental housing is decreasing, which is once again reflective of the current state of the rental market, with high rents and limited availability.

Figure 55: Number of active households, number of applications, and number of household housed, 2014-2018

Centralized Wait List, Inflow Vs. Outflow					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Active households at year end	10,224	10,099	10,052	10,597	12,163
Number of new applications	4,289	4,147	4,403	4,567	4,835
Number of households housed	1,599	1,829	1,786	1,541	1,519

Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

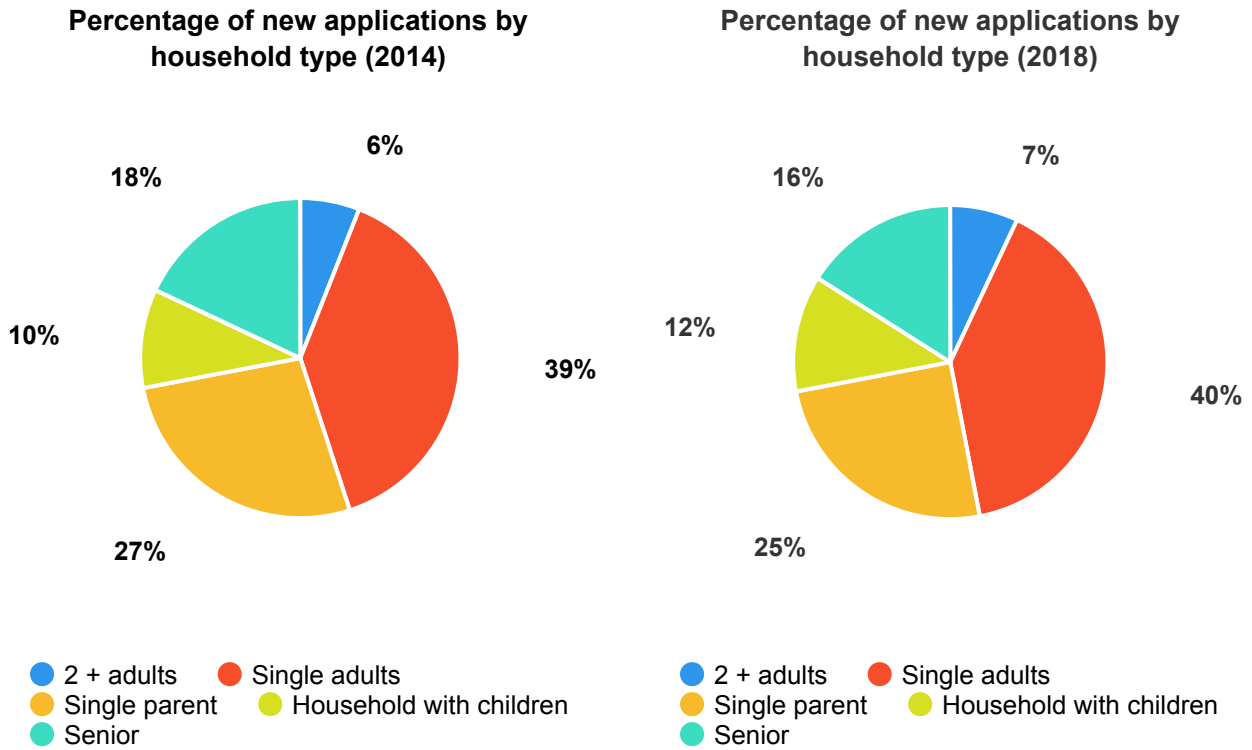
The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa also gathers information on the gender, age, and household types of those applying for social housing and rental affordability programs. Since 2014, there has not been any significant shift in applications for the Centralized Wait List by household types. It has relatively remained the same, with single adults and single parents accounting for the highest number of applications.

In Ottawa, the ratio of men to women in the population is approximately 50/50 although when reviewing the percentage of women to men over the last five years who are on the Centralized Wait List, the demand for affordable housing has consistently been higher for women. Currently, women led households consist of 56 to 57 per cent of households on the Centralized Wait List while men account for 43 to 44 per cent.

Women seeking affordable housing on the Centralized Wait List tend to be younger than men, with the majority of women being between the ages of 30 to 44 years, while the largest number of men are between the ages of 45 to 59 years.

Figure 56: Percentage of new applications to the Centralized Wait List by household type 2014 and 2018.

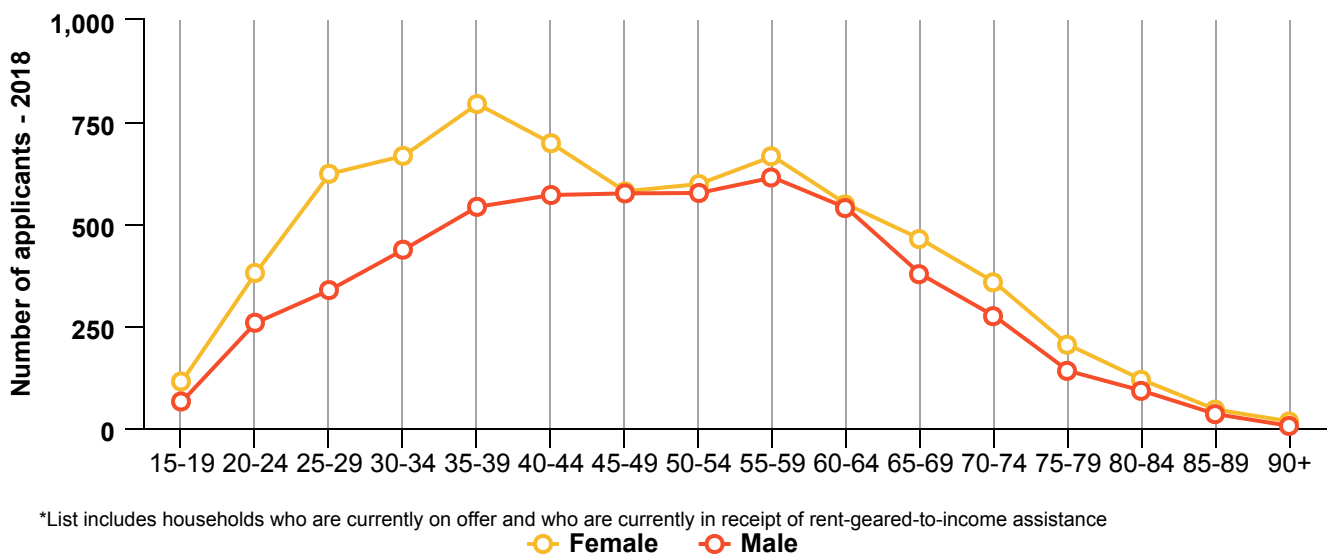
Percentage of New Applications by Household Type



Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Figure 57: Number of applicants on the Centralized Wait List by gender and age, 2018

Number of Applicants on the Centralized Wait List by Gender and Age, 2018



Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Community Housing Landscape

Selection of Households from the Centralized Wait List

Households on the Centralized Wait List may apply for and be assigned a Provincial or Local Priority to access rent-geared-to-income housing based on their current situation.

The local priority status recognizes that some households must be given priority access to rent-geared-to-income housing based on their current living situation, notwithstanding the chronological nature of their application. Priority households are listed in the appropriate provincial or local priority categories and are ranked by order of their application date. Households are only eligible to have one local Priority Status even though they may qualify in one of more categories.

The Province has two legislated provincial priorities:

- Special Provincial Priority (SPP): Member of the household is a victim of violence, experiencing or has recently experienced abuse by a person with whom they live or have lived with.
- Over Housed Priority: A household that is currently residing in a rent-geared-to-income housing unit that has more bedrooms than allowed for their family size.

The City as Service Manager, has the responsibility to establish local policies, known as local rules, regarding aspects of the ongoing administration of rent-geared-to income housing programs. There are six local priorities:

Urgent Safety	Households where a member doesn't qualify for a Special Provincial Priority but is subject to current abuse from a family member or former partner or where a member of the household is subject to extraordinary threat to personal safety by a non-family member and a change in housing will result in a significant increase to personal safety.
Life Threatening Medical	Member of the household has a terminal illness or life-threatening medical condition made worse by the current housing situation and a move will remove the life-threatening aspect of the condition.
Homeless	Households who are confirmed as experiencing homelessness and are staying in a City of Ottawa shelter or are living unsheltered.
In-Situ	Households who currently reside with a community housing provider in an appropriately sized unit, and who have experienced a significant loss in income while paying market rent and wish to apply for a subsidy and remain in their current unit.
Displaced Rent-Geared-To-Income Households	Households who are receiving a rent-geared-to-income subsidy and are displaced from their unit through no fault of their own (natural disaster, fire).
Graduates of Supportive Housing	Households who as a tenant of a supportive housing agency with onsite support, have demonstrated that they are now capable of independent living with or without support.

Community Housing Landscape

Selection of Households from the Centralized Wait List

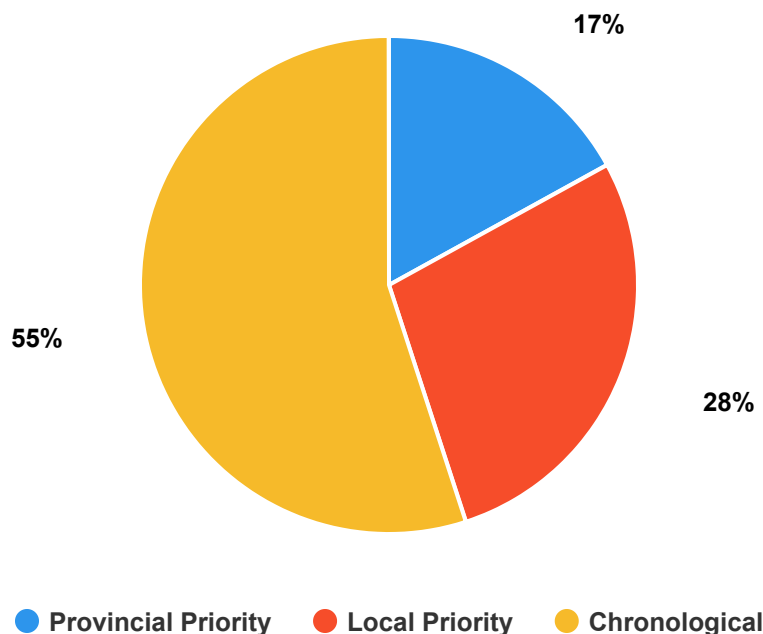
In accordance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011* pertaining to the ranking of households on the Centralized Wait List, the Service Manager establishes the ranking of priority groups with their ratio of access to units. In Ottawa, Housing Providers must select and fill rent-geared-to-income units from the Centralized Wait List in the following priority order:

Selection Ratio	Household Priority Status	Unit Access
1st	Provincial Special Priority (SPP) (victims of abuse)	Mandatory if there are SPP
2nd	Over Housed	Mandatory if there are no SPP
3rd	Local Priority Access	1-5 placements
4th	Chronological (no priority)	Remainder out of 5 placements

In 2018, 822 (17%) of new applicant households were accorded a Special Provincial Priority, 1,335 (28%) a Local Priority and 2,678 (55%) were placed on the Chronological Wait List. A total of 1,519 household were housed in 2018 from the Centralized Wait List; 36 per cent of those housed had a Local Priority, 30 per cent had a Provincial Priority and 24 per cent were from households on the Chronological Wait List.

Figure 58: Percentage of new applicants for social housing by priority status, 2018

Percentage of New Applicants by Priority Status



Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Community Housing Landscape

Average Wait Times

Figure 59: Average number of years for households to be housed for all bedroom types

Average Number of Years to be Housed for All Bedroom Types			
Household Status	Average number of years to be housed for all bedroom types	Mean	Median
Provincial Special Priority	0.4	5.8	4.5
Over Housed	3.2	4.8	3.4
Local Priority	1.9	4.9	4.1
Chronological	5.1	4.2	3.8

Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Figure 60 below, shows single adult households (36%) and households with children (35%), represented 71.7 per cent of all households on the Centralized Wait List in 2018. Although families represent 35 per cent of households on the Centralized Wait List, when considering all members in the family, they represent 16,695 individuals. Singles and seniors represent the next largest group of households and combined makeup 57 per cent of the total number of households on the Wait List. While it is estimated that the number of seniors will grow significantly, increasing to 25.8 per cent of the population by 2029 compared to 10 per cent today, they also have access to approximately 28 per cent of the housing stock.

It appears that all household types have very similar wait times, ranging from 4 to 4.9, years except for singles who wait on average 5.8 years. However, a breakdown by family size, indicates that larger family households (households of six or more) have the longest overall wait times, up to 7.7 years. This is largely the result of a limited number of large units (four to five bedrooms) and limited turnover in the stock.

Figure 60: Centralized Wait List demand and wait times by household composition, 2018

Centralized Waiting List Demand and Wait Times for all Households, 2018				
Household Composition/Type	2018 Total Households*	%	Mean	Median
Single Adults	4,423	36%	5.8	4.5
Household with Children	4,295	35%	4.8	3.4
Seniors	2,680	22%	4.9	4.1
2 + Adults	557	5%	4.2	3.8
3+ Adults	208	2%	4.0	4.0

Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Community Housing Landscape

Average Wait Times

Figure 61: Centralized Wait List demand and wait times (in years) by # of household members, 2018

Centralized Wait List Demand and Wait Times (in years) by # of Household Members				
# of Household Members	2018 Total Households	Total of Individuals	Mean	Median
2	853	1,706	4.4	3.7
3	979	2,937	6.9	6.1
4	973	3,892	6.9	6.6
5	723	3,615	6.4	4.6
6	446	2,676	5.4	3.4
7+	321	2,139	7.7	5.7
Total	4,295	16,695		

Source: The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa

Families with over seven members and who require six or more bedroom units have the longest wait times of over seven years and represent 14 per cent of all individuals on the Centralized Wait List. There is very limited or non-existent stock in Ottawa to meet the demands of some of these larger families, especially where modified units are required.

Community Housing Landscape

Social Housing - Repairs

The majority of the affordable housing stock in the City is in social housing communities. In 2000, the responsibility for the administration of federal social housing programs and federal operating agreements were downloaded from the federal government to the provincial government. These responsibilities were then devolved to the municipality in 2001 and represent a current cost of \$81.2 million to the municipal property tax base. Ontario is the only province where social housing is the responsibility of municipalities.

At the time of download, capital for social housing repairs was disproportionately underfunded. At present, there is a \$19 million annual repair budget, which is well below the conservative industry standard of one to two per cent of the total value of the portfolio. With a portfolio valued at \$3.7 billion, a minimum of \$30-\$60 million is required for ongoing maintenance and repair of the stock and does not address the estimated backlog of repairs that were created due to years of inadequate funding.

Even with the injection of much needed capital programs since 2010, the repair backlog continues to grow for this aging infrastructure. Sufficient and sustained funding would allow cities and housing providers to strategically plan, schedule and fund repairs that would have the highest impact on the buildings' operations, quality and long-term viability.

Current state:

Ensuring that our social/affordable housing stock remains in a good state of repair is an important component of our Plan. Annual capital grant programs available to all housing providers between 2010 to 2018 totaling \$165 million have addressed some of the repair backlog. However, much of the stock is over 40 years old and still requires significant repairs to ensure long-term livability of these units.

However, the need for consistent investment in this aging infrastructure is key. While recent programs have focused on green energy solutions through funding for repairs and retrofits, programs to address local needs for critical infrastructure repair such as elevators, roofs, windows, accessibility modifications and building exteriors are needed as part of a long-term capital repair plan for the social housing sector.

The funding gap for capital repairs needs to be closed in order to ensure there is no net loss of community housing. In 2018 the City invested \$24.6 million in repairs through municipal and provincial programs. It is important that this important asset (rent-geared-to-income housing stock) be maintained in a good state of repair in order to preserve affordability for residents living on very low to moderate incomes.

Community Housing Landscape

Social Housing - End of Operating Agreements (EOA)

End of Operating Agreement (EOA) refers to the expiry of the operating agreements that are in place for each social housing project which has a term or end date after which the housing provider will no longer have a mortgage payment and will receive no further operating subsidy.

The End of Operating Agreements also includes the expiry of federally signed operating agreements and associated mortgages, in addition to capital and operating financing obligations for existing social housing, as well as a variety of rent supplement programs.

Current State:

The End of Operating Agreements means that current annual investments in social housing by the federal government of \$1.7 billion will reduce to \$1 billion by 2020, and be eliminated by 2040. The current federal contribution Ottawa receives has already been reduced from \$32.6 million to \$28.2 million (2018) per annum for Ottawa's social housing portfolio and will continue to decrease to a negligible annual amount by 2029 as operating agreements, mortgages and debentures expire. As federal funding reduces over time, there will be a substantial cost to municipalities to maintain the provincially prescribed number of rent-geared-to income units required under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*.

The assumption that housing providers can continue to provide rent-geared-to-income subsidies and be viable without additional investment is not valid in most cases. Some social housing providers that have been publicly-funded for decades may choose to end their relationship with the City, thus reducing the total number of subsidized housing units. However, the City, as designated Service Manager, would still be required to maintain service level standards at the prescribed number of subsidized units (16,502) which would add significant budget pressures to the City.

The federal/provincial governments, through the new May 2019 provincial Community Housing Renewal Strategy, has addressed this decreasing federal funding through the **Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)**.

The Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative is a multi-year plan to stabilize and grow the community housing sector that targets community housing owned and operated by co-ops, non-profits and municipal non-profits that provide rent-geared-to-income housing and low-end-of-market housing. The Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative will protect affordability for households in community housing, support the repair and renewal of existing community housing supply, and expand the supply of community housing over time.

This funding represents a re-investment of federal funding that has been declining under the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Agreement and provides an opportunity for Municipal Service Managers and housing providers to address the challenges associated with social housing communities (now referred to as community housing) reaching the end of their operating agreements and/or mortgage maturity. The Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative provides \$22.433 million for Ottawa between 2019 and 2022 and is expected to increase over time. This new funding, does not directly replace lost federal funding as it comes with very prescriptive funding priorities and requirements.

1.4.3 Community Housing Key Gaps

The City recognizes the importance of providing a variety of Community Housing options to ensure residents in need of housing affordability can access safe, adequate housing in neighborhoods where they wish to live. Community Housing is essential to reduce the cycle of homelessness and poverty among people who need assistance to afford housing.

Over the last five years, the average number of households on the Centralized Wait List for Community Housing was 10,627. Although the Centralized Wait List had remained relatively static over the previous five years (2013 to 2017), there was a 14.8 per cent increase in the Centralized Wait List in 2018 which is anticipated to increase further by the end of 2019. There is a growing gap between the demand for deeply affordable housing and the available affordable capacity

There is a lack of affordable housing for low income households - singles and families on the Centralized Wait List accounted for 70% of applicants. Annually, three times as many people apply for rent-geared-to-income housing as there are housing offers made. In 2018, 1,519 households received an offer of rent-geared-to-income while 4,835 households applied.

Ottawa's average market rent in 2018 was \$1,174, an increase of 5.6 per cent since 2017, and a 15 per cent increase since 2014 (\$1,021). With the current number of low income households in the City of Ottawa and rising rents, there is a need for new investments in housing subsidies (rent supplements and housing allowances) to help residents close the affordability gap.

As our existing social housing programs are near the end of their operating agreements and mortgage terms, a significantly changed housing environment currently exists for the municipality as Service Manager and for housing providers and households within our community housing portfolio. It is critical that any new housing policy and associated regulatory framework be fiscally responsible, preserve our publicly funded community housing assets, while addressing the needs of our most vulnerable residents.

At present, there is a \$19 million annual repair budget for the community housing portfolio, which is well below the conservative industry standard of one to two per cent of the total value of the portfolio. With a portfolio valued at \$3.7 billion, a minimum of \$30 to \$60 million is required for ongoing maintenance and repair of the stock and does not address the estimated backlog of repairs that were created due to years of inadequate funding.

1.5 Market Housing and Affordable Home Ownership

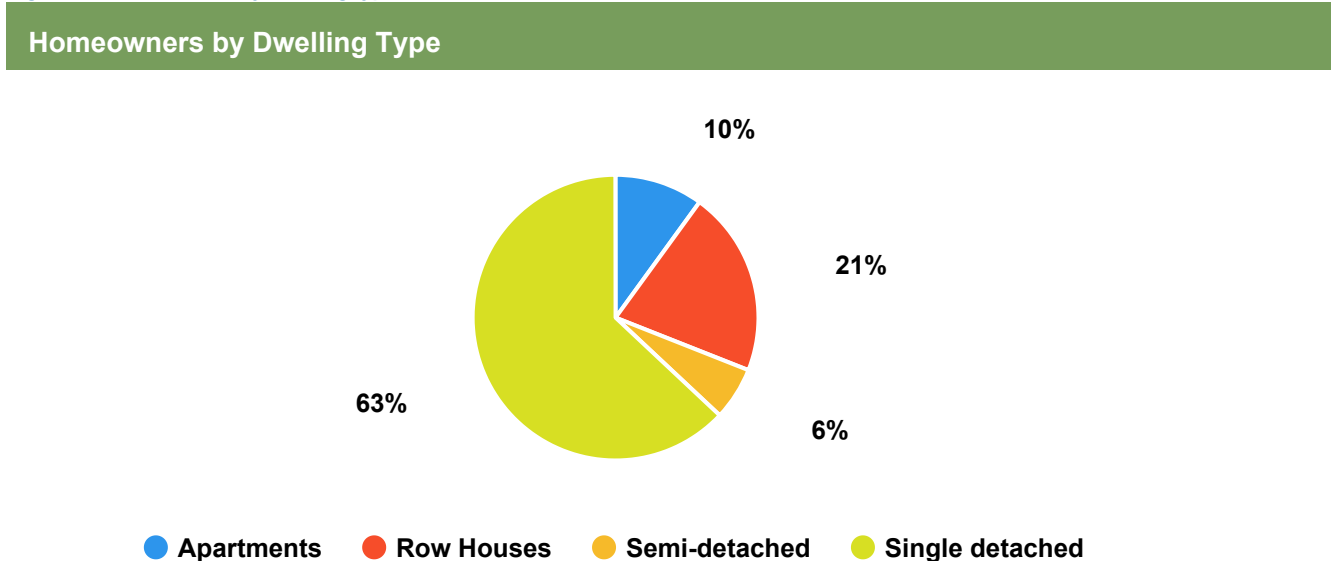
Ottawa’s housing market has traditionally been supported by strong economic conditions that have supported increases in average resale home prices above that of inflation. It should be noted that the federal government, through housing and fiscal policy, influences housing affordability more than any other level of government. While the housing market is relatively affordable to households above or near the median income, many lower income households struggle to save the required 5 per cent or 10 per cent down payment to qualify for a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation mortgage.

Previous federal-provincial Home Ownership Down Payment Assistance programs have provided down payments in the form of a 20 year forgive-able loan to qualified households. These down payment assistance programs have ranged between \$10,000 per household to up to \$30,000 per household and can be a useful tool in assisting renter households to transition into home ownership. However, it should be noted that the majority of funding for these programs was implemented during the 2008 economic recession under the direction of the federal government, and the housing market in 2019/20 has substantially changed. Currently, the City does not offer a Home Ownership Down Payment Assistance Program.

As demand continues to outpace supply in the housing market, the price of home ownership costs will continue to increase. Additional study is required to determine the impact of market and demographic forces on home ownership costs, especially to determine where municipal incentives or regulations could be used to mitigate the cost and the effectiveness of such programs.

Market housing includes affordable rental housing and home ownership. Housing is considered to be affordable when a household spends less than 30 per cent of its pre-tax income on adequate shelter. Households that spend more than 30 per cent of their gross before tax income on shelter costs are deemed to be in core housing need and may require government supports or subsidies to assist with the purchase. Homeowners most commonly live in single detached homes (62.6 per cent) with only 10.1 per cent living in apartments.

Figure 62: Homeowners by dwelling type, 2018

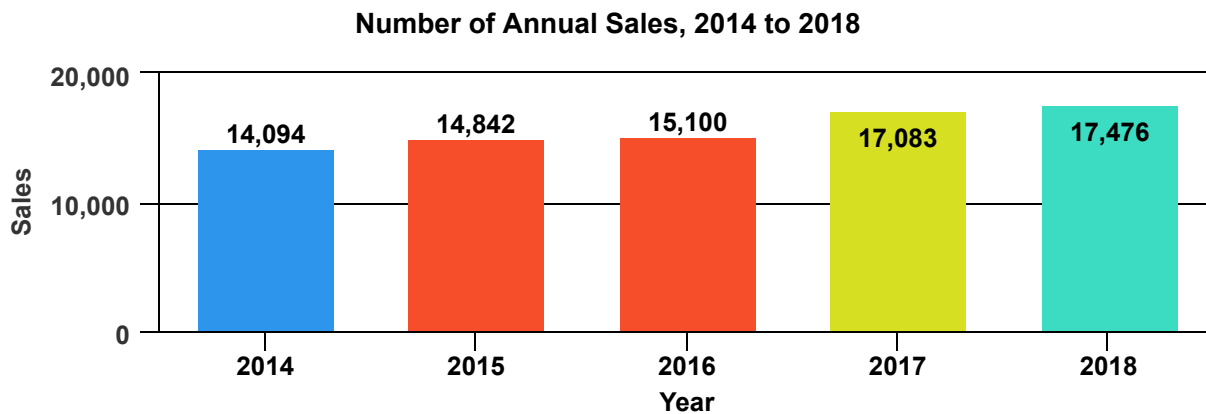


Source: City of Ottawa, Annual Development Report, 2018

Market Housing and Affordable Home Ownership

According to the City of Ottawa’s 2018 Annual Development Report, the Ottawa Real Estate Board logged 17,476 housing resales in 2018, a 2.3 per cent increase from 2017. There was a 3.8 per cent increase in the average resale price of a home in Ottawa from 2017 to 2018, reaching an average sale of \$407,571. As housing prices continue to rise, finding affordable and appropriate housing becomes a challenge, especially for low income residents who may never be able to enter the home ownership market. In 2016, 14 per cent of owner-occupied households were paying more than 30 per cent of their total pre-tax income on shelter expenses.

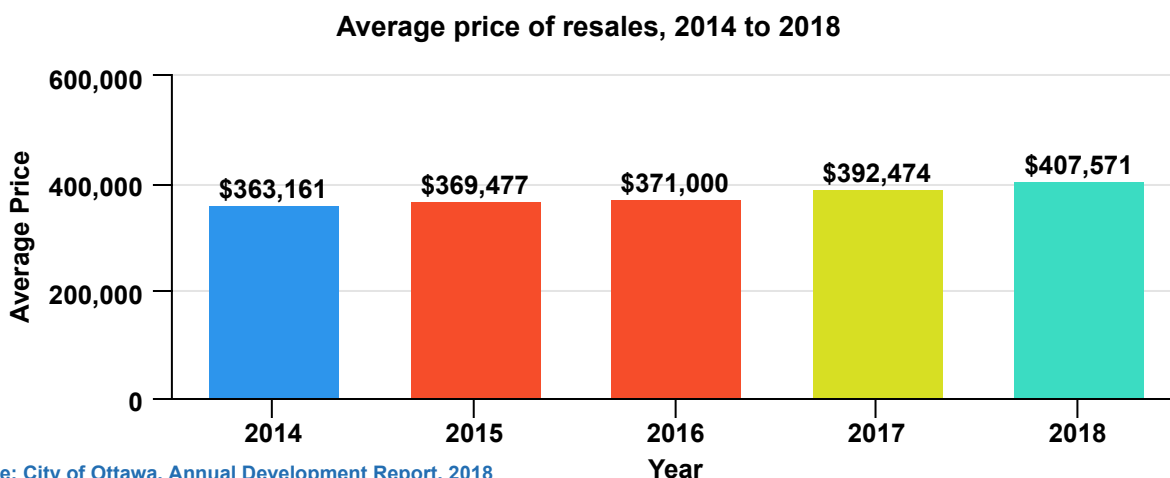
Figure 63: Ottawa housing sales by year, 2014-2018



Source: City of Ottawa, Annual Development Report, 2018

In 2018, Ottawa was considered a sellers’ market, with a ratio of 0.71 which generally means that on average, every month, 71 per cent of all newly-listed houses were sold. Over the previous five years Ottawa was sitting in a balanced market, in which the sales-to-new-listings ratio was between 0.40 to 0.55.

Figure 64: City of Ottawa, average housing resales price by year 2014-2018



Source: City of Ottawa, Annual Development Report, 2018

1.5.1 Market Housing and Affordable Home Ownership

Market housing and home ownership are essential components of a healthy housing system. These types of housing allow households with moderate incomes (\$59,137 to \$111,844 / year) to enter housing with no need for additional supports or subsidies. Ensuring these markets are healthy helps alleviate the demand for community housing and associated supports.

Currently, there are 124,255 households that earn moderate incomes. Of these, 17,023 households are spending 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs and 1,243 households are spending 50 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs. There is a gap in supporting middle income households to access affordable, market rental and home ownership housing.

The resale price of homes in Ottawa continues to rise (3.8 per cent increase from 2017 to 2018). Home ownership is becoming increasingly unaffordable especially for first time buyers. There is a gap in available financial incentive programs for moderate income households to move into home ownership.

Vacancy rates in Ottawa are at an all-time low and only 10 per cent of new housing starts have been rental housing in the last seven years. The rental market has slightly increased supply by 1 per cent between 2016 and 2018 but, as the proportion of the number of renters increases, so does demand for market rentals.

It is estimated that by 2031, there could be a rental housing gap of 18,000 to 19,000 dwellings available in Ottawa should the current population trends continue. The average apartment rents are expected to rise by 41 per cent in the period between 2018 and 2031. This rise would result in almost 25,000 more households living in unaffordable dwellings by 2031.

1.6 As We Heard It

An important part of the Needs Assessment was to consult with a wide variety of stakeholders, residents, and those with lived experience of housing insecurity and homelessness. Starting in January 2019, the City conducted stakeholder consultations with organizations that touch the housing sector. The consultations included a wide range of stakeholders including health care providers, social housing providers, supportive housing providers, private developers, Business Improvement Areas, advocacy organizations and support service agencies. Consultation participants were provided with a summary of their feedback after each session to confirm all of the information was captured accurately. The stakeholder consultations helped the City to better understand the interaction between the different components of the housing sector and other systems.

The City also actively engaged people with lived experience of homelessness and/or housing precariousness. To ensure a wide range of participants, sessions were held at emergency shelters, community housing, rooming houses and in supportive housing. These consultations provided a unique lens on some of the real issues being faced by members of our community.

Finally, members of the general public had opportunities to provide input through an Engage Ottawa site and online survey. The site and associated surveys allowed residents to learn about how our housing sector works to support residents.

During the consultation sessions several key themes emerged which are captured below, but not meant to be an exhaustive list. The summary below provides an ‘as we heard it’ themes and the comments noted have not been endorsed by the City, sector nor partners.



*As we heard it - themes

- | | |
|--|---|
| Increase partnerships in the sector and community | Increase and preserve the community housing stock |
| Increase emergency shelter capacity | Ensure tenants receive the supports they need |
| Ensure equity groups receive targeted supports | Prevent housing loss |
| Expand coordinated access system | Improve the Housing First program |
| Use data to improve services | Educate the public about residents & their housing issues |
| Improve and monitor housing conditions (state of repair) | Reduce wait lists for community & supportive housing |
| Increase advocacy role of sector to help augment resources | Ensure landlords are supported with unit repairs |
| Create new programs to leverage volunteer participation | Ensure the system is well resourced with staff |

* Summary is ‘as we heard it’ and the comments do not imply endorsement by the City, sector or partners

SECTION 3

Key Findings and Needs

Part 1: Findings and Needs

- 1.1 Affordable and Market Housing**
- 1.2 Community Housing**
- 1.3 Homelessness**

1.1 Affordable and Market Housing

Key Findings

As housing prices rise across Ottawa, home ownership is becoming increasingly out of reach for many low income residents and in most cases the rental market is the only option. However, in the private rental market many of the units available are still not affordable to low income residents. Many residents lack access to low cost housing that is adequate and suitable to their household's needs. Ottawa's rental market, with low vacancy rates and rising rents, has highlighted the need to create new affordable housing to increase the overall supply, availability, affordability and appropriateness of units. There is also a need to create new housing subsidies to help households access housing that is available in the private rental market and/or improve affordability in-situ.

Demand / Supply - Key Facts

- Of the 403,689 households in Ottawa, 132,887 are renter households and the others are owner households. However, only 10 per cent of new housing starts have been rental housing in the last seven years, in a city where 34.6 per cent of households are renter households.
- Between 2016 and 2018, the supply of rental units has increased by 1 per cent and during the same period the population living in rental housing has increased by 2.9 per cent.
- Ottawa continues to see an ongoing erosion of rental stock in the city through large scale re-developments and displacement. Should current population trends continue, it is estimated that by 2031 there will be a rental housing gap of approximately 18,000 to 19,000 dwellings available in Ottawa.
- Households in unaffordable dwellings make up 40 per cent of renter households and this is expected to rise over the long-term.
- Ottawa is experiencing a decreasing vacancy rate, from 3 per cent in 2016 to 1.6 per cent (2018); the vacancy rate is projected to drop further by the end of 2019 making affordable housing even harder to secure.
- Between 2014 and 2018, the City has increased its affordable housing supply by 516 units.
- There were 124,255 households that earned moderate incomes (\$59,137-\$111,844) in Ottawa in 2016. Of these households 17,023 were spending 30 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs and 1,243 households were spending 50 per cent or more of their income on shelter costs.

Needs - Key Tactics

- Undertake a market analysis of the rental housing stock in the City of Ottawa especially as it pertains to the development of City lands along the Light Rail Transit corridor to determine housing options that meet the housing needs of low to moderate income residents.
- Identify existing needs and gaps within the housing system to identify opportunities to increase the number of affordable housing units where appropriate, through intensification and redevelopment.
- In consultation with the private and community housing sector, develop affordable housing definitions for low and moderate income households for both rental and ownership housing.

Affordable and Market Housing

Needs - Key Tactics

- Create affordability thresholds and incentives that are financially viable for both the private and not-for-profit sectors.
- Create an Affordable Housing Capital Funding Plan that includes City, federal, provincial, and community housing lands available for affordable housing each term of Council.
- Explore and consider programs that preserve and enhance existing affordable rental housing in the private market.
- Explore the creation of a land bank or community land trust for affordable housing.
- Create a strategic plan that ensures land near to major transit areas incorporates affordable housing.
- Investigate opportunities to co-locate affordable housing with new City facilities.
- Explore the use of community benefits agreements to provide affordable housing when existing communities are adversely affected by redevelopment and gentrification.
- Recognize the important and unique role of Ottawa Community Housing Corporation (OCHC) to ensure that OCHC's development potential for new affordable housing is a shared vision with the City and is supported by Council.
- Establish a fund to assist the not-for-profit sector in the acquisition of strategic affordable housing assets.

1.2 Community Housing

Key Finding

For many residents in Ottawa, finding a suitable rental unit in the private market is beyond their means as vacancy rates remain low and this drives up rental costs through increased competition for units. This additional competition for private market rentals has contributed to increased demand for community housing programs of all types. The community housing portfolio lacks the capacity to manage the additional demand. Minimal outflows from community housing to the private rental market has created additional strain on the housing system.

Demand / Supply - Key Facts

- Over 55,000 households in Ottawa live on low income (13 per cent of Ottawa's population). The City's current housing portfolio provides affordable rental units to more than 23,825 low-income households through a combination of rent geared to income units, rent supplements, portable housing allowances and below market rent units.
- Over the last five years, the average number of households on the Centralized Wait List for community housing was 10,627. The Centralized Wait List remained relatively static over the previous 5 years (2013 to 2017), however there was a 14.8 per cent increase in the Centralized Wait List in 2018 which is anticipated to increase further by the end of 2019.
- Annually, three times as many people apply for rent-geared-to-income housing as there are housing offers made. The need to address provincial priorities on the Centralized Wait List (households feeling domestic violence and over-housed households) in addition to the City's six Local Priorities means that people on the chronological wait list will have increasingly longer wait times to access deeply subsidized housing.
- Limited availability and rising rents in the private market rental stock have resulted in limited turnover in the rent geared to income housing portfolio; many residents are choosing to stay in their units and pay market rent.
- The City provides 3,123 units under the Rent Supplement program with private and not for profit housing providers in addition to creating 807 Housing Allowances since 2014. These programs, with investments totalling \$29 million are unable to meet the overwhelming demand in the community for housing affordability.
- The City provides and funds up to 1,725 supportive housing options. At the end of 2018, the total number of people on the Centralized Wait List for subsidized supportive housing units was 1,233.
- The Community Housing stock is aging and needs significant capital repair. Annually, between \$30 million to 60 million is required for ongoing maintenance and repairs and does not address the estimated back-log of repairs that were created due to years of neglect.

Needs - Key Tactics

- Complete a short and long-term capital needs assessment of all City-funded community housing providers to identify the current and projected state of the community housing portfolio, along with strategies to address capital need over time
- Provide information about the use of renovations and retrofits to existing community housing provides to address energy efficiency, water and energy conservation, to ensure long-term sustainability and climate change resiliency.
- Work with City departments to create incentives to support the long-term financial viability of community housing projects.

Community Housing

Needs - Key Tactics

- Complete an inventory of capital repair funding opportunities for the community housing sector and support providers to access funds where appropriate.
- Create initiatives that support community housing regeneration, efficiency and long-term viability.
- Develop a redevelopment and intensification strategy for community housing to harness potential equity to build new housing.
- Build strong community housing partnerships to leverage economies of scale and ensure long-term viability and sustainability.
- Facilitate partnerships that match health and social supports with community and private housing sectors.
- Develop and sustain initiatives that reduce the number of households who are waiting for and in need of financial assistance for housing rental costs.
- Develop a resident-based access system that efficiently provides one-stop intake for all social benefit and housing programs.
- Examine and increase the mix of affordable housing options (housing subsidies) to meet actual household need over time.
- Support community housing providers in the transformation of governance, structures and ownership models to support redevelopment and intensification.

1.3 Homelessness

Key Finding

Despite having a comparatively high median income to the rest of Canada many Ottawa residents struggle to find and/or maintain housing that is affordable. Many community housing programs have long wait lists forcing residents to access emergency shelter services until a community housing unit or subsidy becomes available. The lack of available, affordable housing in the city is causing a backlog in the shelter system because there is decreasing movement from shelters into affordable or supportive housing. The shelter system is facing challenges with the increased incidence and complexity of mental health and addiction issues among clients. The increasingly complex nature of clients accessing shelter services has created an increased need for support services and directly impacts the ability of agencies to be able to find and maintain housing for these clients.

Demand / Supply - Key Facts

- From 2014 to 2018, there has been a 23 per cent increase in the number of unique individuals and families who accessed an emergency shelter from 6,438 to 7,937 households.
- In 2018, the average nightly occupancy in emergency shelters was 108 per cent higher than the permanent bed capacity. The emergency shelter system is becoming increasingly reliant on the utilization of overflow beds to meet growing demand.
- The lack of turnover in the community housing portfolio, has increased the wait times for households experiencing homelessness, who are spending longer periods of time in the emergency shelter system and/or overflow options.
- Family homelessness is the primary driver of the increased demand for shelter placement in Ottawa. Between 2014 to 2018 family shelters saw a 55 per cent increase in the number of family units requesting emergency shelter placement, from 696 to 1,078 families.
- The provincially funded Violence against Women (VAW) sector is also operating at capacity and is not able to respond to the demands for safe shelter for women leaving abusive situations. The City continues to provide overflow capacity for the VAW sector, supporting 134 family households in 2019 without receiving provincial funding for this expense, estimated at \$1 million annually.
- Housing First programs that provide housing and support services to chronically homeless individuals are also operating at capacity. Currently, there are 1368 individuals (singles and family households) on the City's Coordinated Access list waiting to be matched to a Housing First program.
- The emergency shelter system is facing challenges dealing with clients with increasing needs due to mental health and addictions issues, exacerbated by the City's opioid crisis. Additionally, clients are presenting with more complex needs, concurrent disorders, acquired brain injuries, developmental disabilities, dual diagnosis etc.

Needs - Key Tactics

- Develop a comprehensive homelessness prevention and diversion strategy that builds on the collaborative work of non-profit and cooperative providers, private sector landlords, community partners, and other City services that serve households in need.
- Develop and implement a municipal bed bug strategy. in collaboration with relevant City departments, non-profit and cooperative housing providers, private sector landlords and community partner service agencies.
- Apply a gender based and equity lens to discussions and solutions to homelessness, referring to the work of the City of Ottawa's Women's and Gender Equity Strategy and the City for All Women Initiative.

Homelessness

Needs - Key Tactics

- Work with national and provincial groups to prevent and end veteran's homelessness in Ottawa.
- Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure effective discharge planning prevents people from exiting correctional institutions, hospitals, child welfare system and entering homelessness.
- Incorporate youth-focused recommendations arising from the youth section of housing and homelessness plan.
- Incorporate the Indigenous community's recommendations as appropriate and agreed upon by the Indigenous community.
- Ensure the emergency shelter system is responsive to local needs and demands.
- Review the needs of families experiencing homelessness and develop strategies that reduce emergency shelter use and support quicker access to permanent housing.
- Increase availability and access to support services, especially within community housing buildings and rooming houses where many individuals requiring supports are residing.
- Increase the supply of supportive housing for people who experience chronic homelessness and are living with developmental disabilities, acquired brain injuries, serious physical, mental illness and/or addictions.
- Implement the recommendations from the Fidelity Assessment of the City's Housing First Program.
- Review the eligibility criteria for participation in the Housing First program.
- Expand access to homelessness programs to create a no-wrong door entry into the service system, and for enhanced data collection and sharing.

SECTION 4

Equity Profiles

Part 1: Equity Profiles

- 1.1 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, 2 Spirited (LGBTQ2S)**
- 1.2 Older Adults**
- 1.3 Persons with Developmental Disabilities**
- 1.4 Refugees, Newcomers and Immigrants**
- 1.5 Women**

1. Equity Profiles

Information specific to the Indigenous community and youth is included within the 10- Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The following profiles were completed for resident groups whose housing vulnerability was highlighted through the Needs Assessment. These sections are intended to provide housing specific information to complement information available under the City's population-based strategies as well as the City's Equity and Inclusion Lens.

1.1 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, 2 Spirited (LGBTQ2S)

- One in ten people are attracted to people of the same sex. (CAWI, 2016)

Homeless enumeration efforts have demonstrated that anywhere from 5 to 30 per cent of adults who experience homelessness identify as LGBTQ2S, (Ecker, 2018). However, statistics regarding the LGBTQ2S are difficult to measure so it is likely that figures are under representative.

The LGBTQ2S community remains one of the most marginalized groups worldwide (UNESCO, 2019). A number of factors place LGBTQ2S seniors, adults and youth at a high risk for becoming homeless and a shift is needed in the way temporary housing, shelters and long-term housing are developed for the LGBTQ2S+ community.

There are various pathways into homelessness among LGBTQ2S adults, though an Ottawa based study found that many participants were experiencing homelessness because of financial difficulties. Enhanced vulnerability to family rejection, mental health issues, and housing discrimination potentially place LGBTQ2S adults at a greater risk of homelessness (Ecker, 2018).

Finding LGBTQ2S friendly services that are safe and inclusive can be a difficult experience. Along the housing continuum, homeless serving agencies, particularly emergency shelters, can be perceived as hostile towards the LGBTQ2S community. Further, the LGBTQ2S community may also encounter discrimination from landlords and other tenants. Thus, housing options that are safe and accepting of LGBTQ2S individuals are needed as are broader supports to address health and employment issues. Providing inclusive services is essential in helping LGBTQ2S residents maintaining stable housing and preventing homelessness (CMHC, 2019).

Equity Profiles - LGBTQ2S

Homelessness amongst LGBTQ2S youth continues to be a serious concern. Of youth experiencing homelessness surveyed, 21 per cent identified as LGBTQ2S (City of Ottawa, 2018). A high proportion of LGBTQ2S youth report feeling safer living on the streets than in shelters, due to the transphobia and discrimination that can occur in shelters and youth serving organizations. (Abramovich 2016). Some youth will continue to experience homelessness as adults as well. Half of LGBTQ2S adults experiencing homelessness said they had their first experience of homelessness as a youth (Ecker, 2018).

LGBTQ2S seniors face unique challenges finding inclusive senior housing. In some cases, moving into a retirement home or long-term care facility can mean having to “go back into the closet” for fear of discrimination, homophobia or transphobia from staff or other residents (CMHC, 2019).

A local needs assessment of Ottawa’s housing and homelessness services and supports within Ottawa conducted by Daybreak Non-Profit Housing in 2018 identified 12 recommendations, summarized as:

- Creating targeted LGBTQ2S services and housing options.
- Increasing representation of the LGBTQ2S staff within the housing sector.
- Enhancing training and supports for the housing sector, including private landlords.
- Protecting the rights of LGBTQ2S in all policies and systems.
- Collecting data and conducting research related to LGBTQ2S clients in the housing sector, paying particular attention to the intersectionalities with other identities that might make residents vulnerable.

1.2 Older Adults

- Over 15 per cent of the population is 65 and older, an increase of 23.6 per cent since 2011.
- Ottawa's population aged 55 and over increased by 18 per cent between 2011-2016, compared to an increase of less than 2 per cent for the population under age 55.
- By 2041, 1 in 4 Ottawa residents will be over the age of 65.

Seniors are the fastest-growing segment of the population. The diverse needs and trends related to housing for seniors need to be understood and accounted for in the planning and delivery of programs and services.

The number of seniors who may require affordable housing supports is increasing. In 2016, the percentage of seniors living on low income increased to 9.4 per cent from 7 per cent in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2016). This is reflected in the 14 per cent of people 65+ that are living in core housing need (CMHC, 2019).

While the majority of seniors live in central areas of the city, suburban and rural areas are experiencing the fastest growth of older adults as residents age in place in their communities. Accessible and affordable housing in suburban and rural areas will likely become an even greater priority given the projected increase in seniors living outside the urban core (United Way, 2017).

Certain vulnerable groups of seniors are more likely to live in poverty and experience barriers to housing. The prevalence of disabilities increases with age and in Ottawa, 33 per cent of people aged 65+ report having a disability. Senior women are more likely to be vulnerable than men for reasons ranging from their longer life expectancy to their typical pattern of wage earnings. Ottawa's population of older adults is also becoming increasingly more diverse. By 2036, 28 per cent of Ottawa's seniors aged 65 and over will be visible minorities, an increase of 16 per cent from 2016 (United Way, 2017).

In 2018, the City engaged 1,900 older adults in Ottawa to reconfirm their priorities and help identify potential actions for the Older Adult Plan 2020-2022. These consultations confirmed the pressing housing needs of diverse groups of older adults, including:

- Offering more options for subsidized rents for middle- and low-income seniors.
- Increasing the number of affordable housing units for seniors, especially for senior women and seniors with disabilities.
- Providing more community support services to keep people in their home and in their communities, such as home improvements.
- Improving local, affordable housing options for rural and suburban residents so that they can age in their communities
- Exploring and supporting innovative solutions, such as co-op housing for seniors and home-sharing.

1.3 Persons with Developmental Disabilities

- 18,685 residents in Ottawa are estimated to be living with some level of developmental disability (assuming a 2 per cent prevalence rate).
- Between 55 to 61 per cent of people living with developmental disabilities are men (depending on the level of disability being considered).
- 4.7 per cent of aboriginal adults have a developmental disability.
- Women with developmental disabilities are 65% more likely to experience abuse.

A developmental disability is a life-long condition that affects a person's intellectual, social, behavioral and/or physical development. The experience of living with a disability is varied and unique for everyone but many individuals with developmental disabilities have complex care needs.

There are a disproportionate number of people with developmental disabilities in core housing need. In Canada, 18.5 per cent of people 15 years or older with developmental disabilities live in core housing need, more than twice the average for all households (Canadian Association for Community Living, n.d.). The demand for residential services is also over capacity and increasing. Across Ontario, the waitlist for residential services rose from 12,000 to 15,700 adults with developmental disabilities between 2013 and 2017 (Housing Taskforce, 2018).

There continues to be more demand for services to support people with developmental disabilities than are available. As of July 2019, Developmental Services of Ontario was supporting a total of 1,300 individuals living with a developmental disability with another 1,690 applicants waiting to receive service (Ottawa Developmental Services Network, 2019). Even in situations where affordable and accessible housing is available, people with developmental disabilities are unable to acquire these units due to a lack of needed supports. The incidence of people with developmental disabilities living on low income is disproportionately high and they may not be able to acquire these supports independently.

Too often people with developmental disabilities become housed inappropriately in institutions within the health care system, other institutions or emergency shelters. People with developmental disabilities are over-represented in the shelter system accounting for 18-30 per cent of chronic shelter users in Ontario (ODSN, 2019). Inappropriate placement denies choice and isolates people, increases the health and safety risks individuals living with a developmental disability and results in financial risks across the system (Canadian Association for Community Living, 2010).

As part of the consultation undertaken for the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, the Ottawa Developmental Services Network (ODSN) made recommendations including:

- Increasing intergovernmental collaboration towards development of housing for people with developmental disabilities, and local partnership opportunities with the ODSN.
- Targeting affordable housing capital development funds specifically for people with developmental disabilities.
- Include data on people with developmental disabilities in the Point in Time Count.
- Consider including indicators of developmental disabilities/dual diagnosis on intake questionnaires.
- Include representation from ODSN on the Housing Systems Working Group.
- Consult with ODSN agencies and families in planning for housing and homelessness initiatives.

1.4 Refugees, Newcomers and Immigrants

- One in four residents in Ottawa is an immigrant (Statistics Canada, 2016).
- Ottawa welcomes 9,800 new immigrants every year (OLIP, 2019).
- International migration will account for 65.4 per cent of Ottawa–Gatineau’s population growth by 2036 (Conference Board of Canada, 2019).

Migration continues to be the main driver of population growth. While there are a variety of experiences of immigration, trends which affect more vulnerable newcomers should be noted for housing service and infrastructure planning purposes.

Newcomers to Canada face challenges trying secure housing that is affordable. Of recent immigrants, 34.9 per cent were in core housing need, spending more than 30 per cent of their before tax income on housing (Statistics Canada, 2016). This high proportion indicates newcomers face additional challenges compared to the general population in securing appropriate housing.

The demand for family shelter placement has grown steadily over the past five years, much of which can be attributed to the increase in irregular border crossers (refugee claimants arriving via the United States) and migration to Ottawa from other parts of Canada and Ontario. In 2018, 48 per cent of people requesting service in family shelter cited being a newcomer as the reason. This is an increase of 26 per cent from 2014. Further, there has been a decrease in successful diversions in part because many may have no alternative options like staying with family (City of Ottawa, Housing Services).

The availability and turn over in larger housing units, is lower than smaller units. This can disproportionately impact newcomers for whom it is more common to have a large family. For example, the average size of families arriving under the refugee program in 2015-2016 was 4.4 people compared to 2.2. for the broader Ottawa population (CIC, 2019).

Prior to and upon arriving in Ottawa, many newcomers comment that they lacked essential information on the rental market including availability, and knowledge about processes related to finding immediate housing in Ottawa. Further, newcomers have said that they had been turned down by landlords or rental companies despite having sufficient funds due to lack of a Canadian co-signer or a Canadian reference (OLIP, 2010).

The above trends are exacerbated by low vacancy rates and rising rental and purchase costs. Housing remains one of, if not the greatest challenge facing newcomers.

1.5 Women

- 51.4 per cent of Ottawa residents are women.
- 25.5 per cent of women are immigrants.
- 26.6 per cent are visible minorities.
- 4.8 per cent of women identified as having Aboriginal ancestry.

These numbers are not mutually exclusive as a woman may identify in more than one of these groups.

Women are more likely than men to suffer from a lack of affordable housing and risk homelessness. This gap increases the risks of violence, limits access to other important services and has serious implications on women fleeing violence, as they can be subjected to further abuse.

Women are more likely to live in poverty as women still earn less than men, are more likely to work part-time or precarious jobs, and have more interruptions in their work life due to family responsibilities. In Ottawa, the median income for men was \$11,543 a year higher than for women (CMHC, 2018). This income gap is a major contributor to why women face a higher incidence of core housing need, especially when in single lone parent families. In Ottawa, women led households account for 57 per cent of households on the Centralized Wait List (Social Housing Registry of Ottawa, 2018).

There has been an increase in shelter use. The following only captures usage of City and community run shelters, it does not include provincially funded VAW shelters. The number of families using an overnight emergency shelter in Ottawa increased by 54.9 per cent between 2014 and 2018, with a disproportionately high number of lone female led families (City of Ottawa, 2018).

Women in need of emergency housing are often victims of violence and trauma. While not specific to women only, 16 per cent of family households requested service at shelter because they were fleeing abuse or experiencing a family breakdown in 2018 (City of Ottawa, 2018). Women and children sometimes cannot access VAW shelter services due to the lack of capacity but shelters are vital to those who are fleeing violence and, for women, can often be the first step towards rebuilding personal and financial independence.

Indigenous women, racialized women, senior women and youth face different historical and current realities including barriers to safe housing. Understanding and responding the intersection of these identities with gender would enhance the delivery of housing services.

In 2019, the City engaged residents and stakeholders to inform the first City of Ottawa Women and Gender Equity Strategy. Access to safe and affordable housing for women was repeatedly identified as the number one priority from the consultations, recommending:

- Collecting and sharing gender-sensitive data to better understand the diversity of women's experiences when accessing housing services.
- Developing and implementing policies that earmark a minimum of supportive and affordable housing for women.
- Simplifying the application process to affordable housing, and ensuring that it is trauma-sensitive and decolonized.
- Ensuring the system is responsive to the demands of women by facilitating access to services, increasing shelter capacity with wrap around support and finally by increasing the affordable housing supply for women.

SECTION 5

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