

10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan Refresh

Engagement Summary



Contents

Background	1
Context / Objectives	2
Scope / Governance	3
Planning tables	4
How we engaged / Targeted participant groups	5
General consultation questions / Engagement formats / Top 10 subjects	6
Summary of 'what we heard'	7
Increase partnerships / Increase shelter capacity	8
Increase housing stock	9
Ensure tenants are supported	10
Ensure equity groups are well supported / Need to develop a system for coordinated access	11
Prevent housing loss and housing instability	12
Make data more accessible / Shift Housing First approach	13
Do more public education / Provide landlords with support / Create an inclusionary zoning policy	14
Ensure there are community supports / Ensure community housing is in a good state of repair	15
Increase availability of community housing / The sector is fatigued	16
Need more funding / Seek additional resources	17
Conclusion	17

Background

In 2014 the City adopted the first iteration of its 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The Plan, called A Home for Everyone (2014-2024) provided a framework to address housing affordability and availability and the coordination of homelessness support and prevention services. The City undertook extensive consultations that included eight priority setting sessions, focus groups and a large stakeholder consultation and involved a wide range of stakeholders including the public, housing and homelessness sector and those with lived experience of homelessness and/or housing insecurity to ensure that the Plan was relevant and responsive to community needs. As our housing environment continues to change, the City faces new challenges that our 10 Year Housing and Homelessness plan needs to address.

To ensure our Plan remains responsive to the changing needs of our community the City has reviewed and updated the 10 Year Plan. The refreshed plan will address the new challenges faced by our housing sector while leveraging opportunities and successes arising from the first six years of the plan.

In order to be responsive to local needs, the City once again conducted extensive community consultations to understand the housing and support needs of Ottawa's residents.



- Over **75** in-person consultation sessions were conducted
- More than **85** different organizations or groups were represented at consultation sessions
- Over **300** people who have lived experience of homelessness and/or housing precariousness were consulted
- More than **110** online surveys were completed
- Over **1200** people were reached during consultations from all parts of the community

Context

As a Service Manager, the City is required to update the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan every five years. According to the Housing Services Act, 2011 the updated plans should include:



- An assessment of current and future housing needs (Assessment);
- Objectives and targets relating to housing needs (Objectives and Targets);
- A description of the measures proposed to meet the objectives and targets (Planning); and
- A description of how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets will be measured (Achievement)

The following document summarizes the ‘As we heard’ comments from the community during the consultation phase of the mid-point update. The document is not meant to be an exhaustive list but rather a high-level overview of the key themes of the comments received. This document is a companion document to the Needs Assessment . which outlines the information collected during our environmental scan and data discovery.

Objectives

The purpose of the consultation process was to engage a broad range of stakeholders to guide the refresh of the current 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

- Provide opportunities for a broad spectrum of participants including those with lived experience to participate.
- Inform and educate stakeholders and the public’s understanding around the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, mid-point review and update.
- Consult with stakeholders to validate the Plan’s priorities, determine desired outcomes, identify barriers (including regulatory to success), and innovative ways to achieve those outcomes.
- Ensure the consultation process strengthened relationships with and among stakeholders.

Scope

The consultation focused on engagement with three major groups which included those with lived experience, stakeholders and the general public.

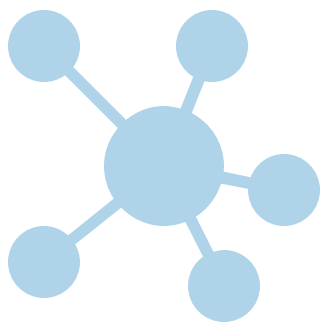
To engage these groups the City leveraged the various network and communication channels of community stakeholders and our internal communications department. Working with stakeholders, we connected with staff and those with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity. The goal of the consultation process was to be as broad as possible, providing multiple accessible options for feedback.

The consultation utilized a variety of formats to gain feedback, including:

- Focus groups
- A Community Conversation
- Facilitated Discussions through existing forums
- Online surveys
- Receipt of written submissions from interested participants
- Social media polls



Governance



The governance structure for the refresh of Ottawa's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan was comprised of the following parties and working groups: Housing Systems Working Group (HSWG), Homelessness Community Advisory Board (CAB), Affordable Housing Working Group, Community Housing Modernization Working Group, Aboriginal Community Advisory Board, A Way Home Ottawa and, the Homelessness Prevention Working Group. The governance structure was specifically designed to enable the City to update the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan using a community approach. It ensured all areas of the housing sector are addressed at tables with subject matter expertise and that all recommendations were presented to the larger steering committees including HSWG and the CAB.

The planning tables and governance structure was created under the guidance of the Housing Systems Working Group. The Housing Systems Working Group maintains its role as the final decision body for all components of the revised plan.

These tables received regular updates from the consultation team on what they were hearing in the community. These updates helped the planning tables ensure that the draft plan is responsive to the needs in the community.

Planning tables

Table	Info
Housing Systems Working Group (HSWG)	The mandate of the Housing System Working Group (HSWG) is to provide advice and guidance to the City's Housing Services Branch on the implementation of the Council-approved 10 -Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The Housing System Working Group membership includes representatives from a broad range of sectors including: social housing (non-profit and co-ops), shelters, housing and homelessness supports and prevention, supportive housing, the Champlain Local Health Integration Network, the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group and the Eastern Ontario Landlord Organization.
Homelessness Community Advisory Board	As a recipient of the federal Reaching Home funding the City works with an inclusive Community Advisory Board (CAB) that is representative of the community. The City first convened this reference group of key stakeholders in May 2004.
Community Housing Modernization working group	The purpose of this working group is to review and identify strategies to support the modernization of community housing both pre and post end of operating agreement/mortgage. The workgroup will inform and assist Housing Services in the development of community housing policy to support the long-term viability and stability of the community housing portfolio and to support households in need of affordable housing options.
Affordable Housing Working Group	The purpose of this working group is to create a new Capital Strategy for funding, regulating, incentivizing and developing affordable housing in Ottawa, for the 2019 to 2029 period. The working group will inform and assist Housing Services, involved directly and indirectly, in the creation of an affordable housing strategy for the City.
Homelessness Prevention Working Group	The purpose of this sub-group, of the Community Advisory Board, is to provide a forum for members to share policy and program information, as well as best and promising practices to guide future homelessness prevention initiatives.
Aboriginal Community Advisory Board	Under the Indigenous stream of the federal Reaching Home Strategy the Indigenous community must also have a Community Advisory Board to provide advice and guidance on service planning for the Indigenous community and funding allocations.
A Way Home Ottawa	The purpose of this working group is to provide a framework for advancing intensive and coordinated work to prevent and end homelessness among youth. The workgroup will provide context on youth homelessness in Ottawa, including specific metrics to gauge problems and success while outlining what is known about the causes, and costs of youth homelessness. The workgroup will help guide interventions to meet the needs of young people experiencing homelessness and identify strategies to ensure a seamless service system for these individuals.

How we engaged

A mixed technique, combining online and in-person methods of engagement was used to make it as easy as possible for residents to participate. An effort was made to reach out to a diversity of stakeholders, with a focus on those with lived experience.

The following is a summary of the engagement activities:

Who	How	When	What
Those with lived experience	Sessions through existing forums (ex. client council, shelter focus groups, tenant associations)	June-September 2019	Identify the barriers clients face when trying to secure and retain housing, what has been helpful, and other needs.
Stakeholders	Stakeholder Engagement sessions/focus groups through existing forms, 1/2-day community conversation, Online Surveys,	January-October 2019	Validate priorities, identify community needs, desired outcomes, barriers (including regulatory), and innovative ways to achieve outcomes
General Public	Online survey, Social Media monitoring, Engage Ottawa website and articles	November 2019	Educate about the housing sector, identify community needs and innovative ways to achieve outcomes.

Targeted participant groups



- Health sector
- Housing providers
- Politicians and government
- Community associations
- Landlords
- General public
- Justice sector
- Seniors
- Youth
- Academia
- Immigration support services
- Emergency and transitional shelters
- Social and affordable housing providers
- Day and drop-in programs
- Violence Against Women services
- Housing and homelessness support services
- Advocacy organizations
- Supportive/transitional housing providers
- Other (food banks, school boards, BIAs, AirBNB, Children’s Aid Society, Street outreach)

General consultation questions

Are the current priorities still relevant?

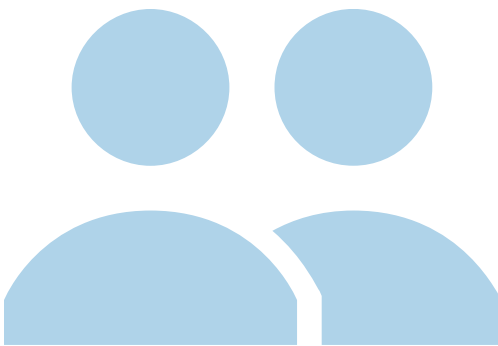
Do we need to consider any new priorities?

What is working well with the current 10-Year Plan?

What are the barriers (including regulatory) that you face?

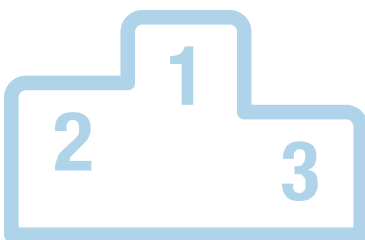
What gaps are there in the system? Please be specific.

What do we need to start doing, do more of, or do differently?



Engagement formats

- Focus groups
- Community conversations
- Facilitated discussions
- Online surveys
- Written submissions
- Social media polls



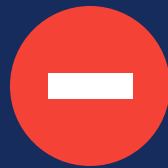
Top 10 Subjects from Consultations

1. Mental health
2. Affordable housing
3. Housing Waitlist/ The Registry
4. Addictions and drug use
5. Housing allowances
6. Transportation
7. Social housing
8. Pests/bed bugs
9. Rent supplements
10. Rooming houses

Summary of 'what we heard'

The City analyzed the comments manually and by using an Artificial Intelligence (AI) software. The AI software helped us understand what subjects we heard the most about during the consultation sessions.

The below summary provides additional detail on the comments heard during the consultation sessions. This summary is not exhaustive but is meant to be a high-level snapshot of the feedback received.



Disclaimer

The following summary is 'as we heard it' and the comments noted have not been endorsed by the City, sector or partners.

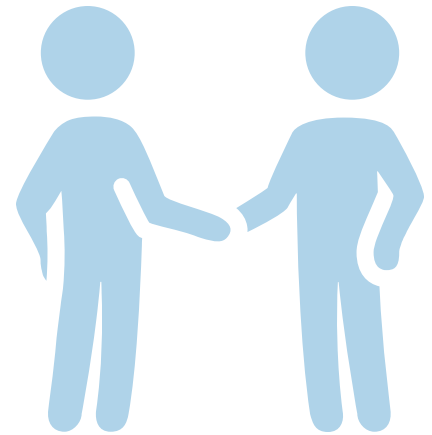
Increase partnerships

Working together was identified as one of the key components to having a successful housing and homelessness support system. As the system becomes increasingly taxed, the sector needs to be looking at ways to create efficiencies. Partnerships can help reduce resources by identifying overlap within the sector. It can also help groups find new opportunities for leveraging economies of scale.

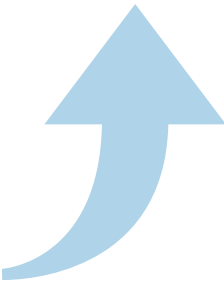
The housing sector also interacts closely with other government services, such as the health and correctional sectors. The community identified gaps in how we transfer people between these institutional systems and housing. In many cases there are people leaving institutions (hospital, corrections etc.) into homelessness. We need to ensure people leaving institutions have a home and are not going directly to shelters where many of their issues may arise again.

Closer partnerships can also help improve client experience through a multidisciplinary approach. As needs in the community become more complex and acute, we need to ensure agencies such as the police, public health and other community supports are working together to achieve common outcomes for the client.

The sector also needs to be looking at non-traditional partnerships to leverage more resources. We should be looking at how we can better involve the private sector in solving the problem. The issues in the community are too large to be tackled by any single group and it will take a community approach to start making meaningful progress.



Increase shelter capacity



Ottawa's emergency and transitional shelters are in high demand and are regularly utilizing overflow beds. There has been a significant increase in the number of families staying in emergency shelters over the last three years. The permanent Family Shelter capacity is not enough and forces many to live for long periods of time in overflow hotels/motels. Staying in these accommodations for extended periods of time causes strain on the families and leads to other issues that will affect their ability to be housed.

Other specialty shelters like ones aimed at supporting women who are fleeing violence are also full and turning people away. This capacity issue sometimes forces women to go to a singles shelter for support where they may not feel safe. There is a great need to ensure women fleeing abuse have a place to go where they feel safe and can begin to recover from the trauma.

Safety and security within shelters is also an issue for marginalized groups like the LGBTQ2S community. LGBTQ2S individuals in shelters may face discrimination and having a dedicated shelter for the group could create an increased sense of security.

Different groups have different needs in emergency shelters and ensuring adequate capacity in all shelters will ensure people are not sleeping rough.

Increase housing stock

Many residents find it challenging to secure housing that is affordable because of low vacancy rates and rising rents. We need to start working to create more purpose-built rental housing and ensure units are maintained at an affordable level. Without major action the vacancy rate will remain low and rents will continue to become more and more unaffordable for low income residents.



The low vacancy rate has also caused intense competition for vacant rental units. In many cases people on social assistance are not able to secure a unit because they may be viewed as less desirable tenants. In many cases, this competition is causing bidding wars for units, further driving up prices.

Our existing housing stock is being also being threatened by gentrification and new developments. As our rental stock ages, many units are being converted into other types of housing creating a gap in affordable rental stock. We need to consider ways to ensure that there is no net loss of rental housing and that rental housing is available in neighbourhoods across the city.



Units that are purpose built to accommodate tenants with disabilities (physical/developmental) are over capacity. Whether the tenant has a physical or a developmental disability, new units need to be built with design features that accommodate the tenants needs. In many cases, ensuring the unit has proper design features can affect the level of support those tenants need. When building new rental housing these design features should be integrated into the building from the outset.

The emergence of short-term rental options like AirBNB has created additional pressures on an already stretched rental market. Over the last few years the prevalence of AirBNB has gone up drastically in the city. In some cases, long-term tenants are being evicted so the landlord can re-purpose the unit as a short-term rental in order to get a higher return.



Our colleges and universities are also growing, and their on-campus capacity is at capacity, putting more stress on rental housing near campuses. Many rental buildings are also being bought up by corporations and being run by property management companies. The smaller mom and pop style landlords are becoming scarcer.

To keep and grow our rental stock in the city we need to be looking at innovative options from around the world. New approaches like tiny homes, container homes, and secondary suites can all offer potential solutions. Another solution is to look at affordable home ownership to take some of the burden off the rental market.

To date, the creation of affordable rental housing has been led by government, non-profits and charities. We need to start looking at how we can involve the private sector in the creation of new affordable housing. This work could include reviewing the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for new affordable housing builds to try and attract new proponents.

Ensure tenants are supported

No matter what type of housing or shelter people are in they need to have the appropriate supports to gain or maintain housing. These supports need to follow the client and continue if they are needed to stabilize the situation. Supports also need to reflect the fact that client needs vary and supports should wrap around the client based on an individual assessment.

One of the most needed support services for all individuals is in the area of mental health. Client needs are becoming more complex with many concurrent issues. The sector is not currently resourced to be able to assist individuals with mental health problems at the service levels that are needed to provide effective care and stabilization.

Many people are also facing addiction issues and there is a lack of support services within the community. In many cases, addiction issues are more severe because of the opioid crisis. Supports to help with addiction need to be intensive and the existing supports have waitlists. When clients have concurrent issues ex. mental health/addictions it is difficult to line up both support services at the same time meaning the client will be unsuccessful recovering from either.



In many cases people need supports with life skills such as financial management, housekeeping, hygiene, etc. that are necessary just to be able to live independently. When people are not provided training or supported in these areas it's likely they will have challenges retaining their housing.

Navigating the housing system can be challenging for anyone but, especially when English or French is not your first language. Clients are coaching each other on how to navigate the system and get the most resources out. Having access to support services in multiple languages could help more people better understand and access support services.

Without proper supports vulnerable clients are at risk of having someone take advantage of them. Many residents face the prospect of home takeovers which can put them at further risk for harm and potential to lose their housing. Supports need to be in place to prevent this and in many cases the supports need to be proactive and not wait until the person/unit is in crisis.

Some issues that are not supported can create issues for the whole building and effect other tenants. For example, issues with cockroaches and bed bugs may spread to others if not treated properly and early. Currently, there is not enough funded supports to help people with what is required to properly prepare and have their units treated for bed bugs and other pests. Having pests can severely affect someone's mental health and can cause housing destabilization.

Ensure equity groups are well supported

Many groups in the community have unique needs when it comes to housing. The system needs to recognize that housing may look different to different people. We need to ensure the housing complement is reflective of our community.

Seniors may require additional design features to help with mobility and prevent falls. Places that have these features are only available to people in high income brackets. The lack of affordable long-term care spots has put additional pressure on the housing system. As our population continues to age, we need to be looking at solutions for creating additional capacity in our units targeted at seniors.

The Indigenous community also faces challenges in the housing sector. The Indigenous community is greatly over-represented in the homelessness sector and therefore we need to have targeted, culturally appropriate supports to help them find and/or maintain housing.

Youth facing housing instability or homelessness also have unique challenges stabilizing in housing due to their age. Many of the services to help people are setup to support adults and do not have age appropriate supports for youth. Youth also face issues when a legal guardian is not present – in many cases single youth may not be eligible for services.

Newcomers face unique challenges related to language and navigating a new system. In many cases, other cultures may have different views on housing and their needs may not align with what's currently part of our service offerings.

LGBTQ2S clients face discrimination and violence in some shelter contexts. The system needs to ensure that LGBTQ2S clients are provided a safe environment, free from discrimination and harassment. Within the LGBTQ2S community transgender people may have difficulty accessing a single shelter that is appropriate for them and where they feel safe.

Landlords can choose ideal tenants because of the low vacancy rates. Because there is such high demand for units landlords can discriminate in renting a unit.

Need to develop a system for coordinated access

Clients are usually accessing a variety of support services when they are in crisis. To access these services, clients retell their story multiple times so their case can be assessed by different agencies. Retelling their story can create additional trauma and ensuring support services are able to share information about the client's situation with other agencies would have a large impact.

In order to create a more seamless system for people accessing support services there should be a one-stop-shop for all housing related supports. The service could include access to financial support programs, registry waitlist info, housing search workers, life-skills programs, job search support, etc.

Prevent housing loss and housing instability

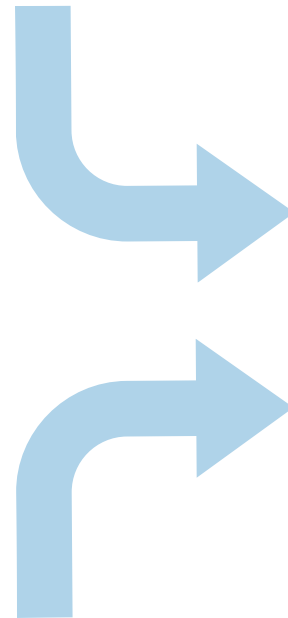
When people face housing insecurity it creates a sense of uncertainty that can lead to a client developing other concurrent problems.

Our housing sector needs to be able to identify people when they are destabilizing and provide the appropriate support whether those are financial resources or other supports. The further upstream we can identify and provide the appropriate supports, the more effective the intervention will be.

If people do lose their housing, there needs to be mechanisms in place to ensure they are rapidly rehoused. The longer a person is without housing the more likely they are to develop other issues because of their lack of housing.

Supports to help people at the Landlord Tenant Board need to be more readily available. Many people don't know their rights when it comes to housing and in many cases lose housing when it was within their right to keep it. Ensuring people are not being unfairly evicted can also help alleviate pressures on the shelter system.

Not everyone knows about their options when faced with eviction and proactive services should be in place to offer supports. The earlier the intervention can take place the more options there will be to support the client in getting an agreeable outcome.



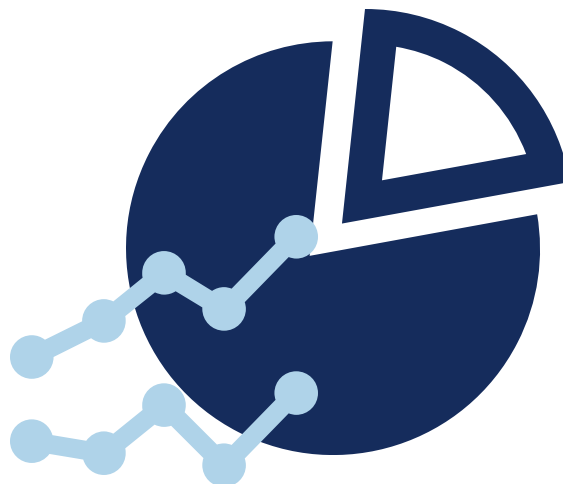
Make data more accessible

The collection and use of data is one of the keys to ensuring our housing system can adapt to the needs in the community. Agencies delivering service and the City both collect data that's used to report to other levels of government. The data collected is usually not consistent across the agencies and therefore we cannot aggregate it to make system wide decisions.

The City should look at leading a data project that would aim to create consistent measures across the sector. Ensuring we are growing the quality and quantity of data that is available to the sector will help us make better resource decisions at a systems level.

The sector also needs to have a better understanding of the whole environment. Many groups may understand their position as it relates to their area of the housing sector but, no sense of how they fit into the larger picture of the sector. Completing a system mapping exercise would give the sector a much better picture of what's available to support people anywhere in the city.

We also should look at mapping where people are experiencing homelessness and start to target support services in those areas. Moving toward a model of evidence led decisions will help ensure resources are used effectively and efficiently.



Shift Housing First approach

Housing First is good in principle but, issues arise when high acuity clients are placed without supports. In many cases clients will refuse the support and destabilize soon after entering housing. Clients destabilizing in this way can ruin the relationship with the landlord. This issue could potentially be solved by placing lower acuity clients that only need minimal supports to maintain their housing.

Some clients need to have proactive checks to ensure the unit is in good condition and the client is not experiencing any issues that could affect tenancy. Proactive checks could also help alleviate issues with social isolation that clients may experience when entering housing on their own.

Programs could also be created to help people deal with social isolation that comes with attaining housing. In some cases, clients may be entering housing after an extended stay in the emergency shelter system and lack some of the life-skills it takes to maintain their own housing. Something to reintegrate people into housing where they can graduate from a program could be good.

Do more public education

In order to grow support to fix the various issues in Ottawa's housing sector we need to be educating the public on what the issues are and what are the potential solutions.

Public education needs to happen so we can destigmatize ideas about individuals who are experiencing housing instability or homelessness. Many individuals who experiencing housing instability also suffer from addictions and/or mental health issues. Ensuring the public understands mental health and addiction issues creates more public support for people dealing with these issues.

We need to be building mixed communities and the public needs to be educated about social housing. Social housing is just another form of housing in the city and should be treated as such. In order to grow the social housing portfolio, the public needs to be on board with having it in their communities.

Provide landlords with support

In some cases, clients in social housing units or clients receiving assistance can cause damage to the units. Landlord taking clients on social assistance should be guaranteed that there until will not be destroyed as a result of taking the client. If there is damage, there should be a mechanism for them to apply to government to cover the repair costs.

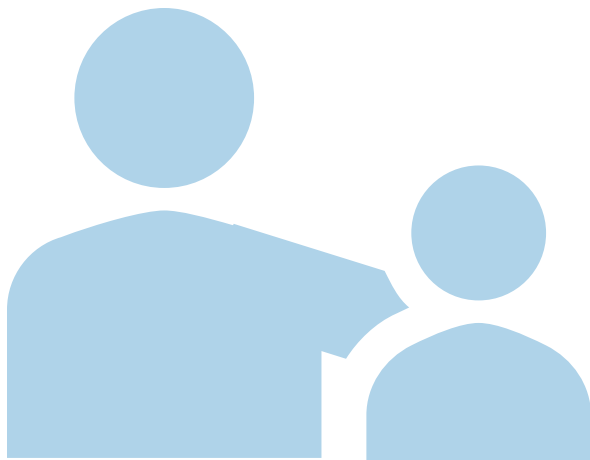
If a tenant destabilizes, the sector should have mechanisms to intervene and ensure there is no housing loss. When people get kicked out of their unit the issue is just passed to another landlord.



Create an inclusionary zoning policy

Since the province allowed for municipalities to create a policy for inclusionary zoning the City should be developing one. Inclusionary Zoning should be applied to most new builds. The policy would ensure we're not ghettoizing neighbourhoods by creating developments with mixed income units. Creating communities with mixed income, mixed age and mixed ethnicity could all be created using the Inclusionary Zoning tool.

The Inclusionary Zoning policy should be city wide and not allow for more affluent neighbourhoods to pay their way out of developing those units. Creating community is key in ensuring successful development.



Ensure there are community supports

Community is an important part of a vibrant neighbourhood. Programs that support strong communities help reduce crime and increase safety in the area. Many people experience social isolation in their housing, and we need to ensure there are opportunities for human interaction built into the community.

Peer to peer support programs are a great tool to build communities and increase the support capacity within these areas. By building peer to peer models, we can reduce the amount of paid supports needed. It also ensures there are resources available in the community versus having centralized supports that are being deployed across the city.

Ensure community housing is in a good state of repair

The social housing that was built during the 60's and 70's is now coming into a general state of disrepair. To add to the issues of disrepair many of these buildings are coming to the end of their operating agreements. Once those agreements end there is a potential that this stock will be lost as affordable and/or rebuilt or re-purposed and targeted at higher income tenants.

There are also pest issues that affect social housing developments. Many tenants face pest issues that they may not have support for which then effects the security of their tenancy. When people are not supported with pest issues, they choose to leave their home and seek alternative shelter. In some cases, support services cannot access the client because of safety concerns with pests.

The current property standards in the city do not give By-law officers enough power to ensure the units are in a reasonable state of repair. We need to look at how to expand the resources of Bylaw to do checks on the units and ensure they are being maintained. When we allow units to slip into disrepair it takes more resources to get them back into a usable state.

The city should have prescriptive rules around standards of living and quality of the unit.



Increase availability of community housing

Community housing is becoming increasingly in demand and capacity has not grown at an equivalent rate. Each year the waitlist seems to get longer, and we don't seem to be making a dent in the chronological wait list. Wait times that are usually many years long show that there is little movement in the system given the current demand.

There is a perception in the community that newcomers and refugee claimants are jumping the list and causing the backlog in the sector. Many also disagree with allowing chronically homeless people getting to 'jump the cue' because of local priorities. People are starting to understand how to work the system and are coaching each other to maximize resources. One option would be to complete another review of local priorities for the Centralized Wait List.

People are also staying in shelter longer because the waitlist for housing is so long. Clients on the waitlist do not receive regular updates on the status of their application so typically never know how long they will need to wait or how many households are ahead of them.

More people need subsidized housing because market rental rates have gone up drastically in the last five years. The working poor are being priced out of the normal housing market.

Some households on the waitlist are housed but, are over/under housed and need to be moved to a more appropriately sized unit. People in this situation are creating additional burden on the system as they are under-utilizing capacity.

Housing allowances are not high enough to make things truly affordable. Even when receiving a housing allowance, people are being forced to use other funds to cover outstanding housing costs. There is also need for more flexibility on who can receive a housing allowance. Allowing greater access to housing subsidies could also help ensure people do not destabilize.



The sector is fatigued

The sector is fatigued from a resource perspective and this is putting additional pressures on staff working in the sector. Staff are experiencing fatigue when there is nothing to offer clients. When staff are forced to turn people away day after day it starts to affect their mental health.

There is not enough opportunity to celebrate successes in the housing sector. In many cases, clients do not feel that their needs are being met with the supports that are available. Because of this we usually do not focus on the positive impact the supports have on so many residents in the community.

There is no part of the sector that can do it alone. To be successful the whole system needs to be working together on common solutions to the root issues.

Need more funding

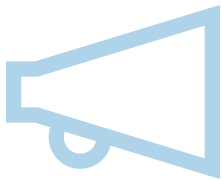
Exploring different funding models is one way in which the sector may be able to more dynamically utilize resources. Idea's like providing block funding to shelters are just one option.

We need to be looking at all possible options for funding. All levels of government need to be doing more to help move the needle in the sector. The current levels of funding are inadequate to solve the issues.

The community was clear that the sector needs more resources across the board, so we can do more, for more people. We know Ottawa's housing market is being increasingly unaffordable for our most vulnerable residents and it will take the community working together to make meaningful solutions.

Seek additional resources

We recognize that resources, especially financial, are thinly spread across the sector. With current resource levels we are not able to make a dent in the overall need for affordable housing in the community. Each year the need continues to grow; resourcing for the need has been greatly outpaced by the demand.



The City does not have adequate resources to make meaningful progress on the crisis in the community. The City needs to be lobbying all levels of government for support. Governments need to be working together at all levels to adequately fund initiatives that are working to achieve common goals.

As a sector we need to be investigating ways to get more political buy-in for increasing resources. Without political will to increase resources we can anticipate that waitlists and pressures on the sector will continue to grow.

Conclusion

There is a clear need for ongoing dialogue with the community around the housing and homelessness system and how to improve services to residents and their experiences with the system. The City is committed to ongoing discussions with partners, stakeholders, the community and/or those with lived experience of homelessness or housing insecurity. Having open conversations helps the City ensure that the Housing and Homelessness Plan is responsive to the growing needs of Ottawa residents.

We would like to thank the many individuals, organizations, and networks that contributed their time, experience, expertise and insights to the refresh.



Even with an updated Plan there will be many challenges in ensuring people in our community are able to find and keep safe, affordable housing and receive the supports they need to improve the quality of their lives and be able to fully participate in the economic, social, and cultural life of the City.

However, making meaningful progress on the Plan will take all of us coming together as a community, in a spirit of partnership and collaboration, leveraging our respective strengths and resources to make a meaningful impact of the lives of the many Ottawa residents that rely on us.