

OTTAWA COMMUNITY HOUSING  
CORPORATION

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



## CORPORATE REPORT ON STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

**Building Stronger  
Communities Together**



[www.och-lco.ca](http://www.och-lco.ca)



# Councillor Mathieu Fleury

## *Chair of the OCHC Board*

As Chair of the Board of Directors of Ottawa Community Housing, I have a unique view of this adaptive and responsive organization with an impactful purpose. Ottawa Community Housing is the largest landlord in Ottawa, and it provides housing to Ottawa's low-income residents.

The 2019 Annual Report to the Shareholder shows that Ottawa Community Housing continued to deliver on its responsibilities, advance its strategic priorities, and play a lead role in the Canadian housing sector.

Throughout the year, the Board of Directors has paved the way for the corporation to become an innovative landlord and a builder of choice for affordable housing. The Board of Directors and its four Board Committees regularly meet to review corporate progress, discuss significant initiatives and provide oversight. In 2019, 34 civic leaders made up our governance team, including elected officials, community volunteers and the tenants living with us. I want to thank all members for their energy and commitment, and for their diverse backgrounds and perspectives in shaping and strengthening our governance leadership.

Our relationship with the City of Ottawa has been strengthened to facilitate the advancement of Ottawa Community Housing in supporting existing tenants, and build more affordable homes on behalf of the City. The City has created an environment for Ottawa Community Housing to advance an integrated plan for significantly intensified construction over the next decade and to play a central role in tackling the affordable housing waiting list.

The provincial and federal governments were also essential to our year of reliable performance. The Province of Ontario changed regulations of the *Housing Services Act* that will improve business processes, and the Government of Canada's National Housing Strategy is playing a vital role in supporting housing investments.

“*The 2019 Annual Report to the shareholder shows that Ottawa Community Housing continued to deliver on its responsibilities, advance its strategic priorities, and play a lead role in the Canadian housing sector.*”



# Stéphane Giguère

## *Chief Executive Officer of OCHC*

Our Annual Report to the Shareholder highlights the performance of our team and critical results from the fourth year of our 10-Year Strategic Plan. It shows the dedication we have to our social purpose. It backs this up with a set of business principles that uniquely position OCHC as an innovative housing leader in Ottawa, Canada and abroad.

With diligent investments in our portfolio over the last few years, OCHC's 15,000 homes are in good condition. They have received regular maintenance, as well as significant capital investments that amounted to almost \$50 million in 2019. On a typical day, OCHC has 99% of the portfolio's homes rented. Over 1,000 new tenants found housing with OCHC last year, in a strained housing market. Overall, the rental vacancy rate in Ottawa is low at 1.8%, and the waiting list for affordable housing has grown to 12,000 people. More than ever, OCHC is ready to respond to the growing needs of Ottawa.

OCHC has planned and is deploying its most significant expansion ever. The 10-Year Housing Development Framework sets a goal for thousands of new homes to the portfolio through renewal. Construction planning and building have already begun in several Ottawa communities. This work aligns with the City of Ottawa's declaration of a housing emergency and responds to the significant affordable housing shortfall.

Tenants are receiving quality maintenance, pest, rent, safety and support services, and OCHC has strengthened its commitment to customer service. Working with tenants through a collaborative approach called Tenant Talks, OCHC is modernizing service standards and procedures to increase service effectiveness and satisfaction levels.

Community engagement levels are increasing, with more tenants taking the lead to promote positive community-building activities. OCHC created an innovative model to assess and plan for community engagement. In 2019, the number of engaged communities increased by 7%.

Behind this report, are the employees of OCHC. Our culture statement emphasizes that we are proud because every day, we make a difference. I publicly thank all employees for their ongoing commitment to our mandate, our organizational values and the specific contributions they have made. I also want to recognize the many contractors, agency partners and volunteers who have worked with OCHC to provide services and support tenants in OCHC communities.



## 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mayor Jim Watson (since December 2010)
- Councillor Mathieu Fleury (since December 2010)
- Councillor Catherine McKenney (since December 2015)
- Councillor Theresa Kavanagh (since December 2018)
- Councillor Scott Moffatt (since December 2018)
- Councillor Rawlson King (since April 2019)
- Dan Doré (since May 2014)

- Ferenaz Raheem (since February 2017)
- Paul-Émile Fortin (since February 2018)
- Rebecca Hickey (since June 2018)
- Michele Brenning\* (since February 2019)
- Girum Simmie\* (since February 2019)
- Brendan Lawlor\* (since March 2019)
- Nina Carter (February 2018 to January 2020)
- Claude Lloyd (May 2014 to March 2019)
- Ben Sorensen (February 2017 to March 2019)

\*Photo not available at the time of production



Mayor  
**Jim Watson**  
Director



Councillor  
**Mathieu Fleury**  
Chair



Councillor  
**Rawlson King**  
Ex-Officio Director



Councillor  
**Catherine McKenney**  
Director



Councillor  
**Scott Moffatt**  
Director



Councillor  
**Theresa Kavanagh**  
Director



**Ferenaz Raheem**  
Corporate Secretary



**Ben Sorensen**  
Director



**Rebecca Hickey**  
Director



**Dan Doré**  
Vice-Chair and  
Treasurer



**Nina Carter**  
Director



**Paul-Émile Fortin**  
Director  
Tenant Representative

### VISION

To be a leader in providing safe and affordable homes to enable OCH tenants to fully participate in the socio-economic opportunities of the City.

### MISSION

As a leader in the delivery of quality, affordable housing, OCH collaborates with others to develop safe and healthy communities.

### GOALS

Nurture healthy, safe and inclusive communities



Deliver quality services to every tenant, every home

Innovate to meet housing and financial needs



Foster an organizational culture of leadership, accountability and continuous improvement

### VALUES

Collaboration | Accountability | Respect | Excellence



32,000 TENANTS



\$17,000  
AVERAGE ANNUAL  
INCOME/HOUSEHOLD



BUDGET  
EXPENDITURE  
\$189.7 M



REVENUES \$144 M  
TENANT RENT \$68.7 M



## NURTURE HEALTHY, SAFE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES



### KEY ELEMENTS

- Housing is a key determinant of health
- Positive social environments are critical to successful tenancies
- Tenants must feel safe, proud and part of the broader community
- OCHC relies on effective partnerships to build communities
- Partners play a vital role in OCHC's need to balance resources with growing tenant needs
- Working with partners improves services to tenants

Most OCHC tenants live within Ottawa's greenbelt in homes clustered as townhome complexes and apartments that integrate with broader neighbourhoods.

The people who make up OCHC communities come from many backgrounds and life experiences. What is common is that these people face financial struggles in finding a healthy and safe place to call home. OCHC provides a range of housing solutions based on the requirements of tenants.

Clients include single-parent families, adults with disabilities, families, senior citizens on fixed income and new arrivals to Canada. For many tenants, OCHC plays a critical role as a liaison to other support services to help establish and maintain successful tenancies.

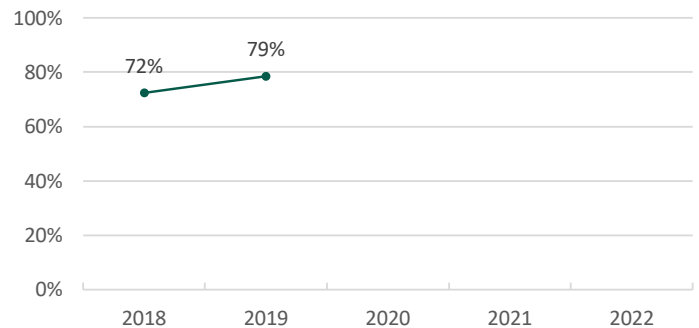
## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LEVELS ARE ON THE RISE

In 2019, OCHC marked the second year using a community engagement assessment tool, called the Community Index of Engagement Levels. OCHC created and introduced CIEL in 2018 as an innovative evaluation approach to establish objective community engagement measures for OCHC communities. CIEL results are used to focus community-building plans in over 100 communities, and to assess and understand engagement impacts.

CIEL results in 2019 identified growing levels of engagement. The number of engaged communities increased by 7% to 79%. In other words, four out of five OCHC communities were assessed to be experiencing positive levels of engagement where tenants know their neighbours and regularly gather to socialize and to participate in organized community activities and events. Tenants who live in these communities are viewed as having a healthy sense of belonging.

Additionally, communities that are self-sufficient in generating their community engagement experience increased by 10% to 24%. These highly engaged communities are positive examples where tenants have taken the lead in broadening dialogue, diversifying participation and building tenant leadership capacity.

**Percentage of Engaged Communities**

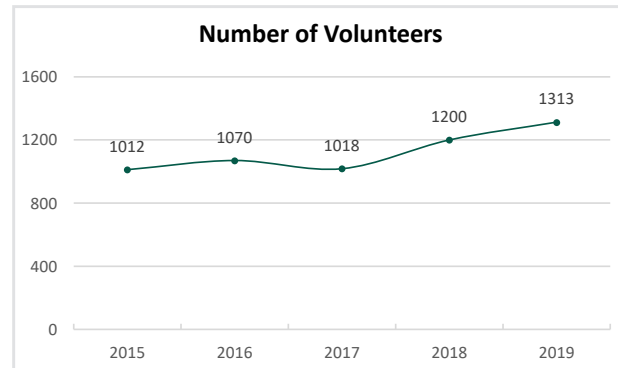


## AN INSPIRING OCHC VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

OCHC's Volunteer Engagement Program (VEP) celebrated its eighth year in 2019. Over the past year, the VEP has relied on volunteers to complete maintenance and beautification projects across the OCHC portfolio.

Program highlights were:

- Over 1,300 volunteers from 34 organizations
- 158 tenant volunteers participated in the program
- 60 projects completed in 37 communities
- Over \$36,000 in contributions received from corporate sponsors
- Projects focused on community beautification, primarily identified by tenants



In 2019, the Volunteer Engagement Program increased efforts to build staff and tenant leadership during volunteer events. These efforts improved the overall experience for volunteers during events by connecting them with OCHC communities.



## BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH THE PARTNERSHIP FORUM

OCHC works to build a broad system of formal and informal partnerships with a network of more than 130 health, social service and community agencies. These organizations provide a range of essential services and extra help to OCHC tenants. Some priority needs of OCHC tenants are fostering mental well-being, dealing with addictions, supporting socially isolated seniors, and removing barriers to participation in the broader community. Without the work of these partners, many tenants would face struggles to have successful tenancies.

Each year, OCHC hosts a one-day partnership forum. This annual event helps build stronger community relationships to provide better support to tenants.

This year marked the eleventh annual OCHC Partnership Forum. The theme for the event was "Working Together to Build Inclusive Communities." Over 130 partner organizations joined OCHC to learn more about reducing barriers, including creating inclusive and equitable communities, using the arts to engage marginalized communities, building youth leadership and decreasing social isolation for seniors.

## TENANTS BENEFIT FROM THE COMMUNITY CAPITAL FUND

In 2019, the Community Capital Fund was used for 35 tenant-driven projects with a total investment of nearly \$100,000. OCHC designates annual funding for the CCF. The fund is used to engage tenant groups, support community spirit and implement capital projects created by tenants to build and enrich their communities.

Examples of CCF projects included the installation of new seating in tenant lounges, the purchase of recreational equipment for common areas, improvements to community kitchens, and the creation of community murals.



### IMPROVED COORDINATION OF PARKING SERVICES

The OCHC Call Centre received 2,849 complaints related to parking in 2019. Parking concerns have been an ongoing issue raised by tenants. In 2019, parking complaints were the second highest type of complaint.

After completing a comprehensive review of parking management options and conducting a phased pilot in 2018, OCHC introduced a new parking model in late 2019. The model leverages a modern parking technology to register and control parking activity. OCHC also hired a third-party contractor called *Precise ParkLink* to deliver the new parking services. OCHC will be closely monitoring the new approach to significantly reduce inappropriate and unregistered parking. Preliminary tenant feedback on OCHC parking services has been positive.

### CREATING A WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

OCHC continues to advance its multi-year green plan called the *Eco<sup>2</sup> Plan*. Over the years, the plan has advanced green technology and innovation in the construction and maintenance of OCHC buildings.

In 2019, OCHC commenced plans to take on another sustainability challenge, reducing waste in OCHC communities. In several ways, the goal of reducing landfill waste at OCHC is a unique green challenge. Unlike many of the *Eco<sup>2</sup> Plan* achievements to date, the approach to waste diversion heavily relies on creating sustained behavioural changes from tenants. Additionally, over the next two years, provincial and municipal governments will identify expectations and targets for waste reduction, organics diversion and recycling.

As one of the largest residential landlords in the City of Ottawa, OCHC communities will have a significant role to play in waste diversion. Based on waste audits and pilot project results in recent years, it is estimated that less than one in ten OCHC tenants participates in waste diversion.

The OCHC Waste Management Strategy focuses on the following elements:

- Establishing property standards to install and upgrade waste diversion infrastructure
- Defining tenant and community responsibilities for waste management
- Ongoing and targeted waste reduction education and communication

The OCHC Waste Management Strategy will align with the City of Ottawa's upcoming Multi-Residential Waste Diversion Strategy in 2021 and the Solid Waste Master Plan in 2022.



## HELPING SENIORS NAVIGATE THE DIGITAL WORLD

In late 2019, OCHC entered an exciting new partnership with Connected Canadians, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide digital training to older adults. Through this partnership, over 50 OCHC seniors are engaging in lively, one-on-one training sessions to help them navigate the digital world.

Many Connected Canadian volunteers are newcomers to Canada who welcome the chance to contribute by helping seniors.

Digital literacy helps seniors do things many of us take for granted, like communicating with family and friends, re-ordering prescriptions and paying bills online.

*"Today, digital literacy skills are essential for everyone and older adults are no exception. We founded Connected Canadians because we believe digital literacy is a human right and no one, regardless of age, should be left behind."*

- Emily Jones Joanise, Founder, Connected Canadians



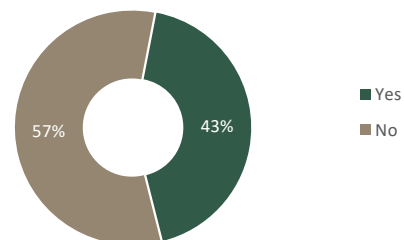
## EVALUATING THE USE OF CLOSED-CIRCUIT CAMERAS

In the fourth quarter, OCHC completed an evaluation of closed-circuit camera systems (CCTV) in the portfolio. The evaluation was a corporate priority given the increasing use of CCTV and the introduction of a new OCHC procedure in 2018 that called for the standardization of CCTV practices.

The evaluation found that the implementation of the CCTV procedure was advancing according to plans, and that OCHC had strengthened numerous practices around the management of CCTV, including system approval protocols, camera inspections, inventory control, privacy and system planning. The evaluation recommended improvements around clearer documentation of CCTV approvals, increased training to employees and more consistency in the posting of CCTV signage. These recommendations will be implemented in 2020.

Currently, 43% of OCHC communities are equipped with a general level of CCTV. Cameras are installed in public locations such as outdoor areas, building access points, lobbies and common areas. Over the next three years, OCHC will expand CCTV to additional communities where specific needs have been identified. There are also plans to modernize legacy CCTV equipment and eventually digitize the full system.

OCHC Communities with CCTV







# HOW WE GROW

For the past 7 years, the OCH Foundation has been helping to build a stronger Ottawa by identifying, addressing and alleviating the social needs of tenants living in Ottawa Community Housing.

## ACTION & AREAS OF FOCUS

The OCH Foundation channels fundamental resources into its key focus areas: EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT in order to empower, inspire, and equip tenants so they can build thriving communities for themselves, for their families, for their neighbours, and for their city.



**3,700**  
Backpacks



**621**  
Kids Connected



**119,921**  
Hours of  
Recreation



**92**  
Bursaries



**800**  
Graduates



Education



Employment



Community Engagement

## SEEDS TO SUCCESS

### Pack a Sack

- Equips students with the necessary tools they need for a successful school year and beyond
- Alleviates the financial burden for families and “levels the playing field” for their children



### recLINK

- Connects young people to social recreation programs at no cost to families
- Engages community partners to address systemic barriers to participation



### Educational Fund

- Provides financial assistance to students pursuing post-secondary education
- Supports any cost directly associated (tuition, books, transportation, childcare, equipment, living expenses)



### Employment

- Supports unemployed and underserved youth to succeed in post-secondary education and the work force through advanced leadership training, mentorship, a variety of employment positions and post-secondary experiences.



**\$4.1M**

Invested since 2014

\$900 k raised in 2019



**85%**

Invested in the community

**15%**

In Operations





## KEY ELEMENTS

- Focus resources on providing quality and responsive services to tenants
- Smart, diligent and lean customer-centred business model
- Strengthen understanding of client needs
- Growing needs for supports to address increasing complexity of vulnerable populations in housing
- Deploy new technology solutions to streamline and modernize service delivery

Approximately 32,000 people live in OCHC communities. OCHC recognizes that a positive tenant experience is critical to meeting its mandate.

OCHC has continued to build its service model to ensure that quality services are provided to tenants related to lease and rental coordination, safety, home maintenance and pest treatment services.

Significant investments have also been made to provide easier, more accessible options for tenants through an expanded call centre model and greater access to low cost internet services through local providers.

## TEN-EX FRAMEWORK Because We Care

OCHC introduced the TEN-EX Framework as an anchor to enhance the tenant customer experience and to strengthen the delivery of five core tenant services.

The Framework focuses on how OCHC strategically links and invests in business systems, employee competencies and measurement of service performance to “deliver quality services to every tenant, every home.” OCHC is implementing the components of the TEN-EX Framework in phases through a three-year action plan.

In 2019, foundational TEN-EX priorities were completed. OCHC reviewed and confirmed tenant service delivery values and critical service outputs, and it identified tenant-facing corporate policy needs. OCHC also completed work to develop a core policy, the Tenant Service Delivery Policy, and a supporting evaluation structure. The Board of Directors will approve the policy in 2020, and this will lead to the implementation of the delivery model in 2021.

Given that TEN-EX is all about the customer experience, OCHC also increased engagement with tenants in 2019 on critical aspects of the framework through an innovative approach called “Tenant Talks”. OCHC is partnering with tenant groups to define service standards and approaches that contribute to positive tenant experiences.



**OCHC CALL CENTRE**  
613-731-1182  
24 HOURS/ 7 DAYS





## TENANT TALKS

OCHC launched Tenant Talks in 2019 as a new way to engage tenants on matters that affect them. A series of sessions are scheduled throughout 2020 to continue the discussions. Tenant Talks includes a web page for tenants to provide feedback and ideas, to view highlights of input gathered during previous talks and a calendar for upcoming sessions. Tenant leaders and OCHC employees facilitate the Tenant Talks sessions.

Initial Tenant Talks sessions have been completed. Approximately 40 tenants started the work with staff to create “journey maps” that visually described tenant experiences, successes and challenges with OCHC services. The journey maps will be used in 2020 to strengthen service standards and make improvements to service delivery.



## TENANT NEWSLETTER - THE QUARTERLY

In 2019, OCHC rolled out a new design for its tenant newsletter, in consultation with tenants. The Quarterly features sections with more stories about OCHC tenants, community topics and successes. Community partners also contribute interesting content. It provides helpful tips to tenants about living in OCHC communities.

The newsletter is available on the OCHC website. In response to tenant requests for just-in-time information, OCHC has also launched an e-Newsletter blog, where articles and tips are published monthly.

# The Quarterly

OCH Tenant Newsletter

Issue 10.2  
December 2019

613-731-1182 [www.och-lco.ca](http://www.och-lco.ca)

SANDRA PILOTE:  
OUR TENANT  
SPOTLIGHT

Read about Exavier, a  
nine-year-old from Michele Heights,  
who raised funds for CHEO on page 6.

**Heather Manor volunteer  
group continues to grow**

**A small, but dedicated group of volunteers  
helps serve up fresh produce for residents**

**Inside this issue**

**CSS: On the Beat**  
Meet Vicky Perehinec, a  
Community Safety Worker.  
Page 11

**Letter from the editor**  
The newsletter editor talks  
about the new look!  
Page 3

**New construction**  
Learn about our new build  
at Rochester Heights.  
Page 8

**Continued on page 5**

**Sign up online** [www.och-lco.ca](http://www.och-lco.ca) to receive the electronic version of the Tenant newsletter

STANDARDIZING TENANT SERVICE MEASURES

In 2019, OCHC completed an internal review of existing evaluation practices related to the delivery of tenant services. Based on the review, an integrated approach was established to measure and report on service delivery performance across the five TEN-EX services. The new measures will be phased into operational monitoring and reporting, and into strategic business intelligence over the next two years.

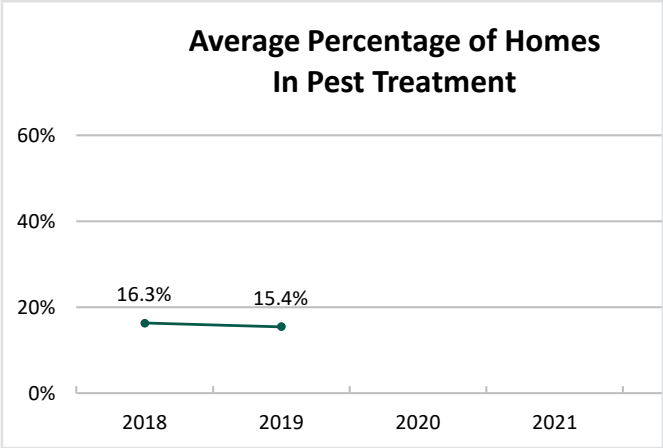
Using existing evaluation tools and approaches, OCHC continued to measure aspects of the delivery of home maintenance, pest treatment and safety services in 2019. It tracked and assessed service level demands, service on-time delivery and service satisfaction. OCHC also evaluated the operational performance of Call Centre functions using several standardized metrics.

COORDINATING REQUESTS FOR SERVICE

The OCHC Call Centre operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call centre operators are available to respond to general inquiries and to receive requests from tenants for home maintenance, pest management and safety services. OCHC uses a system called ONEnumber to coordinate service requests. The system gives tenants options to contact the OCHC Call Centre or to be connected directly with other employees during regular business hours for lease, rent and support services.

In 2019, OCHC received 327,357 service calls. This breaks down to an average of almost 900 calls daily. This is the highest volume of requests encountered in OCHC’s history.

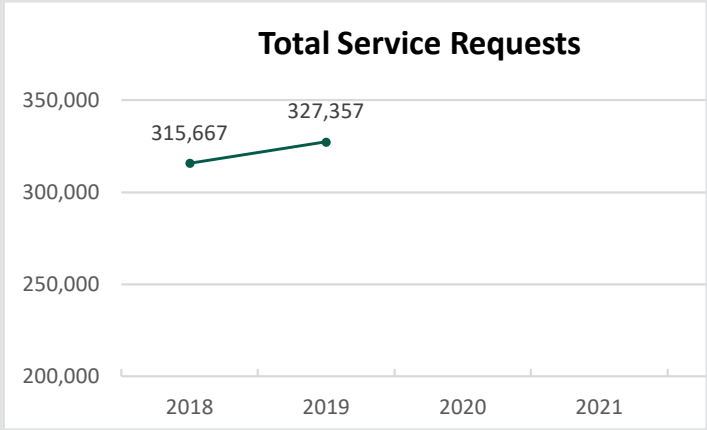
A challenge to call centre performance in 2019 was responding to increased request volume while experiencing several long-term staff vacancies. OCHC completed a recruitment process for call centre operators in 2019 to contribute to service delivery.



OUR BIGGEST SERVICE DEMAND - HOME MAINTENANCE SERVICES

The largest service demand from tenants is for home repairs. In 2019, OCHC received over 74,000 home maintenance requests, ranging from smaller jobs, like installing flooring, repairing a window and fixing a leaky faucet to more demanding maintenance projects, such as retrofitting a home to accommodate a tenant disability.

In 2019, the OCHC maintenance team delivered this service on time, exceeding the 90% service target. In fact, the timeliness of maintenance services increased from the 2018 results by 3%.



INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Reports of pests in hotels, federal government office buildings and other public facilities are increasing. Particularly, concerns about bed bugs and cockroaches are growing across North America.

OCHC is the only housing provider in the City of Ottawa that has internal service capacity to respond to pest issues. OCHC uses an Integrated Pest Management model (IPM) to coordinate and proactively respond to bed bugs, cockroaches, ants and other crawling insects in OCHC buildings. The OCHC model includes monitoring for pests, educating tenants on prevention, and preparing and treating homes for crawling insects.

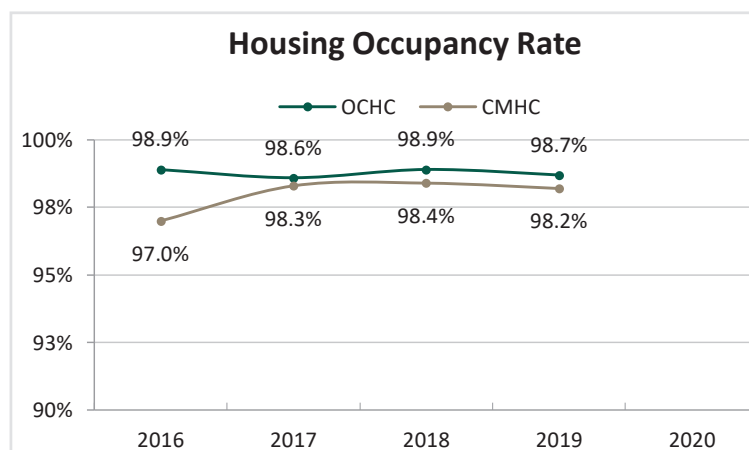
In 2019, on average, OCHC treated 15.4% of homes for pests, and recorded over 25,000 pest-related work orders. This includes proactive and reactive inspections, initial treatments and follow-up visits. OCHC delivered its service on-time at 89.1%.

## HOUSING OCCUPANCY RATE

Quality service starts with ensuring tenants have a home, and a fundamental measure of OCHC's performance is the occupancy rate. This is the percentage of OCHC homes occupied by tenants. Given the increased need for affordable housing in Ottawa, maximizing the use of OCHC housing is imperative.

In 2019, OCHC maintained an occupancy rate of 98.7%. This rate is consistent with previous years.

The vacancy rate across Ottawa for rental homes is low at 1.8%. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reports continuing pressure at all levels of the rental market with renters facing both availability and affordability challenges.



## INTAKE SHARE OF REGISTRY

The Social Housing Registry of Ottawa manages the application process. It works with over 50 housing providers to coordinate placements for community housing in Ottawa.

OCHC continued to be the principal provider of community housing. Based on data supplied by the Registry for 2019, the OCHC intake share of new households was 73.3%. Since 2017, the intake share has increased by 4.6%. In 2019, OCHC welcomed 1,090 new households, a similar intake level to 2018. OCHC continues to work to obtain better data and understanding of the needs of households joining OCHC.

Over the last several years, there have been fewer households finding homes with OCHC. One major factor that has influenced housing availability has been

a pattern of decreasing tenant departures, and subsequently, a lower turnover rate.

The Registry applies provincial and municipal priority criteria to determine the order of applicants for consideration. In 2019, 71% of new households to OCHC had priority status. In general, priority tenants require additional services and support to maintain successful tenancies, given that they may have been homeless or fleeing domestic violence. OCHC continues to engage with partner organizations to build and strengthen access to support services for these tenants.

## HELPING TENANTS PAY THEIR RENT

The percentage of tenants who paid their rent to OCHC in 2019 averaged 89.6%. This level of payment is generally consistent with previous years.

In late 2019, OCHC approved a Rent Collection Procedure to detect, minimize and resolve tenant rent arrears. With the average annual tenant household income at \$17,000, the procedure gives direction to help keep OCHC tenants in good financial standing.

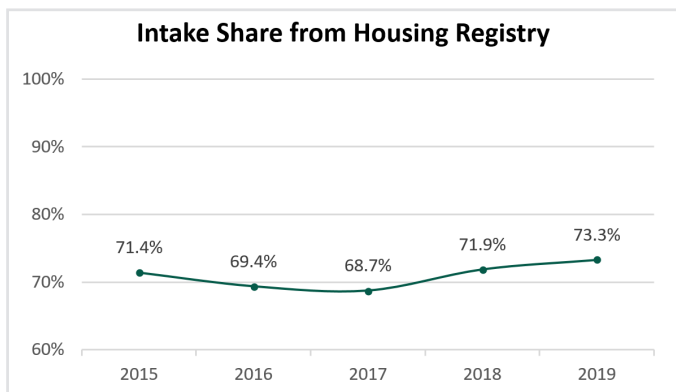
OCHC will continue to monitor tenant debt levels in 2020 closely and assess the new procedure's impact to assist tenants make their rent payments on time.

## NEW REGULATIONS FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING

In 2019, the Province of Ontario produced its Community Housing Renewal Strategy that included regulatory changes under the *Housing Services Act*. The changes are intended to reduce wait times, improve safety and simplify income verification requirements for tenants paying subsidized rent.

OCHC worked with the Service Manager to prepare for the implementation of the regulatory changes. Internal procedures are being revised to reduce the number of housing offers to applicants from three to one and to use tenant income tax notice of assessments to calculate rent.

OCHC is continuing to assess one change in the regulations that gives housing providers the option to refuse an applicant that was previously evicted from community housing for serious criminal activity.





## KEY ELEMENTS

- Meeting housing needs with fiscal constraints
- Pursuing innovative solutions and alternative partnerships
- Extracting and leveraging portfolio value
- Renewing an aging portfolio
- Future capital investment

The housing stock of OCHC continues to age. Buildings are on average 50 years old, and OCHC continues to invest to ensure that homes are maintained in a good state of repair.

The 10-Year Housing Development Plan is being implemented to guide OCHC to leverage the value of OCHC assets, to address capital investment shortfalls and to increase housing capacity.

New developments will be concentrated near public transit, leverage green technology, and ensure capacity for both larger families and barrier-free living.

OCHC recognizes that partnerships with the private sector, the City of Ottawa, and senior levels of government to secure land, financing and supports are essential to the success of the plan.

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

In compliance with the *Ontario Business Corporations Act*, Ernst and Young, the appointed auditors for OCHC completed an audit of financial statements for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. OCHC has independently submitted the audit results to the Shareholder and Service Manager.

There were indicators of strong financial performance in 2019 contained in the auditor's report. They are as follows:

### 01. 2019 Financial Statements

An unqualified audit opinion confirming the 2019 financial statements are fair, accurate and consistent

### 02. Reserves

A reserve balance of \$68.7 million, sufficient to support strategic goals and OCHC's commitment to housing development

### 03. Operating Reserve

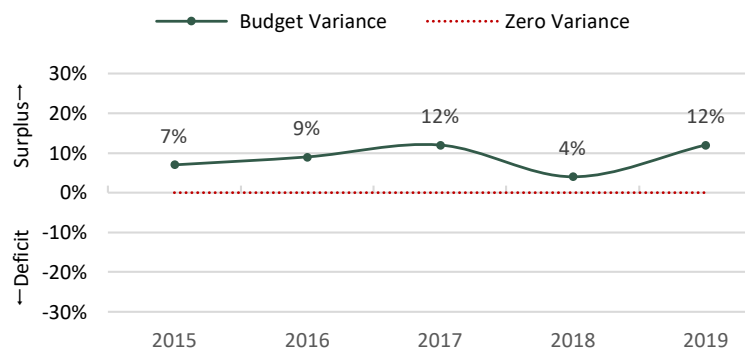
An operating reserve balance of \$3.5 million, slightly above budget. This included a \$500,000 contribution to the Community Reinvestment Fund to support OCHC development activities

OCHC completed 2019 with a positive variance in the annual budget of 12%, across the portfolio.

This is the fifth consecutive year where OCHC has achieved a positive variance in its budget cycle. This was the result of financial diligence, variations in utility costs, and reprioritization of capital works projects to leverage and deliver emerging government capital works investments.

The majority of the funds have been committed at year-end to capital works to be delivered in subsequent years.

### Corporate Budget Variance





## 10-YEAR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

OCHC established the 10-Year Housing Development Framework in 2019 to clarify business assumptions and overall design and modelling options to increase the number of affordable homes in the portfolio. The framework came from a significant level of consultation with housing experts, including construction industry leaders, planning and development, researchers, etc. OCHC completed this over a two-year period to understand long-range demographic growth, housing needs forecasts, broader city infrastructure development plans, land development opportunities, land and tax valuations, and financial viability formulas.

The framework positions OCHC to enter a significant period of portfolio expansion. It plans to increase housing capacity by adding and renewing thousands of homes over the next decade. One of the key deliverables from the framework was the establishment of a viable “run rate” for the addition of new housing stock. OCHC will use the run rate to implement the 10-Year Development Plan commencing in 2021. The plan will provide a longer-term direction to what, where and when builds will be executed in meeting portfolio expansion objectives. The new developments will be concentrated near public transit, leverage green technology, and ensure sufficient capacity for both larger families and barrier-free living.

The validation of the framework and the launch of the 10-Year Development Plan will position OCHC to be the developer of choice for affordable housing in Ottawa. OCHC recognizes that partnerships with the private sector, the City of Ottawa and senior levels of government to secure land, financing and supports is a pre-condition to its success.



## Two New Housing Developments Join the OCHC Portfolio

In 2019, OCHC increased its housing capacity with the opening of two developments at the Carlington and Ashgrove locations.

### Carlington Community

This is a new OCHC location situated at 1290 Coldrey Avenue. The four-story building offers 42 affordable homes specifically designed for seniors that began welcoming tenants in March 2019. The community was created through an innovative partnership with the Carlington Community Health Centre. The health centre will deliver primary medical care and health support services on the main level of the building.

### Ashgrove Community

OCHC's development work in the existing Ashgrove community at 3225 Uplands Drive added 16 homes. The opening of the expansion was phased in from June to September 2019. These additional homes increase the overall size of the Ashgrove community to 130 homes, integrated into seven townhomes and three triplexes. They include barrier-free homes that can accommodate tenants with mobility challenges.

## A Flagship for Green Development

The Carlington Community is OCHC's greenest development and one of Canada's greenest residential landmarks. It features state-of-the-art passive house mechanical systems and high-efficiency plumbing fixtures that significantly reduce energy consumption and water usage.

The building uses 85% less energy than if OCHC had constructed it to the standards of the Ontario Building Code. It represents the next generation of green buildings to be developed by OCHC to reduce its carbon footprint.

## New Communities in Design and Construction Phases

OCHC advanced portfolio growth through concept design, planning and new construction. Construction progressed as planned at two major locations.

### Richelieu Court

The revitalization of Richelieu Court continued in 2019. Demolition of internal structures was completed, and renovation work included completely new interiors, exterior, roof, windows and doors, plus a new heating distribution system. Scheduled for completion in the summer of 2020, Richelieu Court will feature 15 three-bedroom homes, providing much-needed affordable housing for families.

### 811 Gladstone (Rochester Heights Phase 1)

Active construction is advancing as planned for Phase 1 of the Rochester Heights redevelopment. Key construction milestones included site preparation and foundation work for a six-story apartment building and 32 stacked townhomes. This new product will provide affordable housing to 140 households in 2021.

Additionally, master planning, initial design and approval processes are underway for three prime development locations that will be central in the 10-Year Development Plan:

#### 715 Mikinak

The architectural design is underway for this new community, which foresees 271 mixed-sized affordable homes.

#### 818 Rochester Street (Rochester Heights Phase 2)

Early concept development and planning are proceeding, with planning approvals anticipated in 2020.

#### 933 Gladstone Avenue (Gladstone Village)

The initial concept has been completed for a mixed-use development adjacent to the transitway.

## BELLEVUE MANOR CLADDING PROJECT

Bellevue Manor is a 319-home, high-rise community on Caldwell Avenue. The two buildings, constructed in the 1950s, need a new lease on life. The cladding project addresses concerns about heat loss in tenants' homes, external structural deficiencies and the outdated look of the 14-storey apartment towers. As part of the project, tenants participated in the selection of the exterior materials that would be used on the building.

In 2019, OCHC commenced the installation of the innovative, energy-efficient cladding to improve the exterior of the buildings. The work will be completed in 2020 and will provide tenants with warmer, more comfortable homes.



## KEEPING HOMES IN GOOD CONDITION (CAPITAL WORKS)

In 2019, OCHC continued to make critical capital investments of almost \$50 million in the overall OCHC Capital Investment Program. Capital works is an ongoing and significant investment given that OCHC buildings are aging, and increasingly investments are needed to keep the portfolio in good condition.

The 2019/2020 Capital Works Plan is one component of the Capital Investment Program and consisted of 105 major construction projects. The program focused on infrastructure repair of OCHC properties including roofing, cladding and structural restoration, hard and soft landscaping, mechanical system replacements, elevator upgrades, fire safety system renewals, and other building improvements.

Above the Capital Works Program, OCHC has been completing supplemental capital projects work. These initiatives come from funding sources awarded through the federal, provincial and municipal governments for repairs and improvements aimed to support the climate change strategy and other government priorities. Also known by the acronyms HHIP, COCHI, SHIP and SHAI, the funding received has been driving many repairs and improvements projects in 2019 and 2020. OCHC prioritizes these supplementary provincial programs over Capital Works Program delivery, given that funding for these programs is time-sensitive, and they need to be completed according to strict government timelines to avoid loss of funding.

## IMPROVING FIRE LIFE SAFETY IN OCHC COMMUNITIES

Since 2016, OCHC has been advancing its Fire Life Safety (FLS) Program across the portfolio in compliance with the Province of Ontario's fire standards. The program includes:

Upgrades to fire prevention and detection systems in homes and buildings

- Regularly scheduled fire equipment and system inspections
- Tenant and employee education and awareness on fire prevention
- Fire evacuation and response drills and practices

OCHC invested more than \$3 million in the program in 2019. Major work was done to upgrade and repair fire alarms, install and improve fire barriers and separations, and install sprinklers.



## PLANNED POWER SHUT-OFF MAINTENANCE

Nobody likes a power outage. OCHC recognizes that turning off the electricity in tenants' homes to complete maintenance work can have a major impact on daily life.

OCHC has limited these situations for tenants by coordinating an approach to group these repairs. In 2019, 59 planned power shutoffs were coordinated in OCHC buildings. These scheduled "de-energized" periods were used to complete work such as upgrades to breaker panels, fire systems and elevator systems.



# FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



## KEY ELEMENTS

- Strategic focus and effective governance
- Business intelligence and results-based management
- Building organizational culture
- Human resources management
- Changing profile of the modern worker and the work environment
- Leveraging technology
- Lean and effective business processes
- Ensuring effective media and public relations

In 2019, OCHC completed its fourth year of operations under its current 10-year strategic plan.

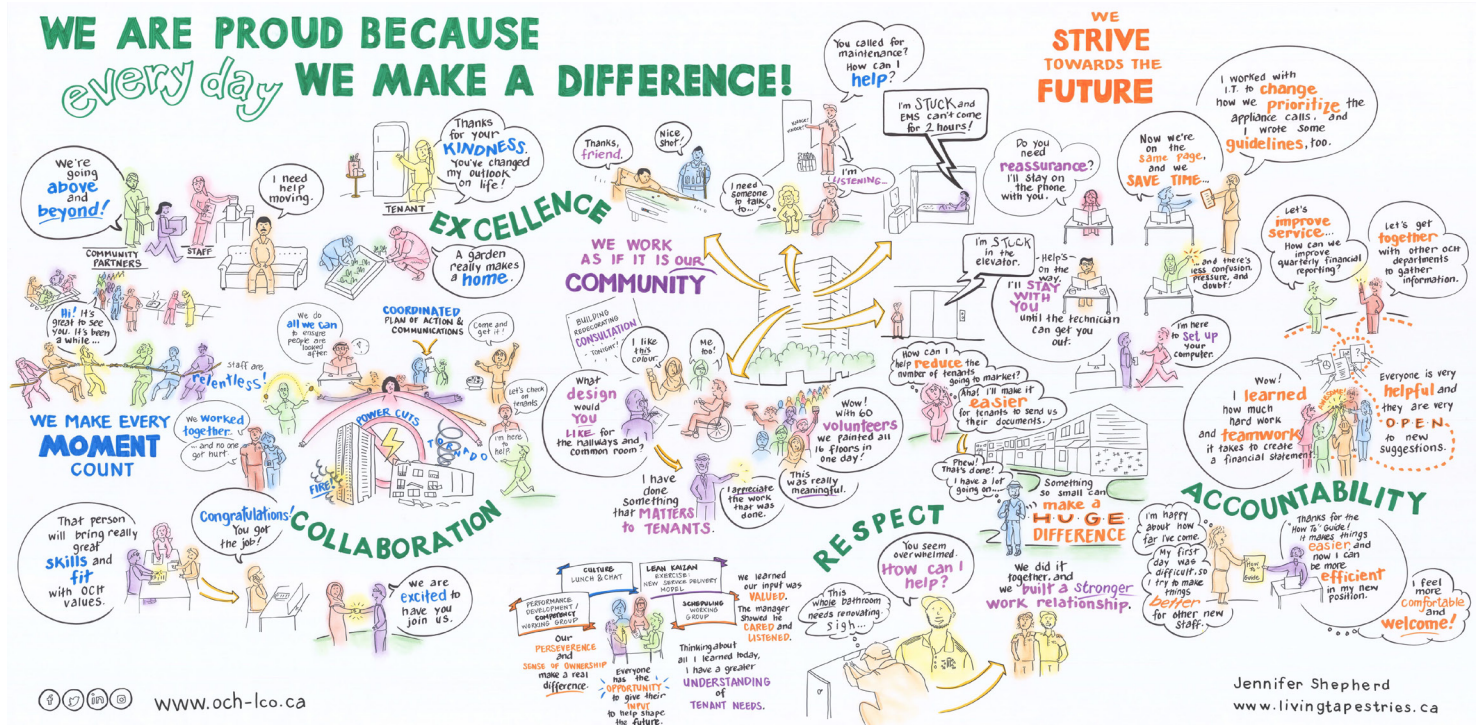
The strategic plan looks to use stronger governance, management systems and innovation to ensure that OCHC is able to build and maintain the housing portfolio, deliver quality tenant services and support healthy communities.

Investing in the organization's culture, employees and technology are critical elements of the strategy.

POCHC recognizes that it is part of a large housing ecosystem and that it must learn, share and partner to build capacity and play a leadership role in this critical work.

## POCHC EMPLOYEES MAKE A DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

Since 2017, OCHC has been advancing its "culture roadmap". In the first two years, OCHC assessed, consulted and built a culture structure that included key culture statements to summarize the desired culture, a multi-year plan and a competency model supported through a new performance development program focused on employee growth.



OCHC has also introduced and applied Lean language and methodology to institute continuous improvement as part of work and the corporate mindset. Employees were significantly involved in all phases of development.

In 2019, OCHC brought the culture statements to life by engaging employees in an interesting exercise. The result was a rich tapestry of real work experiences. The tapestry, as shown above, tells the stories of employee collaboration, accountability, respect and drive for excellence that "make a difference every day" in the lives of OCHC tenants.

## FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### DEVELOPING OUR KEY COMPETENCIES

OCHC implemented a competency-based performance management approach in 2019. Managers and their direct reports began using the OCHC core and leadership competencies in regular performance discussions and feedback meetings. The approach places emphasis on employee development, supported by regular coaching touchpoints throughout the year, between the employee and manager.

To support coaching activities, OCHC integrated a new performance development software in the human resources management system. Managers use this technology with their direct reports to set objectives, to document and discuss competency feedback and to summarize employee progress on performance goals.

### EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

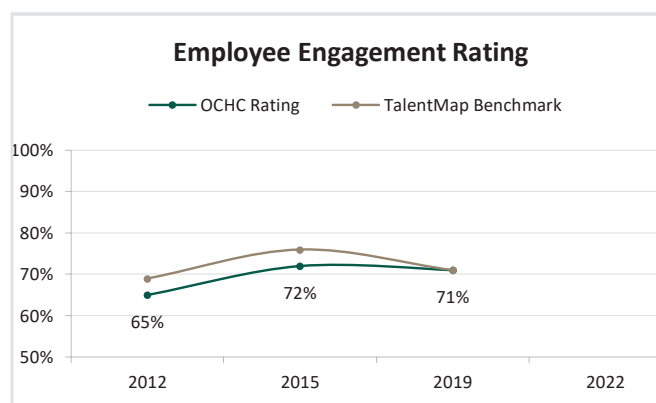
In 2019, OCHC completed a standardized employee engagement survey. An engagement consulting company, TalentMap, conducted the survey. Employee participation was strong, with a response rate of 83%.

The survey identified that 71% of OCHC employees reported being engaged in their work. The overall engagement level is consistent with the last engagement survey conducted in 2015. Engagement results are also similar to other medium-sized benchmark comparators.

The survey identified three primary drivers to further build employee engagement:

- Professional Growth - clarify for employees their opportunities and approaches to grow and develop professionally at OCHC
- Organizational Vision & Culture - assist employees to understand and link OCHC's vision, culture and business priorities to their work
- Teamwork - improve interdepartmental teamwork and collaboration through targeted organizational initiatives and processes

Additionally, OCHC completed a broad employee workshop that was facilitated by TalentMap to create the corporate engagement action plan based on these top three drivers of engagement. The action plan is being implemented through 2020 and 2021 with established monitoring and progress reporting. The next employee engagement survey is planned for late 2021.



### DELIVERING ON MANDATORY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

In 2019, OCHC focused on creating formalized monitoring and reporting to ensure all employees meet mandatory training standards required by law. OCHC verified training completion rates for four essential training courses - Workplace Hazardous Material Information System, Worker/Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities, and Workplace Violence and Harassment.

By establishing more frequent tracking and follow-up practices, 97% of employees were confirmed to have completed the mandatory courses by the fourth quarter of 2019. OCHC will intensify follow-up practices to ensure the remaining employees complete the outstanding training and expect to achieve full compliance in early 2020.



## FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### JOB SHADOWING

The Job Shadowing program is a corporate-wide initiative designed to help OCHC employees connect to the bigger picture, learn about each other's roles and understand how they impact one another to accomplish a common purpose. The program is also recognized as an excellent opportunity for development and personal growth.

More than 20% of employees registered in the first year, demonstrating a lot of enthusiasm for the corporate program. As a champion of the program, the CEO shadowed a Tenancy Support Worker and a Manager, Tenancy Administration.

Testimonials collected from various participants reflected on a very positive experience, and 100% of respondents in a follow-up evaluation felt that the program is well worth continuing.

### EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Workplace safety is everyone's responsibility, and OCHC continued to invest in strengthening health and safety awareness and practices. In 2019, OCHC updated the Health and Safety Policy and strengthened procedures and safe work practices.

OCHC delivered regular, safety-themed corporate communications and monthly team huddles to reinforce the importance of employee health and safety. The Joint Health and Safety Committee continued its routine monthly inspections to ensure compliance and support continuous improvement. OCHC coordinated the delivery of safety training in first aid, mental health first aid, electrical safety, mould remediation, asbestos abatement, and fire life safety.

In 2019, lost time injuries decreased by 13% when contrasted with the previous year. This is the largest year-over-year drop in the past five years.



### SUMMER STUDENTS DEVELOP SKILLS

Each summer, OCHC gives students the opportunity to build on their education and explore their career interests. In 2019, 46 students including nine Youth Futures students joined the OCHC team to support work across the organization's departments.

Students held a range of roles. Some contributed directly to OCHC communities by landscaping, completing maintenance work or helping to organize community events for tenants. Others joined in support roles to research housing issues, IT services or administration.

### NEW CORPORATE LEGAL FUNCTION

In 2019, OCHC consolidated legal activities under a new corporate legal division. The organizational change included the hiring of a director-level manager, the transition of some business processes to the division, and the development of business processes to support the new model.

The Legal Services division has been in place since March 2019 and expands the existing legal team at OCHC. It offers legal support to OCHC departments on various legal matters, including residential tenancies, privacy, insurance, contracts and real estate. The division coordinates external counsel when this expertise is required.

## POST-MORTEM AS A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT APPROACH

OCHC has used post-mortems as a continuous improvement tool since 2014. Post-mortems bring small groups of employees together to close out major projects or to debrief responses to critical events affecting operations. OCHC facilitates post-mortems to recognize accomplishments, identify lessons learned and initiate action plans to address outstanding work and build future business capacity.

In 2019, OCHC completed a management review of the business impact of post-mortems. The review found that post-mortems had a positive impact and engaged staff to propose business solutions for continuous improvement. Post-mortem recommendations ranged from simple tactical solutions, like increasing the size of a generator gas tank, to larger investments, like employee training or changes to business processes.

The management review identified that 90% of the action items that had been identified through post-mortems since 2014 had been implemented.

## LEAN INITIATIVES

The Lean methodology is a world-recognized, continuous improvement approach. Lean strives for customer value through the creation of clear, standardized and efficient business processes.

OCHC introduced Lean in 2016. There is a certified core team of Lean facilitators, and Lean orientation sessions have been provided to almost half of the employees.

In 2019, OCHC completed three Lean projects. Each project focused on business processes that needed modernization.

- The Emergency Incident Notification process
- The Unit Turnover preparation process
- The IT System Enhancement request process

Teams of employees participated in a Lean Kaizen event, the Japanese word for improvement, where they mapped out and assessed the challenges of the current business process and successfully proposed new, standardized business practices.

## TENANT FILE DIGITIZATION

In 2019, OCHC continued its commitment to going paperless in all business processes. It tackled a significant challenge of transitioning tenant records to a digital format. Not only did the project have to consider the volume of existing tenant paper-based records, estimated at over 345,000 documents annually, but it needed to introduce a business solution that employees could confidently use to access tenant records required to deliver services. The solution also needed to create an environment that will be compatible with tenant self-service options that are being planned in the future.

The project was completed with over 25,000 critical tenant documents scanned into the new system and staff trained on how to use the system in their daily work. Service locations have also been equipped with technology that allows new tenant records and other documents to be created and managed entirely electronically.



## NEW PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In 2019, OCHC enhanced its project management practices. New project management standards and tools were introduced to plan, implement and oversee corporate projects. The model is intended to improve the planning, execution, monitoring, reporting and overall coordination of major initiatives.

OCHC also introduced a project management “community of practice” for project managers. The Project Leaders Action Network, or The PLAN, meets each month for an hour to complete short learning activities, provide peer feedback, share project management experiences and practice project management skills.

## FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### STRATEGIC REVIEW

The Board of Directors and Board Committee members joined the senior leadership in November 2019 in a facilitated half-day session to review the current OCHC 10-Year Strategic Plan. The group discussed possible revisions to long-term goals and clarified business priorities for the Corporate Work Plan.

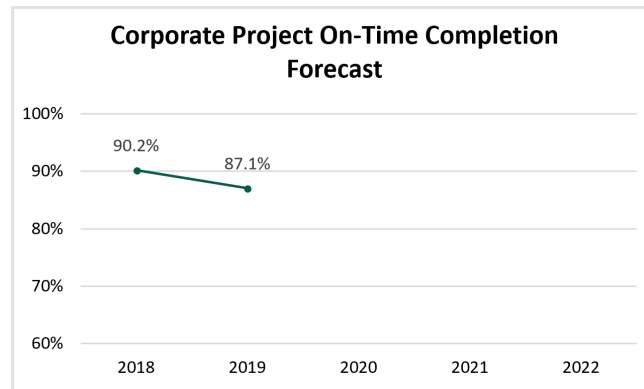
The group used the corporate environmental scan that had been completed earlier in 2019 to examine the affordable housing climate across six scan perspectives: political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental. The scan mostly reinforced that existing strategic drivers are relevant and that the 10-Year Strategic Plan set in 2015 remains a reliable anchor for governance direction and corporate focus.

### CORPORATE WORK PLAN

In 2019, OCHC maintained a high level of corporate project on-time performance at 87.1%. At the conclusion of 2019, there were eight corporate projects experiencing delays. Risks to delayed projects have been assessed at manageable levels, and OCHC anticipates successful outcomes with each delayed project. Most outstanding milestones in delayed projects will be completed through Q1, 2020 and status will continue to be monitored. Delays are mainly due to competing internal resource demands.

The three-year Corporate Work Plan, covering the period 2019 to 2021, consisted of 53 major initiatives across the six OCHC business areas in support of the 10-Year Strategic Plan. The various corporate projects align with four strategic goals and represent balanced investments in strengthening OCHC communities, tenant service delivery, portfolio development and OCHC's overall business capacity.

OCHC completed 13 corporate projects in 2019. These projects were significant investments with strong project management execution. Details of these projects are presented within the Annual Report.

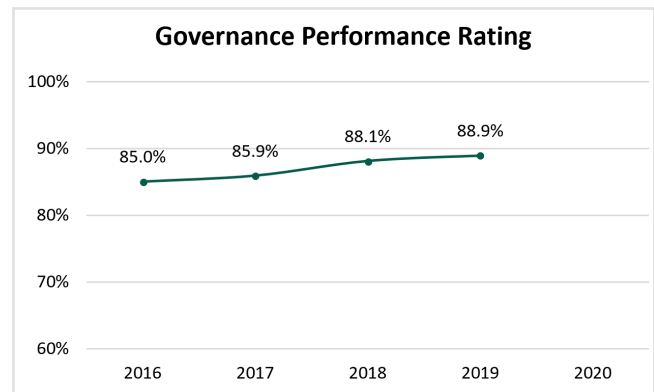


### BOARD GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS RATING

The aggregate governance performance rating for 2019 was 88.9%, the highest level reported since OCHC introduced this approach. The overall level of effectiveness increased by 0.8% compared to the 2018 rating. While governance performance is strong, OCHC has developed an action plan for 2020 to continue strengthening strategic agenda planning, refreshing Board report formats, and renewing governance procedures.

There were 27 governance meetings in 2019. The Board of Directors and four Board committees each met five to six times during the year to discuss strategic issues, give policy direction and review corporate risks.

OCHC uses a standardized reporting approach of monitoring and surveying to assess governance performance. The Governance Professionals of Canada has recognized the approach as innovative in contributing to the operational effectiveness of governance.



## FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### CONTRIBUTING ACROSS THE BROADER HOUSING SECTOR

OCHC continued to engage with various organizations that support the housing sector at municipal, provincial and national levels.

In Ottawa, OCHC has been an active contributor to the Ottawa Social Housing Network. The network is a community of over 50 local housing providers and support organizations that exchange ideas, experiences and learning. OCHC sits on a working group to pilot a shared services model in Ottawa in 2020.

At the provincial level, OCHC is a long-term member of the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association. OCHC is the second-largest housing provider in this organization and has been contributing to strengthen ONPHA's government relations role, build sector relationships at the governance and operational levels, and review ONPHA internal governance practices.

OCHC is a member of Ontario's Local Housing Corporation Forum. The forum consists of executives who lead larger housing corporations. The group shares approaches and leading practices. In 2019, OCHC played a leading role in developing provincial LHC benchmarks in core housing performance areas.

OCHC's Chief Executive Officer sits on the Board of Directors of the Housing Services Corporation. This organization, headquartered in Toronto, focuses on supporting Ontario's social housing assets in areas including insurance and risk management programs, energy services, asset management and renewal, and business solutions.

OCHC is a member of the Canadian Housing Renewal Association, a national non-profit organization with a purpose to strengthen the community housing sector through advocacy, research, partnership and member services. In 2019, OCHC participated in the Association's new Housing Professionals Mentorship Program. The program connected OCHC employees through mentorships to network, learn and build competencies within the housing sector.

OCHC is also an active member of the International Housing Partnership and Housing Partnership Canada. These two organizations focus on peer exchange allowing senior leaders to share learning and approaches for developing and sustaining affordable housing.



### CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

OCHC continued to engage, collaborate, support and deliver ongoing or as-needed strategic communications services to every OCHC department for specific internal and external audiences, including tenants, partners and shareholders.

Standard services include:

- Strategic Communications planning, support and implementation
- Media Relations & Events - Crisis Management and Emerging Issues
- Public Relations & Government Relations
- Digital Communications (social media, web and intranet)
- Internal Communications
- Marketing / Design work (corporate publications)

The various platforms are leveraged to promote corporate messaging that influences and balances public perception of OCHC's mandate, business successes and challenges, awareness of OCHC programs and initiatives, and increased content publication.

2019 has seen the development and implementation of a Government Relations Roadmap and the launch of a new social media channel to enhance outreach with youth. Based on standard indicators such as followership, likes, shares, etc., OCHC had a strong and active presence on social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.



## FOSTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### OPTIMIZED SCHEDULING OF MAINTENANCE RESOURCES

OCHC coordinates maintenance work for over 15,000 homes across Ottawa. The scheduling and logistics of getting this work done efficiently is a challenge.

In 2019, OCHC implemented a new technology called the Dynamic Resource Scheduler (DRS). The DRS replaced a legacy technology. It enhances OCHC's ability to organize daily maintenance work, deploy maintenance employees and electronically report on completed work.

The DRS has reduced the administrative steps required for maintenance work and improved resource efficiencies focusing on delivering service to tenants.

### INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP

In 2019, OCHC completed the initial development of a three-year approach to information management and information technology. An external consultant completed the analysis and preliminary design of the IM/IT Roadmap, building on the long-term investments OCHC has made in technology. The third-party assessment identified OCHC's IM/IT approach as mature and recognized the IM/IT function as a "trusted partner".

The roadmap will be finalized in early 2020 and will set the IM/IT direction for data governance, analytics, system security, business system support and upgrades, and staff technical competence.

### PROTECTING OCHC FROM CYBER THREATS

OCHC relies on five IT systems to deliver direct tenant services and to support critical back-office functions. Overall, there is a high level of system maturity, and the security and availability of these systems are essential to core business. In 2019, OCHC continued to maintain its IT system availability performance target of 99.9%. There were isolated and brief episodes of system loss through the year related to external factors such as local electrical and internet outages. There were no incidents of IT system security breaches in 2019 that had an impact on overall system security or availability.

Like all organizations, OCHC continues to experience ongoing cyber threats through phishing and hacking attempts to breach the IT firewall. In 2019, OCHC identified and intercepted hundreds of thousands of suspicious emails that had the potential to compromise system security.

IT security is a strategic priority. In 2019, OCHC implemented a cloud-based endpoint security software called CrowdStrike. The software actively monitors OCHC devices to isolate and neutralize potential system threats.

OCHC also purchased and implemented an automated IT security training program from KnowBe4, a leading platform in IT security awareness training and simulations. The 2019 campaign included a series of online learning sessions and random phishing simulations. Staff vulnerability to phishing attempts decreased from 31.2% to 7.2%. OCHC will continue using the KnowBe4 platform to strengthen its "human firewall" to help keep IT systems secure.

