



VISION 2025

Taking The Next Step

2021 Annual Report

***Community Housing & Homelessness Plan
Cornwall, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry***



June 2021

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Summary

The five-year update to the Housing and Homelessness Plan was completed and approved by Council on August 12th, 2019.

The Plan was subsequently submitted to the Ministry of Municipal of Affairs and Housing in the Fall of 2019. In March 2020, the Social & Housing Services Department received correspondence from the Ministry acknowledging our successful implementation of this plan.

As a result of the approved updated plan, an implementation schedule was prepared which included, objectives, strategies, actions, measures, outcomes and timeframes. This was drafted in order to ensure that action items identified would be addressed over the next 5 years. This implementation of the plan officially commenced in September 2019.

Due to the ongoing impacts of CVOID 19, including several lockdowns and reopening precautions, many of the action items in year 1 and 2 that have been delayed until we are able to resume normal operations. Subsequently, there are future action items that we have been able to address earlier than scheduled.

Community Visions Overview Chart

Building on the original vision statement for the Housing and Homelessness plan, the re-framed plan has four additional vision statements which speak to different segments on the housing continuum.

These vision statements serve to shape objectives for the re-framed plan, paving the way for specific strategies and actions that are proposed.

The specific vision statements and associated objectives are as follows:

Community Vision #1	People experiencing a housing crisis are housed or sheltered
Objective	To ensure a system of services and supports is in place to help those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless to obtain housing.

Community Vision #2	People who are currently housed but at risk of becoming homeless remain housed
Objective	To ensure a system of services and supports is in place to help those who are at risk of becoming homeless to maintain/stabilize their housing.

Community Vision #3	Suitable existing housing stock is maintained
Objective	To support and promote efforts that help maintain and preserve suitable existing housing stock in the community.

Community Vision #4	The supply of appropriate housing is enhanced
Objective	To encourage the development of appropriate and affordable new housing.

Community Vision #1

Community Vision #1	People experiencing a housing crisis are housed or sheltered
Objective	To ensure a system of services and supports is in place to help those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless to obtain housing.

Summary

People experiencing a housing crisis are among the most vulnerable in the community and they require services and supports to help secure housing or shelter. Work to date has helped to generally improve communication and awareness about available homelessness services. While there are an array of local service providers to help address these needs, plan consultations signalled the need for coordination of these resources in a more systematic way.

Building awareness and understanding of service provider roles within the housing system will help to create a more coordinated and effective homelessness service system. Expanding this awareness in the broader community will further help to connect individuals in need with appropriate resources.



To support plan objective #1, the following strategies and actions will be pursued by the City and its community partners:

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
1) Develop and maintain a shared understanding of the homelessness service system among community partners	a) Undertake homelessness service system mapping to identify service providers, roles, priorities and gaps
	b) Form a roundtable of community stakeholders and establish a formal homelessness system framework with partner-defined goals and roles
2) Enhance the effectiveness of the homelessness system to better respond to needs as they change over time	a) Develop common system protocols among homelessness service providers regarding access to services and supports (e.g. no wrong door, Housing First principles, etc.)
	b) Hold a planning meeting of the roundtable annually to evaluate homelessness service system performance, enhance service approaches and plan responses to changing needs
3) Expand awareness of the homelessness service system among those in need, service providers and the broader public	a) Develop and use a range of information sharing tools to broaden awareness of the homelessness service system, the roles of service providers and how to access services when needed

Community Vision #1

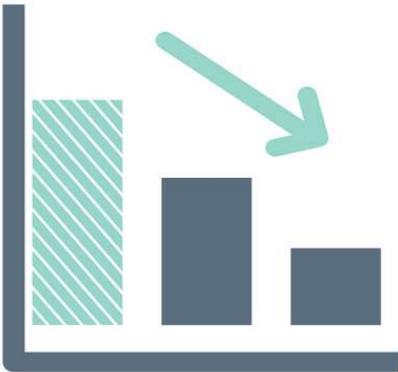
Measures & Outcomes

Measures

- ⇒ Number of homeless based on enumeration counts
- ⇒ Number of individuals seeking services
- ⇒ Demand for services by type
- ⇒ Number of individuals who are sheltered/housed on an emergency basis

Outcomes

- ⇒ Reduction in the number of homeless
- ⇒ A more coordinated/effective service system
- ⇒ Broader awareness on how to access the system
- ⇒ Quicker connections to appropriate services and providers



Community Vision #1 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S1	<p>Action - Undertake homelessness service system mapping to identify service providers, roles, priorities and gaps</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ An update of our website was completed and updates are made regularly. Our social housing page is very robust and includes all the programs that we offer, contact information and applications (where applicable).</p> <p>⇒ Cornwall's Mayor has created a Housing Task Force and this committee (which represent many key areas) meet monthly to discuss various housing related issues.</p>
S1	<p>Action - Form a roundtable of community stakeholders and establish a formal homelessness system framework with partner-defined goals and roles</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ Postponed until regular services resume, however, during the pandemic a Regional Emergency Response Committee was formed to address priorities and concerns presented as a result of the pandemic.</p>
S2	<p>Action - Develop common system protocols among homelessness service providers regarding access to services and supports (e.g. no wrong door, Housing First principles, etc.)</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ The Social & Housing Services Department continues to work towards service integration with Child Care and Ontario Works.</p> <p>⇒ The Housing Access Centre Staff are represented on the Social Development Council's Vibrant Communities Committee which enables us to secure linkages with other community organizations in an effort to work collectively to create common system protocols.</p> <p>⇒ We are proceeding with an amalgamation with our local housing corporation which will provide a streamlined process and support for accessing programs (no wrong door).</p>
S2	<p>Action - Hold a planning meeting of the roundtable annually to evaluate homelessness service system performance, enhance service approaches and plan responses to changing needs</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ Postponed until regular services resume.</p>

Community Vision #1 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S3

Action - Develop and use a range of information sharing tools to broaden awareness of the homelessness service system, the roles of service providers and how to access services when needed

Update

- ⇒ In conjunction with the City of Cornwall, we have developed a Tenant Information Booklet that provides information to tenants regarding a number of items, including but not limited to fire safety, tenants rights, by-law enforcement, etc.
- ⇒ We have strengthened our website information. This includes all programs offered within the Housing Access Centre, in an easy to read format in both official languages.
- ⇒ 2021 Enumeration preparations have begun.
- ⇒ We have had the opportunity to continue strengthening our partnership with external organizations, in an effort to provide additional education on homelessness initiatives and prevention.

Community Vision #2

Community Vision #2	People who are currently housed but at risk of becoming homeless remain housed
Objective	To ensure a system of services and supports is in place to help those who are at risk of becoming homeless to maintain/stabilize their housing.

Summary

Within the community, there are many households who face challenges that put them at risk of losing their housing, whether due to financial or other factors. Maintaining housing stability helps to ensure that households do not become homeless and subsequently require other supports and services. There are a range of preventative services available in the community that have proven to be successful but the coordination and effectiveness of service delivery among providers has been identified as an area for further evaluation.

Providing supports for at-risk households, both in community housing and in the private sector, helps to foster housing stability and minimizes the chance of cycling back through the housing system. Broadening awareness about these services among landlords, especially in the private sector can help promote greater housing stability. Advancing employment initiatives would also provide an innovative way to help stabilize income and break the cycle of poverty for at-risk households.



To support plan objective #2, the following strategies and actions will be pursued by the City and its community partners:

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
1) Identify and assess the range of services that are currently provided to prevent housing loss	a) Document and evaluate the current system of housing loss prevention services and supports to identify areas that are working well, areas that need improvement and system gaps
	b) Undertake a review to determine the overall support needs specifically within the community housing portfolio
2) Improve the effectiveness of services and supports geared to preventing housing loss	a) Convene a roundtable of both housing and service providers to review prevention programs and how service outcomes can be improved
	b) Support housing stability for those most at risk of becoming homeless by securing and providing financial assistance on a priority basis (e.g. CHPI)
3) Expand the awareness of services for preventing housing loss and how to access them	a) Establish tools and resources that clearly identify how housing providers and service partners can access prevention services
	b) Provide community outreach to private landlords to foster awareness of available programs, providers and services supporting tenant stability
4) Improve household stability by enhancing employment assistance opportunities for tenants in the community housing portfolio	a) Engage employment assistance providers to assess opportunities for enhanced assistance among community housing tenants
	b) Where demand warrants, promote a pilot program to expand employment assistance for tenants in community housing
	c) Monitor employment trends among community housing tenants annually to assess trends and impacts

Community Vision #2

Measures & Outcomes

Measures

- ⇒ Number of evictions prevented through intervention
- ⇒ Number of households stabilized through financial assistance
- ⇒ Number of households benefiting from support/service agreements
- ⇒ Number of people living in community housing that obtain employment through the employment initiative

Outcomes

- ⇒ People stay in community housing as long as needed/ appropriate
- ⇒ More coordinated and effective prevention system
- ⇒ Broader awareness of available prevention services/supports and how to access them
- ⇒ Appropriate supports for housing loss prevention are provided to tenants in need
- ⇒ Employment supports serve to create more financial and housing stability



Community Vision #2 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S1	<p>Action - Document and evaluate the current system of prevention services and supports to identify areas that are working well, areas that need improvement and system gaps</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ The Housing Access Centre underwent a LEAN review to streamline the application process and reduced waste by 52%.</p> <p>⇒ Now fully implemented, this LEAN initiative also allowed us to update our corporate website page for social housing page which includes all the programs that we offer, contact information and applications (where applicable).</p>
S1	<p>Action - Undertake a review to determine the overall support needs specifically within the community housing portfolio</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ The LEAN initiative also allowed us to determined that we are able to increase the available time (freed up the equivalent of at least ½ of one Case Manager's time) for more direct case management, including assistance with life stabilization, for clients. Due to the success, this initiative has become part of the regular work duties, instead of continuing it solely as a pilot project. In the future, we hope to expand this service, to tenants, within the community housing portfolio as well.</p>
S2	<p>Action - Convene a roundtable of both housing and service providers to review prevention programs and how service outcomes can be improved</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ Postponed until regular services resume, however, during the pandemic a Regional Emergency Response Committee was formed to address priorities and concerns presented as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p>⇒ Through the SSRF Phase 1, we were able to reach out and support a significant number of community agencies and assist them with continued or new prevention and outreach programs during the pandemic.</p>

Community Vision #2 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S2	<p>Action - Support housing stability for those most at risk of becoming homeless by securing and providing financial assistance on a prioritized basis (e.g. CHPI)</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Based on the CHPI Year End performance indicators, we were able to assist approximately 3,092 individuals stabilize their housing either through short term or long term prevention (including eviction prevention and utility arrears as an example). ⇒ With the addition of SSRF, we were able to extend/expand our prevention programs to include longer stays in non-traditional housing or secure pre-paid beds for COVID relief or self-isolation.
S3	<p>Action - Establish tools and resources that clearly identify how housing providers and service partners can access prevention services</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ We have worked with our various housing providers regarding different prevention programs, including but not limited to assistance with rent arrears through the SSRF.
S3	<p>Action - Provide community outreach to private landlords to foster awareness of available programs, providers and services supporting tenant stability</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Cornwall's Mayor has created a Housing Task Force and this committee (which represent many key areas) meet monthly to discuss various housing related issues. ⇒ We continue to work with private landlords regarding eviction prevention for tenants. ⇒ We advertise our housing programs on social media, local cable television and via mass e-mail campaigns.

Community Vision #2 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

Action - Improve household stability by enhancing employment assistance opportunities for tenants in the community housing portfolio

Update

S4

⇒ We are working with our Local Housing Corporation on various initiatives. When they relocate to their new commercial space, they will be able to provide interview room space to external organizations which can include employment services or life stabilization.

Community Vision #3

Community Vision #3	Suitable existing housing stock is maintained
Objective	To support and promote efforts that help maintain and preserve suitable existing housing stock in the community.

Summary

The existing housing stock provides a range of options for households throughout Cornwall SDG, however, there are issues regarding supply gaps, affordability and the quality of available housing. With limited production of new rental supply, there is considerable and sustained demand for existing rental housing. Efforts have been made to maintain community housing stock as this rental housing is inherently affordable. These efforts must continue in order to protect and revitalize this important community resource, whether through provider supports, capital investment or asset leveraging.

In the private sector, the condition of some rental stock is of concern. Preserving this existing stock, where appropriate, and continuing to help low and moderate income homeowners maintain their housing, encourages a more stable supply of housing options. In addition, building greater awareness around repair needs and available resources, coupled with targeted financial supports for repairs and renovations will further help to preserve existing supply.

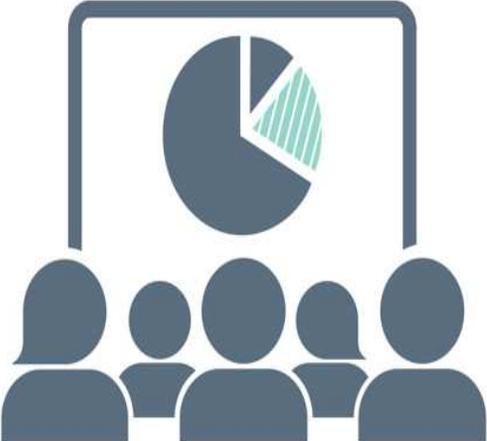
Energy and utility costs can have a real economic impact both on landlords and tenants in terms of cost and affordability. Progress has been made in focusing on energy efficiency when promoting stock improvements and priority should continue to be given to these initiatives.



To support plan objective #3, the following strategies and actions will be pursued by the City and its community partners:

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
1) Maintain and enhance the sustainability of assets within the community housing portfolio	a) Support community housing providers in their capital planning efforts by facilitating assistance to maintain current Building Condition Assessment reports
	b) Determine the capital needs for projects within the community housing portfolio and develop strategies for mitigating gaps in capital needs versus planned reserves
	c) Prioritize those areas identified within provider capital plans when determining how to allocate available funding/ resources, especially in regards to energy efficiency
	d) Support operational sustainability by working with community housing providers to increase revenues and decrease costs
2) Help to improve and enhance the supply of affordable housing in the private sector	a) Establish a dialogue with private landlords to identify renovation requirements and prospective assistance which could help to preserve rental housing stock that is affordable
	b) Create/facilitate appropriate financial supports to private landlords to preserve rental housing stock that is affordable while promoting energy efficiency
	c) Facilitate financial support to low income homeowners for renovations that enable them to remain in their homes
	d) Expand awareness of available programs that foster improvement and sustainability of housing stock that is affordable
3) Revitalize assets within the community housing portfolio to better meet future needs	a) Develop a revitalization plan for the community housing portfolio to help regenerate the current stock and expand housing options
	b) Utilize available equity, funding and resources to support priority revitalization actions, including energy efficiency improvements

Community Vision #3

Measures & Outcomes	
Measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Reduction in net capital needs in the community housing portfolio ⇒ Improvement in the net operating position of providers in the community housing portfolio ⇒ Number of private sector rental units that are preserved or improved and compliant (e.g. OBC, fire code, property standards, etc.) ⇒ Number of homeowners served through renovation programs ⇒ Number of units in the community housing portfolio that are revitalized 	
Outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Existing community housing stock continues to be maintained in good condition ⇒ The supply of affordable rental housing in the private sector is preserved or improved ⇒ Lower income home owners are able to remain in their homes longer ⇒ A plan is in place for revitalizing community housing stock 	

Community Vision #3 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S1	<p>Action - Maintain and enhance the sustainability of assets within the community housing portfolio.</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ As part of Ontario’s Community Housing Renewal Strategy, the Service Manager received funding through the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI), to address local housing priorities, including affordability, repair and new construction. ⇒ In 2020, 12 Community Housing Providers benefited from \$125,475 which assisted with necessary repairs to 13 buildings and/or 693 units. ⇒ As part of the Housing Revitalization Plan recommendations, we hired a Project and Asset Management Coordinator who will assist our housing providers with asset management plans, annual capital budgets (related to their asset management plans), information regarding green sustainability programs and how to access funding for these initiatives. This will also align with the development of the City of Cornwall’s Climate Action Plan. ⇒ We have successfully negotiated 2 new operating agreements, with existing social housing providers, following the end of their previous agreement.
S2	<p>Action - Help improve and enhance the supply of affordable housing in the private sector.</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ In 2020, we continued the Ontario Renovates Program. This program provides low-to-moderate income homeowners with financial assistance for urgent home repairs / accessibility modifications. We are able to assist 43 households last year and 837 households since the inception of the program in 2012. ⇒ Cornwall City Council has recently approved a site-specific Tax Increment Grant (TIG) to increase residential developments within the City which includes affordable housing units. ⇒ We have made several presentations to housing providers with respect to increases to market rents, in order to generate more revenues for continued viability and to increase their reserves for future needs. In addition, they would become less reliable on the Service Manager for higher subsidy needs.

Community Vision #3 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S2	<p>Action - Help improve and enhance the supply of affordable housing in the private sector.</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Cornwall City Council has recently approved a site-specific Tax Increment Grant (TIG) to increase residential developments within the City which includes affordable housing units. ⇒ As part of the SSRF Phase 2, in addition to other funding sources, we are in the process of building a new 77-unit apartment building (65%+ of these units will be rent-geared-to-income or affordable).
S3	<p>Action - Revitalize assets within the community housing portfolio to better meet future needs</p> <p>Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ In 2020, the City hired Colliers International to help draft a housing revitalization plan. In September 2020, a 10-year Housing Revitalization Plan was adopted. This will now form part of our long term strategic plans that provides clear and achievable goals to most effectively meet the current and future demand for social housing in Cornwall, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. The HRP's objective is to provide directions and recommendations for potential regeneration, refurbishment and repurposing of existing housing stock, as well as future acquisitions (including new builds). ⇒ Our new Project and Asset Management Coordinator will assist our housing providers with asset management plans, annual capital budgets (related to their asset management plans), information regarding green sustainability programs and how to access funding for these initiatives. This will also align with the development of the City of Cornwall's Climate Action Plan. ⇒ The City has also approved the creation of a Housing Regeneration Reserve Fund. Savings realized from the end or mortgages is added to the reserve and will be use for future new expansion of units or regeneration of existing buildings.

Community Vision #4

Community Vision #4	The supply of appropriate housing is enhanced
Objective	To encourage the development of appropriate and affordable new housing.

Summary

There are recognized issues regarding the current supply of housing stock, including condition, gaps and affordability. Despite modest growth in Cornwall SDG, there also remains a sustained need for affordable rental housing and there are signs that lack of suitable supply is starting to have an economic development impact on the community.

Facilitating solutions to housing needs both in the short and longer term is a critical component of any healthy, vibrant community. While general housing trends are evident, having a more detailed understanding of local market dynamics in Cornwall SDG would help to effectively plan for needs across the housing continuum and support the development of meaningful housing targets.

Some progressive land use and planning policies are already in place in Cornwall SDG to address housing needs but further consideration needs to be given to their consistency, alignment and implementation across the service area.

While senior government funding/programs have and will continue to help address local needs, the expanded use of innovative municipal tools and incentives would further assist in creating a more conducive environment for affordable housing development. This is especially true for the private sector where additional dialogue regarding housing opportunities, partnerships and incentives could help spur investment.



To support plan objective #4, the following strategies and actions will be pursued by the City and its community partners:

STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
1) Review and document priority housing needs within the regional housing market	a) Undertake a detailed needs study to determine and prioritize current and projected housing needs within the service area, both in the rental and ownership markets
2) Identify and expand regulatory tools to help foster affordable housing development	a) Engage in implementation of Official Plan policies that advance housing objectives/targets for the City and Counties b) Advocate for implementation of zoning provisions in the City and local Townships that support Official Building Plans and housing policies which encourage affordable housing development c) Streamline the process required to advance development approvals for affordable housing
3) Develop and use appropriate tools and incentives to help expand the supply of affordable housing	a) Establish a detailed inventory of surplus lands owned by various governments and public sector agencies which could present viable options for the creation of new affordable housing b) Dialogue with the local development industry on issues, opportunities and incentives for addressing local affordable housing needs c) Develop and expand tools/incentives to encourage private sector investment in affordable housing d) Explore opportunities to expand homeownership options for low/moderate income households
4) Broaden the support of the business community to advance affordable housing opportunities	a) Work with economic development officials at the City and Counties to develop strategies that promote the important links between housing, healthy communities and economic vitality

Community Vision #4

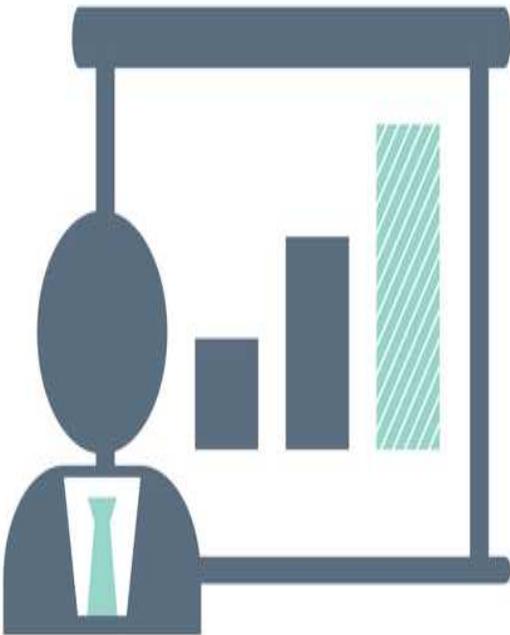
Measures & Outcomes

Measures

- ⇒ Time required for development approvals
- ⇒ Number of units developed on properties secured for affordable housing development
- ⇒ Number of affordable housing units created (rental & ownership)
- ⇒ Number of units created using municipal tools/ incentives
- ⇒ Average incentive provided per unit and as a percentage of the overall unit cost

Outcomes

- ⇒ Clarified current profile of local housing needs and priorities
- ⇒ Clarified regulatory framework that supports affordable housing objectives
- ⇒ Inventory of potential properties which could be used for development of affordable housing
- ⇒ Expanded tools to support affordable housing development
- ⇒ Expanded production of affordable rental and ownership housing
- ⇒ More households accessing the home ownership market



Community Vision #4 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S1	<p>Action - Undertake a detailed needs study to determine and prioritize current and projected housing needs within the service area, both in the rental and ownership markets</p> <p>Update ⇒ In 2020, the City hired Colliers International to help draft a housing revitalization plan. In September 2020, a 10-year Housing Revitalization Plan was adopted. This will now form part of our long term strategic plans that provides clear and achievable goals to most effectively meet the current and future demand for social housing in Cornwall, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. The HRP's objective is to provide directions and recommendations for potential regeneration, refurbishment and repurposing of existing housing stock, as well as future acquisitions (including new builds).</p>
S2	<p>Action - Identify and expand regulatory tools to help foster affordable housing development</p> <p>Update ⇒ As part of our new build, our Project Team includes staff from various city departments, in an effort to minimize the timeline for approvals and/or eliminate costs for external resources, which in turns allows us to invest these savings into the actual building.</p>
S3	<p>Action - Establish a detailed inventory of lands owned by various governments and public sector agencies which could present viable options for the creation of new affordable housing</p> <p>Update ⇒ In 2021, the Social Housing Division engaged with the various planning departments from the City and Counties to create an inventory of municipally owned vacant lands, including an interactive map and list of amenities located near those lands. We will merge this information with recommendations from our Housing Revitalization Plan which will assist us in addressing future areas for development of social and affordable housing. ⇒ Cornwall City Council has recently approved a site-specific Tax Increment Grant (TIG) to increase residential developments within the City which includes affordable housing units.</p>

Community Vision #4 - Annual Progress

Action items to be reviewed or were actioned in Year 2, include the following:

S3	<p>Action - Establish a detailed inventory of lands owned by various governments and public sector agencies which could present viable options for the creation of new affordable housing</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ We continue to provide Provincial funding, to Habitat for Humanity, towards the down payment of a house for an eligible family. With Year 4 - 6 OPHI/COCHI funding we would like to expand that program beyond Habitat for Humanity.</p>
S4	<p>Action - Broaden the support of the business community to advance affordable housing opportunities</p> <p>Update</p> <p>⇒ Cornwall's Mayor has created a Housing Task Force and this committee (which represent many key areas) meet monthly to discuss various housing related issues.</p>