



# 2023 Housing & Homelessness Annual Report

Continuing Forward



## Table of Contents

Message from the Warden .....	2
Introduction: The Northumberland Context .....	3
About the 10-year plan .....	3
A Home for Everyone.....	3
Measuring against our 10-year strategies (2023).....	5
Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options.....	5
Progress toward action items .....	5
Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services.....	6
Progress toward action items .....	6
Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability .....	7
Progress toward action items .....	7
Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports.....	7
Progress toward action items .....	7
Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply .....	8
Progress toward action items .....	8
Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock .....	8
Progress toward action items .....	9
Reporting on Progress .....	10
Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options.....	10
Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services.....	10
Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability .....	10
Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports.....	11
Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply .....	11
Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock .....	11
Looking Forward.....	12
Appendix A: List of Action Items.....	14

## Message from the Warden

### Working Together to Address Housing and Homelessness



I am pleased to present the 2023 Housing and Homelessness report for Northumberland County. As we reach the halfway mark of our 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan (2019-2029), it is important to take stock of progress made and the impact on resident quality of life, while also reflecting on the significant need that exists and the work yet to be done.

Recent achievements are a testament to the tireless work of our dedicated staff, caring community partners, and committed residents, who support our most vulnerable every day. This collective effort is the backbone of our progress.

In 2023, we provided 139 permanent rent supplements and housing allowances, moved 17 chronically homeless households into long-term housing, and acquired 310 Division Street, Cobourg to modernize emergency shelter operations.

In partnership with the Northumberland County Housing Corporation (NCHC), we also developed or acquired 47 units of affordable, supportive, and market rent housing in keeping with our ten-year strategy to see 900 units added to affordable housing stock in Northumberland across all partners. This includes successfully advancing the Elgin Park Redevelopment, with the first 20 of 40 units now in operation. We are also progressing with the 473 Ontario Street development—an Indigenous-led housing development, with a multi-agency partnership rooted in reconciliation—and have purchased property on Westwood Drive to provide much needed land for future affordable housing. These developments are all in the Town of Cobourg, where the demand and waitlist for affordable housing is highest.

We housed 59 households off the Centralized Waitlist for rent-geared-to-income housing in 2023. Nevertheless, demand for affordable housing continues to surge, with the waitlist now at more than 1,000 households, extending up to a decade. Homelessness and housing insecurity continues to grow, presenting new challenges for our community. Rising costs of living and the ongoing echo effect of the pandemic are placing additional pressures on many residents, leading to tougher choices and increased struggles.

The increasing challenges we are facing underscore the need for a community-wide effort. All levels of government, community partners and residents, must work together to support housing and homelessness initiatives. It is imperative we work together, respecting different perspectives and lived experiences, to build a more equitable future for all.

I am proud of our achievements, and energized by our plans to advance the vision of a Northumberland housing and homelessness system that is responsive to the needs of all residents, providing safe, appropriate, and affordable housing within healthy and inclusive communities.

*Northumberland County Warden Brian Ostrander*

# Introduction: The Northumberland Context

## About the 10-year plan

Northumberland County is entering year 6 of our 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2019-2029. The County's vision for Northumberland that "[by] 2029, the Northumberland housing and homelessness system is responsive to the needs of all residents, providing safe, appropriate and affordable housing options within healthy and inclusive communities."

With this plan, the County has established six strategies required to support improved outcomes in the system. These strategies include:

1. Increase Affordable Housing Options
2. Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services
3. Support Housing Stability
4. Increase Supportive Housing and Supports
5. Build a Diverse Housing Supply
6. Optimize the Existing Housing Stock

These six strategies are well aligned with Northumberland County's Affordable Housing Strategy, Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan and the Community Housing Master Plan. This annual report will begin to deep dive into each one of these strategies and provide concrete actions that have been taken, present data (where available), identify gaps where future attention will be required.

Northumberland County is required to update the plan every five years and will initiate the next review in the next six months, following the receipt of anticipated direction from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

## A Home for Everyone...

Northumberland County continues to raise aware of key housing realities facing our community. Despite the fact that many of these realities have existed for several years, these challenges continue to become more acute:

Some key realities include:

- The average market rent in Northumberland for a one-bedroom unit is more expensive than neighbouring communities, including the City of Peterborough, the City of Kawartha Lakes, Hastings County, and the City of Kingston.
- In December 2023, residential transactions reported had selling prices averaging \$678,021 in Northumberland, with the average property selling at 95.6% of the list price. This is a 9.2% decrease from the previous month and is down 1.8% from last year according to Northumberland Market Report. However, despite this decrease, it remains unaffordable to all households in Northumberland except for the top decile of income earners.
- The waitlist for social housing continues to be 10 years in some communities and has grown more than 300% in the last 10 years, with over 1,100 households on the waitlist.

- As of November 2023, the living wage for Northumberland County was \$20.60 (minimum wage is currently \$16.55 in Ontario). This means that a single earner household earning a living wage in Northumberland County is unable to afford any rental unit at the County's AMR regardless of unit size. In fact, the average rent for an available private market one-bedroom apartment is so high that a household needs to make upwards of \$70,000 to be able to afford it and that far exceeds the median income of \$40,800 for this demographic.

Access to rental housing in Northumberland is limited, particularly in larger urban areas, where the rental market is characterized by high rents and low vacancy/availability rates. However, unaffordability and unavailability of rental units is expanding into all areas of the County. The weekly rental listings compiled by the Help Centre have demonstrated the lack of availability week over week. Northumberland's vacancy rate is calculated using data from CMHC, which is available for three municipalities and limited in its reliability. In 2023, the average vacancy rate in Northumberland was 1.3%. This vacancy rate is close to the 2023 provincial average of 1.7%.

## Measuring against our 10-year strategies (2023)

In the development of the renewed 10-year housing and homelessness plan, engagement with community stakeholders was completed which supported the County in prioritizing the various action items under each strategy. For a full list of action items, please see Appendix A.

### Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options

This strategy focuses on work required to increase the supply of rental housing which is affordable to households with low and moderate incomes and achieving a functional zero end to homelessness. This is a key strategy that supports not only the Housing and Homelessness Plan but also the Affordable Housing Strategy.

#### Progress toward action items

Over 2023, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 13 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Worked with member municipalities to promote available incentives to developers for the creation of affordable rental housing options. (Action item 1.1)
- Continued discussions with member municipalities on land-banking opportunities to continue identifying shovel-ready and funding-ready projects. (Action item 1.2)
- Continued the expansion of the County-funded Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program, with a budget that grows annually. Seeking rent supplement units in up to 50% of all affordable units created under the Affordable and Rental Housing Program. (Action item 1.4)
- Shifted subsidy calculation processes for former Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program Recipients to support more households by considering max shelter rates for social assistance recipients (Action item 1.4)
- Worked with the Northumberland County Housing Corporation (NCHC) to complete construction for the first Phase of Elgin Park – realizing 20 units of affordable and market rental housing. (Action Item 1.6)
- Continued working with projects partners (Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, Habitat for Humanity Northumberland and the NCHC) to continue moving development forward, including the completion of procurement for pre-design consultants for 473 Ontario Street, including Architecture and Engineering and Construction Manager. (Action Item 1.6)
- Acquired 123 King Street East, Colborne Ontario (~\$1,300,000) to preserve 22 units of affordable housing in Cramahe. (Action Item 1.6)

- Support private and non-profit developers applying for incentives through the Affordable and Rental Housing Policy and Affordable Housing Grant Program for the creation of affordable housing units. This is done through letters of supports, and commitments under the Affordable and Rental Housing Policy. (Action item 1.7)
- Supported provincial advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the impact service managers have in building rental stock across the province. (Action Items 1.9 – 1.13)
- Participated in local, regional and provincial housing tables to support advocacy efforts to improve outcomes of programs and policies. (Action items 1.9 – 1.13)
- Continued to explore alternate construction methodologies including, Construction Management at Risk, Modular Building and 3D printing. (Action item 1.5)

## Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services

This strategy focuses on developing a ‘no wrong door’ approach for accessing all housing and homelessness related support services in Northumberland. This strategy supports the development of a person-centred coordinated system supporting members of our community that are the most vulnerable.

### Progress toward action items

Over 2023, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 6 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Obtained access to HIFIS as a method of sharing real time information with participating agencies and to enhance coordinated access to the homelessness system. Implementation planning process is currently underway. Full implementation expected late fall 2024. (Action item 2.2)
- Maintained a ‘Quality By Name List’ status based on the Built For Zero-Canada scorecard. The list is updated in full monthly. (Action item 2.3)
- Continued development of the Homelessness Leadership Table (HLT) as a next step towards examining homelessness services to identify opportunities to coordinate service delivery. Revised the Terms of Reference for HLT. (Action item 2.4)
- Acquired 310 Division Street (~\$2,500,000) to support a coordinated entry into the homelessness system in Northumberland, collaborating with Transition House Emergency Shelter and members of the HLT to support individuals experiencing homelessness through access to a 24/7, 365 day drop in centre, low-barrier emergency shelter beds and transitional housing. (Action item 2.1)
- Maintained the Housing Help Northumberland website for Northumberland. (Action item 2.5)
- Alongside community partners, provided supports to individuals living rough, outside, couchsurfing, in shelters and at-risk of homelessness to ensure that all individuals in the County have the opportunity to access supports and services. (Action item 2.1)

## Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability

This strategy focuses on creating a system of support service providers and landlords to enable successful transitions into housing stability for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. This strategy is also supported by the goals outlined in the Affordable Housing Strategy.

This strategy also includes work to ensure people that are housed are able to remain housed, including those with affordable rents in the private sector and community housing sector.

### Progress toward action items

Over 2023, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 13 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Continued implementing the COHB, including working with internal department stakeholders, community partners and the broader housing and homelessness systems to refer eligible households. (Action item 3.1.)
- Created Housing Stability Program (~\$500,000 annually), which provides monthly rent subsidies to households experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness access permanent housing. (Action item 3.1)
- Continued the expansion and implementation the Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program, to support households on the centralized waitlist and those at risk of homelessness obtain affordable and/or subsidized housing. (Action item 3.1.)
- Continued the implementation of eviction prevention policies and processes for the NCHC. (Action item 3.3.)
- Ongoing work with the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, and partners on the development of affordable housing at 473 Ontario Street, based on the principles of reconciliation, including completing Indigenous Cultural Competency Training with project staff. (Action item 3.4.)

## Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports

This strategy focuses on expanding the supply of housing with supports in appropriate locations throughout Northumberland. This goal is relevant to not only the Housing and Homelessness Plan, but also the Affordable Housing Strategy.

### Progress toward action items

Over 2023, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 4 action items. Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Continue providing training opportunities for key County staff supporting the NCHC to ensure services provided support housing retention framework, including Mental Health First Aid and Situational Awareness. (Action item 4.1)



- Worked with Public Works to complete renovations at 152 Cockburn Street, Campbellford Ontario for use by a non-profit agency for the delivery of supportive housing. (Action item 4.2) / (Action item 6.3)
- Continue working with community housing tenants to connect them with supports needed, including Community Paramedicine support. (Action item 4.1)
- With COCHI/OPHI Year 4 funding (~\$460,000), identified community housing providers with similar capital repair needs and supported capacity building through partnering with HSC for project management and bulk procurement initiatives. (Action item 4.4.)
- County Council introduced an investment of ~\$250,000 annually to support treatment bed access for individuals in need.

## Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply

This strategy focuses on encouraging and supporting the development of a diverse housing stock, including the need for more purpose-built rental, smaller units, accessible housing options, and differing tenures and other ways to support a strong, robust and diverse housing supply across the County. This strategy also supports the goals of the Affordable Housing Strategy.

### Progress toward action items

Over 2023, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 3 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Co-chair the Housing Services Strategic Committee and co-chair of the Municipal Support of Rental Development Technical Table – drafted the A Home for Everyone: How we get there together advocacy paper. (Action Item 5.1)
- Participate in local, regional and provincial advocacy and networking tables to support system change and improvement to support housing system improvements. (Action Item 5.1)
- Supported the drafting of responses to Provincial policy changes including Development Charges and the Provincial Policy Statement. (Action Item 5.3)
- Delegated to provincial Ministers at AMO and ROMA on land acquisition initiatives and policy changes to support the NCHC’s growth strategy. (Action Item 1.2)

## Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock

This strategy focuses on existing housing stock and ensuring that dwellings are well-maintained and in good condition. It includes the considerations of finding new uses for existing dwellings and non-residential uses which are vacant or under-utilized. This goal also corresponds to the Affordable Housing Strategy.

## Progress toward action items

Over 2023, progress has been made to support this strategy and the identified 6 action items.

Key progress made toward these action items include:

- Continuation of the Affordable Rental Housing Grant Program which in addition to the creation of new affordable housing units, supports the rehabilitation and renovation of existing affordable housing stock in need of critical repair. (Action item 6.1)
- Adopted the Community Housing Master Plan and NCHC Asset Management Plan to identify a path forward to an optimized community housing sector. (Action item 6.1)
- Continuation of Northumberland Renovates (\$150,000 annually) and providing supports to low-income homeowners to make critical renovations to their homes to enable aging in place and affordable accommodations. (Action Item 6.1)
- Funded Capital Repair needs in the local sector, including with the NCHC and other community housing providers using County levy investments and COCHI/OPHI program funding from the provincial and federal governments.
- Worked with Public Works to complete renovations at 152 Cockburn Street, Campbellford Ontario for use by a non-profit agency for the delivery of supportive housing. (Action item 4.2) / (Action item 6.3)

## Reporting on Progress

### Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options

- In 2023, 22 units at risk of going to market rent were maintained at affordable rents.
- At the end of 2023, Elgin Park Phase One was completed, with 20 units available for rent (RGI and Reasonable Market).
- As of 2023, there are 72 permanent rent supplement units, the number of rent supplements has remained relatively consistent since 2018.
- The number of housing allowance recipients in 2023 was reported to be 67, which is an increase from the previous two years and a return to levels experienced in 2020.
- In 2023, 1090 households were reported to be on the waitlist with 59 of these households housed. In 2022, the waitlist consisted of 1067 households, with 52 housed off the list. Of these, 10 households were in receipt of the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), which provides a Portable Housing Benefit to assist with rental costs.

### Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services

- The Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT) is a case conferencing group that shares their knowledge and resources to support individuals experiencing homelessness. This group meets every two weeks and updates the By-Name List (BNL).
  - 11 member organizations attend the meetings.
- Access to emergency accommodation continues to operate through Transition House – where eligibility and availability is determined.
- In 2023, 11 agencies continued to use common intake processes, as well as sharing tools and data. This has remained stable since the previous year.

### Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability

- In 2023, benefits were issued to 181 unique at-risk households to support them in remaining housed. An additional 136 households were supported by these benefits in 2023.
- Via the NCHC, there were 22 households at risk of experiencing homelessness that were stabilized in 2023. Community housing partners reported an additional 12 households for which eviction was prevented. These are households with current arrears but active payment plans.

- In 2023, 86 households were reported to move from homelessness or temporary housing into permanent or long-term housing. There were 64 individuals/families who provided consent to be added to the BNL and 130 were active on the list at any given time in 2023.
- Additional funding allocations through council to support homelessness prevention efforts.
- Implement HSP program, offering 82 rent subsidies to support individuals and families maintain or attain permanent, safe, and affordable housing with Northumberland County.

## **Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports**

- 57 emergency spaces, including overnight, overflow, and warming room beds, were made available in 2023.
- Consultant led homelessness system review was completed and key recommendations including additional outreach staffing and the modernization of shelter services is underway.
- Purchased a seniors' residence that will be renovated in 2024 as our new Emergency Shelter, warming/cooling space, transitional Housing, and Resource Centre for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

## **Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply**

- In 2023, 29 net new units of affordable housing were added to the supply.
- The NCHC is building 45 new housing units.
- The NCHC and Northumberland County are actively pursuing 5 new properties for growth.
- Over 250 new affordable housing units and rent supplements are in the pipeline for development over the next few years.

## **Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock**

- The Renovate Northumberland program supported 12 households in 2023.

County Council committed to increase investment into the state of repair of the NCHC, doubling its annual allocation to capital repair to \$1,200,000 annually by 2026.

## Looking Forward

Looking forward to 2024, Northumberland County will seek to stabilize the housing and homelessness system and increase availability of supports with the creation of a community hub at 310 Division Street in Cobourg.

In 2024, housing and homelessness leads will review the implementation plan in detail and develop key goals over the next several years to further progress on the critical strategies and action items identified in the housing and homelessness plan. In addition, work will be taken to refine data sources and ensure baseline metrics are clearly established.

Some key goals in 2024 include:

- Continue working with member municipalities and other sources to develop a land bank of shovel-ready and funding-ready projects.
- Invest further into programs that educate and provide food options to the support communities with food insecurities.
- Create a Community Liaison Committee to support the emergency shelter.
- Expansion and more focus on our outreach team supporting at-risk or homeless clients in all municipalities.
- Update the KPI dashboard quarterly.
- Continue pre-construction work, including net zero feasibility studies for the construction at 473 Ontario Street with project partners.
- Continue to support community housing providers in meeting goals and priorities of the Service Manager, which include housing retention practices.
- Continue to expand the Made in Northumberland Rent Supplement Program.
- Continue opportunities for shelter benefit programs to be operated through community partners.
- Ensure that NCHC assets are well maintained through a thorough capital repair program.
- Coordinate with community partners in developing supportive housing options.
- Deliver EDI, Indigenous cultural understanding, and gender-based violence training to all partners who interact with the NCHC.
- Continue to work with the Homelessness Leadership Table to enhance wrap around services.
- Implement a Capital Repair Program on NCHC buildings for better planning and accurate data collection.
- Move forward with the renovations and retrofitting of 310 Division St to create a low barrier shelter system that will serve more of the community's needs.

- Full HIFIS implementation with community partners trained and adding real time updates to the system for better tracking of the homelessness population in Northumberland.

For a list of housing and homelessness resources available, visit our website at [Northumberland.ca/HousingAndShelter](https://Northumberland.ca/HousingAndShelter).

Information is also available on the Housing Help website at [HousingHelp.Northumberland.ca](https://HousingHelp.Northumberland.ca)

Alternative forms of this report are available upon request.

## Appendix A: List of Action Items

### Strategy 1: Increase Affordable Housing Options

- 1.1 **PRIORITY** Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with member municipalities to implement the recommended Northumberland Affordable and Rental Housing Program.
- 1.2 **PRIORITY** Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with member municipalities to develop a County-wide approach to securing land for affordable housing development, including exploring a policy to give priority to affordable housing development in the disposition of surplus land, land banking, and land sharing.
- 1.3 Consider waiving interest charges on the deferred development charges for market-rate rental housing developments.
- 1.4 **PRIORITY** Consider the feasibility of a County-funded rent supplement program to support households with incomes in the first and second income deciles.
- 1.5 **PRIORITY** Consider developing County-wide design guidelines and alternative standards for affordable housing to encourage the development of more innovative housing options.
- 1.6 **PRIORITY** Explore the feasibility of expanding Northumberland County Housing Corporation's (NCHC) role to developing mixed income buildings (including market rental and affordable rental units) to increase supply of affordable housing while maintaining financial viability.
- 1.7 Support non-profit organizations who are applying for federal and/or provincial funding to build affordable housing.
- 1.8 Explore the feasibility of building container or modular homes and/or tiny homes as affordable housing units.
- 1.9 Advocate to community partners, such as school boards and faith groups, to contribute to the development of affordable housing in Northumberland. Contributions can be in-kind, such as land, or financial.
- 1.10 Advocate to the federal government to expand the Co-Investment Fund, or similar future programs, to provide increased capital funding for affordable housing projects, including increased funding to allow for deeper levels of affordability.
- 1.11 Advocate to the federal government to improve timelines for approvals and execution of agreements, including the release of funds, for the Co-Investment Fund.
- 1.12 Advocate to the federal and provincial governments to fully exempt charitable non-profit organizations from HST for new affordable housing projects.
- 1.13 Advocate to the provincial government to expand the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative program, or similar future programs, to provide increased capital funding to build new

affordable housing projects. Funding amounts should be reflective of the needs of Service Managers, including increased building costs in small, rural communities.

## **Strategy 2: Implement Coordinated Access for Housing and Support Services**

- 2.1 **PRIORITY** Building on the Homelessness Coordinated Response Team (HCRT) work, design and implement a coordinated access system for housing and homelessness services to better help people needing assistance.
- 2.2 Ensure all housing and homelessness service providers use a common approach to collecting and sharing data, including a common intake assessment process using the VI-SPDAT tool and a cloud-based database.
- 2.3 **PRIORITY** Work on developing a quality By-Name List based on the Built for Zero scorecard and update this list on a monthly basis at a minimum.
- 2.4 **PRIORITY** Convene a table of community agencies providing housing and homelessness services to examine current services to determine how each contributes to the housing and homelessness system and identify opportunities to coordinate service delivery.
- 2.5 Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, increase awareness of all housing and homelessness services available for Northumberland residents through a common website, mobile app, brochures, and monthly e-newsletters to all community agencies. This should include the weekly rental listings.
- 2.6 Building on the recommended action in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, engage and work with private landlords to facilitate access to private rental units, even for the population who may be considered 'hard to house'.

## **Strategy 3: Support Housing Stability**

- 3.1 Continue to work with community agencies to provide education on basic life skills, such as being 'rent ready' and budgeting, as a standard part of the process for people who are moving from homelessness to permanent housing.
- 3.2 Work with community agencies and high schools to develop a training module to provide basic life skills training, including budgeting and being 'rent ready'.
- 3.3 Consider implementing the Host Homes Program as a shelter-diversion strategy for youth.
- 3.4 Consider implementing the Homeward Bound Program for female-led lone-parent families.
- 3.5 Building on the recommendations in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, encourage and support social enterprises which provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities, mental health issues, addictions, youth, and people who are currently receiving Ontario Works benefits.



- 3.6 **PRIORITY** Building on the recommended actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, provide County-funded and County-administered housing allowances and rent supplements, such as the Canada Housing Benefit, to individuals and families who are chronically homeless and those who have low acuity scores and only need affordable housing.
- 3.7 Develop and enhance partnerships with other sectors, such as hospitals, the LHIN, and the correctional system, to ensure people leaving institutions are connected to the appropriate housing and supports they need to live independently in the community.
- 3.8 **PRIORITY** Encourage community agencies to examine current practices in providing supports to ensure they are person-centered and flexible enough to meet each individual client's own goals rather than the goals of the support provider.
- 3.9 **PRIORITY** Building on the landlord engagement strategy identified in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with community agencies to provide education on discrimination and the human rights code as it applies to tenants and vulnerable groups.
- 3.10 **PRIORITY** Building on the eviction prevention model implemented in 2018, ensure all community housing providers, including Northumberland County Housing Corporation, are using the tools and processes developed to guide tenant relations and support eviction prevention goals.
- 3.11 Building on current relationship-building initiatives, work with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services and the Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre to develop culturally appropriate tools and processes to prevent evictions.
- 3.12 **PRIORITY** Identify opportunities to bring people with living or lived experience into the decision-making process regarding the support services they need.
- 3.13 Advocate to the federal and provincial governments to increase funding for the Canada Housing Benefit, or other similar future program.

## **Strategy 4: Increase Supportive Housing and Supports**

- 4.1 Encourage and support community agencies to provide training to frontline staff to ensure supports provided are culturally appropriate and trauma informed. This may include facilitating peer mentorship opportunities among staff of different organizations.
- 4.2 Work with community agencies to explore opportunities to submit joint funding bids, pool funding among housing partners to build supportive housing, and combine resources to develop common tools.
- 4.3 Work with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services to explore opportunities to develop culturally appropriate supportive housing options for Indigenous peoples in Northumberland County who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- 4.4 **PRIORITY** Encourage and support non-profit housing providers to explore options for a shared services model to build capacity in the sector.

## **Strategy 5: Build a Diverse Housing Supply**

- 5.1 **PRIORITY** Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, encourage member municipalities to revise zoning by-laws to ensure cohousing, co-living, and shared housing arrangements (with or without supports) are permitted in all communities throughout Northumberland.
- 5.2 Keep member municipalities accountable to ensure their Official Plans and zoning by-laws do not act as barriers to the development of a more diverse housing supply in all communities.
- 5.3 Work with member municipalities to explore options to make zoning by-laws and other local regulations more flexible to allow culturally appropriate housing.

## **Strategy 6: Optimize the Existing Housing Stock**

- 6.1 Facilitate partnerships among community agencies, private developers, member municipalities, and property owners to identify opportunities to renovate vacant or underutilized properties into affordable and/or supportive housing.
- 6.2 Explore the feasibility of offering a property tax discount for property owners who donate or lease their property at below-market value to non-profit housing providers to increase the supply of affordable housing.
- 6.3 Explore the feasibility of supporting a pilot project which would renovate a vacant or underutilized property into cohousing/shared housing for people on the By-Name List with low acuity scores (i.e. those who only need affordable housing).
- 6.4 Facilitate partnerships with faith groups and non-profit and for-profit residential developers to redevelop vacant or underutilized church-owned property to increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing.
- 6.5 Encourage private and not-for-profit residential builders to meet Passive House, LEED (even if they do not obtain certification), or similar standards in renovations of existing dwellings as well as the development of new dwellings, particularly affordable housing projects.
- 6.6 Building on the actions in the Northumberland County Affordable Housing Strategy, work with municipal staff and other housing partners to develop fact sheets on considering climate change in the renovation of existing homes as well as the building of new dwellings by incorporating energy efficient and environmentally sustainable features.