



Dufferin
county

10-Year Housing & Homelessness Plan

2023 Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2013, the County of Dufferin, in consultation with the community, created the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan to improve access to housing that is suitable and affordable for all residents in Dufferin. The 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan underwent a five-year review, and the updated plan was adopted at County Council on November 14, 2019. Annual updates to the plan are posted on the County website.

This update is an opportunity for the County to share its progress on its 10 year plan.

Current Programs and Services

- Administering Rent Supplement Program.
- Centralized Waitlist for community housing.
- Working with local housing providers and landlords.
- Managing and operating County owned properties.
- Administering Federal and Provincial programs.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Another year has passed in Community Services. I am very thankful and proud of our staff and partners' commitment through 2023.

Our clients face significant obstacles and challenges. In many cases, the current economic environment has facilitated these challenges. I am pleased to say our staff provided mindful, and extraordinary service to our clients. Their passion and respect for clients cultivated an environment of flexibility and perseverance throughout 2023.

This update summarizes the Department's progress on the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

Anna McGregor

Director, Community Services
County of Dufferin

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Various progress measures were established to ensure that the goals identified were addressed over the 10-year life of the plan. Specific measures include the County's efforts related to assisting low-income households, increasing the supply of affordable housing, maintaining operating agreements with housing providers, and expanding community collaboration.



90

Individuals housed
from the
By-Name List (BNL).



203

Households assisted
with Housing
Allowances.



Reduced our Waitlist by 193 Households

as a result of implementing
income and asset limits.

2023 PROGRESS UPDATES

GOAL 1 - Address Housing Affordability, Availability & Equity

Intended Outcomes	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	2023 Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better housing outcomes for low to-moderate income households by helping to address affordability/income disparity. House more people i.e., goal of 40 additional units by 2024). Overall decline in seniors on the centralized waitlist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore alternative solutions to assist households with housing affordability and attainability. Explore alternative solutions for affordable seniors housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) Housing Allowance provided housing allowances to 72 households. Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) provided a total of 103 households with a portable housing benefit that can be used throughout Ontario. Chronic Homeless Housing Allowance Program (CHHAP) was implemented. As of year-end, 10 chronically homeless individuals from the By-Name List (BNL) were receiving housing allowances. Seniors represented less of the centralized waitlist than 2022, 29% down from 34%. County continued to offer the Homeownership Program. Continued to offer the Rent Supplement Program.

GOAL 2 - Prevent Housing Instability & Homelessness

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help people obtain and/or maintain housing through Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) and similar programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue delivering urHome and providing assistance with LEAP/OESP. Continue collaboration with community partners. Leverage work being done with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) and link to Community Advisory Board (CAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to offer HPP. Administered LEAP for other utility providers and provided support for OESP. HIFIS continues to be used to complete all HPP applications. Chronic Homeless Housing Allowance Program (CHHAP) was provided. Certification was offered in two cohorts. Clients from shelters and the BNL attended.
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2023 PROGRESS UPDATES

GOAL 2 Continued - Prevent Housing Instability & Homelessness

Intended Outcomes	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	2023 Results
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dufferin has three subprojects under Reaching Home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In 2023, Dufferin County employed three Housing Support Workers who worked with clients on the BNL who were identified as chronic. Workers assisted clients with searching for and securing housing and completing applications and referrals to mental health and/or medical resources. They provided ongoing support and home visits to those maintaining their housing to avoid the client re-entering the homeless system. They worked collaboratively with the Landlord Liaison to find solutions should issues arise with the landlord. ◦ The Landlord Liaison is responsible for the ongoing development and maintenance of relationships with landlords in Dufferin County. The Landlord Liaison is the point person for the local motel owners who are participating in either the Motel Program or the Coordinated Access Transitional Housing (CATH) Program. They also work in collaboration with the Housing Support Workers in the event an issue is reported by a landlord. ◦ Family Transition Place (FTP) was approved for funding for 20 months to provide 2 Frontline Outreach Workers. They provide intensive case management for the period August 1, 2022, through to March 31, 2024, to help meet the needs of chronically homeless individuals in the County of Dufferin.

2023 PROGRESS UPDATES

GOAL 3 - Maintain, & Where Possible, Improve Housing

Intended Outcomes	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	2023 Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and, if possible, improve community housing. • Maintain operating agreements with housing providers. • Make housing more accessible and sustainable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with providers to discuss the importance of partnerships. • Complete necessary upgrades identified in short term stage. • Continue tenant surveys. Analyze feedback provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Property Parking Lot Restoration and Line Painting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 43 Bythia St, Orangeville. ◦ 40 Lawrence Ave, Orangeville. ◦ 227 William St, Shelburne. ◦ 207 William St, Shelburne. • Repairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 54 Lawrence, Orangeville. • Security Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Entire housing portfolio. • COCHI: \$398,900 dispersed to 3 Providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Lavender Lane: New fencing, Roofing and Windows. ◦ Fiddleville: Front entry way accessibility (curbs and walkways), Hallway flooring thought the apartment complex, replacement of the front entrance canopy to the apartment complex. ◦ Credit River: New flooring in hallways of apartment complex, 4 kitchens, 5 bathrooms, new flooring for 3 x 3-bedroom units and 3 x 2-bedroom units.

GOAL 4 - Meet a Range of Complex Community Needs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer safe and secure housing for victims of abuse in a timely manner. • Work to become an Indigenous ally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue involvement in the DART committee table and with FTP. • Fund Housing Allowances to FTP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COHB provided a cumulative total of 103 households with a portable housing benefit that can be used throughout Ontario. • Continued involvement in DART. • Dufferin County's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan was adopted in May of 2021. It will be reviewed annually.
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2023 PROGRESS UPDATES

GOAL 4 Continued - Meet a Range of Complex Community Needs

Intended Outcomes	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	2023 Results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and renew MoUs to continue to offer collaborative services. Train staff to promote greater knowledge of complex needs. Ongoing adherence to accessibility standards for housing units. 	

GOAL 5 - Cultivate Local Partnerships, Collaborate with Lower-Tiers of Government & Engage the Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness and buy-in of housing challenges. Collaborate on housing and support services. Consult community. Work more closely with lower-tier municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness of challenges, poverty, inequity, and homelessness. Continue involvement in committees (i.e., DCEC) and expand partnerships if the opportunity arises. Engage tenants and the community using modern and interactive methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work with DC MOVES & DCEC. The Division organized a successful Annual Housing Forum on November 22, 2023. Sixty-two community partners attended the Forum. The main components of the events were: Planning and Economic Development - Addressing housing and housing shortage through policy change. Impacted community services (Guest Speakers: Roger Barrow -Salvation Army New Hope Community Church, Heather Hayes -Orangeville Food Bank) Landlord/tenant challenges and solutions. County services and successes. The cost of homelessness - Interactive activity (Million Dollar Murray) and successful interventions in Canada.
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2023 PROGRESS UPDATES

GOAL 5 Continued - Cultivate Local Partnerships, Collaborate with Lower-Tiers of Government & Engage the Community

Intended Outcomes	Medium Term (3-5 Years)	2023 Results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with planning officials within municipal government to advocate for more housing within housing. • Review and renew MoUs to continue to offer collaborative services. • Continue work with lower tier towns and townships, local agencies, and the general community to share information and gain valuable feedback on Housing and Homelessness issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022, The Dufferin Area Family Health Team (DAFHT) chose not to renew their contract to employ three Housing Support Workers. The County of Dufferin decided to move those positions in-house and created the Housing Stability Team. This team is managed under the Ontario Works portfolio and is comprised of the three Housing Support Workers, two Community Support Workers and the Landlord Liaison. Together, alongside the Ontario Works team, they provide a holistic approach to supporting clients on the By Name List (BNL). • Dufferin County's Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan was adopted. Housing & Homelessness was named a priority. The DCEC Housing & Homelessness Working Group was named the Lead Table for this priority and the Housing Services Division co-chairs that table.

DIVISION CHANGES AND OTHER INITIATIVES

First Region to disperse all of COHB

The County is one of the smallest service providers in all of Ontario but was the first to disburse all its allocated COHB.

Additional COHB for Asylum Seekers – \$130,800

Received additional funding October 2023 to assist with asylum seekers or recent refugees. 11 applications were completed in 2023 with 1 additional client being counted in 2024 as their start date of funding was February 2024.

Men's Shelter Opened

The County provided funding to support the Men's Shelter in Orangeville. The shelter opened in May 2023.

RentSmart Certification offered to clients

Certification was offered in two cohorts. Clients from shelters and the BNL attended.

Changes to Income and Asset Limits

The regulations governing Income and Asset Limits changed in 2023. The Centralized Wait-list's distribution was impacted by these changes as client eligibility changed.

Interviewed 8 clients - Video tells their story

In October 2023, we interviewed 8 people on how Dufferin County's housing programs have impacted their lives. This video tells their story. See video here

[2023_dufferin_county_housing_forum_v5 \(1080p\).mp4](#)

Restructuring of Shelter agreements

The County restructured its Shelter agreements in 2023. This aligned services with the goal of ending homelessness.

DIVISION CHANGES AND OTHER INITIATIVES

Memorandum of Understanding created with SHIP

Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP) and the County entered into an MOU to provide funding for a Full-time Housing Stability Specialist in 2023. The Housing stability Specialist provides high quality, integrated, person-directed housing and services within the County of Dufferin to twenty (20) individuals who are on the By-Name-List (BNL) and/or being supported by the County of Dufferin and may be facing eviction.

Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) Funding – \$398,900 disbursed to 3 Providers

Lavender Lane: New fencing, Roofing and Windows.

Fiddleville: Front entry way accessibility (curbs and walkways), Hallway flooring throughout the apartment complex, replacement of the front entrance canopy to the apartment complex.

Credit River: New flooring in hallways of apartment complex, 4 kitchens, 5 bathrooms, new flooring for 3 x 3-bedroom units and 3 x 2 bedroom units.

Housing Forum - Facing the Future Together

The Division organized a successful Annual Housing Forum on November 22, 2023. Sixty-two community partners attended the Forum. The main components of the events were: Planning and Economic Development - Addressing housing and housing shortage through policy change. Impacted community services (Guest Speakers: Roger Barrow -Salvation Army New Hope Community Church, Heather Hayes -Orangeville Food Bank) Landlord/tenant challenges and solutions. County services and successes. The cost of homelessness - Interactive activity (Million Dollar Murray) and successful interventions in Canada.

Bridges out of Poverty

Staff attended workshops on October 17 and October 18th.

BBQ and Summer Concert Series

Leisa Way & Friends played for all County tenants.

LOOKING FORWARD

2024

The Housing Division anticipates the growing need for affordable housing and additional programming to assist the most vulnerable in Dufferin County. There are several objectives and opportunities for 2024, which include:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Leadership will look for opportunities for staff to create greater awareness in the workplace and with the clients we serve. This will include:

- Inclusive Leadership Training
- Unequal Impact - Exploring the intersection of Justice, Equity, and Environmental Racism Training
- Dimensions of Neurodiversity Training
- Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression in the Workplace Training
- Indigenous Awareness Training
- Impact of Psychological Safety on Inclusion Training
- Climate Training
- Mental Health Awareness with Tenants Training
- Trans Inclusion in the Workplace Training
- Illuminating History – Unveiling Local 2SLGBTQ+ movements

Promotion of RentSmart

Collaboration with other organizations in the community will be explored to further promote Rent Smart. The County is exploring further sessions at the end of 2024.

ENGAGEMENT AND LOOKING FORWARD

Explore Affordable Housing Options

The County and its partners will continue to collaborate and engage stakeholders on affordable housing options. This includes:

- Tiny Homes
- Habitat for Humanity Tiny Home Program
- Streamlining process for approving Accessory Residential Units

COHB & OPHI

No Service Manager has received any COHB funding for 2024/2025. The OPHI allocation for 2024/25 was reduced to \$300,700, which includes \$276,840 earmarked for housing allowances.

Opening of SHIP Units

SHIP opened 236 First St. in May 2024 which provides 27 permanent, supportive housing units. Residents began moving in as of May 22, 2024, and the site reached full occupancy by the end of June 2024. The County entered into an MOU with SHIP for an allocation of 10 units to support those with diagnosed mental health and/or addictions.

COCHI allocated to Providers

\$542,600 for capital repairs.

Master Housing Strategy

The County is undertaking the creation of a Master Housing Strategy (MHS). The main goal of the MHS is to develop a long-term strategic plan that leverages existing owned land to identify and redevelop existing properties, and to explore the potential of surplus and underutilized County-owned lands to expand affordable housing options.

End of Operating and Mortgage Agreements

Work has started with Providers as the end of operating agreements and end of mortgages begin.

GLOSSARY

Affordable Rent	Where rent is set at 80% of the average market rent. Rent increases once a year in line with the provincial rent control guideline
BNL	By-Name List - real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness, who want to be linked to services and work with service providers
CAB	Community Advisory Board
CAT	Coordinated Access Table
Chronic Homelessness	Refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• they have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year• they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days)
CHHAP	Chronic Homeless Housing Allowance Program - ongoing financial supplement paid by the County to the landlord or eligible renter (from the BNL) to help them offset rental costs
COCHI	Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative. A program aimed at improving housing affordability and sustainability in Ontario.

GLOSSARY

COHB	Canada Ontario Housing Benefit - ongoing financial supplement paid from the federal government directly to eligible renter households (from the waiting list) to help them offset rental costs. Administration done by the County
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Emergency Sheltered	Includes those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence. Emergency shelters are facilities that provide short-term temporary accommodations and essential services for individuals experiencing homelessness
FTP	Family Transition Place
Functional Zero	Functional Zero is three or less chronic homeless households on the BNL for three consecutive months
HAD	Housing Access Dufferin - the centralized waiting list for community housing. People apply to the centralized wait list to get a rental unit. The rental units are supplied by County of Dufferin, various local non-profit housing providers and private rent supplement landlords
HIFIS	Homeless Individuals and Families Information System - a comprehensive data collection and case management system allowing multiple service providers to access real-time homelessness data

GLOSSARY

Homelessness	Homelessness means without permanent address/residence and includes those who would be in emergency accommodation/shelter. For Dufferin it means that homeless numbers are a combination of those in emergency shelters, emergency motel stays, couch surfing, and those who are unsheltered
Home Ownership Program	Provides moderate income individuals and families with an interest-free down payment assistance loan to help them in purchasing their own home
HPP	Homelessness Prevention Program - wide range of programs that offer financial support to stop people losing their housing or to help them get housing. A financial assistance payment can be paid direct to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• landlord to stop an eviction• utility provider to stop a disconnect of service• landlord to cover first and last month's rent• funds are limited and subject to availability
HSA	Housing Services Act, 2011
Market Rent	Full rent is charged. No financial assistance is applied.
Ontario Renovates	Provides financial assistance for low to moderate income homeowners or renter households: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to increase accessibility of their unit through modifications and adaptations (ramps, etc.)• repairs and maintenance• house value and income limits apply• funds are limited and subject to availability

GLOSSARY

OPHI	Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative. Funding stream that addresses local housing priorities, including affordability, repair and new construction.
PIT	Point-in-Time (PiT) Homelessness Count - a coordinated event where persons experiencing homelessness are counted and asked a variety of questions to get a snapshot in time to illustrate homelessness in the community
Reaching Home	A federal funding program, that was launched in 2019. Reaching Home supports the goals of Canada's National Housing Strategy, in particular, to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by fiscal year 2027-2028
RGI	Rent-Geared-to-Income - where rent is subsidized, based on 30% of a household income. Rent changes in line with household income
RentSmart	A program that provides education to tenants, providers, and community organizations to help people keep housing. It provides comprehensive housing and life skills education with a graduation certificate that may-be-recognized as a reference on housing applications

GLOSSARY

Rent Supplement Units	Where there is insufficient County of Dufferin and local housing provider stock (rental units) the County enter into agreements with private landlords who then rent their units to people from the Housing Access Dufferin Centralized Wait List. The tenant pays their portion of the rent (based on the RGI calculation) and the County pays the balance to the private landlord
SSRF	Social Services Relief Funding
Unit Composition	Refers to the mix of community housing