



Municipal Shared Services Committee
Thursday, June 20, 2019 – 1:30 p.m.
Stratford City Hall – Auditorium, 1 Wellington Street, Stratford ON

REGULAR MINUTES

A meeting of the Municipal Shared Services Committee was held at
1:30 p.m. on June 20, 2019
Stratford City Hall – Auditorium, 1 Wellington Street, Stratford ON

Where appropriate, motions contained in the Municipal Shared Services Committee Minutes are considered recommendations to the affected municipalities.

Committee Members Present:

Deputy Mayor Martin Ritsma, City of Stratford (Chairperson)
Councillor Tom Clifford, City of Stratford
Councillor Bonnie Henderson, City of Stratford
Warden Walter McKenzie, County of Perth
Councillor Robert Wilhelm, County of Perth
Councillor Jim Aitcheson, County of Perth
Councillor Marg Luna, Town of St. Marys
Councillor Jim Craigmile – Town of St. Marys

Absent:

Mayor Al Strathdee, Town of St. Marys
Councillor Tony Winter, Town of St. Marys

Staff Present:

Rob Horne – CAO, City of Stratford
Michael Humble – Director of Corporate Services, City of Stratford
Kim McElroy – Director of Social Services, City of Stratford
Renato Pullia – CAO, County of Perth
Blaine Lucas – Director of EMS, County of Perth
Linda Becker – Provincial Offences Coordinator, County of Perth
Betty Jo Belton – Archivist – Stratford-Perth Archives, County of Perth
Andre Morin – Treasurer, Town of St. Marys

Kriss Snell – CAO, North Perth
Lizet Scott- Clerk, Perth South
*Theresa Campbell – Clerk/Acting CAO, Perth East
*Jeff Brick – CAO, West Perth

Also Present:

Dr. Miriam Klassen - Perth District Health Unit
Julie Pauli – Perth District Health Unit
Peter Bolland - Spruce Lodge Home for the Aged
John Kastner – General Manager, Stratford Perth Museum
Julia Merritt – CEO, Stratford Public Library

1.0 Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Municipal Shared Services Committee with quorum present was called to order by Committee Chair, Deputy Mayor Ritsma at 1:30 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Ritsma requested all attendees introduce themselves.

*Theresa Campbell and Jeff Brick now present (1:35 p.m.)

2.0 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

None disclosed.

3.0 Confirmation of Agenda

Moved by: Councillor Aitcheson
Seconded by: Councillor Wilhelm

That the Committee Agenda for the June 20, 2019 meeting be approved.
Carried.

4.0 Adoption of the Previous Minutes – March 21, 2019

Moved by: Councillor Wilhelm
Seconded by: Warden McKenzie

That the Municipal Shared Services Committee minutes dated March 21, 2019 be adopted as amended. Carried.

(changed seconder for adjournment from Councillor Wilhelm to Councillor Aitcheson)

5.0 Business Arising from the Previous Minutes

None identified.

6.0 Known/Expected Provincial Budget Impacts – Round Table Discussion

Rob Horne explained that the CAO's met to discuss the recent Provincial announcements. He would like to continue this informal discussion with attendees at this meeting to gain some additional insight on what is known and what might be coming. Renato Pullia circulated a spreadsheet listing all the known facts at this time. Mr. Pullia will continue to update this spreadsheet to act as an internal document moving forward to try and maintain a sense of potential impacts and areas of clarification. Please provide him with any information you receive and he will provide updated copies.

Peter Bolland – Spruce Lodge

Mr. Bolland outlined there has been one small increase, which is the annual level of care amount received; however they received only half of what they usually receive. Cuts have been made to the High Wage Transition funding, Structural compliance funding (capital reserve contribution) and Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) funding. Mr. Bolland stated that Spruce Lodge will manage for the balance of 2019 and will need to figure out how to address reductions going into 2020.

Dr. Miriam Klassen & Julie Pauli – Perth District Health Unit

Dr. Klassen reported that in April, the Government announced the modernization of public health, including 10 new regional public health entities, down from 34. In May, the Government reversed its retroactive cuts to public health, childcare and land ambulance. In June, Dr. Klassen was at the Public Health Annual General Meeting and it was announced that the Ministry was currently undertaking consultation regarding public health modernization. Renata Pullia noted that with the possible merger of the counties, there are still many budget unknowns in terms of the relative down-stream impacts of these changes.

Paramedic Services – Blaine Lucas

Blaine Lucas reported that funding was frozen to the 2018/19 rates, which reflects what it cost to run the ambulances in 2017. It is unclear if next year they are still working on 2018 rates, or is it based on 2019 rates. They will continue to operate in 2019 on \$256,000.00 less than what the original budget was approved at. If they receive funds from the Province, they will use that money to offset operating costs for 2020. Renata Pullia added that they are still waiting to receive details in writing from the Ministry.

Stratford-Perth Public Library – Julia Merritt

Julia Merritt reported there was a 50% operating funding cut to the two library service agencies (Southern Ontario Library Service and Ontario Library Service North). These are the agencies responsible for the inter-library loan service. This is the courier service that made the Perth County Information Network function, and moved approximately 80,000 items between the five libraries. With the 50% cut, the delivery service program has been cut and the expectation from the Province was that the libraries would use the

Canada Post libraries materials rate, which unfortunately for Perth County, would mean an additional \$200,000.00 in postage and staffing time. The main area the library community is working on right now is the changes to Bill 108, as libraries have been written out of the legislation related to development charges. There is still an opportunity for libraries to be included in the community benefits charges portion.

Stratford-Perth Museum – John Kastner

John Kastner reported that the museum is impacted minimally. The provincial CMOD fund will still be in place for 2019. It will be re-visited for the 2020 budget. The grant represents 4% of the museum's annual operating expenses. At this time, they foresee the funding to remain the same. The museum was working on two capital projects, both of which would be almost fully grant supported. They feel the likelihood of being successful with a provincial grant are diminishing and are applying for federal grant funding instead.

Provincial Offences – Linda Becker

Linda Becker reported that they have not received any updates. They are still waiting on previous legislative changes to be implemented. Licence re-instatement fees are increasing and escalating rather quickly.

Social Services – Kim McElroy

Kim McElroy reported that Ontario Works has seen the reduction of addiction service initiatives, which affects 21 municipalities. The 2019 Ontario Works budget remained the same as 2018. There will be changes to the Employment Support Program, however will not directly have an impact in 2020. Housing will be re-allocating funds differently and may not necessarily change the overall budget. Ms. McElroy has not received any details on early-years and childcare programs, but anticipate they will be looking at cuts for 2020.

Stratford-Perth Archives – Betty-Jo Belton

Betty-Jo Belton reported that the Archives do not receive any direct provincial funding. They are waiting to see what impact all of the changes has on their municipal sponsors and how that will subsequently impact their budget. She noted that the Provincial Archives Advisor position is provincially funded and they are concerned that this service may be cut. She is also concerned that if there are fewer teachers in classrooms, that this will impact their ability to bring students to visit the archives and use them as consultants on preparing curriculum material. She also noted that the Conservation Authorities have lost 50% of their funding for the flood management program.

7.0 Social Services – First Quarter Update – Report Dated June 20, 2019

Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, reviewed the report dated June 20, 2019 and was available for questions.

8.0 Stratford –Perth Archives – Report Dated June 20, 2019

Betty Jo Belton – Archivist, reviewed the report dated June 20, 2019 and was available for questions.

9.0 Provincial Offences Administration – Report Dated June 20, 2019

Linda Becker – Provincial Offences Coordinator, reviewed the report dated June 20, 2019 and was available for questions.

10.0 Paramedic Services – Report Dated June 20, 2019

Blaine Lucas – Director of EMS, reviewed the report dated June 20, 2019 and was available for questions.

Mr. Lucas updated the committee that in January 2019 they began an operational review of the paramedic service. It was brought to Council on May 2, 2019 with recommended changes for administrative support for education, professional standards, patient care/delivery and additional full-time paramedics, a community paramedic program focused on wellness for the agriculture community, emergency response vehicle, eight new administrative positions, 16 new jobs total. Staff is working on the difficult task of re-allocating funds and making internal decisions to work to the reduced budget.

Councillor Clifford inquired if the new positions being filled are sustainable in 2020 with the budget cut backs. Mr. Lucas explained that it will be, as there is approximately a 50/50 split between part-time and full-time positions in the paramedic services.

Rob Horne inquired if they needed to draw on reserves to make the current budget work? Mr. Lucas explained they used a combination of surplus from last year and

reduced a WSIB reserve contribution and funds for professional development. The goal was not to touch any funds dedicated to patient care or front-line service.

Mr. Lucas reported they have been working on cross-border billing and actively pursuing funding. They have secured approximately \$17,000.00 from Middlesex County for 2018. They are currently in active discussions with Waterloo, Huron and Oxford County. Renato Pullia added that the legislation states that they may enter into agreements, and are communicating with these municipalities to negotiate agreements.

Motion by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Wilhelm

**THAT all first quarter reports dated, June 20, 2019 be accepted as circulated;
Carried**

11.0 New Business

Warden Walter McKenzie thanked Rob Horne and expressed the committee's appreciation for Mr. Horne's commitment and contributions. The committee wishes him well in his retirement.

12.0 Next Meeting – Thursday, September 19, 2019 @ 1:30 p.m. – County of Perth

13.0 2019 Meeting Schedule

September 19 – County of Perth

November 21 – Budget Meeting, City of Stratford

December 19 – County of Perth

14.0 Adjournment

Motion by: Councillor Clifford

Seconded by: Warden McKenzie

That the meeting adjourn. Carried.

Time: 2:25 p.m.

DRAFT

To: Warden McKenzie and Members of Council
Date: Thursday, September 05, 2019
Prepared By: Betty Jo Belton, Manager of Archives Services / Archivist
Subject: MSSC Report for Stratford-Perth Archives – (CS – 2019)

Recommended Action:

THAT Perth County Council receives the “MSSC Report for Stratford–Perth Archives (CS – 2019)” report; and

THAT Council approve the report for submission to the MSSC Meeting of September 19, 2019.

Background Information:

This report provides an update on activities of the Collections and Reference teams, as well as public outreach, at the Stratford-Perth Archives to the end of July 2019.

Comments:

- **Collections Management and Development**

Work continues on cataloguing records of the Gaffney Construction Company, the Stratford General Hospital, the former Perth Regiment Museum’s archival collection and the local branch of the Canadian Federation of University Women. Loral Gingerich, the summer student at Archives this year, has made significant contributions to these projects by taking on the tough job of cleaning mould and animal feces from records that had been stored in less than optimal conditions before their arrival at the Archives.

- **Research and Reference**

In addition to responding to day to day requests for research assistance, Archives reference staff worked with a Grade 10 history class at Stratford Northwestern high school to research the lives of returning World War 1 soldiers for their Through Veterans Eyes Project. Photos of Hicks House in Mitchell were provided for an article called “If these walls could talk...” in this summer’s issue of HuronPerth Boomers magazine.

	2018 (12 months)	2019 (1st 7 months)
Researchers	1,042	554
Visitors	1,149	549
In-person Total	2,191	1,103
Mail	224	106
Telephone	653	337
Website & historypin	4,967	1,922
Other Total	5,844	2,365
Annual Total	8,035	3,468

- **Public Outreach**

94 local history articles written by all staff were published in the Mitchell, Listowel and Stratford newspapers and via the County Facebook page in January – July. The Archives annual exhibit, Parades, Picnics and Power: Celebrating 125 Years of Labour Day is now open. Community groups hosted several events in the Archives. The new Stratford and District Historical Society, for example, had a public ceremony in the gallery to celebrate their incorporation in March and a membership drive “Meet & Greet” event in May. Archives had a booth at the North Arts Council Community ARTS showcase in May. We enjoyed visits from both Perth County Council and the judges for Communities in Bloom who were assessing Stratford's heritage preservation efforts.

Connection to Strategic Plan:

GOAL 1: Ensure residents are being served by an efficient, cohesive, accessible and comprehensive service delivery model.

Reviewed by:

Recommended by the Department

Lori Wolfe, Director of Corporate Services/County Clerk

Recommended by the CAO

Renato Pullia, Chief Administrative Officer

To: Warden McKenzie and Members of Council
Date: September 5, 2019
From: Linda Becker, Manager of Court Services
Subject: POA Report for MSSC Meeting of September 19, 2019

Recommended Action:

THAT Perth County Council receives the “POA Report for MSSC”, and
 THAT Council approve the report for submission to the MSSC Meeting of September 19, 2019.

Background Information:

This report provides an update on activities at the Court Services (POA) office to the end of August 2019.

Comments:

The Provincial Offences court office is operating normally. Statistics to the end of August are as follows for each year:

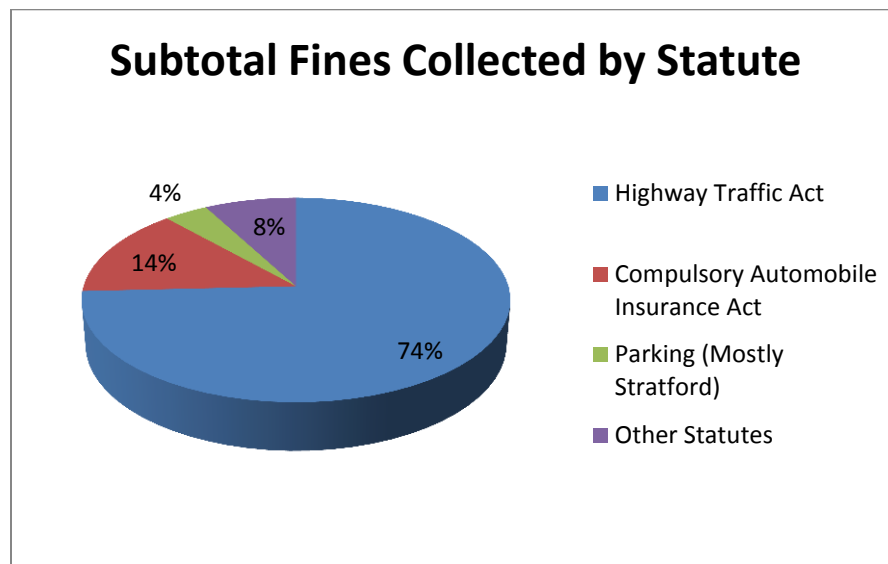
Year	Charges Filed	Fines Collected
2019	7,739	\$984,917
2018	6,306	\$975,509
2017	7,244	\$1,049,538
2016	8,343	\$1,112,808

Fine Revenue Distribution by Jurisdiction:

Fine revenue has been calculated to show the actual breakdown for each municipal partner.

Municipal Partner	2019 Budget Projection	Actuals as Calculated
Town of St. Marys	3.45 %	5.89%
City of Stratford	40.14%	31.06%
County of Perth	56.41%	63.04%

Fine Revenue Distribution by Statute:



Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications in receipt of this report as it is for information purposes.

Connection to the Strategic Plan:

GOAL 1: Ensure residents are being served by an efficient, cohesive, accessible and comprehensive service delivery model.

Reviewed by:

Lori Wolfe, Director of Corporate Services/County Clerk
Renato Pullia, Chief Administrative Officer

Report to Council

To: Warden McKenzie and Members of Council
Date: Thursday, September 5, 2019
Prepared By: Renato Pullia, Chief Administrative Officer
Subject: Paramedic Services Municipal Shared Services
Committee (MSSC) Sept 2019 Report

Recommended Action:

THAT Perth County Council receives the “Paramedic Services Municipal Shared Services Committee (MSSC) Sept 2019 Report”; and

THAT Council approves the report for submission to the Sept 19, 2019 meeting of the Municipal Shared Services Committee.

Comments:

In early 2019, the County conducted an Operational Review of the Paramedic Services department to ensure it was functioning as efficiently as possible, was positioned to successfully meet its mandated goals, and was aligned with the Corporate Strategic Plan. The Operational Review focused on three deliverables:

- a) Creation of a sustainable administrative structure; and
- b) Re-allocation of existing resources (within current funding envelope); and
- c) Assessment of any capital enhancements in response to service delivery pressures.

There were 20 challenges found that impacted the efficient administration of the department, including a 25% increase in call volume (2016-2018) and resource pressures for optimal emergency coverage.

Given the recent changes in management with Chief Lucas and Deputy Chief Eggleton’s resignations, Perth County formed a short-term (60-day) partnership with Medavie EMS Elgin Ontario (MEMSEO) to support the ongoing management of our County’s ground ambulance operations.

As of August 15, 2019, Malcolm (Mac) Gilpin, Managing Director for MEMSEO, stepped in as Perth County’s Director of Paramedic Services, along with Donald McLellan, General Manager for Medavie EMS, Chatham-Kent, in the role as Chief of Operations.

Together, Mac and Donald have quickly become immersed in our operations and been working closely with our County’s Paramedic management team of four full-time Commanders and four Acting Commanders – all of whom remain active and are readily

available to support the day-to-day issues of our frontline complement of 38 part-time and 58 full-time paramedics.

A full evaluation of our Paramedic Operations is underway, including evaluating the six full-time management positions that were previously posted. Once Council has the opportunity to consider the recommendations that will be brought forward in the coming weeks, further details about the direction of Perth County's Paramedic Services will be communicated with all relevant stakeholders.

A current paramedic spare ambulance has been put into service to ensure the County has appropriate surge and backup capabilities while the County waits for delivery of the new ambulance that was approved in the 2019 budget, with delivery date forecasted to be late December.

Provincial Funding

The County has received correspondence from the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care (MOHLTC) that the provincial cost sharing for land ambulance services for 2019 would be provided based on full 50/50 allocation, as originally budgeted. For 2020, the Ministry letter notes "In order to support LASG planning for the 2020 year, municipalities can expect continued growth. Final confirmation of 2020 funding will be provided through the 2020 budget process."

Connection to the Strategic Plan

Goal 1: ensure residents are being served by an efficient, cohesive, accessible and comprehensive service delivery model.

Reviewed by:

Renato Pullia, Chief Administrative Officer

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: September 19, 2019
To: Municipal Shared Services Committee
From: Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Re: 2nd Quarter Update for the Social Services Department (2019)

ONTARIO WORKS DIVISION

Discretionary Benefits Program Update

Title: Discretionary Benefits Program Update

Background: Discretionary benefits may be issued only to persons in receipt of assistance under the Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Act. Benefits eligible for this program include but are not limited to:

Health-related Benefits:

- Dental care under MCSS fee schedule for Ontario Works adults and ODSP dependent adults
- Dentures and repairs
- Prosthetic appliances such as back braces, surgical stockings and artificial limbs
- Wheelchairs and repairs for the portion not covered through the Assistive Devices Program
- Hearing aids and batteries
- Vision care for adults
- Prescription drugs where outside the drug formulary (e.g. Experimental drugs)
- Funerals and burials
- Surgical supplies
- Diabetic supplies
- Batteries for mobility aids
- Hearing aids
- Other medical equipment and devices as supported by a physician

Non Health-related Benefits:

- Travel and transportation that is not undertaken for health related purposes e.g. Re-location to another province
- Moving expenses

- Necessary repairs to home owned by applicants (in cases where without these repairs, there is a safety risk to the participant)
- Replacement or repair of essential household furniture and appliances
- Initial deposits required by landlords or utility companies
- Blood test in applications for support where the cost cannot be paid by some other means (e.g. If the court orders shared costs for OW recipients)
- Payments required to ensure continuation of hydro or heating service, or to prevent eviction

A copy of the updated policy is attached and all sections recommended for revision are highlighted for ease of review.

Analysis: A review of the 2018 funding envelope indicated that Discretionary Benefits were not being maximized and that there was room to add some additional items to the previous list as well as increase the maximums on items already covered to ensure that the City of Stratford Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) was keeping aligned with current costs. A request was put out to multiple CMSM's to ensure that our costs and items were reflective of other areas. Locally, funeral homes had contacted the CMSM to request that the policy expand the criteria to include Non-Social Assistance Recipients. (Non-SARS) as they were identifying this as a service that was not being met locally. Many municipalities did include this item in their discretionary policy. (Waterloo, Bruce, Grey, Huron) After a review of best practices this item was added with an eligibility of income and asset testing.

Financial Impact: The funding envelope for the discretionary benefits program is based on caseload at \$10 per case for the total Ontario Disability Support and Ontario Works each month. In 2018 the funding envelope was \$299, 590; this funding was not maximized by \$92,311.

The program costs are 100% Ministry funded. Ontario Works staff monitors this budget on a regular basis to ensure that funding is within projected levels. If the requests exceed the Ministry funded envelope the costs would be 100% Municipal dollars.

Outcome: THAT approval be given for the Director of Social Services to amend the maximum funding for items approved under the Discretionary Benefits Program as noted above, effective June 1, 2019.

AND THAT staff be authorized to make future amendments to this policy as needs are identified from the community, based on best practices, working within the funding maximums supplied by the Province of Ontario.

Ontario Works Stratford

SECTION: Benefits	EFFECTIVE DATE:
SUBJECT: Discretionary Benefits	DATE APPROVED:
SUPPORTING DIRECTIVE: 7.2 Health Benefits.	AUTHORITY: OW Manager
	DATE REVISED: February 1, 2019

POLICY:

Discretionary benefits are provided on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Administrator of Ontario Works to:

1. Persons in receipt of assistance under the Ontario Works Act, including children on whose behalf Temporary Care Assistance is being paid; or
2. Persons in receipt of income support under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act
3. Persons not in receipt of social assistance who are deemed financially eligible (funeral costs only)

The amount provided for discretionary benefits is determined by the Administrator.

The items provided under discretionary benefits are:

- dental services for adults
- vision care for adults
- prosthetic appliances
- moving expenses
- travel and transportation that is not for health-related purposes
- funerals and burials
- general household furnishings and repairs
- payments to ensure continuation of hydro or heating services/prevent eviction
- any other special service, item or payment authorized by the Director

Note: The maximum benefit for this program is \$500 annually per individual per benefit type. There is a maximum of \$500 in place per benefit unit. This benefit can be used for personal items unless otherwise noted in the policy. (Please see CHPI procedure for the maximums for former CSUB items (moving/storage, furniture, emergency energy) that are now being issued from discretionary benefits.)

APPLICATION OF POLICY:

Dental Care

Effective January 1999, the CMSM entered into an Agreement with the Ontario Dental Association to deliver the dental program. Dental cards are provided monthly with the client cheque or direct bank statement to be detached and taken to the dentist of the client's choice

to obtain dental benefits as noted below. The dentist sends the billing to Accerta claims and the municipality receives a billing monthly from this organization. Children on a benefit unit under 18 years of age are covered by the Healthy Smiles Program managed by Service Ontario.

Dental Care for Adults – OW Clients and ODSP Dependent Adults Only

- Emergency dental services to relieve pain or for medical or therapeutic reasons. These services are covered in the ODA guide as “Emergency”.
- Dental care which supports the person’s employability or participation requirements

Dentures

Participants requiring dentures must submit a written estimate for the cost of the procedure and confirm that they can fund any balance over the listed maximums below.

Full dentures	\$1000
Partial dentures (each plate)	\$500 (per plate)
Repairs	\$120
Realignments	\$120 (per plate)
Root Canals	\$1000
Wisdom Tooth Removal	\$1000

Orthodontic procedures and cosmetic dental surgery will not be covered.

Vision Care – OW clients and ODSP Dependent Adults Only

Dependent children can receive a new pair of frames and lenses every 3 years and at each change in prescription. Consideration may also be given for repair/replacement of glasses due to breakage, damage or loss for this age group. Maximum funding for frames is \$45.00.

Vision care may be provided to adults for eye glasses, repairs or replacement when necessary as a result of a significant change in a prescription or when doing so would support the person’s employability or participation requirements.

Standard benefits	New pair of frames and lenses every 3 years
Replacement due to loss, damage or negligence	Only in exceptional circumstances
Replacement lenses due to a change in prescription	New lenses anytime there is a change in prescription. Where possible, the lenses should be placed in the existing frames.
Repairs	Proof of the need for repairs is required. Glasses should be repaired if the cost is less than replacement.

The cost is subject to the following maximum amounts effective June 1, 2015:

- Single vision \$200

- Bifocals \$225

Should more expensive lenses (tints, photo-gray, etc.) and frames be selected, the recipient is responsible for paying the difference in cost, including the difference in dispensing fees, directly to the supplier.

OW will not typically pay for contact lenses unless they are required as a result of a medical condition that has been documented by an optometrist, ophthalmologist or general practitioner.

Recipients requiring vision care items must contact the Ontario Works office to receive a Vision Care form which is to be taken to the Optometrist of their choice. Once completed by the Optometrist, the form is to be submitted to the OW office for approval. Generally, if a recipient has purchased lenses and/or frames without the prior approval of their Caseworker, no reimbursement shall be made.

Prosthetic Appliances

Any device that replaces or strengthens a bodily function is considered a prosthesis. Prosthetic appliances may include such items as back braces, surgical stockings, artificial limbs and inhalers. The recommendation of an approved health professional and an estimate of cost is required. The maximum must be no more than \$500 annually.

The consumer contribution for items funded under the Assistive Devices Program (ADP) is fundable up to the program maximums listed above.

Transportation

Travel and transportation for non-health related purposes is a discretionary benefit and may be provided when the Administrator considers travel and transportation reasonable and appropriate.

Examples:

1. Transportation for a recipient to return to their home outside of Ontario.
2. Transportation for a recipient to another municipality if the person has obtained employment

Transportation will be provided via the most economical means possible. If the participant uses a personal vehicle or compensates a friend for providing the transportation, an allowance of forty (40) cents per kilometer will be applied.

Moving Expenses – OW clients only

This includes the cost of moving household furniture and effects from one place of residence to another. Estimates from movers must be provided. Approval can be for no more than \$250 maximum.

Funerals and Burials

Funeral applications will be completed by a designated worker at the Stratford CMSM office. Inquiries should be directed to the designated worker.

The provision of funeral services is considered discretionary. There are a number of factors to consider when determining eligibility for funeral benefits, which include the deceased person's income, assets, and residency within Perth County. Income and asset maximums are determined by the deceased person's household composition prior to death. Income and assets of spouses will be considered.

Social Assistance Recipients (SARS) - If the deceased was in receipt of Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program Benefits, then eligibility for assistance has been established and OW will assist with the funeral services in the absence of sufficient life insurance policies or trust funds. Some trust funds are exempt as assets when determining eligibility for Social Assistance. This exemption does not apply to the determination of eligibility for funeral benefits in Perth County. If total assets (including the funds held in trust) exceed the Allowable Asset Levels for Ontario Works Discretionary and Non-Shareable Benefits, then no eligibility for funeral coverage exists.

Funeral benefits should be issued in accordance with the current Funeral Fee Schedule for Social Assistance Recipients (Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program.)

Current Fee Schedule January 2019:

Adult	\$3,535
Child older than 8 years	\$3,535
Child 5 to 8 years	\$1,000
Child 2 to 5 years	\$ 750
Stillborn to 2 years	\$ 500

Plus additional actual costs:

Cemetery plot

Clergy Honourarium (max. \$100)

Opening and closing

Cremation

Outer shell or vault (if required by cemetery)

Oversize casket

Additional charges increased in contagious/hazardous cases where determined by coroner

Mileage outside of area \$0.35 per kilometer

Grave markers, as required by a cemetery and 'perpetual care' charges may also be approved.

Tombstones will typically not be approved. Generally speaking, no additional contributions by a family member for a more expensive funeral will be allowed.

Non-SARS – Non-Social Assistance Recipients who meet the eligibility criteria will be eligible for assistance with the cost of direct burial or cremation to the maximum of \$2250 for people older than 8 years of age and adults. Should the family be claiming financial hardship, the next-of-kin or the funeral home of the deceased will contact the Social Services office. The worker will use current household income limits for the City of Stratford Community

Homelessness Prevention Initiative Guidelines (CHPI), and an allowable asset level of \$5,000, to determine eligibility for Funeral benefits. Assets that can be readily converted into cash, accessible life insurance policies (where the estate of the deceased is the beneficiary), trust funds, and prepaid funerals will be considered. Assets that cannot be readily converted into cash such as vehicles and property may be considered as a resource for revenue recovery. Family composition prior to the deceased member's passing is to be used. Limits in the chart below are based on gross income.

Non-SARS Household Income Limits (January 25, 2019)	
Single	27,000
Two People	31,500
Three People	37,000
Four or more People	41,500

Unclaimed Bodies - Under the Anatomy Act (section 11), municipalities are responsible for the burial of unclaimed bodies at the expense of the Corporation. Upon receipt of a Warrant from the Coroner, the worker will arrange burial services for the body and provide the Coroner with the date and location of the burial. Funeral services will be provided by the funeral home contacted by the Coroner or Police. Note: unclaimed bodies cannot be cremated. The cost of direct burial to the maximum of \$2250 for people older than 8 years of age and adults.

In cases where a recipient resides in one geographic area and dies in another, the delivery agent in the place in which they ordinarily resided and received assistance is responsible for the funeral and burial costs. A person who is experiencing homelessness is deemed to reside in the geographic area in which the person received assistance. If the family wants the body returned for burial in another geographic area, the OW office where the person dies is responsible for the costs of preparing the body and for any transportation costs. The delivery agent to whom the body is returned is responsible for burial and cemetery costs.

OW can recover any amount paid for a funeral and burial or cremation from any person or organization liable for the payment of these expenses. For instance, OW may obtain an Assignment of Benefits from CPP or OAS for which the deceased was eligible or may make a claim against the estate.

General Household Furnishings – OW clients only

Household furnishing essential to the family may be considered under this program. Examples of these include fridge, stove, washing machine and bedroom furnishings. Estimates must be received and a maximum of \$250 per family unit can be approved.

Household Repairs – OW clients only

A payment for necessary repairs for the preservation and maintenance of a dwelling place may be paid where not providing it would be detrimental to the health and well-being of the

participant and dependents. (eg. furnace) This payment is once, life-time and can be approved to a maximum of \$2,000 with administrator's approval.

Payments to Maintain Households – OW clients only

Initial deposits required by landlords or others for hydro and heating, where necessary to connect service and payments for continuation of hydro or heating services or to prevent eviction.

Tenant's Insurance – OW clients only

Initial deposit required by the Social Services Housing Division for mandatory tenant insurance to reside in a public housing unit.

Identification – OW clients only

Funding assistance to obtain initial identification documents, delayed registration of birth fees and the replacement cost (once life-time) for birth certificates, and social insurance numbers, will be available to Ontario works applicants and dependants included in the benefit unit. Clients submit completed application forms for the required document, the caseworker will request the payment and send the application to Service Canada and Service Ontario. The requested documents will be sent from Service Canada and Service Ontario directly to the client.

REFERENCES:

- Section 74(4) of the *Ontario Works Act*
- Section 55 and 59 of OW Regulation 134/98
- OW Directive 7.1 - 7.8 inclusive

EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE DIVISION

Huron and Perth Children Charter of Rights Project

Title: Huron and Perth Children Charter of Rights Project

Background: Kids First Huron and Perth Steering Committee has committed to the development of a local Charter of Rights.

"Kids First Huron Perth is a consortium of 69 local agencies and professionals committed to providing an integrated system of prenatal, healthy child development, early identification and intervention, and early learning and care services for children under the age of six and their families who reside in Huron and Perth counties. Kids First also serves as the local system planning body for children and provides advice to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children programs, the EarlyON Child and Family Centres, and the Preschool Speech Language System.

Established in September 2008, over 125 individuals now sit on one or more of the Kids First committees, networks and working groups. Kids First endorses the Province of Ontario's vision for early years and child care – All children and families have access to a range of high quality,

inclusive and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are child- and family-centred and contribute to children's learning, development and well-being.

Members of Kids First Value:

- Children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential
- Programs and services that are child and family centred
- Programs and services that are of high quality
- Strong partnerships
- The innovative use of resources" (Kids First 2018 Accomplishments Report, 2018)

There is an annual Community Forum held to present the current accomplishments, and announce any new initiatives and/or guest speakers.

At the October 2018, Community Forum, a project was launched to develop a Huron and Perth Charter of Rights of Children and Youth. Working groups that are age specific were established to lead the project implementation.

Analysis: Based on our completed research and effective use of best practices, the working group has developed a project development time line. The City of Stratford Research and Program Analyst provided suggested sample sizes required to have a 95% confidence level in the responses collected by children using Census data.

The implementation phase has commenced with a pilot project from the 0-4 year-old working group. A training model was then designed by the 0-4 working group to deliver to front line staff; this was presented by the Early Years Coordinator to Huron and Perth County staff; allowing them to become the first "champions" to share this pilot. In partnership with Perth Care For Kids, they were able to document and photograph specific instances where the rights of the children were present and easily identifiable. Consent and permissions were supplied to parents beforehand, as well an overview letter that outlined the goals and overall objectives of the project.

Once the pilot is completed (Huron County is covering Preschool ages, and Perth is covering Infant/Toddler ages in the pilot), the larger Charter committee will validate the documentation and information gathered to further refine the process and make the steps to increase access and awareness of children's rights throughout both counties. A marketing campaign will follow once the validation stage is complete with the goal of having this program recognized across all ages of the child care and school aged system.

Financial Impact: There is no overall financial impact on the budget. The expenses for this project are covered by the 2019 Early Years and Child Care operating budget. Huron County and the City of Stratford are sharing any costs where it is deemed appropriate. An estimate of the cost of the Project is \$9,000 to cover the costs of the materials and marketing.

Outcome: THAT the report titled "Huron and Perth Charter of Rights of Children and Youth Project" be received for information.

Community-Based Early Years and Child Care Capital Program (CBCP) in Monkton

Title: Community-Based Early Years and Child Care Capital Program (CBCP) in Monkton

Background: A Request for Community-Based Early Years and Child Care Capital Program (CBCP) Funding Submissions was issued by the Ministry of Education, due January 19, 2018. Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs) submitted requests for the Province to review. This provincial Capital project was directed to support the need for child care and EarlyON spaces in communities that did not have space within local schools. This program offered an opportunity to meet the needs of families living in rural areas of Ontario.

The City of Stratford's Early Years and Child Care Division submitted a request for funding for a program to be located in Monkton and be operated by the Municipality of North Perth for up to fifteen (15) new child care spaces. In April, 2018, correspondence was received from the Ministry of Education that indicated it had completed its review of the community-based child care (project #1) and EarlyON Child and Family Centre "EarlyON" (project #2) capital project submissions. The two projects identified in the submissions by Stratford were approved.

Following this notification the Provincial election period caused these submissions to be postponed. Therefore, the initiation of this project was delayed.

Upon approval to initiate this project the notice stipulated conditions that needed to be met in order to proceed forward with contracting a Service Provider.

These stipulated conditions were as follows:

- Signed 2018-2019 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centre (OEYCFC) Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA)
- Signed attestation form; and
- Floor plan approval letter issued by the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

The above conditions were satisfied through documents that were submitted electronically by the Manager of Early Years and Child Care to the Ministry of Education (as per the Ministry instructions and by the deadline of March 1, 2019). On March 4, 2019, an amended Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) was received and final approval for funding was to be completed once the Ministry received executed signed copies of the Amended TPA electronically. The TPA was submitted March 15, 2019.

On June 6, 2019, a notice by the Province was received to proceed with the CBCP projects and agreements with the service providers.

Analysis: The Ministry has now issued the Approval to Proceed (ATP) on the CBCP projects. There would be an agreement detailing the amount of funding and conditions prepared to be executed between the City of Stratford and the Municipality of North Perth. The funding would be flowed in stages for the project. All tendering, liability, and compliance that the Ministry of Education requirements are met for the completion of this project would be the responsibility of the Municipality of North Perth.

Financial Impact: There is no financial impact to the Municipalities. The project is 100% Provincially and Federally funded.

Outcome: THAT the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director of Social Services be authorized to enter into an agreement to allow the transfer of funds to the

Municipality of North Perth to complete the Elma Logan Recreation Complex Capital Project in Monkton.

HOUSING DIVISION

10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys – 2018 Annual Report and update on the 5-Year Review

Title: 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys – 2018 Annual Report and update on the 5-Year Review

Background: As the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for the City of Stratford, County of Perth, and the Town of St. Marys, the City of Stratford is responsible for administering provincially mandated affordable and community housing, homelessness response and housing stability programs. As part of this mandate, the City of Stratford has also facilitated the development and implementation of a 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan (from 2014-2024) for the Service Manager area.

In accordance with Ontario Regulation 367/11 under the Housing Services Act, 2011 (sections 8.1 and 9.1), the City of Stratford as the CMSM is required to:

- Produce an annual report that outlines the previous calendar year's activities, accomplishments and outcomes; and
- Share the report with the public and the Province by June 30 of each year.

The original plan and previous Annual Reports (2014-2017) are available on the City's website at: [City of Stratford, Housing Division webpage link](#).

Analysis: 2018 Annual Report for the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan:

The attached Annual Report highlights the achievements made in the fourth year of the implementation of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. It captures these achievements according to the current five strategic priorities:

- Coordination and Collaboration
- Data Gathering and Sharing
- Affordable Housing Options
- Eviction and Homelessness Prevention
- Homelessness Reduction

5-Year Review of the 10-Year Plan - Update

As shared in a previous report (**SOC18-0007**), the 10-Year Plan must be reviewed every 5 years, according to the Housing Services Act (2011). This review would ensure that the Plan continues to reflect local needs, address local challenges, and align with the work being done nationally and provincially. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the current vision and strategic priorities and make adjustments as necessary. Community consultations have taken place to gather feedback and input for this review.

The initial deadline for the completion of the 5-year review was June 30, 2019. However, in correspondence addressed to Service Managers on April 3, 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has extended the deadline to December 31, 2019.

Financial Impact: There is no new or additional financial impact for the City associated with this report.

Outcome: THAT the 2018 Annual Report on the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys be received for information.

2018
ANNUAL
REPORT

YEAR 5



A 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan

STRATFORD, PERTH COUNTY, AND ST. MARYS • 2014-2024





A Message from the Director of Social Services

I am pleased to share with you the 2018 Annual Progress Report on the *10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys*. This report highlights our communities' achievements in the past year as we continue to work towards our collective vision of ensuring that all people have access to safe, suitable, and affordable housing.

In the fifth year of this Plan, some of our accomplishments included:

- Breaking ground on a number of new construction projects in Stratford, St. Marys and Listowel which, upon completion in 2019, will bring an additional 47 affordable housing units into our communities;
- The official launching of two new programs (Supported Housing of Perth Program and the Salvation Army Housing Help & Voluntary Trusteeship Program) designed to provide housing support to individuals experiencing homelessness based on their level of need; and
- Conducting a homeless enumeration which provided both individual and systems-level information on the scope and nature of homelessness locally.

In 2018, we also initiated activities to improve our communities' capacity to increase local housing solutions. Some of these activities, such as preparing for the implementation of a homelessness management information system and moving towards a quality By-Name-List, were integral for developing a coordinated, local response to homelessness. Other activities were undertaken in order to enhance the capacity of our social housing sector. These included beginning the process of conducting Operational Reviews and planning for the End of Operating Agreements with local non-profit and co-operative housing providers.

These achievements are the result of strong partnerships with local service providers, community members, and the Warden, Mayors and Municipal Councillors. I would like to take the opportunity to thank these key stakeholders for the work they have done in responding to homelessness and promoting housing stability locally. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication of City of Stratford staff who invested their time and energy into facilitating the implementation of the *10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan*.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Mockler
Acting Director of Social Services

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Introduction

The 2018 Annual Report highlights the achievements made in Year 5 of the *10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys (2014–2024)*. These achievements are a result of the commitment and passion of local services providers, community members, municipal partners and City of Stratford staff, all of whom played an important role in furthering our communities' vision that:

“All people will have access to housing that is safe and suitable for their needs, and will have supports that enable them to remain stable in their homes. People may become homeless, or face the possibility of losing their homes, but supports will be in place to help them remain in their housing or to locate to a permanent alternative as quickly as possible, in the community of their choice.”

The plan is divided in to five strategic priority areas:

1	Coordination and Collaboration	2	Data Gathering and Sharing
3	Affordable Housing Options	4	Eviction and Homelessness Prevention
5	Homelessness Reduction		



2018 Objectives, Achievements, and Outcomes

1

COORDINATION & COLLABORATION:

To improve coordination in the delivery of housing services and supports, through systems orientation.



VI-SPDAT is a pre-screening, or triage tool, designed to assess the health and social needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in order to match them with appropriate support and housing interventions. Once a VI-SPDAT is completed, the individual is added to the local By-Name-List (BNL).

The **SPDAT** is an assessment tool designed to identify areas in the life of an individual or family experiencing homelessness where support is most likely necessary in order to avoid housing instability.

A **By-Name-List** (BNL) is a real-time, dynamic list of all people experiencing homelessness in the community. Rather than being chronological, a BNL orders individuals for services and supports based on level of acuity; individuals with the highest needs are prioritized for services first.



The City of Stratford Social Services Department integrated intake and reception processes for the Housing, Ontario Works, and Early Years & Child Care divisions in order to better coordinate access to social services, reduce duplication of information, and improve client experiences.



Multiple community agencies were engaged as access points where individuals complete the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (**VI-SPDAT**) in order to streamline referrals to housing support and homelessness programs through the local **By-Name-List** (BNL).



A number of training and professional development opportunities were provided to staff from the Social Services Department and other community agencies to enhance the delivery of homelessness and housing support programming including:

- Using housing-based case management and assertive engagement techniques
- Using Motivational interviewing
- Administering the Service Prioritization Decision Assessment Tool (**SPDAT**)
- Working with Indigenous peoples in culturally appropriate ways
- Using trauma-informed practices
- Understanding the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA), and rent-geared-to-income (RGI) calculations
- Understanding the *Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* (RTA) and Human Rights



2 DATA GATHERING & SHARING:

To enhance the capacity for gathering data and sharing information between service providers.



In preparation for the adoption of **HIFIS 4**, the Social Services Department investigated best practices in other communities, engaged relevant stakeholders including the City of Stratford IT Department, and developed an implementation plan.



In partnership with the *Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys Alliance to Prevent Homelessness and Enhance Housing Solutions*, the City of Stratford Social Services Department conducted a **homeless enumeration** in order to; 1) Understand the broader nature and scope of homelessness locally; 2) Enhance programming that addresses the local need; and 3) Connect individuals experiencing homelessness with services and supports. You can view the results on page 9.



Work continued towards developing a quality By-Name-List (BNL) to ensure that information about individuals experiencing homelessness locally was accurate, reliable, and consistently updated.



A survey was administered to landlords, property owners, and property managers throughout the Service Manager area in order to:

- Gain a more comprehensive understanding of the private rental market locally (including types, availability, and affordability of units);
- Understand the barriers and challenges landlords face when renting and maintaining properties in Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys; and
- Gather information on useful tools and incentives to support local landlords.

The results of the survey are on page 9.

HIFIS 4 is a software program designed to track and support individuals who are experiencing homelessness. This software allows organizations across the homelessness-serving sector to share information in a coordinated way while maintaining confidentiality and privacy for individuals.

A **homeless enumeration** is a data collection initiative that counts and gathers information on individuals experiencing homelessness during a specific period of time in order to understand the nature and scope of homelessness in communities. It is not a census and is considered an undercount of the number of individuals experiencing homelessness.



3

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS:

To increase access to affordable housing options.



Construction continues on the Britannia Street project.



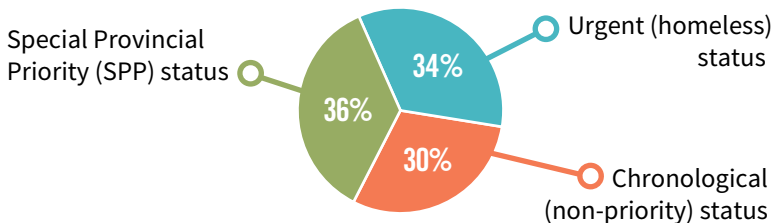
Construction began on Phase 1 of the Britannia St. Affordable Housing Project in Stratford. This building will include a total of 35 new affordable rental units, providing a mixture of 1 and 2-bedroom apartments, and will increase the availability of wheelchair accessible and barrier free units in the community.



Through the capital component of the Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP), construction began on three new affordable housing 4-plexes in Perth County (Listowel) and the Town of St. Marys. These properties will provide supported housing for 12 households who were experiencing homelessness.



118 applicants were housed from the centralized waitlist in 2018. The status of the applicants:



Special Provincial Priority (SPP) status is assigned to a household where a member of that household is experiencing or has experienced abuse by a person with whom they live or have lived. As per the Housing Services Act, 2011, SPP status households are ranked highest on the social housing centralized waitlist regardless of their date of application. Households experiencing extenuating circumstances (including homelessness) can be deemed **urgent status**, placing them higher on the waitlist over other chronological (non-priority) status households.



Seven (7) loans were extended to local households in 2018 through the Affordable Home Ownership Program.



15 households were supported through the Survivors of Domestic Violence – Portable Housing Benefit Pilot Program.



As Service Manager, the City of Stratford Social Services Department completed operational reviews of the 11 non-profit and co-operative housing providers it oversees in order to gain a better understanding of how to support the sustainability of local social housing providers.



The municipally owned and operated Perth and Stratford Housing Corporation (PSHC) held a series of coffee hours inviting tenants to:

- Share their ideas and suggestions on how resident services and supports on PSHC properties can be improved; and
- Learn more about the new Smoke-Free and Cannabis Growth & Usage policies.

9 coffee hours 
were attended by a total of
84 tenants



4

EVICTION & HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION:

To focus homelessness prevention on the individuals and families who are at greatest risk.



The City of Stratford's Social Services Outreach Worker Program supported 85 households experiencing housing instability.



Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) funds were used to assist:

118
households with
moving costs



157
households with last
month's rent deposit



113
households with
rent arrears



123
households with
utility arrears



In its first year, the Salvation Army's Housing Help & Voluntary Trusteeship Program supported 160 households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness with finding and maintaining housing. Two (2) of those households also received support with money management in the form of a voluntary trusteeship.



The Social Services Department designed training materials on shelter diversion for internal staff and community partners in order to improve the delivery of emergency housing services through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) Program.



5

HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION:

To transform the provision of emergency accommodation in Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys to focus on helping individuals and families return to permanent housing.



The City of Stratford Social Services Department renewed the community's commitment to the 20,000 Homes Campaign Collaborative (renamed Built for Zero-Canada) which is a national change movement providing intensive and community-specific mentorship, coaching and support to ending chronic homelessness.



The Supported Housing of Perth Program (SHOPP) officially launched. Based on Housing First principles, **high-acuity** households experiencing homelessness were provided with intensive wraparound supports and case management to find and maintain housing. The program also provided support to landlords participating in the program (e.g. compensation for repairs beyond normal wear and tear, timely rent payments, etc.).

As of December 2018:

High-acuity refers to a household's score on the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), a triage tool that assesses the health and social needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. A high-acuity score represents a higher depth of need; that is, more complex, co-occurring issues that are likely to impact overall housing stability.

30

households were actively participating in the program



private market landlords had been recruited into the program and provided 6 units to participants

15

households had secured permanent housing:



9 households were housed in the Perth and Stratford Housing Corporation (social housing)

6 households found housing in the private market



The City of Stratford's Intensive Housing and Community Outreach Coordinator provided intensive case management to 11 **high-acuity** households experiencing homelessness and supported them in finding and maintaining housing.



257 households were provided with emergency accommodation in 2018. On average, each household accessed 7.5 nights of emergency accommodation.

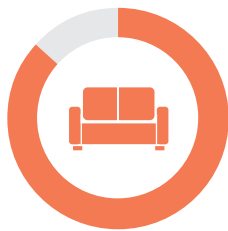


Key Findings

Homeless Enumeration 2018

A total of 101 individuals (adults, youth, and children) were identified as experiencing homelessness during the enumeration period of May 15-18, 2018. This number is based on 79 respondents who completed surveys during the enumeration period¹.

Of those 79 respondents:



78% were provisionally accommodated (23% in provincial institutions)



64% were experiencing **chronic homelessness**



28% were unaccompanied youth (aged 16-24)



11% were families with dependent aged children



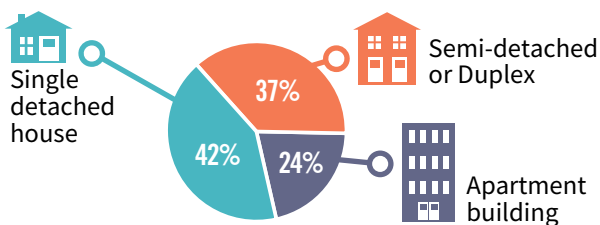
69% identified a relationship breakdown (i.e. conflict and abuse) as a significant reason for their loss of housing

Chronic homelessness refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year.

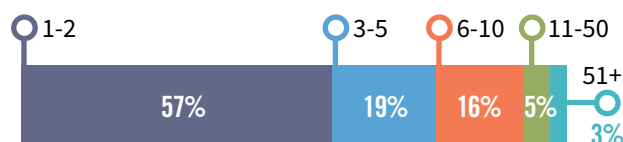
Landlord Engagement Survey 2018

76 surveys were completed

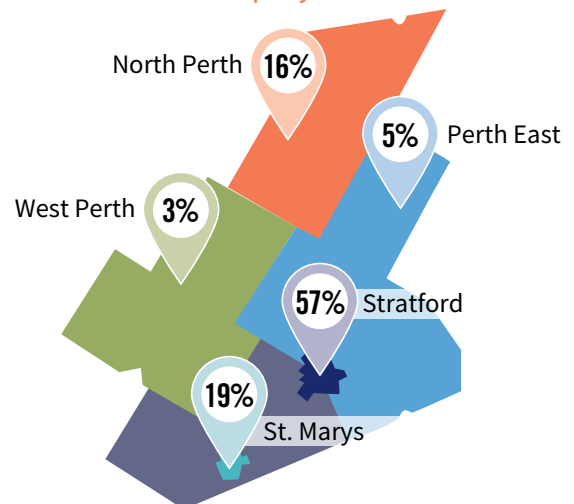
Rental Property Types



Number of Units in Properties



Rental Property Locations



¹ A full report is available on the City of Stratford website.

Moving Forward into 2019



The coming year marks an important milestone in the implementation of the *10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys*. In order to ensure the Plan continues to reflect local needs and address local challenges while also aligning with the work being done at the provincial and national levels, a comprehensive review will be conducted. Undertaking this process provides an opportunity to reflect on the current vision and strategic priorities and make adjustments as necessary. In doing so, we can make sure the Plan continues to be a roadmap for our communities for how we respond to homelessness and support housing stability for those who live here.



**City of Stratford**

Social Services Department – Housing Division

82 Erie Street, Stratford, ON N5A 2M4

Phone: 519-271-3773 ext. 200 Toll-Free: 1-800-669-2948

Fax: 519-273-7191

Please visit our website at www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/housing.asp
to review or download past reports.

ADMINISTRATION

Community Income Tax Clinics

Title: Community Income Tax Clinics

Background: The City of Stratford has coordinated annual Income Tax Clinics for low income residents since 1989. Originally operating under the auspices of the Leisure Advisory Council and Community Services Department, responsibility for Income Tax Clinic coordination was assumed by the Social Services Department in 2007.

Analysis: The 2019 Income Tax took place on March 19, 2019, with services provided free of charge by three local accounting firms including, BDO Canada LLP, Famme and Company and Mitchell and Pearce Professional Corporation.

The firms provided the services of a total of 10 accountants, who met individually with 144 low income individuals or couples to complete and submit their 2018 tax return. The clinics are provided at various locations including City Hall, 82 Erie Street and the BDO office on Hibernia Street. Eligible residents include individuals with an annual income of less than \$18,000, and couples with an annual income of less than \$28,000.

Preparation for the clinic by Social Services staff commences in January, when firms are contacted to ascertain their willingness to participate. Clinic information is circulated through department staff, local agencies, offices of the MP and MPP, and the Town Crier. All appointments are booked and confirmed by social services department staff.

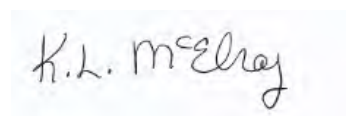
Since its inception, this program has served 3647 residents, averaging an annual participation rate of 120 clients per year. For the period 2007 to 2019, an annual average of 177 individuals and couples were served.

Financial Impact: As indicated, all professional accounting services are provided free of charge to participants. There is no impact on the budget.

Outcome: **THAT the report on annual Community Income Tax Clinic activities and outcomes be received for information.**

THAT Social Services issue a thank you to all businesses that offered and provided their support and services.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kim McElroy,
Director of Social Services – Consolidated Municipal Service Manager Stratford