Court File No.: CV-25-00000750-0000

ONTARIO
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

BETWEEN:

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO

Applicants

- and -

PERSONS UNKNOWN AND TO BE ASCERTAINED

Respondents

APPLICATION UNDER Rule 14.05 of the *Rules of Civil Procedure*

RESPONDING RECORD

VOLUME 4 OF 4

WATERLOO REGION COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES
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Committee (Intervener)

July 9, 2025

Court File No. CV-25-00000750-0000

ONTARIO
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

B E T W E E N:

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO

and

PERSONS UNKNOWN AND TO BE ASCERTAINED

RESPONDING RECORD

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Court File No. CV-25-00000750-0000

ONTARIO

SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

B E T W E E N:

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO

Applicant

and

PERSONS UNKNOWN AND TO BE ASCERTAINED

Respondents

AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS

I, Lynn Kubis, of the City of Kitchener, in the Region of Waterloo, in the Province of Ontario, AFFIRM AND SAY:

1. I am the Office Manager at Waterloo Region Community Legal Services. As such, I have knowledge of the matters hereinafter deposed to, except where stated to be based on information and belief. As to those matters, I verily believe them to be true.

REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

2. On December 15, 2021, a Regional Municipality of Waterloo Council meeting was held and a motion was passed to approve a Policy for responding to unauthorized use of Region-owned or occupied land. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "A"** are excerpts from the December 15, 2021 Addendum Agenda that relate to this issue.

3. On December 3, 2024, a Regional Municipality of Waterloo Council meeting was held and a presentation was made on CSD-HOU-24-020, 2024 Point-in-Time Count Preliminary Overview. An update was provided on the Point-in-Time count of all homeless individuals in Waterloo Region on October 22, 2024. The report highlighted that 2,371 individuals were estimated to be experiencing homelessness in Waterloo Region. This was an increase from 1,085 individuals counted in 2021. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "B"** is the December 3, 2024 Council Addendum Agenda that relates to this issue.

4. On April 23, 2025, a Regional Municipality of Waterloo Council meeting was held and a motion was passed to approve PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "C"** is the April 23, 2025 Council Addendum Agenda that relates to this issue.

5. On May 6, 2025, a Regional Municipality of Waterloo Council meeting was held and a presentation was made to Council on the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness Mid-Year Update. Discussed in this update was the Region of Waterloo's fourth point in time count from October

22, 2024. Page 37 contains a chart comparing the counts between 2021 and 2024. It shows an increase of people living in encampments or living rough from 412 in September 2021 to 1,009 in October 2024. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "D"** is the May 6, 2025 Addendum Agenda that relates to this issue.

NEWS ARTICLES

6. On June 10, 2025, The Trillium posted an article titled: "How Metrolinx's plan to deliver European-style train service went off the rails". A copy of the article is attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "E"** to this affidavit.

RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

7. On or about June 3, 2019, the federal government's National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls release its final report titled "Reclaiming Power and Place". A copy of relevant portions of the report is attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "F"** to this affidavit.

8. In February 2024, the Federal Housing Advocate released their final report and recommendations following their review of homeless encampments, titled Upholding Dignity and Human Rights. A copy of this report is attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "G"** to this affidavit.

LETTERS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS

9. On December 23, 2024, Commissioner Peter Sweeney from the Regional Municipality of Waterloo sent a letter to The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to pledge continued commitment to support unsheltered people living in encampments to transition to safe and stable housing. The letter reiterated the Region's commitment to the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness and stated the central focus the Region of Waterloo's efforts was the encampment response protocol. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "H"** is the December 23, 2024 letter that relates to this issue. The Region of Waterloo encampment response protocol is attached above as **Exhibit "A".**

10. In or around May 2025, Sanguen Health Centre released a public "Statement on the Impact of Encampment Evictions" to their website. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "I"** is the statement that relates to this issue.

11. I make this affidavit to provide background context for the matters considered in this Application and for no further or other purpose.

SWORN remotely by Lynn Kubis at the City of Kitchener, in the Province of Ontario, before me at the County of Wellington in the Province of Ontario on July 9, 2025 in accordance with O. Reg. 431/20.

Joanna Mullen, A Commissioner of Oaths (LSO#: 64535V)

Lynn Kubis

Lynn Kubis

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "A"** REFERRED TO IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20, ADMINISTERING OATH OR DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Media Release: Immediate

Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Council

* Addendum Agenda

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

Closed Session

7:00 p.m.

Open Session

Immediately following Closed

Meeting to be held electronically

150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, Ontario

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1. **Moment of Silence**

2. **Roll Call**

3. **Motion to Go into Closed Session**

That a closed meeting of Council be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 7:00 electronically, in accordance with Section 239 of the "Municipal Act, 2001", for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

a) labour relations;
b) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to potential litigation;
c) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to potential litigation;
d) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related security of the municipality; and
e) personal matters about an identifiable individual
* f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to a by-law

4. **Motion to Reconvene into Open Session**

Should you require an alternative format please contact the Regional Clerk at Tel.: 519-575-4400, TTY: 519-575-4605, or regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca

3891209

104

Report: PDL-LEG-21-69

Region of Waterloo

Planning, Development & Legislative Services

Legal Services

To:	Regional Council
Meeting Date:	December 15, 2021
Report Title:	**Policy Review of Region Bylaw 13-050 – Use or Occupation of Region-owned Public Land**

---

1. Recommendation:

That that the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve a policy for responding to unauthorized use of Region-owned or occupied land attached as an Appendix to Report PDL-LEG-21-69 dated December 15th, 2021.

2. Purpose / Issue:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the existing process for responding to an unauthorized occupation of Region-owned public lands by individuals experiencing homelessness and recommend possible modifications to this process. This report includes a recommended policy that would guide Region of Waterloo staff going forward in providing outreach services to persons living rough on lands owned by the Region of Waterloo. The policy stresses the importance of outreach and service delivery as the first point of engagement and the need to balance the need for providing supports to vulnerable individuals with the civic responsibility of maintaining the use of lands for the public and/or operational needs of the municipality.

3. Strategic Plan:

The information provided in this report supports the Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities and Responsive and Engaging Public Service Strategic Plan focus area, specifically objective 4.3, namely activity to "promote and enhance equity in policies, planning, services and decision-making in order to positively affect community well being.

4. Key Considerations:

1) Regional By-law 13-050 – **A By-law respecting the Conduct of Persons Entering upon Buildings or Grounds owned or occupied by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo –** delegates authority to "Designated Personnel" to issue notices of trespass and take action to prohibit certain activities on region-owned or occupied lands. The persons delegated with decision-making

authority include Director/Manager level staff having operational responsibility for the lands. By-law enforcement officers also have delegated authority.

2) "Prohibited Activities" under the bylaw include, broadly, any activities that hinder or obstruct the use or enjoyment of the property by the public or for the operational requirements of the Region of Waterloo. The list of specific prohibited activities expressly references "erecting a structure, tent or temporary shelter on public property without authorization".

3) This bylaw provides general direction for the form and delivery of notice to persons engaged in a Prohibited Activity. It also provides that staff may engage the Waterloo Regional Police Service to request assistance or initiate any other action the police service may determine necessary in the circumstances.

4) Enforcement of the Region's bylaw has historically been complaint driven. In the instance of enforcement which took place on November 26th, complaints about the encampment at 34 Stirling Street the Region were received from members of the public including passengers on GRT expressing concern about safety given the close proximity of tents to the nearby transit shelter/stop.

5) The Region's bylaw has broad application to a wide range of prohibited activities. As a result, specific direction as to the timing and manner of enforcement is not set out in the bylaw. In the instance of enforcement that took place at the property at 34 Stirling Street, the Licensing and Enforcement Division made the operational decision to include a road maintenance crew with heavy equipment due to the presence of large items and that the site posed broader health and safety concerns. These concerns stemmed from the presence of generally unsanitary conditions, broken glass from the nearby bus shelter, large items (ie. couch and mattresses) and drug paraphernalia, including sharps (some of which were removed by by-law enforcement officers).

6) The Region's bylaw is similar to bylaws in other municipalities which largely adopt the provisions of provincial legislation, namely the *Trespass to Property Act*, a statute which provides legal authority for any owner or occupier of land – whether publicly or privately owned – to require individuals to vacate land on prior notice. The bylaw provides general direction and while staff actions undertaken in the context of the 34 Stirling Street site were consistent with the requirements of the bylaw, the manner in which these actions were carried out did not reflect the dignity of those living at the encampment.

7) As a result, Regional staff conducted a review of the existing process and have attached a sample policy to this Report. The policy would supplement the existing bylaw and is intended to:

    a. prioritize the health and safety of all concerned and respect for the

individuals experiencing homeless and their possessions;

b. put greater emphasis on the importance of assisting individuals to access safer, sustainable, and healthier alternatives and clarify that enforcement will only occur after all reasonable support efforts have been attempted without success;

c. provide for a centralized process for receiving information about encampments and co-ordinating communications with members of Regional Council, delivery of outreach services and engagement with other Regional departments; and

d. elevate decision-making to senior management recognizing the complexity of balancing the need to provide appropriate supports to vulnerable individuals with the civic responsibility of maintaining public safety and public uses of land.

5. Background:

On November 26th, 2021, Regional by-law enforcement staff attended at 34 Stirling Street in the City of Kitchener to enforce the provisions of a Region bylaw prohibiting unauthorized occupation of Region-owned public lands. While the decision to remove belongings with heavy equipment was made to protect the health and safety of staff and members of the community, the manner in which this was carried out did not reflect the dignity of those living at the encampment.

As a result, Region staff undertook to conduct a review and suggest modifications to the Region's process to ensure individuals experiencing homelessness and their belongings are treated with respect and dignity.

6. Area Municipality Communication and Public/Stakeholder Engagement:

As noted above, area municipalities have similar by-laws – specifically addressing prohibited activities in parks. By-law 13-050 and the attached policy, if approved, would apply only to Region-owned or occupied (ie. rented) land and would not apply to lands within the jurisdiction of area municipalities or private lands.

7. Financial Implications:

None.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

This report recommends adopting a policy intended to provide enhanced clarity of decision-making and communications in situations where Regional staff may have to respond to an encampment on Region-owned property in the future. This policy would supplement existing By-law 13-050 described above.

9. Attachments / Links:

Appendix A: Region Bylaw 13-050 – Conduct of Persons Entering upon Buildings or Grounds owned or occupied by the Region of Waterloo (DOCS # 1535396)

Appendix B: Draft Policy – Encampments on Region-owned Public Lands

Prepared By: **Jeff Schelling**, Regional Solicitor/Director of Legal Services

Reviewed By: **Arran Rowles**, Acting Commissioner, Community Services

Approved By: **Jeff Schelling**, Regional Solicitor and Director of Legal Services

Appendix B- Draft Policy – Encampments on Region-owned Public Lands

The Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Draft Policy - Homeless Encampments on Region-owned or occupied lands

This policy will guide Region of Waterloo staff in providing outreach services to individuals living rough on lands owned or occupied by the Region of Waterloo. This policy seeks to balance the need to provide appropriate supports to vulnerable individuals with the civic responsibility of maintaining the use of these lands for the public and/or operational requirements of the municipality.

This policy is also intended to supplement, not replace, Regional By-law 13-050 – A By-law respecting the Conduct of Persons Entering upon Buildings or Grounds owned or occupied by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo.

Key Principles:

The following four principles will guide any action required to support individuals living rough and experiencing homelessness on lands owned or occupied by the Region of Waterloo:

(1) The Region's priority is to assist individuals to access safer, sustainable, and healthier alternatives, not enforcement. Enforcement will only occur after all reasonable support efforts have been attempted without success and with reasonable advance notice of the requirement to vacate a public space. In exceptional circumstances, however, more immediate intervention may be required to address public safety concerns.

(2) Regional staff, supported by community social service agencies, will work with individuals living outside to respond to their individual needs on a case-by-case basis by providing access to services, supports and shelter. The Region will use a co-ordinated approach between Regional departments in responding to the needs and issues related to individuals living rough or experiencing homelessness.

(3) The Region will engage in ongoing proactive communication with individuals experiencing homelessness, service providers, Regional councillors, community agencies and other groups.

(4) The Region acknowledges that individuals living rough cannot be forced to accept services and supports. However, the refusal of an individual to accept services and supports is not sufficient reason to prevent the enforcement of Regional by-laws.

Step 1 - Outreach Services to Assist Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

The first point of engagement with individuals occupying Region owned or occupied lands will be through the Region's Community Services department, directly, or

indirectly via third party outreach agencies. The goal of the Region's outreach initiatives will be to assist and encourage people currently living rough on publicly owned lands to access safer and healthier alternatives, including housing, support services, shelter and more permanent housing options.

The Director of Housing and their staff will receive all reports of encampments within the Region of Waterloo and will coordinate efforts to provide services for individuals living rough and experiencing homelessness through community agencies and other Region departments, including Public Health. The Housing Division will work closely with other Regional departments to ensure that the timing of any enforcement activities is co-ordinated with outreach efforts. In some circumstances, it is anticipated that given the appropriate outreach and supports over time, individuals will be assisted in securing better alternatives than living rough and will voluntarily vacate Region-owned or occupied lands, making enforcement unnecessary.

Step 2 – Notification, Communication and Enforcement

Enforcement will only occur after all reasonable outreach and support efforts have been provided without success and with reasonable advance notice of the requirement to vacate a public space. In exceptional circumstances, however, more immediate intervention may be required to address public safety concerns.

The Commissioner of the Regional department having operational responsibility for the Region-owned or occupied public lands shall be responsible for making a determination to provide notice to individuals that camping is to be discontinued and that personal goods, debris and structures are to be cleared by the individuals from a public space or right of way. The Commissioner shall consult with the Regional Solicitor and Chief Administrative Officer in making this determination. Regional Council will be notified of a decision to issue notices to vacate.

The primary objective of any enforcement activity will be to ensure the safety of all concerned and respect for the individuals experiencing homeless and their possessions. In circumstances where a site has been vacated due to prior outreach activities, by-law enforcement officers will attend at the site to undertake any required clean-up having regard to the foregoing primary objective. These activities may be co-ordinated with the Waterloo Region Police Service and other Regional departments to maintain the safety of staff. In circumstances where a site is not vacant, by-law enforcement officers will consult with the Regional Solicitor prior to initiating on-site enforcement. The Regional Solicitor shall be responsible for providing advice to Regional Council on any proposed enforcement activity on a site where individuals refuse to accept supports and have not vacated a particular property.

BY-LAW NUMBER 13-050

OF

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO

A By-law Respecting the Conduct of Persons Entering Upon Buildings, Grounds and Public Transportation Vehicles Owned or Occupied by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

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The Council of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo enacts as follows:

WHEREAS The Regional Municipality of Waterloo owns or occupies certain buildings, grounds and public transportation vehicles for the purpose of carrying out its municipal services;

AND WHEREAS persons, from time to time, enter onto these buildings, grounds and public transportation vehicles and cause physical damage to the premises, disruption to Regional operations or the use and enjoyment of these premises by other persons;

AND WHEREAS it is the desire of The Regional Municipality of Waterloo to create a code of use in regard to these premises;

AND WHEREAS The Regional Municipality of Waterloo has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person and the ability to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate pursuant to sections 8 and 9 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended;

AND WHEREAS The Regional Municipality of Waterloo has the authority to enact by-laws respecting its public assets and the protection of persons and property pursuant to subsection 11(2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

PART I - DEFINITIONS

1. In this By-law:

(1) "**Designated Personnel**" means those persons listed in Schedule "A" of this By-law;

(2) "**Designated Premises**" means any public transportation vehicle that is owned or operated by the Region or any building, grounds or other premises, other than a highway or the private residential unit of an individual, that are owned or occupied by the Region;

(3) **"Director"** means the Director of Facilities Management and Fleet Services or any successor position, or his or her designate;

(4) **"highway"** means a common and public highway and includes any bridge, trestle, viaduct or other structure forming part of the highway and, except as otherwise provided, includes a portion of a highway;

(5) ***"Municipal Act, 2001"*** means the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, or any successor legislation;

(6) "**Prohibited Activity**" means any activity that is listed in Schedule "B" of this By-law;

(7) **"public transportation vehicle"** means a bus or other motor vehicle that is designed to operate on a highway, as well as a train that runs upon rails, wherein passengers are transported for a fee or other consideration;

(8) **"Region"** means The Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

(9) **"sign"** means any device, object or thing that creates a design or conveys a message, or that is designed to convey a message and that is placed for the purposes of advertising, announcing, directing or promoting any idea, event, activity, product, service or facility, identifying a business or enterprise, or conveying any other type of message; and

(10) *"**Trespass to Property Act**"* means the *Trespass to Property Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21, as amended, or any successor legislation.

PART II – PROHIBITION

2. No person shall do a Prohibited Activity on Designated Premises.

3. (1) No person shall place, or cause or permit to be placed, a sign, or any part of a sign, on Designated Premises.

(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to a sign that is placed at a location that is designated for signs by the Director and the sign meets the following criteria:

(a) the sign is less than 1,600 square centimeters in area;
(b) the sign does not promote an unlawful activity or discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability;
(c) the sign does not contain profanity or obscenity; and
(d) the sign is not obsolete in relation to a past event or a business or enterprise that is no longer conducted, or an activity, product, service or facility that is not in season or is no longer provided.

4. Every person who contravenes section 2 or 3 of this By-law is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine not exceeding $5,000, exclusive of costs.

PART III - TRESPASS

5. Without limiting Part II of this By-law, Designated Personnel may exercise any of the following enforcement options at Designated Premises when a person is doing or has done a Prohibited Activity:

(1) Issue a verbal direction to refrain from a Prohibited Activity;

(2) Issue a verbal direction to leave the Designated Premises citing as the reason the failure to refrain from a Prohibited Activity;

(3) Serve a written notice upon a person prohibiting a Prohibited Activity citing as the reason the failure of the person to refrain from a Prohibited Activity;

(4) Serve a written notice upon a person prohibiting entry upon a Designated Premises citing as the reason the failure of the person to refrain from a Prohibited Activity;

(5) Post a sign so that the sign is clearly visible in daylight under normal conditions from the approach to each ordinary point of access to the Designated Premises prohibiting a Prohibited Activity;

(6) Post a sign so that the sign is clearly visible in daylight under normal conditions from the approach to each ordinary point of access to the Designated Premises prohibiting entry upon the Designated Premises by a person citing as the reason the failure to refrain from a Prohibited Activity; and

(7) Exercise any other rights or powers pursuant to the *Trespass to Property Act* that are reasonable in the circumstances.

6. Any verbal direction, written notice or sign pursuant to section 5 of this By-law shall be reasonable in relation to the conduct prohibited, the breadth of the location and the duration of the time imposed.

7. (1) Any person who is subject to a verbal direction, written notice or sign pursuant to section 5 of this By-law may apply to the Director in writing with a request that the verbal direction, written notice or sign be rescinded or modified.

(2) Any written request pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall set out the grounds for the request and shall be submitted to the Director within 30 calendar days of:

(a) the person's receipt of the verbal direction or written notice or the person's observance of the sign; or
(b) any changed circumstance that relates to the impact of the verbal direction,
written notice or sign upon the person.

(3) Upon the receipt of the written request pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the Director shall investigate and determine whether the verbal direction, written notice or sign should be rescinded or modified and the Director shall advise the person of his or her decision in writing.

(4) The verbal direction, written notice or sign that is the subject of a request pursuant to this section shall remain in full effect pending the Director's decision in writing.

8. Designated Personnel may contact the Waterloo Regional Police Service, or any other police service having lawful jurisdiction, at any time to request assistance or to initiate any other action as the police service may deem necessary in the circumstances.

PART IV - GENERAL

9. This By-law may be enforced by a Designated Personnel or a police officer.

10. (1) The Director shall have all necessary authority to administer this By-law.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1) of this section, the Director shall have the authority to:

(a) prescribe any administrative forms for the purposes of this By-law;
(b) designate permitted locations for signs at Designated Premises; and
(c) remove, or cause the removal, of any sign that does not meet the requirements of this By-law.

11. This By-law may be cited as the "Code of Use By-law".

12. Any procedural by-law of the Region governing the conduct of any person during a session of Council of the Region, or of a committee of Council of the Region, shall govern and this By-law shall apply with necessary modification.

13. If any section or sections of this By-law or parts thereof are found by any Court to be illegal or beyond the power of Council of the Region to enact, such section or sections or parts thereof shall be deemed to be severable and all other sections or parts of this By-law shall be deemed to be separate and independent therefrom and shall continue in full force and effect unless and until similarly found illegal.

14. (1) By-law 05-055 of The Regional Municipality of Waterloo, A By-law Respecting the Conduct of Persons Using the Public Transit System ("Grand River Transit") Operated by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo,
shall be repealed effective on the coming into force and effect of this By-law.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, any direction or notice issued to a person pursuant to By-law 05-055 of The Regional

Municipality of Waterloo, A By-law Respecting the Conduct of Persons Using the Public Transit System ("Grand River Transit") Operated by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, that is in effect at the time that the By-law is repealed shall be deemed to be a direction or notice pursuant to this By-law and shall continue in full force and effect.

15. This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the date of final passage hereof.

By-law read a first, second and third time and finally passed in the Council Chamber in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo this 11th day of December, A.D., 2013.

REGIONAL CLERK

REGIONAL CHAIR

#1523422

SCHEDULE "A"

DESIGNATED PERSONNEL

1. The following are Designated Personnel:

(1) the Director having responsibility for the Designated Premises;

(2) an employee of the Region having responsibility for the Designated Premises, or any part thereof, at the particular time;

(3) Manager, Business Services, for the Region, or any successor position thereto;

(4) Supervisor, Security Services, for the Region, or any successor position thereto;

(5) Supervisor, Transit Security for the Region, or any successor position thereto;

(6) a municipal law enforcement officer as appointed by the Region;

(7) a security guard under contract to the Region; and

(8) other persons from time to time as may be designated by Council of the Region.

SCHEDULE "B"

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

1. In this Schedule:

(1) "authorization" means written permission from the Director for the Region having responsibility for the Designated Premises, or his or her designate;

(2) "loitering" means to linger without due cause or purpose;

(3) "nuisance" includes any conduct or behavior which interferes with the ordinary enjoyment of persons using Designated Premises; and

(4) "service line" means an indoor or outdoor line of two or more persons awaiting service of any kind, regardless of whether or not such service involves the exchange of money, including but not limited to, sales, provision of information, transactions, or advice and transfers of money or goods.

2. The following activities are Prohibited Activities:

(1) An activity that obstructs, prevents or hinders the rights of others to use and enjoy Designated Premises or which obstructs, prevents or hinders the operations of the Region or any of its employees, agents or contractors;

(2) Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, an activity that obstructs, prevents or hinders the rights of others to use and enjoy the Designated Premises or which obstructs, prevents or hinders the operations of the Region or any of its employees, agents or contractors includes, but is not limited to:

(a) smoking tobacco or holding lit tobacco in any elevator or escalator, in any service line, public area or area designated as a "No Smoking" or "Smoke Free" area;

(b) committing any nuisance, disturbing the peace or acting contrary to public order;

(c) spitting, urinating or otherwise causing unsanitary conditions;

(d) littering;

(e) loitering;

(f) rollerblading or skateboarding without authorization;

(g) using profanity, obscene language or racial slurs;

(h) vandalizing the Designated Premises or any personal property on the Designated Premises;

(i) using, removing or possessing any personal property of the Region or any other person without authorization;

(j) selling or attempting to sell, distribute or solicit any good or service without authorization;

(k) operating any radio, tape recorder, DVD, CD or MP3 player, musical instrument or similar device, without authorization, unless the sound is conveyed by earphone at a decibel level that does not disturb any other person;

(l) operating for commercial purposes any camera, video recording device, movie camera or any similar device without authorization;

(m) carrying any goods, without authorization, which are offensive, dangerous, toxic, corrosive, flammable or explosive in nature that are likely to alarm, inconvenience, cause discomfort or injure any person, or cause damage to property, whether or not such good are contained in an approved container;

(n) bringing any large animal onto the Designated Premises, without authorization, other than during an emergency or for use as a service or guide animal;

(o) entering, without authorization, onto the Designated Premises without a shirt or footwear;

(p) bringing a small animal or bird, without authorization, that is not in a cage or carrying device designed for secure and safe transport unless the small animal or bird is required for use as a service or guide animal;

(q) acts which are perceived as threatening, intimidating or sexual harassment;

(r) entering, without authorization, any area that is designated or used as a work area for an employee;

(s) interfering with an operator of a public transportation vehicle or obstructing his or her vision;

(t) erecting, without authorization, any structure, tent or temporary shelter;

(u) consuming alcohol without authorization;

(v) riding or standing on any exterior portion of a public transportation vehicle or leaning out of or projecting any body part through any window of a public transportation vehicle;

(w) projecting a body beyond the edge of any platform for a public transportation vehicle, except to enter or leave the vehicle;

(x) riding a bicycle on any platform for a public transportation vehicle; and

(y) any activity contrary to the *Criminal Code of Canada*, R.S. 1985, c. C-46, as amended, other federal statutes, provincial statutes or municipal by-laws;

(3) Acts which are contrary to any specific rules or terms of use for the Designated Premises provided that the specific rules or terms of use have been posted in a conspicuous location at the Designated Premises;

(4) Entering Designated Premises without paying the required fee or fare or having proof of payment for the required fee or fare for admission to the Designated Premises;

(5) Failing to comply with the terms and conditions of any pass, transfer or other instrument that is required for the entrance or use of Designated Premises; and

(6) Entering a public transportation vehicle at other than a designated passenger entrance.

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "B"** REFERRED TO IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20, ADMINISTERING OATH OR DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Community and Health Services Committee
Addendum Agenda

Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Regular Session: 11:00 a.m.

Location: Council Chambers

Should you require an alternative format please contact the Regional Clerk at Tel.: 519-575-4400, TTY: 519-575-4605, or regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca

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Pages

Start time is approximate. The Community and Health Services Committee will start immediately following the Administration and Finance Committee.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Land Acknowledgement**
3. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under the "Municipal Conflict of Interest Act"**
4. **Presentations**
5. **Delegations**

   5.1 **Nick Desclouds, CUPE Local 5191** 3
   Re: Wage Parity for Paramedics

6. **Regular Agenda**

   6.1 **Strategic Priority - Equitable Services and Opportunities**

   6.1.1 CSD-CHS-24-006, Creating Culturally Responsive Child Care at 30 Christopher Drive 5

   Recommended Motion:
   That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action as set out in report CSD-CHS-24-006 with respect to 30 Christopher Drive, Cambridge:

   a. That the Commissioner of Engineering and Environmental Services be authorized to execute a five-year lease agreement with two five-year renewable terms with The Healing of the Seven Generations "A Community Healing Strategy & Support Program" to create a licensed Indigenous-led non-profit child care centre at 30 Christopher Drive, Cambridge, with terms and conditions satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor.

   *6.1.2 CSD-CHS-24-004, Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Directed Growth Update *15*

For information.

6.2 Strategic Priority - Homes for All

6.2.1 CSD-HOU-24-020, 2024 Point in Time Count Preliminary Overview 33

For information.

6.2.2 CSD-HOU-24-021, Waterloo Region Housing Revitalization Plan Update 43

Recommended Motion:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo authorize staff to explore affordable housing development partnership opportunities with the non-profit and private sectors that create enhanced or additional affordable housing units, are beneficial for existing tenants, or produce cost-sharing outcomes as outlined in report CSD-HOU-24-021, dated December 3, 2024.

7. Information/Correspondence

7.1 Council/Committee Tracking List

None.

8. Other Business

9. Next Meeting - January 14, 2025

10. Adjourn

Recommended Motion:

That the meeting adjourn at x:xx x.m.

Region of Waterloo

Community Services

Housing Services

To:	Community and Health Services Committee
Meeting Date:	December 3, 2024
Report Title:	2024 Point in Time Count Preliminary Overview

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1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To provide an update on the coordination and preliminary results of the federally mandated Point-in-Time Count conducted in the Waterloo Region on October 22, 2024.

3. Strategic Plan:

This report supports the following strategic priorities derived from the Region of Waterloo's Corporate Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027:

- Strategic Priority 1: Homes for All: We will invest in affordable homes and economic opportunities for all that are part of inclusive and environmentally sustainable communities.
- Strategic Priority 3: Equitable Services and Opportunities: Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, accessible services across the Waterloo Region that support the social determinants of health and complete communities as we grow.
- Strategic Priority 4: Resilient and Future Ready Organization: The Region of Waterloo is a great place to work, where everyone is valued, feels they belong and where they have the supports and tools they need to do a great job. We will be prepared for the future by providing a safe space for bold ideas and experimentation that transform services, based on data and other ways of knowing.

4. Report Highlights:

- The 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count found a total number of 2,371 individuals estimated to be experiencing homelessness in the Waterloo Region on October 22, 2024. The number of these individuals who have been chronically homeless will need to be further analyzed and will be reported on early 2025.

- Waterloo Region's fourth PiT Count took place on October 22, 2024, over a 24-hour period. The PiT Count is a community-level, comprehensive measure of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness that provides a picture, or 'snapshot', of individuals experiencing homelessness at a single point in time. It includes both chronic homelessness and temporary or episodic homelessness. This broader scope signifies that while chronic homelessness is a major component of the total, the PiT Count also captures individuals in situations such as emergency shelter stays, temporary housing, or those staying in places not meant for human habitation.
- The initiative is coordinated through the *Reaching Home Program: Canada's Homelessness Strategy*. As part of this agreement, the Region of Waterloo is federally required to complete a PiT Count, which is comprised of two parts: the enumeration (or *count*) and the Survey on Homelessness (see **Appendix A)**.
- This year's PiT Count was completed with the support of more than 40 community partner agencies, including three hospitals, two correctional institutions, rural and Indigenous partners, in conjunction with Regional Staff. All seven area municipalities in the Waterloo Region were included, spanning the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Chonnonton and Haudenosaunee peoples.
- Community engagement and coordination efforts heavily focused on making contact with populations that have higher rates of hidden homelessness, including newcomers, Indigenous, veterans, women, and gender-diverse individuals. A list of Target Population Groups was created to supplement efforts towards achieving a more representative and inclusive dataset that captured all populations, and therefore, all dimensions of homelessness in our community. This achieved a robust and far-reaching enumeration and survey achievement, which included both major hospital and incarceration institutions.
- These findings indicate the structure of homelessness has critically increased since 2021, which found an estimated 1,085 individuals experiencing homelessness in the Waterloo Region and is consistent with the warnings issued in the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness Key Findings Report.

5. Background:

On Tuesday October 22, 2024, the Region of Waterloo's Homelessness and Supportive Housing team conducted its fourth PiT Count, alongside local community partners, which included service providers, non-shelter service providers (food and meal providers, health clinics targeted to individuals experiencing homelessness), and public systems (hospitals, police, and correctional facilities).

The data from the 2021 and 2024 PiT Counts indicates a substantial expansion in homelessness in the Waterloo Region, specifically rising from 1,085 individuals in 2021, to 2,371 this year. This trend warrants careful analysis to understand the underlying factors and implications faced in our Region.

It is imperative to note that the 2021 PiT Count took place during an active wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several planned engagement efforts were modified and/or cancelled due to Public Health guidelines and measures that challenged in-person engagement and implementation of PiT Count processes. Additionally, staffing was a significant problem across the system, negatively impacting capacity and overall participation in the PiT Count.

The 2024 PiT Count presents itself as a remarkably different landscape since the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, economic fallout from events (i.e., the pandemic) and rising inflation may have had delayed impacts on housing stability and resultingly pushed more individuals into homelessness. Fundamentally, however, the 2024 PiT Count has achieved a more comprehensive and effective coordination and collaboration process involving a higher number of community partner agencies compared to the 2021 PiT Count.

Furthermore, the foundational work of The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PECH) has brought in more community partner agencies and service providers, increasing overall involvement in this year's PiT Count. Namely:

- Number of locations and services has increased, strengthening staffing experience and trusting relationships with individuals experiencing homelessness and receiving support,
- Outreach support has significantly expanded in both numbers so full-time staff and more established partnerships with partners like Sanguen, Traverse, Community Healthcaring, and others,
- COVID-19 is no longer a significant concern; community members and individuals accessing social services and/or experiencing homelessness are moving more freely than in 2021.

The results of this year's PiT Count demand attention to resource needs and inform shifts related to homelessness since the 2021 PiT Count. The 2024 PiT Count highlights the urgent issue of homelessness in the Waterloo Region, with numbers indicating that while chronic homelessness is indeed rising, the overall increase in homelessness is broader. This calls for comprehensive and emergent actions to reduce chronic homelessness and address the increasing number of individuals in our community facing homelessness.

Furthermore, as emphasized in the PECH, investment from both public and private sectors, key system partners (healthcare, mental health and addictions, justice), and all levels of government is required to respond to, and address this growing crisis impacting our community; otherwise the Plan risks just becoming an idea. Efforts to address homelessness must consider both long-term solutions for chronic homelessness and more immediate strategies to prevent or intervene in episodic homelessness.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities and Public: The nationally-coordinated PiT Count approach includes Core Standards for the methodology that guide how the enumeration and survey are conducted in participating communities, supporting a consistent data collection process across communities and over time. Aligned with Core Standards 2 and 3, the 2024 PiT Count was conducted in collaboration with community partners' feedback and engagement throughout the planning, coordination, and implementation of the PiT Count.

The scope of the 2024 PiT Count was determined by the extensive collaboration and involvement of approximately 40 PECH partner agencies, including rural and Indigenous partners, in conjunction with Regional Staff. Key interest holders included: individuals with lived experiences, shelter providers, corrections and health services, Waterloo Regional Police Services (WRPS), and non-profit service providers, across all area municipalities (Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, Woolwich). Area municipality staff will continue to be invited to engage in the co-creation and implementation of the PECH.

7. Financial Implications:

The 2025 Draft Operating Budget includes $60.9M for homelessness initiatives. This is funded from a combination of funding sources including provincial grants, federal grants and the property tax levy. The Draft Operating Budget includes a $10.2M investment in the PECH of which the full investment is funded from the property tax levy.

The 2025-2034 Draft Homelessness Capital Program includes $5.9M in 2025 with a 10-year capital budget through 2034 of $19.0M. This program is funded from the Facilities Lifecycle Reserve ($1.0M), Homelessness Prevention Capital Reserve ($2.8M) and regional debentures ($15.2M).

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

The number of people experiencing homelessness in the Waterloo Region is unprecedented. Chronic homelessness across the Region has been increasing at an average growth rate of 28% year-over-year since 2020. Homelessness has most certainly and critically risen in numbers and visibility, exacerbating existing difficulties for individuals experiencing homelessness, and the services within the system.

With the development of the PECH, the current national momentum to support housing needs, and growing public concern about homelessness, there are unique opportunities for our Region to achieve a more responsive, integrated, inclusive, and equitable system.

As we work towards ending chronic homelessness by 2030, it is imperative to make use of the data from this year's PiT Count to inform service planning and delivery in the Waterloo Region. Data analysis, including analyzing disaggregated data and meaning-making, will take place with Co-Creators and Lived Experience Consultants as part of the implementation of the PECH. This process of compiling and organizing large amounts of data will yield valuable information that warrants careful consideration and contextual analysis to understand the underlying factors and implications of homelessness in our Region.

It is our intent to return to the Community and Health Services Committee in the new year to share these results and analysis of this data.

It is also our goal to compare and contrast this data with current data sources to validate and improve real-time data. This will also inform the PECH Funding Strategy and Engagement Plans, closely reflecting all seven Strategic Focus Areas of the PECH. Regional staff, in partnership with the forthcoming All of Community Leadership Table, will continue to collect and use outcome data, including upcoming benchmarks in equity work across the system and housing outcomes. It is our priority to continue ensuring that all work related to the PECH aligns with the common goal of ending chronic homelessness.

It is the hope of this report, along with learned experiences during the 2024 PiT Count, that a reflective foundation of the needs of our community's most vulnerable be brought to the attention of all.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: 2024 PiT Count Survey

Prepared By: Malika Chenny-Ramkissoon, Social Planning Associate, Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Reviewed By: Chris McEvoy, Manager, Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Ryan Pettipiere, Director, Housing Services

Approved By: Peter Sweeney, Commissioner, Community Services

UNSHELTERED SURVEY — Survey Number: 0000

Location: ☐Cambridge ☐Kitchener ☐Waterloo ☐North Dumfries ☐Wellesley ☐Wilmot ☐Woolwich

Date: _____ **Time:** _____AM/PM

Interviewer: _____ **Contact #:** _____

C. Where are you staying tonight? / Where did you stay last night?

a. DECLINE TO ANSWER
b. OWN APARTMENT/HOUSE

→ **[THANK & END SURVEY]**

c. SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE
d. HOTEL/MOTEL SELF-FUNDED
e. HOSPITAL
f. TREATMENT CENTRE
g. JAIL, PRISON, REMAND CENTRE

→ **C1. Do you have access to a permanent residence where you can safely stay as long as you want?**
a. Yes **[THANK & END]**
b. No (not permanent AND/OR not safe) **[BEGIN SURVEY]**
c. Don't Know **[BEGIN SURVEY]**
d. Decline to answer **[THANK & END]**

h. HOMELESS SHELTER (e.g. emergency, family or domestic violence shelter, warming centre, drop-in)
i. HOTEL/MOTEL FUNDED BY CITY OR HOMELESS PROGRAM
j. TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING
k. UNSHELTERED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (e.g. street, park, bus shelter, forest, or abandoned building)
l. ENCAMPMENT (e.g. group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term outdoor settlement)
m. VEHICLE (e.g. car, van, recreational vehicle (RV), truck, boat)
n. UNSURE: INDICATE PROBABLE LOCATION _____(b. - m.)

→ **[BEGIN SURVEY]**

BEGIN SURVEY

1. Have you spent at least one night in any of the following locations in the past year? (check all that apply)

☐ HOMELESS SHELTER (e.g. emergency, family or domestic violence shelter, warming centre, drop-in)
☐ HOTEL/MOTEL FUNDED BY CITY OR HOMELESS PROGRAM
☐ TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING
☐ UNSHELTERED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (e.g. street, park, bus shelter, forest, or abandoned building)
☐ ENCAMPMENT (e.g. group of tents, makeshift shelters, or other long-term outdoor settlement)
☐ VEHICLE (e.g. car, van, recreational vehicle (RV), truck, boat)
☐ SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE BECAUSE YOU HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO
☐ HOSPITAL OR OTHER HEALTH FACILITY
☐ JAIL, PRISON, OR OTHER CORRECTIONAL FACILITY
☐ NO
☐ DON'T KNOW
☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

1b. If you haven't stayed in a homeless shelter in the past year, what are the main reasons? (Do not read categories; check all that apply)

☐ TURNED AWAY - SHELTERS ARE FULL	☐ FEAR FOR SAFETY	☐ OTHER: _____
☐ TURNED AWAY - BANNED	☐ BED BUGS & OTHER PESTS	☐ DON'T KNOW
☐ LACK OF TRANSPORTATION	☐ CROWDED	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

2. Do you have family members or anyone else who is staying with you tonight? / Did any family members or anyone else stay with you last night? (Indicate survey number for partners. Check all that apply)

☐ NONE ☐ PET(S)

☐ PARTNER - Survey #: ___ ___ ___ ___ ☐ OTHER ADULT (Can include other family or friends)

☐ CHILD(REN)/DEPENDENT(S)

[indicate age for each child/dependent]	CHILD 1	CHILD 2	CHILD 3	CHILD 4	CHILD 5	CHILD 6	CHILD 7	CHILD 8
AGE								

☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

3. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? (If unsure, ask for best estimate)

○ AGE _____**OR** YEAR BORN _____ ○ DON'T KNOW ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

3 a) Are you, or is someone in your household currently pregnant?

○ YES ○ NO ○ DON'T KNOW ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

➔ **For this survey, "homelessness" means any time when you have been without a permanent and secure place to live, and includes sleeping in shelters, on the streets, or living temporarily with others without having your own permanent housing (e.g. couch surfing).**

4. In total, for *how <u>much time</u>* have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR (the last 12 months)? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

○ LENGTH _____ DAYS | WEEKS | MONTHS ○ DON'T KNOW ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

4b. In total, for *how <u>much time</u>* have you experienced homelessness over the PAST 3 YEARS? (Does not need to be exact. Best estimate.)

○ LESS THAN HALF ○ ABOUT HALF OR MORE ○ DON'T KNOW ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

5. How old were you the first time you experienced homelessness?

○ AGE_____ ○ DON'T KNOW ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

6. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant, refugee, asylum claimant (i.e. applied for refugee status after coming to Canada), or through another process?

○ YES, IMMIGRANT ----------> **If YES:** **How long have you been in Canada?**
○ YES, REFUGEE ----------> ○ LENGTH: _____ DAYS | WEEKS | MONTHS | YEARS
○ YES, ASYLUM CLAIMANT IN CANADA -------> OR DATE: _____/_____/_____ DAY / MONTH / YEAR
○ YES, TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKER -------> ○ DON'T KNOW
○ YES, OTHER WORK PERMIT ----------> ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER
○ YES, STUDY PERMIT ----------
○ YES, TEMPORARY RESIDENT ----------
○ YES, OTHER (including undocumented) -----
○ NO
○ DON'T KNOW
○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

How long have you been in Waterloo Region?

○ LENGTH _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS / YEARS	○ ALWAYS BEEN HERE	○ DON'T KNOW	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER
↳ **Where did you live before you came here?** ○ CITY: _____ | PROVINCE/TERRITORY/COUNTRY: _____ ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER			

7b. What is the main reason you came to Waterloo Region? (Do not read categories; select one)

○ TO ACCESS EMERGENCY SHELTER(S)	○ EMPLOYMENT (SEEKING)	○ RECREATION/SHOPPING
○ TO ACCESS SERVICES AND SUPPORTS	○ EMPLOYMENT (SECURED)	○ OTHER: _____
○ FAMILY MOVED HERE	○ TO ATTEND SCHOOL	○ DON'T KNOW
○ TO VISIT FRIENDS/FAMILY	○ FEAR FOR SAFETY	○ DECLINE TO ASNWER
○ TO FIND HOUSING		

8. Do you identify as First Nations (with or without status), Métis, or Inuit?

○ YES, FIRST NATIONS	○ YES, MÉTIS	○ NO	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER
○ YES, INUIT	○ INDIGENOUS ANCESTRY	○ DON'T KNOW	

8a. In *addition* to your response in the question above, do you identify with any of the racial identities listed below? (Show or Read list. Select all that apply)

☐ *IDENTIFY AS INDIGENOUS ONLY*	☐ BLACK-AFRICAN (e.g., Ghanaian, Ethiopian, Nigerian)
☐ ARAB (e.g., Syrian, Egyptian, Yemeni)	☐ BLACK-AFRO-CARIBBEAN OR AFRO-LATINX (e.g., Jamaican, Haitian, Afro-Brazilian.)
☐ ASIAN-EAST (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese)	☐ LATIN AMERICAN (e.g., Brazilian, Mexican, Chilean, Cuban)
☐ ASIAN- SOUTH-EAST (e.g., Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian)	☐ WHITE (e.g. European, French, Ukrainian, Euro-Latinx)
☐ ASIAN-SOUTH OR INDO-CARIBBEAN (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Indo-Guyanese, Indo-Trinidadian)	☐ NOT LISTED (PLEASE SPECIFY): _____
☐ ASIAN-WEST (e.g., Iranian, Afghan)	☐ DON'T KNOW
☐ BLACK-CANADIAN/AMERICAN	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

9. Have you ever served in the Canadian Military or RCMP?
(Military includes Canadian Navy, Army, and Air Force, Regular and Reserve, Army Rangers including completing basic training)

○ YES, MILITARY	○ BOTH MILITARY AND RCMP	○ DON'T KNOW
○ YES, RCMP	○ NO	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

10. As a child or youth, were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home?
(Note: This question applies specifically to child welfare programs.)

○ YES	○ NO	○ DON'T KNOW	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

10b. Approximately how long after leaving foster care/group home did you become homeless?

LENGTH _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS / YEARS	DON'T KNOW	DECLINE TO ANSWER

11. Have you been experiencing difficulties related to any of the following?

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	DECLINE TO ANSWER
ILLNESS OR MEDICAL CONDITION (e.g. diabetes, tuberculosis (TB) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV))	o	o	o	o
PHYSICAL MOBILITY (e.g. spinal cord injury, arthritis, or limited movement or dexterity)	o	o	o	o
LEARNING, INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL, OR COGNITIVE FUNCTION (e.g. fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, or dementia)	o	o	o	o
ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY (e.g. due to an accident, violence, overdose, stroke, or brain tumour)	o	o	o	o
MENTAL HEALTH [diagnosed/undiagnosed] (e.g. depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), bipolar, or schizophrenia)	o	o	o	o
SUBSTANCE USE (e.g. alcohol or opiates)	o	o	o	o
SENSES, SUCH AS SEEING OR HEARING (e.g. blindness or deafness)	o	o	o	o

12. What gender do you identify with? (Show list or read list.)

o MAN	o TRANS WOMAN	o NOT LISTED: _____
o WOMAN	o TRANS MAN	o DON'T KNOW
o TWO-SPIRIT	o NON-BINARY (GENDERQUEER)	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

13. How do you describe your sexual orientation, for example straight, gay, lesbian? (Show list or read list.)

o STRAIGHT/HETEROSEXUAL	o BISEXUAL	o ASEXUAL	o NOT LISTED: _____
o GAY	o TWO-SPIRIT	o QUEER	o DON'T KNOW
o LESBIAN	o PANSEXUAL	o QUESTIONING	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

14. What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently? (Do not read the options. Check all that apply. "Housing" does not include temporary arrangements (e.g., couch surfing) or shelter stays. Follow up for the reason if the respondent says "eviction" or that they "chose to leave".)

HOUSING AND FINANCIAL ISSUES ☐ NOT ENOUGH INCOME FOR HOUSING (e.g. rental increase, loss of benefit, income or job) ☐ UNFIT/UNSAFE HOUSING CONDITION ☐ BUILDING SOLD OR RENOVATED ☐ OWNER MOVED IN	**CONFLICT WITH:** ☐ SPOUSE/PARTNER ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ LANDLORD ☐ OTHER (_____)	**EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION BY:** ☐ SPOUSE/PARTNER ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ LANDLORD ☐ OTHER (_____)
OTHER ☐ COMPLAINT (e.g. noise/damage) ☐ LEFT THE COMMUNITY/RELOCATED ☐ DEATH OR DEPARTURE OF FAMILY MEMBER ☐ PET(S) ☐ OTHER REASON _____ _____ _____	**EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY:** ☐ SPOUSE/PARTNER ☐ PARENT/GUARDIAN ☐ LANDLORD ☐ OTHER (_____) ☐ DON'T KNOW	**HEALTH OR CORRECTIONS** ☐ PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUE/DISABILITY ☐ MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE ☐ SUBSTANCE USE ISSUE ☐ HOSPITALIZATION OR TREATMENT PROGRAM ☐ INCARCERATION (jail or prison) ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

14b. Was your most recent housing loss related to an eviction?

o YES	o NO	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

14c. How long ago did that happen (that you lost your housing most recently)? (Best estimate)

○ LENGTH _____ DAYS | WEEKS | MONTHS | YEARS	○ DON'T KNOW	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER	

15. What are your sources of income? (Reminder that this survey is anonymous. **Read list** and check all that apply)

Formal or Informal Work	**Benefits**	**Other**
☐ FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT	☐ EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	☐ MONEY FROM FAMILY/FRIENDS
☐ PART TIME EMPLOYMENT	☐ DISABILITY BENEFIT (e.g. WSIB)	☐ OTHER MONEY FROM A SERVICE AGENCY
☐ CASUAL EMPLOYMENT (e.g. contract work)	☐ SENIORS BENEFITS (e.g. CPP/OAS/GIS)	☐ OTHER: _____
☐ INFORMAL INCOME SOURCES (e.g. bottle returns, panhandling, sex work)	☐ SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (e.g. OW/ODSP)	
	☐ VETERAN/VAC BENEFITS	
	☐ CHILD AND FAMILY BENEFITS	
	☐ GST/HST REFUND	☐ NO INCOME
		☐ DON'T KNOW
		☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

16. In the past year (12 months) have you:

BEEN TO AN EMERGENCY ROOM	Y ____ N____
BEEN HOSPITALIZED	Y ____ N____
INTERACTED WITH POLICE (*Tickets, arrests, searches)*	Y ____ N____
BEEN TO PRISON/JAIL	Y ____ N____

17. What challenges or problems have you experienced when trying to find housing? (Select all that apply) –

☐ LOW INCOME	☐ MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES	☐ DISCRIMINATION
☐ NO INCOME ASSISTANCE	☐ ADDICTION	☐ DON'T WANT HOUSING
☐ RENTS TOO HIGH	☐ FAMILY BREAKDOWN/CONFLICT	☐ OTHER: _____
☐ POOR HOUSING CONDITIONS	☐ CRIMINAL HISTORY	☐ NO BARRIERS TO HOUSING
☐ DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	☐ PET(S)	☐ DON'T KNOW
☐ HEALTH/DISABILITY ISSUES	☐ CHILDREN	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

18. Have you applied for or updated your Community Housing Waitlist application in the last 12 months?

○ YES	○ NO	○ DON'T KNOW	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

19. What services would be helpful to you right now?

[Reminder that this survey is anonymous. **Read list** and check all that apply]

☐ ACCESSING INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS (E.G. ONTARIO WORKS, EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE)	☐ ADDICTIONS TREATMENT AND SUPPORT	☐ CARE FOR YOUR PET
☐ FINDING A JOB	☐ BRAIN INJURY TREATMENT AND SUPPORT	☐ BUS PASS
☐ GETTING ID	☐ MEDICAL SUPPORT	☐ INTERNET ACCESS
☐ LEGAL AID	☐ MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT (COUNSELLING, TREATMENT, ETC.)	☐ OUTREACH WORKERS
☐ TRANSLATION SERVICES	☐ PREGNANCY SUPPORT	☐ PUBLIC PHONE
☐ FINDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING		☐ SECURE STORAGE
☐ HELP WRITING HOUSING APPLICATIONS	☐ DRUG TREATMENT REFERRALS	☐ SHOWERS
☐ HOUSING SEARCH SUPPORT	☐ DRUG CHECKING PROGRAM	
☐ GENDER SPECIFIC HOUSING AND SUPPORTS	☐ SAFE CONSUMPTION SITE (CTS, UPHN, ETC.)	☐ OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):
☐ LOW BARRIER HOUSING	☐ SAFER SUPPLY PROGRAM (PRESCRIPTION TO REPLACE UNREGULATED DRUGS)	
☐ PHYSICALLY ACCESSIBLE HOUSING		

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "C"** REFERRED TO IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20, ADMINISTERING OATH OR DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Community and Health Services Committee
Addendum Agenda

Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Regular Session: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Council Chambers

Should you require an alternative format please contact the Regional Clerk at Tel.: 519-575-4400, TTY: 519-575-4605, or regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca

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Pages

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Land Acknowledgement**
3. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under the "Municipal Conflict of Interest Act"**
4. **Presentations**
5. **Delegations**

   5.1 **Jill Stoddart and Sydney Tricand, Family & Children's Services (FACS) Foundation** 4
   Re: 2025 LemonAID Day

6. **Consent Agenda**

   Items on the Consent Agenda can be approved in one motion of Committee to save time. Prior to the motion being voted on, any member of Committee may request that one or more of the items be removed from the Consent Agenda and voted on separately.

   Recommended Motion:
   That the Consent Agenda items be received for information and approved.

   6.1 **Strategic Priority - Equitable Services and Opportunities**

   6.1.1 PHP-PSV-25-003, Paramedic Services - 2024 Community Paramedicine Program Report 11
   For information.

   6.1.2 PHP-HPE-25-003, 2025 Vector-Borne Disease Program Update 15
   For information.

   6.1.3 PDL-BWR-25-004, Youth IMPACT Project Update – Region of Waterloo Investment in Youth 22
   For information.

7. **Regular Agenda**

7.1 Strategic Priority - Homes for All

7.1.1 CSD-HOU-25-005, Plan to End Chronic Homelessness Mid-Year Update 27
For information.

7.1.2 CSD-HOU-25-006, Racialized Women Transitional Housing Program 64
For information.

7.2 Strategic Priority - Equitable Services and Opportunities

7.2.1 CSD-CHS-25-001, Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Directed Growth and Child Care Funding Update 68

Recommended Motion:
That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo increase the 2025 Operating Budget for Children's Services in the amount of $6,775,216 with $0 net tax levy impact to reflect changes to Ministry of Education funding, as outlined in report CSD-CHS-25-001, dated May 6, 2025;

And that Regional Council request that the Ministry of Education provide increased Local Priorities Funding in alignment with growth in child care spaces to ensure service levels are maintained for children with special needs and child care fee subsidy.

8. Information/Correspondence

8.1 Council/Committee Tracking List
No requests.

9. Other Business

10. Next Meeting - June 10, 2025

*11. Motion to go into Closed Session

Recommended Motion:
That a closed meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee and Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee be held on May 6, 2025 at 11:30 a.m., in the Waterloo County Room, in accordance with Section 239 of the "Municipal Act, 2001", for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

1. Receiving advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to a labour relations matter;
2. A proposed acquisition of land in the City of Cambridge; and
3. *Receiving advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to a proposed acquisition of lands.

12. Adjourn

Recommended Motion:
That the meeting adjourn at x:xx x.m.

FACS FOUNDATION

LEMONAID DAY

SPONSORED BY ACTIVA

LEMONAID DAY

Who is FACS Foundation?

Since 1991, FACS Foundation has provided support to children, youth and families in Waterloo Region, helping them to heal, learn and grow. FACS Foundation's commitment to early intervention and prevention complements the child protection measures of Family & Children's Services of the Waterloo Region. The programs and services supported by FACS Foundation do not receive funding from the government but rely on community-raised funds.

LEMONAID DAY

What is LemonAID Day?

LemonAID Day is a community event where children, families, and businesses across Waterloo Region set up lemonade stands to raise funds. All proceeds go to FACS Foundation to send kids to camp or to attend local resilience-based programming.

LEMONAID DAY

The Power of Camp and Resilience-Based Programming

Camps and resilience-based programs (sports, arts, science) provide a fun and meaningful break for children and their families.

Children gain independence by being away from family and making positive decisions on their own.

Kids can step out of everyday lives and worries, experience adventures, and build positive relationships.

Kids make new friends, learn leadership skills, and take on responsibilities like making beds and doing dishes.

New worlds and possibilities are opened up through engaging activities.

Lemon Twist Media Event

Lemon Twist is a promotional event that will feature young people from schools across Waterloo Region participating in a fun and friendly competition to see who can juice lemons the fastest. This event promises to be a lively and engaging experience. Beyond the title of Lemon Twist Champion, there are also bragging rights for the winner. Each student will be cheered on by a champion from their homeschool/hometown! This event serves as a promotional media event to bring attention for and excitement about this year's LemonAID Day.

Wednesday May 21st

11am-12pm

Family Centre

How Can Regional Council Support LemonAID Day?

Publicly Support and Promote LemonAID Day, June 7th

Promote LemonAID Day! Post on the Region's social media platforms to share your support and let others know how they can get involved. Share your commitment to supporting children, youth, & families in Waterloo Region.

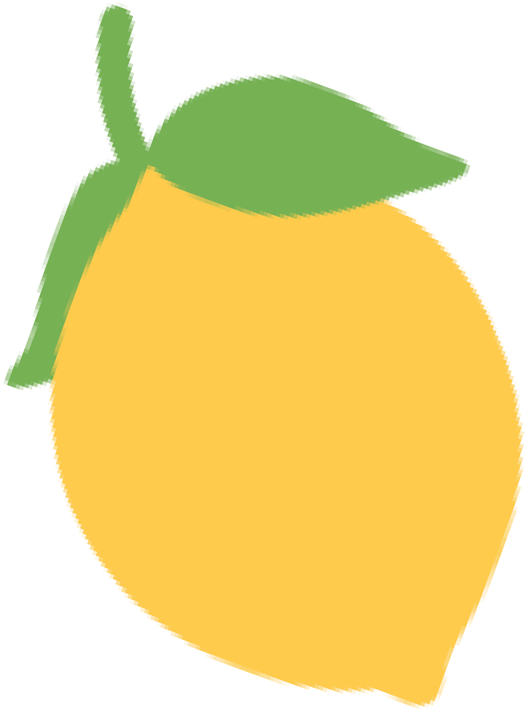
Attend Lemon Twist Media Event, May 21

Cheer on young people from our community and show support and commitment to LemonAID Day! Connect with other community leaders, and stakeholders, potentially fostering new partnerships and collaborations.

Permit FACS Foundation to Hold LemonAID Stands in Key Areas

Ion Transit Stops
Waterloo Town Square
Kitchener City Hall
Open to Ideas!

THANK YOU!





Questions? Contact Us!

Jill.Stoddart@FACSfoundation.org

Sydney.Tricand@FACSfoundation.org

Region of Waterloo

Public Health and Paramedic Services

Paramedic Services

To:	Community and Health Services Committee
Meeting Date:	May 6, 2025
Report Title:	Paramedic Services - 2024 Community Paramedicine Program Report

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1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

The purpose of this report is to present highlights of the 2024 outcomes of the Region of Waterloo's Community Paramedicine Program and its plans for 2025. The Community Paramedicine program is 100% provincially funded.

3. Strategic Plan:

The activities of the Community Paramedicine program align with the Equitable Services & Opportunities strategic priority for the Region of Waterloo.

4. Report Highlights:

- Community Paramedics work in a non-emergency role delivering service to clients in our region.
- Provincial guidelines allow Community Paramedics to provide targeted care to senior populations in two main ways:
    - Helping clients live their best while remaining in place. This includes system navigation as well as health education and in-home assessments.
    - Supporting individuals who are currently or soon to be waitlisted for Long-Term Care (LTC) placement. This also includes individuals who require Crisis Placement.
- Access to the Community Paramedicine Program is through referrals by local hospitals, family physicians/health care teams, community agencies, and specialty providers.
- In 2024, 830 referrals came from front-line Paramedics who identified patients

living at risk or requiring services.

- Since receiving CPLTC funding in 2023, the Program has provided support to over 400 individuals awaiting placement in Long-Term Care facilities. This is achieved through home visits, wellness checks, and remote patient monitoring.
- Five full-time Community Paramedics support the program, with a goal to recruit up to 6 additional staff this year. This staffing complement will support Program expansion to a 24/7 delivery model.
- Newly implemented medical oversight and comprehensive medical directives allow Community Paramedics to provide in-home treatment for chronic disease symptoms. This provides an opportunity to mitigate unnecessary 911 utilization and hospital visits.
- Community Paramedics expanded scope of care includes point-of-care testing, allowing lab work and urinalysis to be completed without the need for patients to leave home.
- 2025 will see a rotational clinic model to support eligible clients living in Regional Housing locations.

5. Background:

- Community Paramedics work in a non-emergency role delivering service to clients in our region.
    - Through regular check-ups, health education, and in-home assessments, they support clients while helping them navigate the most appropriate care pathway.
    - Community Paramedics can identify and fulfill the needs of individuals by addressing their unique situations pertaining to health, well-being, and safety.
- The Community Paramedic Program is referral-based, supported by local hospitals; family physicians/health care teams; community agencies; and specialty providers.
- Provincial funding guidelines mandate Community Paramedics to provide targeted care to senior populations in the two branches below:
    - Base programming - helping clients live their best while remaining in place. This includes system navigation as well as health education and in-home assessments.
    - Community Paramedicine for Long-Term Care (CPLTC) – this branch supports individuals who are currently or soon to be waitlisted for Long-Term Care (LTC) placement. This also includes individuals who require Crisis Placement
- Community Paramedicine services provided include:
    - Non-emergency home visits

- Health Education and Disease Management
- Remote Patient Monitoring
- In-home safety assessments
- System Navigation and connection to appropriate service providers
- Medication Reconciliation
- Support to patients wishing for a palliative approach to care
- Access to Programs to support healthy living
- In-home point-of-care testing (POCT) including urinalysis and lab values/blood draws

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities: Valuable relationships with partners and agencies in our Region are a key to success. The Community Paramedicine program works alongside local health partners and the Kitchener-Waterloo-Wellesley-Wilmot-Woolwich (KW4) and Cambridge-North Dumfries (CND) Ontario Health Teams (OHTs).

Public: Rostered individuals from the Region of Waterloo continue to report high levels of satisfaction through client surveys.

7. Financial Implications:

The Region of Waterloo's Community Paramedic Program is 100% funded through the Province of Ontario. The 2025 approved Regional Operating Budget includes:

- $371K of Community Paramedicine base funding from Ontario Health West
- $3M of Community Paramedicine Long-Term Care (CPLTC) Funding from the Ministry of Long-Term Care. This funding has been extended until March 31, 2026.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

By providing in-home support, the goal of the Community Paramedicine program is to reduce unnecessary 911 calls for service and visits to emergency departments. Staff will continue working to expand the Community Paramedicine program as a function of provincial funding.

9. Attachments:

None.

Prepared By: Ann Bettles, Commander, Community Programs

Reviewed By: Kevin Petendra, Deputy Chief, Paramedic Services

Approved By: John Riches, Chief, Paramedic Services

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner /Medical Officer of Health

Region of Waterloo

Public Health and Paramedic Services

Health Protection and Healthy Environments

To:	Community and Health Services Committee
Meeting Date:	May 6, 2025
Report Title:	2025 Vector-Borne Disease Program Update

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1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

This report provides a program update for Regional Council, as the Board of Health, on Public Health's Vector-Borne Disease Program.

3. Strategic Plan:

This report relates to the Equitable Services and Opportunities strategic priority of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. Public Health conducts vector borne disease surveillance, vector source reduction, and provides public education to reduce the risk of vector-borne diseases in the Region of Waterloo.

4. Report Highlights:

Vector-borne diseases (VBDs) such as West Nile Virus (WNV), Lyme disease, Powassan virus, Anaplasmosis, and Babesiosis continue to be monitored throughout the Region, as per the Ontario Public Health Standards. With continued changes in climate, it is expected that VBDs will continue to become more established in Ontario and Waterloo Region. See Appendix A.

- In the last five years, the number of West Nile Virus cases in the Region of Waterloo has fluctuated between 0 to 5 cases and has generally remained low. Cases in Ontario have also fluctuated within the same time period, but with a steady increase since 2022.
- The number of cases of Lyme disease has been gradually increasing over the last few years in both Waterloo Region (ranging from 7 cases in 2020 to 29 cases in 2024) and Ontario. Lyme disease rates in Waterloo Region remain lower than the province.

In 2024, Public Health conducted tick dragging and identified ticks that tested positive

for Lyme disease, Babesiosis and Powassan virus.

- As a result, Waterloo Region will be added to Public Health Ontario's map of Blacklegged Tick Established Risk Areas for tickborne diseases in 2025.

Public Health conducts various activities to protect the community from VBDs such as: human case and vector surveillance (e.g. conduct trapping, test and identify vectors and locally-acquired cases); investigation of complaints (e.g. standing water complaints); control measures (e.g. larviciding program); and education and communication to ensure people can protect themselves and reduce the risk.

5. Background:

West Nile Virus

West Nile Virus (WNV) is primarily a disease of birds but can spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people (70-80%) infected with West Nile Virus do not develop any symptoms, others will develop mild flu-like symptoms. A very small percentage of people (less than 1%) who are infected develop severe symptoms (e.g. neurological) and health effects such as encephalitis and meningitis.

In 2024, Waterloo Region reported 5 human cases of WNV, including 4 locally-acquired cases. In the last five years, the number of WNV cases in the Region of Waterloo has fluctuated, but it has generally remained low. Cases in Ontario have also fluctuated within the same time period, but with a steady increase since 2022.

Public Health conducts mosquito surveillance and control efforts which include setting up and monitoring mosquito trapping sites, treating catch basins with larvicide, and addressing standing water complaints. Mosquito trapping is used as a tool to monitor and confirm when WNV is detected in the Region. In 2024, a total of 181 mosquito traps were submitted from 16 different sites in Waterloo during the trapping season. Two of 462 mosquito pools tested positive for WNV.

Pestalto, a third-party licenced pest control operator conducts surveillance, monitoring and larvicide treatment in roadside catch basins. Larvicide treatment is provided to control mosquito larvae and prevent them from developing into adult mosquitoes. Two rounds of larvicide treatment were provided to over 117 000 municipal catch basins between June and August of 2024.

Tick-Borne Diseases

Tick-borne diseases reportable to Public Health include Lyme disease, Babesiosis, Anaplasmosis and Powassan virus disease.

Public Health conducted tick dragging in the Spring and Fall of 2024 to determine whether blacklegged ticks are present in the Region and whether they were infected with any reportable tick-borne diseases. On both occasions, the tick dragging activities

identified ticks that tested positive for Lyme disease, Babesiosis and Powassan virus. As a result, Waterloo Region will be added to the Public Health Ontario (PHO) Blacklegged Tick Established Risk Areas map. This map is mainly used to support health care providers with a clinical risk assessment after a tick bite.

Despite established risk areas, it is important to note that blacklegged ticks feed on and are transported by migratory birds, meaning there is a possibility of encountering an infective blacklegged tick almost anywhere in Ontario.

In 2024, Waterloo Region reported 29 cases of Lyme disease, including 11 locally-acquired cases. This is an increase from 2023 which had 5 locally acquired cases. The number of cases of Lyme disease has been gradually increasing over the last five years in both Waterloo Region and Ontario. This is not unexpected due to the environmental impacts of climate change, which has expanded the geographic range of blacklegged tick populations across the province, as well as heightened awareness among health care practitioners which may lead to increased testing. Lyme disease rates in Waterloo Region remain lower than the province.

In 2024, Waterloo Region had two human cases of Anaplasmosis, none of which were locally-acquired. In Ontario, there were 134 cases of Anaplasmosis. Waterloo Region had no human cases of Babesiosis or Powassan virus disease in 2024. In Ontario, there were 4 cases of Babesiosis and 1 case of Powassan virus disease.

Public Health will continue tick dragging in the spring and fall in locations based on a variety of considerations including:

- Locations where locally-acquired human cases of tick-borne diseases were reported;
- Locations of ticks submitted to www.eTick.ca by the public; and
- Presence of suitable tick habitats.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities and Public: Public Health engages with the municipalities and townships to conduct larviciding. In addition, Public Health engages with municipalities, townships and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) for mosquito trapping and tick dragging within the Region. Public Health also engages with these partners to provide education and signage for trail users about preventative measures for vector borne diseases (see Appendix B).

7. Financial Implications:

The 2025 Approved Public Health Operating Budget includes $265,000 for the Vector-Borne Disease program. This program is funded within the Department's base budget for Public Health Mandatory Programs; the budget is approved annually by Regional Council (as the Board of Health). Mandatory programs are funded approximately two-

thirds (67%) by the province with the remainder one-third (33%) funded by the local tax levy.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Public Health remains committed to reducing the risk of vector-borne diseases in the Region, including West Nile Virus and tick-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease, Babesiosis and Powassan virus. With the environmental impacts of climate change, and resulting expansion of vector populations, Public Health will continue to assess and target areas in the region for vector surveillance and control, alongside conducting human case surveillance and providing public education on personal protective measures. These activities are in alignment with the requirements of the Ontario Public Health Standards.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Trends of West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease in Waterloo Region and Ontario

Appendix B: Tick Sign for Trails

Prepared By: Lara Cook, Health Promotion and Research Analyst, Health Protection and Healthy Environments

Bernadette Moussa, Manager, Health Protection and Healthy Environments

Reviewed By: Aldo Franco, Director, Health Protection and Healthy Environments

Dr. Rabia Bana, Associate Medical Officer of Health

Approved By: Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health

Appendix A: Trends of West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease in Waterloo Region and Ontario

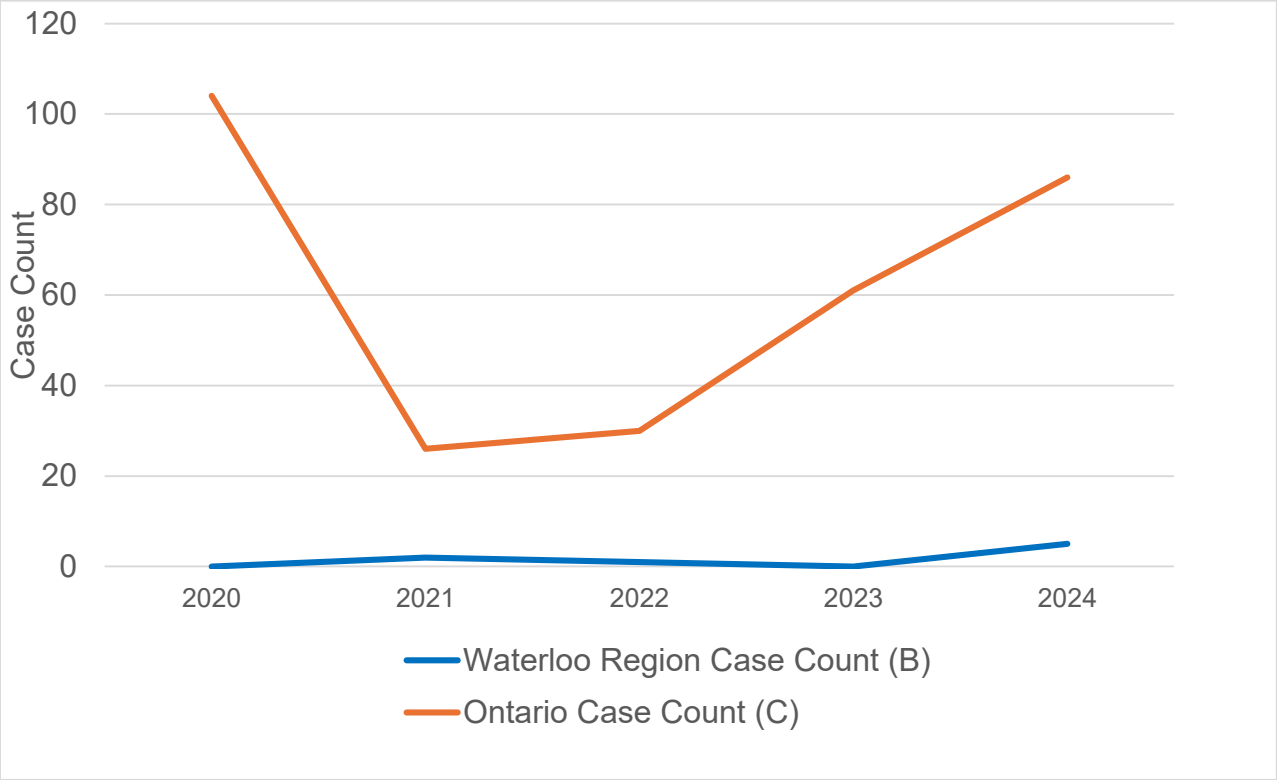


Figure 1: Total number of confirmed and probable West Nile Virus cases, Waterloo Region and Ontario, 2020–2024‡.

‡ Ontario and Waterloo Region data for 2024 is preliminary and subject to future revisions.

Data Sources:

A. Population Projections for Census Divisions by Age and Sex, 2021-2046, Ontario Ministry of Finance. Date Extracted: Mar 30, 2023.

B. integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) database, Ontario Ministry of Health. Date Extracted: Jan 06, 2025

C. Public Health Ontario, Infectious Disease Query, 2005-2012, Date Extracted: Feb 15, 2018; 2013, Date Extracted: Jan 25, 2023; 2014-2024, Date Extracted: Jan 06, 2025

Superscript B and C refer to data sources listed in Data Citations above.

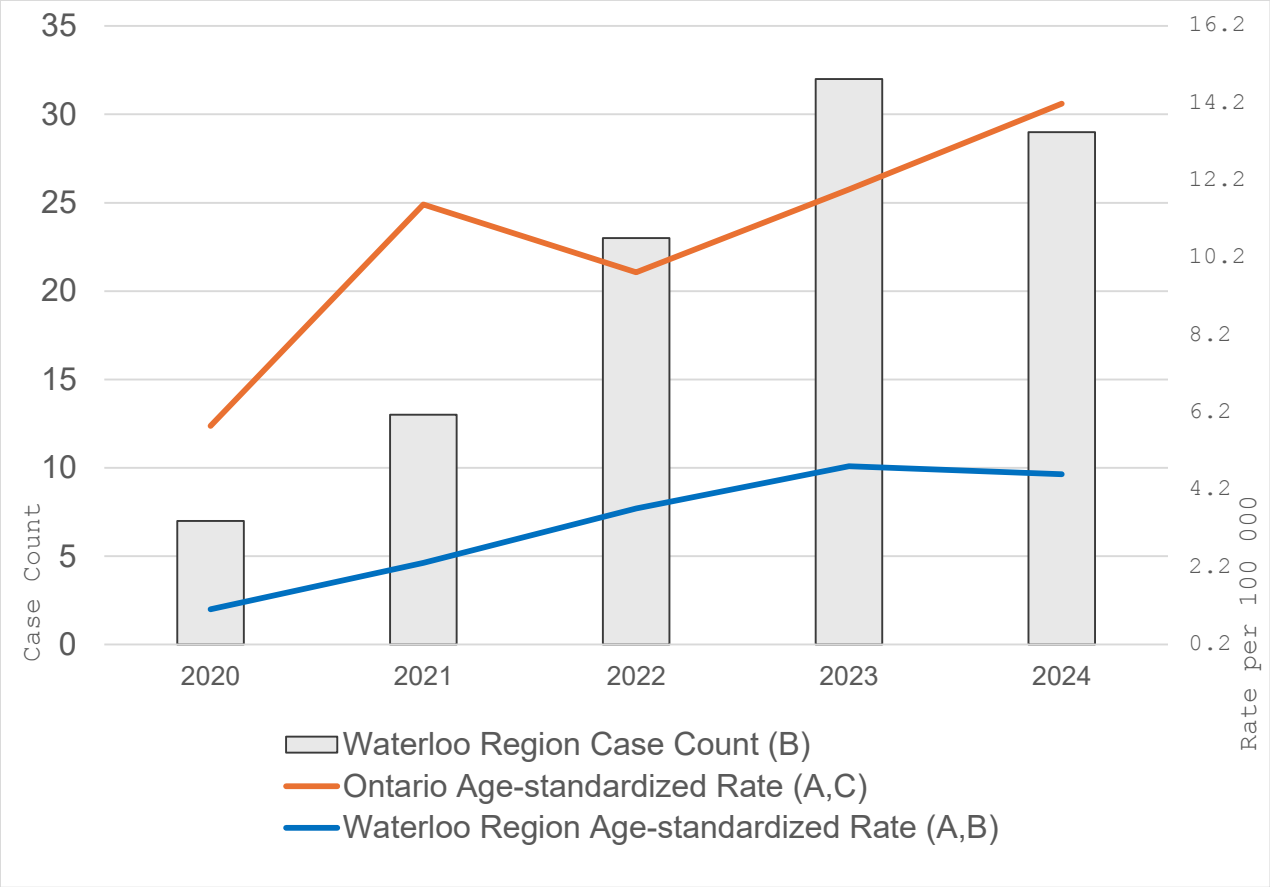


Figure 2: Total number and age-standardized rate per 100,000 of confirmed and probable Lyme disease cases, Waterloo Region and Ontario, 2020–2024‡.

‡ Ontario and Waterloo Region data for 2024 are preliminary and subject to future revisions.

Data Sources:

A. Population Projections for Census Divisions by Age and Sex, 2021-2046, Ontario Ministry of Finance. Date Extracted: Mar 30, 2023.

B. integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) database, Ontario Ministry of Health. Date Extracted: Jan 06, 2025

C. Public Health Ontario, Infectious Disease Query, 2005-2012, Date Extracted: Feb 15, 2018; 2013, Date Extracted: Jan 25, 2023; 2014-2024, Date Extracted: Jan 06, 2025

Superscript A, B, C refer to data sources listed in Data Citations above.

Appendix B: Tick Sign for Trails



Figure 1: Be Smart Tick Sign for Trails

Region of Waterloo

Planning, Development, and Legislative Services

Build Waterloo Region

To:	Community and Health Services Committee
Meeting Date:	May 6, 2025
Report Title:	Youth IMPACT Project Update – Region of Waterloo Investment in Youth

---

1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

This report is an update to Council on the success of the Youth IMPACT Project pilot.

3. Strategic Plan:

This program aligns with Equitable Services and Opportunities.

4. Report Highlights:

- In 2024, the Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) and Smart Waterloo Region (SWR) partnered to established and piloted the Youth IMPACT Project – a youth-led process for young people and community organizations to obtain funds to support social and community innovation projects developed by youth (see PDL-ECD-24-002 and www.childrenandyouthplanningtable.ca/yip/).
- 23 teams of youth (108 youth in total), and their partnering community organization, pitched their ideas for meaningful change. Ideas for change connected to Youth Impact Survey data, and/or one of the youth ideas for change from Data in Action. Projects included efforts to create safer communities, youth skills acquisition, building community, etc.
- Nine youth evaluators evaluated all the pitches. A total of $166,060 was requested. They awarded the $70,000 in available funding to 12 of the 23 pitched projects.
- Seven of these 12 projects concluded in 2024. These projects involved an additional 228 young people in their delivery, and rippled out into communities to impact hundreds of additional young people, families and community members. Five projects are concluding in 2025.

5. Background:

The Youth IMPACT Project pilot was funded primarily by the Region of Waterloo and the United Way Waterloo Region Communities. It builds on the successes experienced by SWR in bringing innovation training and youth-led ideas for change into school settings. CYPT & SWR wanted to ensure greater access to these opportunities that could happen in community settings.

This model of youth-led ideas for change, in partnership with community organizations, relied on community organizations being ready to engage. A six-week training course was offered on adult allyship, innovation and youth-led decision-making to all community organizations that decided to opt in (19 participated). Many of these organizations then went on to work with youth who wanted to participate in bringing their ideas for change to life.

In total, 27 boxes were distributed to teams of youth. These boxes included a physical toolkit and resources, as well as gift cards to support youth in their planning processes to develop their ideas and pitches.

In June 2024, 23 groups of youth pitched their idea to a decision-making panel. Ahead of the pitch event, nine youth were selected by the CYPT Youth Connector (youth) staff to form the decision-making panel. These youth, along with support from CYPT adult staff, committed 345 hours across 6 weeks to consider and make their decisions on funding allocation. In total, twelve groups received funding to implement their idea (see Appendix A).

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities: Promotion of this project took place pan-regionally (i.e., in all cities and townships). Five of the seven area Municipalities have opted to be Voting Member organizations with the CYPT. They received promotion materials directly to share with their residents. They have also received project updates and highlights via CYPT communications.

Public: The Youth IMPACT project was open to youth and organizations across all of Waterloo region. Information on how to get involved was promoted during the first quarter of 2024 via CYPT and SWR social media, direct to young people who were connected to CYPT and/or SWR, direct to the 100+ organizations that are connected with the CYPT, and some media coverage.

7. Financial Implications:

The approved 2025 operating budget included a provision of $150,000 annually to support this work.

	Current Year	Future Year(s)
Budget Impact?	Align	Align
Capital Plan Impact?	N/A	N/A
Tax Rate Increase	N/A	N/A
Impact to Average Household	N/A	N/A

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Based on the success of the Youth IMPACT Project pilot in 2024, CYPT is now moving forward with 2025 Youth IMPACT Project. This year's project will be a 'challenge' year, where testing will occur with granting smaller amounts for less intensive projects. In total, $50,000 will be awarded in 2025 to support youth-led ideas for change, and the momentum will continue to build among the youth population for youth-led change. The 2025 Youth IMPACT Project will kick off on May 10th at the CYPT Youth Impact & Action Summitt (in correspondence with 'Youth Month' in our community). Information on how to get involved will follow the same promotion channels that were used in 2024.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Highlights of Youth IMPACT Projects

Prepared By: Alison Pearson, Manager, Children and Youth Planning Table.

Reviewed By: Matthew Chandy, Director, Build Waterloo Region.

Approved By: Rod Reiger, Commissioner, Planning, Development and Legislative Services

Appendix A

Youth Project Showcase



Book-A-Pedia

A **book club** focusing on stories by **racialized authors** to highlight diverse perspectives and experiences. Started in Fall 2024 and is ongoing.



Churchill Basketball

Restoring the neighbourhood **basketball court** so people of **all ability levels** can participate.



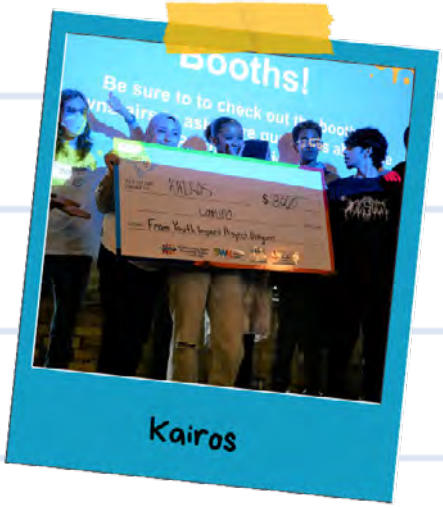
Empowering Newcomers Aesthetics Program

A program for **newcomers** to **learn aesthetic techniques** while building skills like independence and confidence. The program happened in Fall 2024.



Harvest to Garnish

Combatting food insecurity and promoting **sustainability through interactive cooking and gardening workshops**. Happened in Summer 2024.



Kairos

A program where youth can **explore postsecondary options** like **trades** and other professions so they don't see university as the only option.



Project Astraeus

A program where youth **innovate in STEM**, connect with **experts**, share their ideas, and build a network to foster **solutions to real-world problems**. Started in Fall 2024 and is ongoing.

Appendix A

Youth Project Showcase



Soccer, Shirts and Snacks

A **free soccer tournament** event for kids on a PD Day. The group provided a free **lunch, fruit smoothies and a free T-shirt** to participants in November 2024.



Sunset Youth Market

A **summer market** with over **15 youth vendors**! The event happened in August 2024 and with the proceeds **raised over $200 for OneROOF**.



The Welcoming Table

Many students go to school hungry and experience bullying. This duo is **inviting newcomers** to their school group where they can **combat hunger and discrimination.**



Voices 4 Youth

Creating a **suggestion box** and interviewing community members to share their **ideas for positive change.**



Youth Fun Fest

An unforgettable day where teens can be free to play! **Local performers, games, food, prizes.** This event happened in October 2024.



Youth-Led Circles

Providing **safe spaces for newcomer youth** who may experience discrimination in the community. The sessions took place in September 2024.

Region of Waterloo

Community Services

Housing Services

To: Community and Health Services Committee

Meeting Date: May 6, 2025

Report Title: Plan to End Chronic Homelessness Mid-Year Update

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1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To provide Council with an update on the progress of the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PECH) pertaining to:

a. Investment outputs in priority areas that have been realized and/or are underway as a result of the $10.2M and $4.6M investments from Council in 2024 and 2025 to-date, respectively,
b. Planned and implemented equity-focused work in the housing stability system,
c. Implementation of the All of Community Coordinating Team in 2025, and
d. Impact of the Point-in-Time (PiT) Count on the forthcoming PECH Data Strategy.

3. Strategic Plan:

This report supports the following strategic priorities: Homes for All, Equitable Services & Opportunities, and Resilient and Future Ready Organization in the Region's approved Corporate Strategic Plan 2023-2027.

Homes for All: Through community co-creation and movement towards system transformation, we continue to work towards functional zero chronic homelessness in Waterloo Region.

Equitable Services & Opportunities: Equity is a key driver to the success of the PECH. We will explore new models of service through community collaboration and partnerships with equity-owed groups will expand our understanding of successful outcomes to be more inclusive of the diversity of needs across our community.

4. Report Highlights:

- With the Regional Council investment of $10.2M in 2024 and the additional $4.6M in the 2025 budget (see **Appendix C** for a summary of 2024 investment outputs), Region staff and Community Co-Creators have been working collaboratively to advance the prioritized PECH initiatives across the community.
    - Priority areas for the PECH 2025 (as outlined in **CSD-HOU-24-019**) are underway in collaboration with Community Co-Creators.
- Year-to-date progress includes the implementation of PECH rent supplements, winter warming initiatives, the opening of the YWCA Cambridge Women's Shelter and the revision of current Homelessness and Supportive Housing frameworks.
- Equity across the Housing Stability System (HSS) is a key driver in the success of the PECH. Functional zero cannot be effectively achieved without the intentional and meaningful collaboration with equity-owed groups across the community.
    - New and increased benchmarks for equity in the HSS are forthcoming as the infrastructure of the PECH work continues to evolve.
- In addition to improving social services outcomes, research informing the PECH shows that investing in solutions for homelessness and supportive housing also delivers significant economic benefit.
    - As one example, a 2024 study identified that annual healthcare costs for people experiencing homelessness are six times that of housed people.
- As a critical part of the PECH data strategy, the 2024 PiT Count data (see **Appendix A**) validate the priority areas of the PECH, including the need for increased, sustained investment in ending chronic homelessness and building a more accessible and equitable housing system. A summary of key statistics from the 2024 PiT Count can be seen in **Appendix B.**

5. Background:

On April 9, 2024, Regional Council approved and endorsed the PECH (see **CSD-HOU-24-006**) with a $10.2M investment to prioritize this work. Further, Council directed staff to return in October 2024 with a comprehensive funding and advocacy strategy as part of the 2024 Regional Budget Process.

Investment Update

In October, the Funding Strategy and Engagement Plans (see **CSD-HOU-24-019**) fulfilled this direction, setting the groundwork for the 2025 tax levy expansion of $4.6M. **Appendix C** provides a summary of the investment outputs for 2024, and the planned allocations of funding for 2025.

Equitable Access

A priority component of the work of the PECH is to improve accessibility to a more equitable housing stability system. The PECH embeds equity through its initiatives by addressing chronic homelessness through an intentional, equity-driven approach that recognizes systemic barriers embedded within the experiences of homelessness. In collaboration with Co-Creators and the community agencies they represent, the PECH focuses intently on how to build equity within our system. More specifically, as it relates to the prevention of inflow into homelessness, distribution and coordination of the various support needed for those experiencing homelessness, in a collective effort to pave a pathway to exiting homelessness. Without this intentional and equity-focused lens, systemic barriers and service gaps will continue to erode our ability to reach functional zero chronic homelessness.

Examples of ongoing work aimed at bolstering equity across our system include the following:

- **PECH rental supplements**: a co-created, collaborative effort involving 27 community partners focused on the distribution of 151 subsidies across rural and urban settings with particular focus on unsheltered, BIPOC, newcomers, families, older adults, youth, and women.
- **Opening of YWCA Cambridge women's shelter:** In February, 20 emergency shelter beds for women, Two-Spirit, trans, and gender-diverse individuals.
- **Opening of Winter Warming sites in both Kitchener and Cambridge:** improve geographic equity across the community. Establishment of the Cambridge site embraced a safer, gender-responsive space for women, providing easier access to necessary warming supports.
- **Coalition of Muslim Women (CMW)'s first community transitional housing program for racialized women and those with children**: fills a critical gap in the housing stability system. Their dedicated efforts recognize intersectional realities of systemic barriers and the indispensable needs of our community's diverse and racialized populations.
- **Precursory, collaborative community submission for the Federal Advocates Review (Neha review panel):** Neha, which means "our ways" in Kanien'kehà:ka-Mohawk, explores how the Federal government can advance specified housing supports for women. This achievement marked a unique opportunity for cross-community engagement to advocate for resources that support women and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.
- Launching of PECH's revision of policies and frameworks aimed at reaching functional zero chronic homelessness. This work prioritizes the voices and insights of Co-Creators and lived experts by use of an intersectional approach designed for participatory policy development.

Return on Investment in Homelessness

The cost of ending homelessness in Waterloo Region has previously been estimated at $342M according to the Funding Strategy (see **CSD-HOU-24-019**). It is not unreasonable to assume an increase to that estimation as the crisis grows beyond the municipal scope of control.

A growing body of research confirms that it costs more to ignore homelessness and housing affordability than it does to fix it. For example, a 2024 study identified that annual healthcare costs for people experiencing homelessness are six times that of housed people, even after adjusting for health history and regardless of the income of the housed person (Homeless Hub, 2024).

This is one example of how investment in homelessness has an overall fiscal impact on intersecting systems, such as healthcare. According to the 2017 Ontario's Auditor General Annual Report (2017), the "average cost of providing social housing to a single household is approximately $613 per month" (p. 703).

Comparatively, "a single shelter bed costs $2,100 per month (more than three times more expensive), while a single correctional facility bed costs an average of $4,300 per month (seven times more expensive), and a hospital bed costs an average of $13,500 per month" (Auditor General of Ontario, 2017, p. 703).

As outlined in a recent report published by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in partnership with Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) and Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) facilitated by HelpSeeker Technologies, "Municipalities Under Pressure: The Human and Financial Cost of the Ontario Homelessness Crisis", there are significant financial investments needed province-wide and by all levels of government to address and end chronic homelessness in Ontario.

It is expected that increasing investments will have direct positive impacts on the experiences of homelessness across Waterloo Region. Staff anticipate updated projections on overall investment needed to achieve functional zero as the data strategy is developed and implemented.

The Point-in-Time Count and Data Strategy

On October 22, 2024, the Region of Waterloo's fourth PiT Count took place within the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Chonnonton and Haudenosaunee peoples. The PiT Count was conducted in all seven area municipalities in Waterloo Region over a 24-hour period.

A total number of 2,371 individuals were counted as experiencing homelessness in the Waterloo Region on October 22, 2024, of which 1,790 individuals completed the Survey on Homelessness. Of this number, 78% reported an experience of chronic homelessness, up from 75% in 2021 (see **Table 1** in **Appendix A** for comparison of Region of Waterloo's 2021 and 2024 PiT Counts).

The PiT Count is comprised of two components: (1) the Enumeration (or "count") and (2) the Survey on Homelessness. The Survey collects information on the characteristics

and experiences of those affected by homelessness. Those who participated in the survey were able to decline or stop participation at any point; thus, quantitative findings are based on the number of respondents as per each question. In tandem, the count and survey aim to supplement current understandings of how communities can better serve individuals experiencing homelessness. These findings are presented in the 2024 PiT Count Infographic (see **Appendix B**).

Findings from the 2024 PiT Count reinforce the priorities and recommendations within the PECH (see **Appendix A** for detailed insights into key enumeration and survey findings). The data confirms and reinforces insights from the local Prioritized Access to Housing Support (PATHS) and By-Name List (BNL) data sources, what community partners see and support in the community every day, and what the PECH is working actively to address – that systemic financial and health challenges are driving increases in the number of people experiencing homelessness and the length of time they are experiencing homelessness. The findings of the PiT Count further demonstrate that our local experience is consistent with the recent findings of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in their report on the provincial homelessness crisis.

As outlined in the PECH recommendations and its Funding Strategy & Engagement Plan, significant ongoing investments are needed to flatten the curve and end experiences of chronic homelessness in the Waterloo Region. Results from the 2024 PiT Count reaffirm local PECH priorities that aim to centre community voices, infrastructural and foundational work to support enhanced programs and services, services that support the urgent needs of people currently experiencing homelessness, and a yearly assessment and prioritization of the work across the community.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:
Through a Municipal Housing and Homelessness Leads Committee, Region staff remain closely connected with area municipalities in the collective work of addressing housing and homelessness related issues in the region. Staff meet and communicate regularly on housing and homelessness issues, including progress on the implementation of the Interim Housing Solutions, taking into consideration the valuable insights, considerations and resources of area municipal partners. Through collaborative problem-solving, data sharing, and leveraging shared resources, area municipalities are a vital partner in building a healthy and inclusive community for all. Some representatives from municipalities sit as members of the PECH Co-Creators table and further the Co-Creator's monthly roundtable is actively being used as an avenue for engagement on municipal issues impacting the goal of functional zero chronic homelessness.

Public:
The PECH Co-Creators table continues to hold monthly meetings. This collaborative group has 65 active organizations represented by 112 individuals, 25 lived experts, and regional staff. Both Co-Creators and Regional staff continue to lean into improved,

collaborative processes with a shared goal to achieve increased trust, stronger partnerships, improved and more equitable access to a more equitable system, and an overall goal of systems transformation.

7. Financial Implications:

The 2025 Approved Operating Budget allocates $65.6M million for homelessness initiatives, sourced from a combination of provincial and federal grants, as well as the property tax levy. Within this budget, a $14.9 million investment is dedicated to the PECH, with the full amount funded through the tax levy.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Through the remainder of 2025, Regional staff, in partnership with Co-Creators will continue to focus on the priorities as outlined in the Funding Strategy (see CSD-HOU-24-019). The key deliverables that can be expected this year include continued equity work to support a more equitable, accessible housing stability system. Examples of upcoming work include the following:

- A data strategy framework that is structured on the current state of homelessness in Waterloo Region as understood by a variety of data sources including the 2024 PiT, HIFIS, and PATHS data. Further, this framework will consider how to measure the impact of investments on inflow/active/outflow of experiences of homelessness and the system change work committed to by the PECH and all its partners and participants.
- The PECH Coordinating Team continues to move towards operational implementation, with a final team of 9 community representatives and two regional managers expected to be finalized in the first two weeks of May and launched into action shortly after. This team will act as the nucleus that guides the PECH activities and be critical voices in helping us achieve functional zero chronic homelessness.

Staff will return to council with further updates on identified priority work in September, ahead of the Regional Budget Process.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: 2024 Point-in-Time Count Homelessness Data – Insights to Action

Appendix B: 2024 PiT Infographic

Appendix C: PECH Investment Outputs Summary

Appendix D: Presentation

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Appendix A: 2024 Point-in-Time Count Homelessness Data – Insights to Action

Overview

Following the preliminary results of the 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count shared with Council on December 3, 2024 (see CSD-HOU-24-020), the following appendix provides detailed insights into key enumeration and survey findings.

Background

The 2024 PiT Count is a community-level measure of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness that provides snapshot of individuals experiencing homelessness (both chronic homelessness and temporary or episodic homelessness) at a single point in time.

The PiT Count is comprised of two components: (1) the Enumeration (or “count”), which estimates the number of individuals experiencing homelessness within a determined geographical area on a single night and also identifies the location where they spent the night: in shelters, transitional housing, or unsheltered locations; (2) the Survey on Homelessness, which includes a set of standardized questions that are administered directly to individuals experiencing homelessness. Respondents were able to decline or stop participation at any point in the survey; our quantitative findings are based on the number of respondents as per each question.

These findings are presented in the 2024 PiT Count Infographic (see **Appendix B**). The Survey collects information on the characteristics and experiences of those affected by homelessness and aim to strengthen and supplement current understandings of how communities can better serve individuals experiencing homelessness.

As part of the Reaching Home Program: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy agreement with the federal government, the Region of Waterloo conducted its fourth PiT Count as is federally mandated. Its methodology adhered to the national PiT Count prescribed by the federal government to provide a baseline for understanding the experiences of homelessness impacting the most vulnerable in our community.

With the support of more than 40 community partner agencies, including hospitals, carceral institutions, rural, Indigenous, women and gender diverse-specific supporting partners, in conjunction with regional staff, a robust and comprehensive coordination effort was achieved. Findings yield a changed structure of homelessness since 2021, with significant shifts between unsheltered and sheltered populations.

Results of the PiT Count are a critical piece of evidence that reflect the magnitude and evolving nature of homelessness across the Waterloo region. A comprehensive report on the Region's 2024 PiT findings is underway as we prepare a Local Report targeted for completion by July 2025. This report will provide detailed contextualization of trends derived from PiT data through more granular breakdowns (e.g., rural and urban geographic settings, sub-population-specific analysis) to better understand the effects of the deepening homelessness crisis impacting the Region.

Acknowledgements:

The Region of Waterloo gratefully acknowledges and thanks our community partner agencies who contributed their invaluable time, support, and expertise to the 2024 PiT Count. We especially are thankful to all those individuals who are experiencing homelessness and dedicated time towards sharing their personal and challenging experiences with us for this report.

Methodology:

It is critical to note that the methodology of the PiT Count varies year-to-year due to a variety of factors, namely coordination efforts, outreach resources, and the overall availability of support. While the Federal Government (Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada) provides expertise and guidance to communities in data collection, analysis, and survey development, the PiT Count methodology is flexible, adapting to the changing landscape of homelessness at the time of each count.

The overarching approach to the PiT Count follows the 'Everyone Counts – A Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada, 4th Edition – Standards for Participation' set forth by the Federal Government, which ensures consistency across communities, while allowing local adjustments to both outreach strategies and survey questions based on the specific needs and circumstances of each community. This adaptability is vital in ensuring that the PiT Count remains relevant and accurate, even as factors such as economic shifts, public health crises, and the availability of resources fluctuate.

The methodology, intended to achieve a measure of the number of individuals experiencing homelessness on a specific day, provides a series of information collected to support communities in the following areas:

- **Identifying over-represented populations**: Pinpoint groups disproportionately affected by homelessness, allowing for targeted interventions (i.e., population-specific).
- **Understanding pathways into homelessness:** Gain insights into causes and contributing factors of homelessness to enhance prevention services.

- **Building collaboration:** Foster cooperation within the homelessness sector and with other areas (such as health and corrections), ensuring resources are directed where most needed.
- **Garnering public support:** Strengthen engagement within community to collectively work towards ending homelessness.
- **Directing resources effectively:** Allocate resources to areas with the greatest need, ensuring a more impactful response.

While the core methodology of the PiT Count remains consistent, the methodology can and should be adapted to reflect the unique context and challenges faced by each community. The flexibility in the approach allows for a more dynamic and responsive data collection process, ensuring that PiT Counts continue to provide valuable insights for improving homelessness service provision and informing policy decisions.

Limitations:

Notably, the 2021 PiT Count data was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, possibly underreporting the actual extent of homelessness at the time. Public health measures, including social distancing guidelines, restricted in-person engagement, and staff shortages, all had a direct effect on participation rates and overall data quality. These challenges made it difficult to conduct outreach and implement the usual processes, leading to limitations in the scope and depth of the data collected. As a result, the 2021 PiT Count coordination and engagement efforts counted 1085 individuals and had 609 completed surveys (a 56% response rate), while the 2024 PiT Count counted 2,371 individuals and had 1,790 completed surveys (a 75% response rate).

The higher count and survey response rate of the Region's 2024 PiT Count illustrates that more individuals experiencing homelessness are engaged in the 2024 PiT Count. This also suggests that the 2024 data may be more reflective of those who were reachable or willing to engage, while 2021's lower participation rate might have missed certain sub-populations or marginalized groups.

The 2024 PiT Count achieved more than twice the data yielded in 2021, suggesting the following:

- Conducting the 2024 PiT Count in a post-pandemic environment benefitted from a more robust and coordinated methodology, aided by the collective efforts of more than 40 community partner agencies, including the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region's (SDCWR) and its Lived Expertise Working Group, whose efforts were specifically targeted to reaching a greater geographic and

population group (e.g., woman and gender-diverse individuals, individuals in hospitals and incarcerated).

- The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, encompassing a variety of considerations, including economic factors such as rising inflation, has exacerbated housing instability and homelessness.
- Staff and support capacity were better equipped to conduct outreach and engagement with individuals experiencing homelessness, benefiting from lessons learned during the pandemic and the enhanced collaborative framework provided by initiatives such as the PECH. This increased collaboration and resource mobilization resulted in a more comprehensive and effective data collection process, which ultimately provides a clearer, more accurate picture of homelessness in the Region of Waterloo.

PiT Data Comparison:

The table below (**Table 1**) compares metrics of the Region's 2021 and 2024 PiT Count data. At this time, we are awaiting the completion and publication of PiT Count data from communities across Ontario, which will allow for extensive cross-comparison of our Region's data with those of other cities. The variation in homelessness data across Ontario communities will highlight the impact of local contexts, including the effectiveness of service coordination, outreach resources, and the specific socio-economic challenges each municipality faces.

The differences in these figures are expected to further inform challenges in capturing an accurate representation of homelessness and underscore the need for consistent and comprehensive data collection methods across communities.

Table 1: Region of Waterloo's 2021 and 2024 Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts Comparison

Metric	September 2021	October 2024
People experiencing homelessness (total count)	1,085	2,371
Surveys completed	609	1,790
People experiencing Homelessness six months or more in last year	424 (75%)	1272 (78%)
People living in encampments or living rough	412 (38%)	1,009 (43%)
People experiencing hidden homelessness	335 (31%)	353 (15%)
People in emergency shelters	191 (18%)	446 (19%)
People in transitional housing	84 (8%)	221 (9%)
People staying in motels funded by Region of Waterloo	N/A*	153 (6%)
People in institutions (e.g. hospitals, incarcerated, Domestic Violence shelters)	63 (6%)	100 (4%)
Other: unsure or unclear	N/A	89 (4%)

Racialized community	72 (15%)	350 (26%)
Indigenous identity	102 (17%)	305 (17%)
Gender-diverse identifying	17 (3%)	36 (2%)
Served in military and/or RCMP	28 (5%)	84 (5%)
***Note*: During the Region of Waterloo's 2021 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count, no motel program was in operation.**		

Findings from the Region's 2021 and 2024 PiT Counts reveal a marked increase in the scale of homelessness across the Waterloo Region. Specifically, there are more individuals living in encampments, in emergency shelters, and in transitional housing and there is a clear rise in the number of racialized individuals experiencing homelessness. While chronic homelessness remains a significant concern, the Region's efforts to engage with these populations, improve data collection, and expand services are becoming more vigorous, as evidenced by increased participation and coordination in the 2024 PiT Count.

This comparison highlights upward trends in homelessness over the past three years across the Region, reflecting the growing scale of homelessness and demographic shifts, which may be influenced by several system changes over the past three years (e.g., effects from the COVID-19 pandemic over time).

Key highlights of this comparison include the following:

- **Overall Increase in Homelessness**: the number of individuals experiencing homelessness has more than doubled from 1,085 in 2021 to 2,371 in 2024.
    - This substantial rise draws attention to an escalating homelessness crisis, potentially exacerbated by ongoing economic challenges and systemic issues.
- **Increased Survey Participation:** the number of completed surveys also saw a dramatic increase, from 609 in 2021 to 1,790 in 2024.
    - This indicates improved outreach and a more accurate representation of the homeless population, or a greater willingness among individuals to participate in the survey process.
- **Chronic Homelessness:** the percentage of individuals surveyed who have been experiencing homelessness for six or more months has increased from 75% (424 individuals) in 2021 to 78% (1,272 individuals) in 2024.
    - This underscores the persistence of chronic homelessness in the region, with fewer individuals experiencing shorter-term homelessness.
    - This finding, within the PiT Count data, differs from our local By-Name List (BNL) and Prioritized Access to Housing Support (PATHS) data, indicating

that there are individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are not on the PATHS or Coordinated Access (CA) list.[1]

- **Short-term Homelessness:** The percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness for less than six months has decreased slightly, from 25% in 2021 to 21% in 2024.
    - This decrease reflects the growing number of individuals facing long-term homelessness, which continues to be a critical and persisting challenge our Region faces.
- **Encampments**: a notable increase in the number of individuals living in encampments, rising from 412 in 2021 to 1,009 in 2024.
    - This suggests a rise in visible homelessness and a potential shift in the types of homelessness individuals are experiencing, due in part to a lack of available shelter spaces.
- **Hidden Homelessness:** the number of individuals experiencing hidden homelessness has increased from 335 to 353, indicating that while the problem persists, it remains a significant challenge to fully address the hidden, less visible aspects of homelessness.
- **Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing:** the number of individuals in emergency shelters has more than doubled, from 191 in 2021 to 446 in 2024, reflecting an increased reliance on temporary housing.
    - Similarly, those in transitional housing rose from 84 to 221, highlighting a shift towards seeking longer-term support options but still within temporary or semi-permanent settings.
- **Individuals in Institutions (e.g., incarcerated, hospitals):** the number of individuals in institutions settings has increased slightly from 63 to 100, which may reflect continued overlaps between homelessness and institutionalization.
- **Demographic Shifts:**
    - **Racialized Communities:** An increase in the percentage of racialized individuals experiencing homelessness, from 15% in 2021 to 26% in 2024. This suggests that racialized populations are being disproportionately impacted by homelessness.
    - **Indigenous Identity:** The percentage of individuals identifying as Indigenous remained at 17%, suggesting that while the absolute numbers may have increased, the proportion of Indigenous people within the homeless population has not shifted significantly.

[1] BNL (individuals experiencing homelessness who are connected to the system, i.e., active in HIFIS), PATHS (individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are on the CA list awaiting supportive housing), and PIT (individuals who were counted as experiencing homelessness on October 22, 2024).

- **Gender-diverse Individuals:** The percentage of gender-diverse individuals experiencing homelessness decreased from 3% to 2%, which may reflect changing demographic reporting, outreach efforts, and challenges in the visibility of this group.
- **Military and RCMP Service:** The proportion of individuals with military or RCMP service remained consistent at 5%, showing no significant change in this subgroup within the homeless population.

The significant increase in the Region's total and chronic homelessness figures from 2021 to 2024 illustrates a growing crisis in the Region influenced by economic factors, housing instability, and an evolving landscape post-pandemic. The disparity in chronic homelessness between Waterloo and preliminary data from other regions, such as London, suggests that Waterloo is facing more severe and long-term homelessness issues, which may be linked to systemic gaps in housing and support services. PiT Count data can enhance operational considerations, namely maintenance of BNL and Coordinated Access (CA) data by validating and complementing these other data sources.

BNL and CA data, such as the PATHS list, is collected by community partners through the shared Homelessness Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). HIFIS is used daily by direct services staff who are supporting the needs and housing plans of people experiencing homelessness. PiT Count data is distinct from BNL and PATHS data as the engagement and survey of people experiencing homelessness through the PiT Count reaches individuals who are not yet connected to community organizations and HIFIS.

Challenges to Accessing Housing:

The Survey on Homelessness asked participants what challenges or problems individuals experienced when trying to find housing (respondents were able to select more than one response).

The top five challenges individuals experience when trying to access housing were:

- "Low income" (1425 individuals; 80%)
- "Rents too high" (1382 individuals; 78%),
- "Addiction" (591 individuals; 33%),
- "No income assistance" (564 individuals; 32%)
- "Poor housing conditions" (559 individuals; 31%).

Comparatively, the Region's 2021 PiT Count also found that systemic barriers such as low income and lack of income assistance, high rent, poor housing conditions, and addictions challenges where the top reasons people cannot access permanent housing.

To a great degree, PiT Count data from both 2021 and 2024 emphasize the challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness as exacerbated and driven by systemic financial barriers, particularly low income and high rents while social and structural issues (e.g., addiction, lack of income assistance, and poor housing conditions) remain significant contributors. Despite the increase in the 2024 survey sample size compared to 2021, the shifts in reported barriers highlight growing trends, including the rising impact of addiction and inadequate social support systems.

2024 PiT Count and The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PECH):

The PECH Key Findings Report for Waterloo Region presents an in-depth examination of the current state of homelessness in the Region, with specific actions for ending chronic homelessness. The 2021 PiT Count revealed that over 1,000 individuals were homeless, with more than half enduring chronic homelessness, while the Region's latest, 2024 PiT Count, found this number to have more than doubled. While the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated this issue, increasing both the visibility and number of individuals facing homelessness, the 2024 PiT Count emphasized the urgency that demands attention to resource needs and an improved understanding of the rise of chronic homelessness and increasing number of individuals facing homelessness across the Region.

Effort from both public and private sectors, key system partners (e.g., healthcare, mental health and addictions, justice), alongside all levels of government are required to address homelessness in our Region. This crisis demands attention to consideration of long-term solutions for chronic homelessness and more immediate strategies to prevent and intervene in the face of episodic homelessness.

The PECH report emphasizes that to address this crisis, a comprehensive and equity-focused approach is necessary, with particular attention to the voices of those with lived experience. The creation of the PECH aims to use this lived experience as a central element in devising sustainable solutions, including addressing the diverse needs of specific populations such as veterans, refugees and newcomers to Canada, Indigenous peoples, women and gender-diverse individuals, and individuals living with disabilities, such as acquired brain injuries (ABI).

When compared to the 2021 PiT report (see CSD-HOU-24-020), the current climate highlights the need for ongoing innovation and system-level changes to reduce chronic homelessness. The intention behind the PECH plan is to leverage community-driven initiatives and cross-sector collaboration to create long-term stability for vulnerable

populations in the region. This includes addressing systemic gaps in housing and support services, with the goal of reducing homelessness and improving housing stability for those in need.

The PECH Priority Actions for 2025:

The PECH, which serves as the Region's official plan to prevent, address and end chronic homelessness by 2030, outlines seven strategic focus areas and 30 actions. These areas emphasize a comprehensive, equity-driven approach that centers around a collaborative Co-Creator model with members, including those with lived experiences of homelessness. Findings from the Region's 2024 PiT Count demand the need for systemic change, emphasizing the rise in homelessness across the Region. While the PECH emphasizes its central goal of reducing chronic homelessness by 50% in 2025, the 2024 PiT Count shows homelessness has doubled since 2021.

As the PECH continues to work alongside area municipalities, Co-Creators, lived experts, and Regional staff in implementing its recommendations, data from the 2024 PiT Count may be used to inform and support its strategies. For example, as analysis progresses in preparation for the Local Report, preliminary PiT Count data reflects a significant portion of our homeless population face barriers to housing stability due to systemic gaps (e.g., affordable housing, mental health support). The PECH addresses these gaps by calling for increased access to housing and wraparound services, recognizing that supportive services (such as mental health care and addiction services) are crucial for long-term housing stability.

Furthermore, both the PiT Count and the PECH are data-driven, relying on both quantitative and qualitative information to shape policy and interventions. As the analysis unfolds for the Local Report, we continue to work alongside the PECH partners and collaborate with key interest holders (i.e., corrections and health services) to inform the data derived from the 2024 PiT Count. For example, the SDCWR supplemented Regional PiT Data by investing resources and capacity into qualitative semi-structured interviews in addition to conducting the PiT Count Survey on Homelessness. This engagement focused on hidden homelessness and warrants careful analysis to further contextualize and improve understandings of the Region's homeless landscape.

Outlined in the PECH's 2025 Priority Actions, one of its collaborative priority areas includes launching a data strategy to monitor and track progress on ending chronic homelessness and establishing data-informed decision-making processes. This area aims to leverage support and advocacy efforts as well as inform our community of the realities of homelessness.

PiT Data - Local Report & Municipality Profiles:

Homelessness impacts both urban and rural areas, while the latter is often overlooked in social support areas concerning investment into appropriate service support. The PECH details an urban-rural strategy in partnership with The Rural Upstream Project – Engage Rural community partner agency. In collaboration with eight health and social service agencies spanning the four rural townships, the PECH aims to map services and strengthen understandings of the multifaceted challenges facing rural townships.

The Region's 2024 PiT Count found 2% of individuals experiencing homelessness in rural settings, and 98% of individuals in urban settings. Specific examination into urban and rural PiT Count data is currently undergoing analysis and will be detailed in the Local Report being developed alongside Co-Creators as part of the implementation of the PECH. This analysis, along with sub-population specific data briefs, will be shared with the Community and Health Services Committee by July 2025 in an in-depth Local Report.

The Social Development Centre Waterloo Region (SDCWR) complimented the quantitative PiT Count by conducting in depth qualitative interviews with people experiencing homelessness. During the week of the PiT Count, members of the Social Development Centre's Live Expertise Work Group team met with over 80 individuals who were without a home, to explore their narratives and experiences. Using these stories as qualitative data and by including Lived Expertise Consultants in the development of the Local Report, the SDCWR will function as a collaborator for the 2024 PiT Count's meaning-making process, as well as help amplify the voices of some of the most vulnerable in our community.

AMO Initial Findings & Influence Over PECH Actions:

As a Service Manager, the Region of Waterloo participated in the data collection conducted by HelpSeeker for the Association of Municipalities of Ontario 2025 report *Municipalities Under Pressure: The Growing Human and Financial Cost of Ontario's Homelessness Crisis*. Using the data submitted by staff and additional internal data, staff are currently undertaking a comparative analysis to understand how our investments in housing and homelessness programs stack up to provincial averages. The data tracked and submitted for the province-wide report includes PATHS and BNL data, so discrepancies should be expected as methodologies vary. Further, anticipated outcomes of the PECH are tracked against PATHS and BNL data. Overall, local PiT Count findings reinforce both provincial trends and PECH projections of increases in experiences of homelessness. Additional findings in comparing to provincial trends include:

- Of the total 81,515 Ontarians experiencing known homelessness, approximately 51% are considered chronic.
    - In the Waterloo Region, according to PATHS and BNL data, the local chronicity rate is slightly below the provincial average at 45%.
        - This suggests that the impact of the heightened investments to end chronic homelessness is positive, as previously projected in the PECH Funding Strategy.
- While the Ontario rate of households in Core Housing Need (CHN) is at 12.1%, Waterloo Region sits at 9%, slightly lower than the provincial average.
    - There are approximately 20,018 (1 in 11) households in Waterloo Region in CHN.
        - Comparatively, 1 in 25 households in Waterloo Region are on the Community Housing waitlist.
    - The number of Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) units both provincially and locally has remained stagnant for several years based on similarly stagnant funding models.
        - Improved data and analysis are needed to understand the waitlist data to determine who is not accessing this resource.
        - Continued work with community partners and divisional program areas will occur to better understand what this data represents and what can be done to alleviate CHN through Housing Programs as an upstream solution.
- Across the province, municipal contributions to homelessness have doubled between 2020 and 2024. Locally, municipal investment in homelessness has increased by 38%.
    - This increase in investment is tracking against positive outcomes in local data, compared to projections of stagnant investment. As presented in the PECH Investment Strategy, increased investment continues to be critical to improved outcomes and reaching functional zero by 2030.

While the scope and methodology of the AMO report and local comparator data is significantly different than that of the PiT count, findings in the analysis of both sources maintain the increased need in investment to resolving chronic homelessness in Waterloo Region. The 2025 PECH priorities as presented in CSD-HOU-24-19 hold against these patterns. Continued tracking of the impact of the PECH actions will be critical to ensuring that actions and priorities set by co-creators and staff meet community needs.

Funding Key Messages

The 2024 Homelessness Operating Budget of $56M included an incremental $10.2M for the PECH, with $7M funded from the property tax levy and $3.2M funded from the Tax Stabilization Reserve.

The $10.2M for the PECH accomplished the following:

- 98 additional PATHS participants housed out of experiences of homelessness.
- 150 net new portable affordability rent supplements.
- 18 youth shelter beds stabilized.
- 20 women's shelter beds.
- 44 supportive housing units stabilized.
- 3 additional Unsheltered Support Workers to build capacity in the system.
- Funding for approximately 30 spaces for families in need of Emergency Shelter, and up to 50 single adult spaces in motel rooms for people who cannot access emergency shelters.
- Stabilization of staff supports across the Emergency Shelter system.
- Stabilization of tenant support to over 300 fixed-site Supportive Housing units.

In 2024, 192 individuals transitioned from chronic homelessness into housing through the PATHS program. This indicates that community efforts to support people into permanent housing are making progress. Despite this progress, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness continues to grow: the system is struggling to keep up with the increasing number of people who need support.

The pace of homelessness is exceeding available resources; as chronic homelessness continues to grow, the system is unable to scale quickly enough to meet the demands of our most vulnerable community members. The variance between the need for housing and the system's capacity to respond underscores the urgency for enhanced resources, infrastructure, and solutions to address homelessness effectively.

Conclusion:

While the Region of Waterloo's 2024 PiT Count represents a significant increase in individuals experiencing known homelessness in Waterloo Region, there are encouraging points of note. Increased partnerships across the community, through the efforts of the PECH, enable staff and partners to connect with more communities who previously were not connected to systems. This means that while the numbers increase, the ability of programs to better serve the community also increases. Regional staff and the PECH Co-Creators will continue to track closely the impact of funded efforts through the PECH and Housing Services broadly.

As we work towards completing our analysis of the Local Report, we will continue working in collaboration with the PECH partners, key community partners, including those with lived experiences of homelessness, to ensure our data from the 2024 PiT Count is well-informed. We aim to publish a cogent analysis of these findings in a Local Report by July 2025, utilizing additional data sources such as the PATHS and BNL to ensure that actions prioritized by, and funded through the PECH, are evidence-based and contextualized by the needs of our community.

2024 Point in time count findings

Region of Waterloo
COMMUNITY SERVICES

2371 people experiencing any type of homelessness were counted on October 22, 2024.

- **1009** people living rough (living in encampments, on the street, or staying in their vehicle)
- **446** people staying in an emergency shelter
- **353** people experiencing hidden homelessness (staying with friends or family, or temporary accommodations)
- **221** people staying in transitional housing
- **153** people staying in a motel funded by the Region
- **100** people in institutions (hospital, police custody)
- **89** people staying in unknown or undisclosed locations

1790 people included in the **point in time count** filled out a survey. A summary of the responses they shared is outlined below.

WHERE/HOW LONG

Where people are experiencing homelessness*

41% Living rough

25% Emergency shelter
Including hotel/motel funded by homeless program

20% Hidden homelessness

8% Transitional housing

6% Other
Motels, Institutions and Unknown

78% of people surveyed said they experienced chronic homelessness

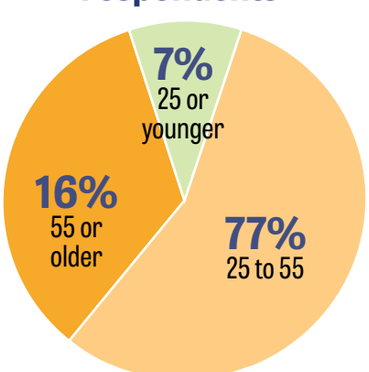
Racial identity

26% Identified themselves as members of a racialized community

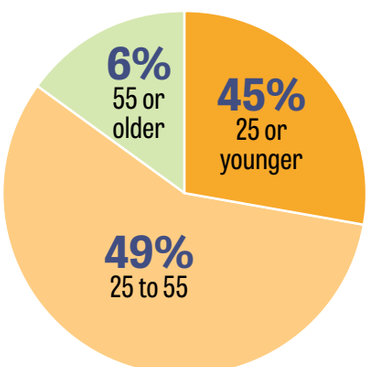
17% Identified themselves as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis

WHO

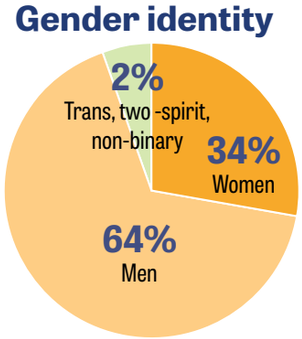
Age of survey respondents



Age when people first experienced homelessness



Gender identity



* The number of people experiencing homelessness in these locations differs from the numbers reported at the top of the page as this section reports on where survey respondents are experiencing homelessness - not everyone experiencing homelessness filled out a survey. Not everyone who participated in the survey answered every question. The percentages above are based on total responses for each question.

EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS



Top 5 reasons
people said caused their experience of homelessness

Not enough income for housing **(44%)**

Conflict with spouse / partner **(18%)**

Landlord / tenant conflict **(13%)**

Unfit / unsafe housing conditions **(12%)**

Substance use issues **(11%)**

Health challenges reported by survey respondents

72%	70%	44%	29%	28%
Substance use	Mental health	Illness / medical condition	Physical limitation	Acquired brain injury

Top 10 services
that would be helpful

- Finding affordable housing **(76%)**
- Housing search support **(54%)**
- Bus pass **(53%)**
- Finding a job **(49%)**
- Accessing income support (e.g. OW, EI) **(45%)**
- Internet access **(42%)**
- Getting ID **(41%)**
- Outreach workers **(41%)**
- Secure storage **(39%)**
- Washrooms, showers **(39%)**



Top 10 challenges to finding safe permanent housing

- Low income **(80%)**
- Rent too high **(78%)**
- Addiction **(33%)**
- No income assistance **(32%)**
- Poor housing conditions **(31%)**
- Mental health issues **(29%)**
- Discrimination **(27%)**
- Criminal history **(19%)**
- Family breakdown / conflict **(18%)**
- Physical health issues, accessibility **(16%)**

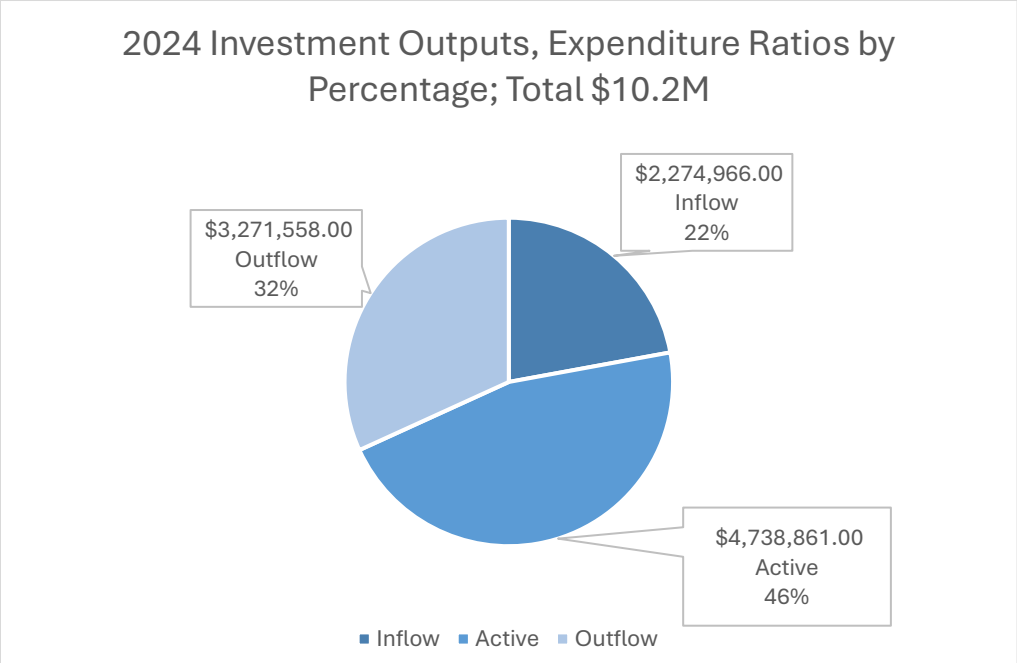
To learn more about Waterloo Region's Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, please visit:
engagewr.ca/end-chronic-homelessness

Appendix C: PECH Investment Outputs

As approved by Council in April 2023, the 2024 PECH budget of $10.2M has been fully allocated to support ending chronic homelessness in Waterloo Region. A key component of moving the needle towards functional zero is to redistribute spending ratios from majority active, to more even across inflow, active, and outflow expenditures. As compared to data from previous years, and as presented in the PECH Funding Strategy (CSD-HOU-24-019), the $10.2M approved for 2024 has focused on balancing these ratios, as shown in Chart 1. As compared to previous patterns of expenditure, the first dedicated year of PECH spending shows a 54% expenditure rate on inflow/outflow services and supports for individuals experiencing or at risk of becoming chronically homeless, and 46% on active chronic homelessness.

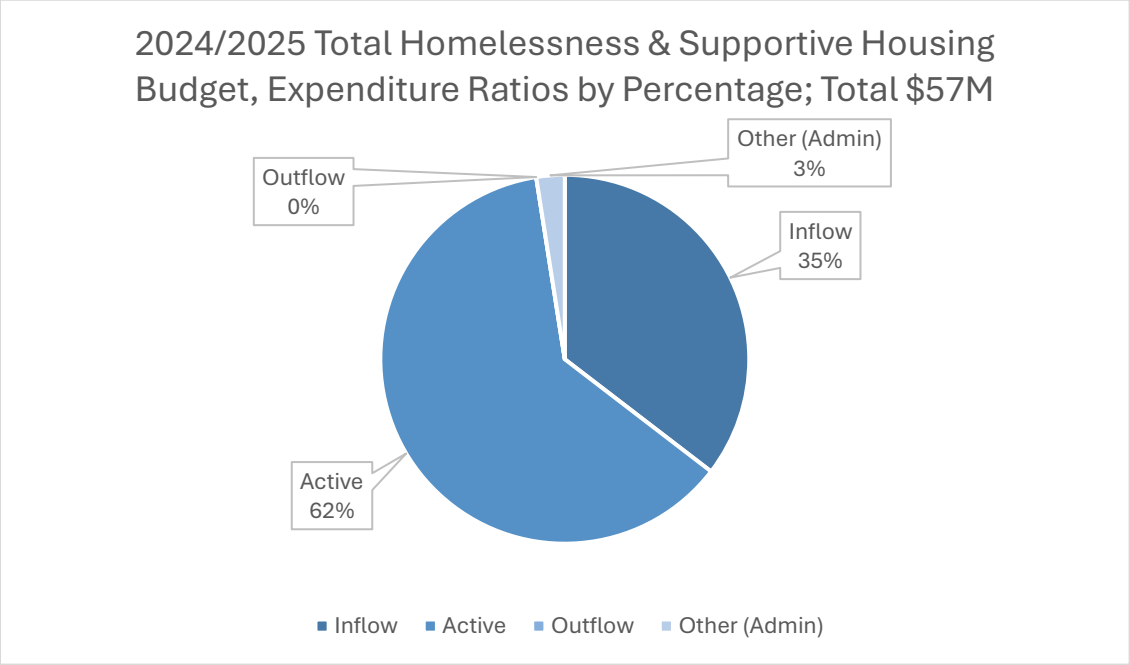
Tracking expenditures by inflow, active, and outflow categories is important because by increasing spending in inflow and outflow, the housing stability system can more effectively reduce entry into chronic homelessness and help those in active homelessness achieve housing outcomes. As funding levels increase in each category, inflow reduces, and housing outcomes increase. To this end, measuring the outputs of investment by these three categories is helpful to understand how inflow is reduced, outflow is encouraged, and active homelessness remains supported.

Chart 1: 2024 Investment Outputs Ratios by Percentage



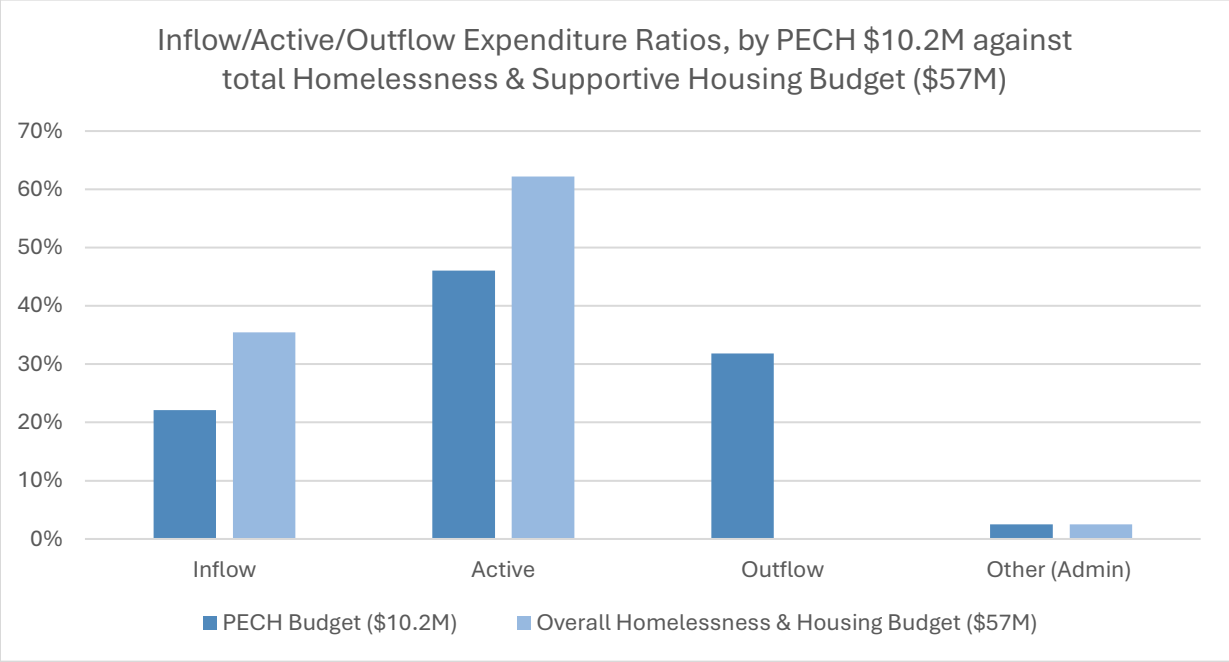
This is a meaningful shift in expenditures as part of the overall pattern of the Homelessness & Supportive Housing budget. For comparison, Chart 2 shows the full 2024/2025 budget of $57M and its relevant expenditure ratios. Compared to the full budget, the $10.2M dedicated to PECH shows a clear and significant shift to a systemically meaningful effort to invest in inflow and outflow mechanisms. Chart 3 additionally expresses this information side-by-side, reflecting the PECH budget as a portion of the H&SH total budget and its respective expenditure ratios.

Chart 2: 2024/2025 Total Homelessness & Supportive Housing Budget, Expenditure Ratios by Percentage, Total $57M



An important measure of projection for the PECH impact lies in how investment is allocated across inflow/active/outflow of chronic homelessness. Chart 3 below shows a meaningful shift in the ratios of expenditure across these categories for the 2023 $10.2M PECH budget as compared to the whole of the Homelessness & Supportive Housing budget. Based on data projections measuring the impact of investment to outcomes presented to Council in October 2024 (CSD-HOU-24-019, Appendix C), allocating budgeted dollars more evenly across the three categories is critical to address inflow and outflow of chronic homelessness to move towards functional zero.

Chart 3: Inflow/Active/Outflow Expenditure Ratios, by PECH $10.2M against total H&SH Housing Budget ($57M)



There are a number of significant outputs from the $10.2M that have impacted community. The impacts in each area can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Outputs, 2024 Tax Levy Investment or $10.2M

Funding	Area of Investment	Relevant Outputs
$ 349K	Workforce Stabilization/Staffing	• Stabilization of staffing in emergency shelter • Increased unsheltered homelessness support • Increased capacity for serving clients through FirstConnect
$ 4.2M	Emergency Shelter/Emergency Support	• 20 emergency shelter beds for women and gender-diverse individuals experiencing homelessness • Stabilization of 100 beds in King St. shelter (now closed) • Regular drug & paraphernalia sweeps in neighbourhood surrounding King St. shelter during operations • Support for 6 rooms for 16- & 17-year-olds experiencing homelessness • Support for 10 young single mothers and their children experiencing homelessness

		• Continued operations support of YW family shelter • Stabilization of 44 youth supportive housing units and youth shelter services
$ 5.2M	Rent Supplements/Supportive Housing	• Stabilization of 10 units dedicated to addiction recovery beds • 149 rent supplements/assistance units distributed through a wide range of partners across urban centers • Funding to support 90 housing outcomes with supports for people on PATHS, with the most complex needs of people experiencing homelessness • Stabilization funding to support 78 units of fixed site permanent supportive housing • Stabilization of youth shelter/supportive housing programing • Continued support of 50 units of fixed site permanent supportive housing • Stabilization to support continued operation of 45 units of women's fixed site supportive housing • New operating funding for 25 existing seniors units to become seniors' supportive housing units
$ 224K	Eviction Prevention	• Stabilization of staff and programming to prevent evictions and support tenants facing deep core housing needs and at risk of homelessness
$ 387K	Consultation - Lived Experts, PECH Implementation	• Engaging Lived Experience consultants through ongoing engagement • PECH Consultant scope extension for ongoing support
$ 10.2M		

Region of Waterloo

PECH Mid-Year Update

May 6, 2025

Context

The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PECH) is a multi-year plan to end chronic homelessness (functional zero) in Waterloo Region by 2030, endorsed by Council on April 9, 2023. This report provides an update on:

- Investment outputs in priority areas from the $10.2M 2024 budget;
- Equity work underway by the PECH;
- Forthcoming data strategy and the impact of the PiT Count

Functional Zero

- The goal to end chronic homelessness through the PECH is to reach a state of **functional zero**
- Functional zero is **3 or less people experiencing chronic homelessness** indicating that homelessness is rendered rare and brief

PECH Co-Creators

- 125 individuals representing 65 organizations, community and grassroots groups
- Launching sub-groups focused on PECH priorities
- Current selection process underway for the PECH coordinating team to guide this work, expected to launch in mid-May

2024 Point-in-Time Count

- 2,371 individuals counted as experiencing homelessness
- 1,790 completed the Survey on Homelessness
- Of these 1,790, 78% reported experiencing chronic homelessness
- This data reaffirms local PECH priorities and projections of the positive impact of investment on housing outcomes

Current Priority Areas of the PECH

- Increasing equitable access across the housing stability system
- Reducing inflow to chronic homelessness through prevention efforts
- Increasing outflow from chronic homelessness to permanent housing outcomes
- Developing a data strategy to monitor the ongoing impacts of the PECH
    - PiT results reaffirm local PECH priorities

Specific Investment Outputs from $10.2M

- Workforce stabilization/staffing and increased support for unsheltered homelessness
- 20 emergency shelter beds for women and gender-diverse individuals in Cambridge
- 6 spaces for 16- & 17- year olds experiencing homelessness
- Support for 10 young single mothers and their children
- Stabilization of 44 youth supportive housing units and youth shelter services
- Stabilization of 10 addiction recovery beds
- 151 rent supplements across urban and rural communities
- 90 additional permanent housing outcomes for people on PATHS with the most complex needs
- Stabilization of 198 fixed-site permanent supportive housing including dedicated spaces for women and seniors
- Stabilization of eviction prevention programs

Additional Equity Focused Efforts

- YWCA Cambridge & 84 Frederick (SHIP)- 67 emergency shelter spaces for women, Two-Spirit, trans, and gender-diverse individuals
- CMW- transitional housing for racialized women and children
- 151 rent subsidies in collaboration with 27 organizations
- Gender and geography responsive Winter Warming
- Guaranteed equity leadership on PECH coordinating team
- Continuing work to amplify lived expertise for systems change

Inflow/Active/Outflow - Why It Matters

- Funding Strategy included projections of how investments reduce inflow and encourage outflow are a path towards functional zero
- Historically the H&SH budget was primarily spent on active homelessness
- Investing more heavily in prevention (inflow) and housing outcomes (outflow) is critical to reaching functional zero

Integrating Housing Plans Across the Continuum



What Comes Next

- PECH Data Strategy to monitor impact in three key areas:
  - Are we getting closer to functional zero?
  - In what ways can we focus investment to create a more equitable, accessible housing stability system?
  - How might we measure systems change as part of this work?
- Continue to work towards a more equitable, accessible housing stability system
- All of Community Coordinating Team
- Updated inflow/active/outflow projections and expenditures for 2025 and beyond

Region of Waterloo

Community Services

Housing Services

To:	Community and Health Services Committee
Meeting Date:	May 6, 2025
Report Title:	Racialized Women Transitional Housing Program

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1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To provide an update on a new Transitional Housing Program for racialized women and racialized women with children as part of the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness.

3. Strategic Plan:

1. **Strategic Priority 1: Homes for All:** We will invest in affordable homes and economic opportunities for all that are part of inclusive and environmentally sustainable communities.
    - **Key themes:** Affordability and accessibility of services; safe and equitable communities; health and wellbeing.
2. **Strategic Priority 3: Equitable Services and Opportunities**: Through collaboration and innovative design, we will provide equitable, accessible services across the Waterloo Region that support the social determinants of health and complete communities as we grow.
    - **Key themes:** Community-based decision-making; livable and vibrant growth.

4. Report Highlights:

- Addressing chronic homelessness through the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness requires an intentional, equity-driven approach that recognizes the systemic barriers, such as racism, sexism, and violence, that disproportionately impact women and gender-diverse individuals. To support this direction, staff are supporting an expanded partnership with the Coalition of Muslim Women to provide specialized, inclusive transitional housing support for racialized women experiencing homelessness that our current system lacks.

- Supporting this initiative strengthens our overall social service infrastructure, aligns with key policy priorities on gender equity and anti-racism in the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, and moves us closer to a sustainable solution that prevents homelessness from becoming a chronic issue. This is a necessary and timely step toward creating a truly functional, inclusive, and effective homelessness response system.

5. Background:

In 2024, Region of Waterloo Housing Services staff began discussions with leadership within the Coalition of Muslim Women about the experiences of housing instability and homelessness within the Muslim and racialized women community. As outlined in the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PECH), the housing and homelessness system is working to centre the voices and expertise of people with lived experience and equity owed groups. These conversations led to a new partnership and the use of Waterloo Region Housing units as transitional housing units for racialized women and women with children. These units within Waterloo Region Housing are being vacated as part of the tenant relocation strategies as these buildings undergo redevelopment work. Between the time that these units are vacated by Waterloo Region Housing tenants and when the building is ready for demolition and redevelopment, they are being used as Transitional Housing units for women and women with children and supported by the Coalition of Muslim Women.

There is an opportunity to solidify and expand this Transitional Housing program for racialized women and women with children. Housing Services staff are partnering with the Coalition of Muslim Women to expand this Transitional Housing program to utilize a residential building in Waterloo. This Transitional Housing Program will provide wrap around staff supports to racialized women and children staying in the program, and focus on social connections/inclusion, financial stability, and supporting the women into permanent and stable housing.

Addressing chronic homelessness through the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PECH) requires an intentional, equity-driven approach that recognizes the systemic barriers, such as racism, sexism, and violence, disproportionately impact women and gender-diverse individuals. The Transitional Housing initiative with Coalition of Muslim Women is crucial in providing specialized, inclusive support that our current system lacks and remains aligned with the original commitment to further equity work through this site. The Coalition of Muslim Women has demonstrated a strong commitment to equity and accountability, highlighting critical service gaps and advocating for a more responsive system. As our community rapidly grows, we need to continue to adapt to the need for a diversified, adaptable approach to homelessness. Supporting this initiative strengthens our overall social service infrastructure, aligns with key policy

priorities on gender equity and anti-racism with the PECH, and moves us closer to a sustainable solution that prevents homelessness from becoming a chronic issue. This is a necessary and timely step toward creating a truly functional, inclusive, and effective homelessness response system.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:
Through a Municipal Housing and Homelessness Leads Committee, Region staff remain closely connected with area municipalities in the collective work of addressing housing and homelessness related issues in the region. Staff meet and communicate regularly on housing and homelessness issues, including progress on the implementation of the Interim Housing Solutions, taking into consideration the valuable insights, considerations and resources of area municipal partners. Through collaborative problem-solving, data sharing, and leveraging shared resources, area municipalities are a vital partner in building a healthy and inclusive community for all.

Public:
The creation of The Plan to End Chronic Homelessness was a community-centred process involving extensive public consultation and engagement. Co-creation among staff, the project partners, and those identified as co-creators occurred throughout the development of the PECH. In this process of co-creation, co-creators provided input to shape the community engagement approach, assist in the sense-making of findings and develop final recommendations. The Co-creators continue to be the champions of the work, helping to bring the PECH to the community for its implementation.

7. Financial Implications:

The 2025 approved Housing Services Operating Budget includes the resources to fund this initiative for the remainder of 2025 and annualized in 2026. With the closure of KWUNWP's Transitional Housing program operations in Waterloo, regional staff worked with their leadership team to develop a re-allocation plan to support the agency's Affordable Housing project in Cambridge which in turn created this opportunity to also fund this initiative within the 2025 Approved Operating Budget with no additional financial resources requested.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Staff will work to enter into an updated partnership agreement with the Coalition of Muslim Women for the provision of specialized, inclusive Transitional Housing for racialized women and children. This will strengthen our overall social service infrastructure, aligning with the key policy priorities on gender equality and anti-racism

of the PECH and moving us closer to the goal of ending chronic homelessness in the region.

Additionally, staff will continue to work with KWUNWP to support their ongoing housing operations and continue to look for new partnership opportunities with this organization in the future in alignment with the equity and Indigenous focused actions of the PECH.

9. Attachments:

N/A

Prepared By: Ryan Pettipiere, Director of Housing Services

Reviewed By: Jennifer Gordon, Manager Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, Chris McEvoy, Manager Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Approved By: Peter Sweeney, Commissioner of Community Services

Region of Waterloo

Community Services

Children's Services

To: Community and Health Services Committee

Meeting Date: May 6, 2025

Report Title: Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Directed Growth and Child Care Funding Update

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1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo increase the 2025 Operating Budget for Children's Services in the amount of $6,775,216 with $0 net tax levy impact to reflect changes to Ministry of Education funding, as outlined in report CSD-CHS-25-001, dated May 6, 2025;

And that Regional Council request that the Ministry of Education provide increased Local Priorities Funding in alignment with growth in child care spaces to ensure service levels are maintained for children with special needs and child care fee subsidy.

2. Purpose / Issue:

This report provides an update on the growth of child care spaces as part of the CWELCC Plan and outlines the revised 2025 funding allocations related to CWELCC and child care.

3. Strategic Plan:

This report addresses Strategic Priority 3: Equitable Services & Opportunities and Strategic Priority 4: Resilient and Future Ready Organizations in the Region's Corporate Strategic Plan.

4. Report Highlights:

- The Region has received an additional 411 CWELCC child care spaces to be created by December 31, 2026, bringing the total number of new CWELCC spaces for Waterloo Region to 4,136 since 2022.
- The Region has received notice of increased 2025 child care funding from the Ministry of Education, as a result of new CWELCC child care spaces and the new

Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Infrastructure Fund.

- The Region will receive $6.3 million in new Canada-Ontario ELCC Infrastructure Funding to support the creation of new centre-based licensed child care spaces operated by not-for-profit organizations. Additional CWELCC Start-up Grant Funding ($1.6 million) will also support new child care spaces.
- Despite the increase to child care spaces, there is no change to Local Priorities Funding which primarily supports special needs services and fee subsidy expenses. This is anticipated to cause a budget pressure in future years.

5. Background:

For 2025, the Ministry of Education redesigned the child care funding formula to implement a new cost-based funding approach for licensed child care programs participating in CWELCC. In early April, the Ministry of Education made updates to new CWELCC space allocations and 2025 child care funding allocations.

In 2023, Waterloo Region was allocated 3,725 new CWELCC licensed child care spaces (CSD-CHS-23-001, CSD-CHS-23-002). The Region is on track to meet growth targets and 2,400 new CWELCC child care spaces have been created in Waterloo Region. In 2024, Children's Services requested an additional 507 spaces from the Ministry of Education (CSD-CHS-24-004).

As a result of the new province-wide space recalibration process, Waterloo Region has received an additional 411 CWELCC child care spaces. This brings the total number of new CWELCC spaces to be created by 2026 for Waterloo Region to 4,136. Even with the additional spaces, demand for child care will continue to far exceed available child care spaces. Before CWELCC, the waitlist in Waterloo Region for licensed child care was around 5,600 children – now it is over 13,000 children, of which 8,700 indicate they are looking for care immediately.

For spaces created from 2024 to 2026, at least 90% must be not-for-profit spaces and no more than 10% can be for-profit spaces. The previous ratio was 85% not-for profit to 15% for-profit. Based on approved for-profit growth from 2024 to 2026, Children's Services has 15 remaining for-profit spaces to allocate by December 31, 2026. As per Ministry direction, all other spaces will be allocated to not-for-profit licensees.

Children's Services will launch a CWELCC Enrollment Application in spring 2025 to allocate the additional not-for-profit CWELCC spaces. The CWELCC Enrollment Application will be a fair and transparent Request for Proposal process and will be communicated widely with current and prospective child care operators once available. It is expected that interest in opening new CWELCC spaces will exceed the number of funded spaces Children's Services has available to allocate and not all programs that apply for CWELCC enrollment will be approved.

To support the creation of these spaces and other new spaces that align with the Region's Directed Growth Plan, the Region will receive $1.6 million in additional CWELCC Start-up Grant Funding. Between 2022-2026, CWELCC Start-up Grant Funding will total $19 million. Programs apply for this funding when they apply to create new child care spaces.

The Canada-Ontario ELCC Infrastructure Fund is new Government of Canada and Province of Ontario funding intended to support the creation of new centre-based licensed child care spaces operated by not-for-profit organizations. The Region will receive $6.3 million in ELCC Infrastructure Funding. Eligible programs will apply for this funding as part of the upcoming CWELCC Enrollment Application or through a separate application (for previously approved eligible new spaces).

Additionally, administration funding and CWELCC Cost-based Funding 2025 allocations were adjusted. Administration funding was increased by $22,000. This funding will be used to support incremental expenses related to accountability for the new and increased funding. CWELCC Cost-based Funding will decrease in 2025 by $1.2 million due to the Ministry adjusting funding to align with current data. This change will have no impact since cost-based grants to programs will be at least $1.2 million lower than the initial budget because some programs are eligible for less funding than preliminary projections.

In the redesigned funding approach, Local Priorities Funding supports expenses outside of the CWELCC cost-based approach, primarily child care fee subsidy and special needs supports. As the number of child care spaces increase, these expenses are also expected to proportionally increase; however, the Ministry of Education has shared that system managers should plan for this funding to be flatlined in future years. Children's Services is concerned about service and budget pressures in future years related to Local Priorities Funding, most critically that there will be insufficient funding in 2026 and beyond to meet demand for child care fee subsidy and special needs supports.

Children's Services and child care operators are adapting to the new CWELCC cost-based funding approach. The new approach provides predictable funding based on actual expenses from 2023 and the majority of child care operators expect the funding will support program sustainability in 2025.

The most significant limitation of the new funding approach is an expected funding shortfall for new licensed home child care spaces, based on the factors used in the funding calculation. Additionally, some existing child care operators who have recently opened or plan to open new child spaces have identified funding pressures for new spaces given they may have higher costs than the prescribed benchmarks (e.g., due to existing wage grids). Children's Services is working closely with operators and other system managers to understand challenges and opportunities with the new approach and will continue to share feedback with the Ministry through the Ontario Municipal

Social Services Association (OMSSA).

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Children's Services has been conducting on-going engagement with parents that have traditionally been underserved in the licensed child care system as part of the implementation of the Access and Inclusion Plan. Consultation regarding child care growth also continues with internal stakeholders (i.e., Housing Services, Economic Development, and Facilities), external stakeholders (i.e., child care operators, school boards, and ethno-cultural organizations), and area municipalities.

Children's Services has been working closely with licensed child care operators to support their transition to the new funding model. Children's Services has also been collaborating with other municipalities across Ontario to align approaches, share resources, and provide feedback to the Ministry of Education.

7. Financial Implications:

The 2025 Children's Services Operating Approved Budget includes $175M of CWELCC cost-based allocation which is 100% Ministry funded. Of this amount, $1.1M was reduced. There is also an additional $1.6M for CWELCC start-up funding and $6.3M for Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure to support child care growth. Children's Services also received $22K for administration. The table below shows a comparison of the 2025 Updated Approved Ministry Allocation and 2025 Approved Budget. All budget changes are 100% funded by the Ministry and there is no levy impact.

	2025 Updated Approved Ministry Allocation	**2025 Approved Budget**	**Proposed changes to 2025 Approved Budget**
CWELCC Cost-based allocation	173,407,311	174,556,756	(1,149,445)
CWELCC Cost-based Holdback	4,095,551	4,095,551	
Local Priorities Allocation	25,265,386	25,265,386	-
Start-up Grants	7,613,330	5,993,100	1,620,230
Canada-Ontario ELCC Infrastructure Fund	6,282,430	-	6,282,430
Administration Allocation	3,086,523	3,064,522	22,001
CWELCC Holdback	(4,095,551)	(4,095,551)	-
Sub-Total (Child Care Funding)	**215,654,980**	**208,879,764**	
EarlyON	4,829,567	4,829,567	-
Indigenous-Led CC & Family	300,000	300,000	-
Total 2025 Ministry Approval	**220,784,547**	**214,009,331**	**6,775,216**

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Children's Services will launch a CWELCC Enrollment Application in spring 2025 to allocate the additional not-for-profit child care spaces based on the Region's Directed Growth Plan. The new Canada-Ontario ELCC Infrastructure Funding and additional CWELCC Start-up funding will support not-for-profit child care growth and will also be allocated in spring 2025. Children's Services will continue to administer the CWELCC program, in alignment with Ministry of Education Guidelines and is committed to supporting licensed child care operators throughout this funding transition.

9. Attachments

None.

Prepared By: Tyla Fullerton, Manager, Integrated Policy, Planning and Funding

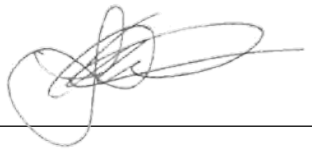
Bethany Wagler-Mantle, Manager, Integrated Policy, Planning and Funding

Olga Lucia Cadena, Financial Analyst, Corporate Services

Reviewed By: Barbara Cardow, Director, Children's Services

Approved By: Peter Sweeney, Commissioner, Community Services

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "D"** REFERRED TO
IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS
SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY
OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE
COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING
A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20,
ADMINISTERING OATH OR
DECLAEATION REMOTELY THIS 9th
DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Council
Addendum Agenda

Date:	Wednesday, April 23, 2025
Regular Session:	5:30 p.m.
Location:	Council Chambers/Electronic

Should you require an alternative format please contact the Regional Clerk at Tel.: 519-575-4400, TTY: 519-575-4605, or regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca

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Pages

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Land Acknowledgement**
3. **Motion to go into Closed Session**

   Recommended Motion:

   That a closed meeting of the Council be held on April 23, 2025 at 5:35 p.m., in the Waterloo County Room, in accordance with Section 239 of the "Municipal Act, 2001", for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

   1. Receiving advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to the *Community Care and Recovery Act*; and
   2. Personal matters about an identifiable individual.

4. **Motion to Reconvene into Open Session - 7:00 p.m.**

   Recommended Motion:

   That Council reconvene into Open Session.

5. **Declaration of Office - Regional Councillor Matt Rodrigues**
6. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under the "Municipal Conflict of Interest Act"**
7. **Presentations**
8. **Petitions**
9. **Delegations**

   9.1 Chloe Young, Waterloo — 15
   Re: Councillor P. Wolf Motion Re: Consumption and Treatment Services

   9.2 Anne Loeffler, New Hamburg — 27
   Re: Soil erosion issue on the Region's farm on Bleams Road

   ***9.3 Krista Straus, New Hamburg**
   Re: Wilmot Land Assembly

*9.4 Sidney MacDonald, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.5 Megan Walker, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.6 Andrew Reeves, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.7 David Alton, Social Development Centre of Waterloo Region
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.8 Jacara Droog, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.9 Heather Majaury, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.10 Laura Pin, Wilfrid Laurier University
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.11 John-Lee Bannister, Waterloo
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.12 Héline Chow, Waterloo
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.13 Lili Berescu, Waterloo
Re: Councillor P. Wolf Motion Re: Consumption and Treatment Services

*9.14 Ashley Schuitema, Waterloo Region Community Legal Services
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.15 Jason Paul, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.16 Laura Mosher, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.17 Julian Ichim, Kitchener
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site

Specific By-law

*9.18 Erin Dej, Cambridge
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.19 Meagan Snyder, Unsheltered Campaign
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.20 Tara Jones, Waterloo
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.21 Martin Asling, Waterloo Region Yes in My Backyard
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.22 Shannon Down, Waterloo
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

*9.23 Pranav Seetharaman, Waterloo
Re: PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

10. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Recommended Motion:
That the following minutes be approved.

10.1 Council - March 19, 2025

10.2 Closed Council - March 19, 2025

10.3 Special Council - March 28, 2025

10.4 Library Committee - April 1, 2025

10.5 Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee - April 8, 2025

10.6 Closed Committee - April 8, 2025

10.7 Administration and Finance Committee - April 8, 2025

10.8 Community and Health Services Committee - April 8, 2025

*10.9 Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Public Input Committee - April 16, 2025

11. Communications

11.1 Council Information Package - April 16, 2025 (Distributed to Councillors Electronically)
For information.

*11.2 Correspondence - Dr. Chris Steingart, Sanguen Health Centre

12. Motion to Go Into Committee of the Whole to Consider Reports

Recommended Motion:
That Council go into Committee of the Whole to consider reports.

13. Reports

13.1 Committee Reports

13.1.1 Library Committee Summary - April 1, 2025 32

Recommended Motion:
The Library Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo authorize the Manager, Library Services to enter into reciprocal borrowing arrangements with other public libraries from time to time on behalf of the Region of Waterloo Library, which forms part of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, with such agreements to the satisfaction of the Regional Solicitor.

13.1.2 Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee Summary - April 8, 2025 33

Recommended Motion:
The Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the following actions regarding Duke Street West between Victoria Street North and Breithaupt Street in the City of Kitchener effective April 24, 2025 at 12:01 a.m.

    1. Pass a by-law to amend Road Consolidation By law 01 059 (Regional Road System) to add the following parts of Duke Street West to the Regional road network, as per Report TSD-TRP-25-004 dated April 8, 2025:

        - Duke Street West (between Victoria Street North and rail corridor), legally described as: Edwards Street, Plan 374, Kitchener (AKA Duke Street) lying West of Victoria Street and South of CNR, City of Kitchener.

        - Duke Street West (between rail corridor and Breithaupt Street), legally described as: Part of Edwards Street, Plan 376, being Parts 1, 2, 3 and4 on 58R-22190, City of Kitchener.

    2. Pass a by-law to amend Traffic and Parking By-law 16-023 to:

- Add to schedule 01 - No Parking on Duke Street West from Breithaupt Street to Victoria Street, both sides, anytime.
- Add to schedule 04 - No Stopping on Duke Street West from Breithaupt Street to Victoria Street, both sides, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

2. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the following actions regarding Speedsville Road between Maple Grove Road (Regional Road 38) and Eagle Street (Regional Road 39) in the City of Cambridge effective April 24, 2025 at 12:01am.

    1. Pass a by-law to amend Road Consolidation By-law 01-059 (Regional Road System) to add the following parts of Speedsville Road to the Regional Road network:

        a. Part of Lots 8, 9, 10 and 11, Concession 1 Beasley's Lower Block & Part of Lots 26, 27, 28 and 29, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Part 1 on 58R-18565; Part of Lot 27, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Parts 2 and 3 on 58R-18565; Part of Lot 28, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Part 4 on 58R-18565, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

        b. Part of Lots 28 and 29, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Part 1 on 58R-19923; Part of Lot 29, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Parts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 on 58R-19923, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

        c. Block 1, Plan 58M620, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

        d. Part of Lots 6 and 7, Concession 1, Beasley's Lower Block & Part of Lots 1, 25 and 26, Beasley's Broken Front Concession & 16 Foot Widening on Registered Plan 1046 & 16 Foot Widening on Registered

Plan 1174 & 10 Foot Widening on Registered Plan 1353 & Part of Lots 13 and 14 on Registered Plan 1364, being Part 1 on 58R-18569, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo; and

e. Assign Regional Road number 82 to this segment of Speedsville Road.

2. Pass a by-law to amend the Region's Traffic and Parking By-law 16-023 as follows:
   a. Add to Schedule 10, Level 2 Pedestrian Crossover, Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82), 248 meters south of Rogers Drive (Mill Run Trail);

   b. Add to Schedule 11, Through Highways, Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82) from Maple Grove Road (Regional Road 38) to Eagle Street (Regional Road 39);

   c. Add to Schedule 17, Rates of Speed, 60 km/h on Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82) from Highway 401 to Eagle Street (Regional Road 39); and

   d. Add to Schedule 19, No Heavy Trucks, Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82) from Maple Grove Road (Regional Road 38) to Eagle Street (Regional Road 39)

3. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo:

   a. Receives the Grand River Transit (GRT) Business Plan for information;

   b. Approves holding a Special Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee meeting on April 16, 2025 for the purpose of hearing public input on the GRT Business Plan; and

   c. Direct staff to present the final version of the GRT Business Plan to the Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee for a decision from the Committee, after meeting with all interested area municipalities in accordance with report TSD-TRS-25-005 dated April 8, 2025, as amended.

4. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo endorse the Levels of Service as outlined in Appendix A of report EES-SAM-25-001, dated April 8, 2025.

5. Whereas the prevailing narrative is that road speeds should reflect what a driver would naturally expect to drive; and
Whereas the two rural roads that we have reduced the school zone speed from 80 to 60 to 40 have created dangerous driving situations endangering both drivers and other road users; and
Whereas the lower speed limits at rural schools are only needed during school hours; and
Whereas rural roads have different traffic patterns and expectations than urban roads;
That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo:
    1. Prepare the requisite amending by-law(s) to lower speed limits in school zones from 80 km/h to 60 km/h (instead of the current 40 km/h) on Lobsinger Line near King Alfred Academy and Northfield Drive near Balsam Grove Parochial School.

    2. That staff be directed to investigate the installation of flashing lights in school zones that operate during school hours along side of active speed cameras as part of the rural strategy.

    3. That staff be directed to work with Townships' staff to create a rural speed zone strategy

13.1.3 Administration and Finance Committee Summary - April 8, 2025 36

Recommended Motion:
The Administration and Finance Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to 2025 property tax policies and rates as set out in Report COR-CFN-25-005 dated April 8, 2025:

    a. Establish the following property class tax ratios for the 2025 property tax year:

        - Residential and New Multi-residential 1.000000

- Multi-residential, Commercial and Industrial 1.950000
- Aggregate Extraction 1.586727
- Landfill 1.540000
- Pipeline 1.161300
- Farmland and Managed Forest 0.250000

b. Direct staff to prepare the necessary by-laws to establish the 2025 property class tax ratios and the resulting 2025 Regional property tax rates for Regional Council's consideration on April 23, 2025; and

c. Notify the Area Municipalities within Waterloo Region accordingly.

2. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2024 Plan Update and Year End Financial Results as set out in report COR-CFN-25-007 dated April 8, 2025:

   a. Receive the 2024 Plan Update that shows implementation and progress toward achieving the vision set out by Council in the Growing with Care Strategic Plan 2023-2027;

   b. Approve the preliminary 2024 financial results for the purposes of preparing the Region's 2024 Audited Financial Statements; and

   c. Apply the Surplus Allocation Policy to 2024 financial results.

3. Whereas The Fashion History Museum is ceasing operation in the City of Cambridge,

   And whereas its closure is a significant loss to the cultural fabric of the Regional community,
   And whereas the museum carries an international reputation with a collection that ranges from ancient Egyptian cloth to important couture like Dior, Chanel and Balenciagas,
   And whereas the museum in collaboration with the Historic School of Dress in London England is designing historic costumes for the Globe Theatre in London,

And whereas the museum is partnering with a fashion designer in Antwerp who is showcasing items from the fashion museum to be shown at the Paris Fashion Week,

Therefore be it resolved that the appropriate regional staff be requested to report on options to help promote the collection by partnering with other museums in the region and or securing space in an appropriate regional building or commenting on the possibility of a new stand-alone structure to service the whole regional community.

13.1.4 Community and Health Services Committee Summary - April 8, 2025 38

Recommended Motion:
The Community and Health Services Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the proposed housekeeping amendments to the Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing Program as detailed in Appendix A and as outlined in report CSD-HOU-25-004, dated April 8, 2025.

   That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo request to the Province of Ontario and the Canadian Revenue Agency to change the eligibility requirements for the Ontario Trillium Benefit to allow for tenants in property-tax exempt housing deemed affordable by a municipality or other government body to remain eligible for the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit, as outlined in report CSD-HOU-25-004, dated April 8, 2025.

13.1.5 Closed Council Summary - April 16, 2025
To be available at the meeting.

13.2 Board of Health

13.2.1 Board of Health Update
For information.

***13.3 Regional Chair**

*13.3.1 Appointments to Boards and Committees

14. Other Matters Under Committee Of The Whole

14.1 PDL-LEG-25-017, 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law 39

Recommended Motion:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo pass a by-law in the form attached as Appendix 'A' to this Report PDL-LEG-25-017, being a Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub (KCTH) and other transit-related development.

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo direct staff to implement a plan for alternative accommodation for current residents of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, and add $814,333 to the 2025 regional Housing budget as outlined in this Report PDL-LEG-25-017.

14.2 Notice of Motion - Councillor P. Wolf, Referred Motion

Recommended Motion:

WHEREAS the Ontario Superior Court has issued an injunction on Section 2 of the Community Care and Recovery Act, allowing Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) sites to remain operational for 30 days beyond a Charter judgment;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has indicated it will not support the court injunction granting a suspension of CTS closures in Kitchener, Guelph, and other locations;

AND WHEREAS Waterloo Region's only CTS site, located in Kitchener, is critical to saving lives and reducing harm among vulnerable constituents, as acknowledged by the court's recognition of the high risk of death and injury to CTS clients should the site close;

AND WHEREAS there has been no visible community or institutional support for eliminating CTS services from local councils, advisory committees, schools, churches, health professionals, business owners, or CTS clients;

AND WHEREAS Section 3 of the Community Care and Recovery Act prohibits municipal support for consumption services without approval from the Ontario Minister of Health;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Regional Council formally requests that the Province of Ontario provide **immediate funding and support** to ensure continued operation of the Kitchener CTS site during the injunction period, in compliance with the court's decision.
2. Regional Council further requests that the Province grant **approval under Section 3 of the Community Care and Recovery Act** to allow the Regional Municipality of Waterloo to support and maintain CTS operations beyond the injunction

period if necessary.

3. Regional Council directs staff to communicate this motion urgently to:
    1. The Ontario Minister of Health,
    2. Local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs),
    3. The Waterloo Region Drug Action Team,
    4. Relevant stakeholders advocating for harm reduction services.
4. Regional Council commits to working collaboratively with provincial authorities and community partners to ensure no disruption in life-saving services provided by CTS during this critical time.

15. Motion for Committee of the Whole to Rise and Council Resume

Recommended Motion:

That Committee of the Whole rise and Council resume.

16. Motion To Adopt Proceedings of Committee of the Whole

Recommended Motion:

That Council adopt the proceedings of Committee of the Whole.

17. Motions where notice has been provided

17.1 Notice of Motion - Councillor D. Craig

Recommended Motion:

Whereas the regional budget is a statement of our values and the kind of regional community we are trying to build,
And whereas the budget is an all-encompassing reflection on everything from support for climate change initiatives, to concerns for homelessness to needed expansions for social services and transit,
And whereas, the regional budget defines for the coming years the priorities, commitments, and aspirations of the regional community,
And whereas, our budget deliberations have not been fully capturing the opinions of residents from Cambridge and the Townships in our public meetings over the past number of years,
Therefore, be resolved that the Region of Waterloo hold one additional budget meeting in Cambridge and one additional meeting in our northern townships to bring a wider balance of input from all our regional residents.

18. Notice of Motion

Motions listed will be considered at a future meeting or if notice is waived.

19. Unfinished Business

20. Other Business

21. Questions

22. Enactment of By-laws – First, Second & Third Readings

Recommended Motion:

That the following by-laws be approved.

22.1 By-law 25-012

Recommended Motion:

That a By-Law to amend By-Law Number 24-052 A By-law to Establish Fees and Charges for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and repeal By-law 23-062, as Amended, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-012, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.2 By-law 25-013

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Establish Tax Ratios for the Regional Purposes and Area Municipal Purposes for the Year 2025, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-013, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.3 By-law 25-014

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Establish and Levy Rates of Taxation for Regional Purposes for the Year 2025, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-014, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.4 By-law 25-015

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Amend By-law No. 01-059, a By-law to Consolidate all By-laws with Respect to Roads Included in the Regional Road System, as amended (Duke Street West), be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-015, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.5 By-law 25-016

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Amend By-law No. 01-059, a By-law to Consolidate all By-laws with Respect to Roads Included in the Regional Road System, as amended (Speedsville Road)be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-016, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.6 By-law 25-017

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Amend By-law 16-023, as amended, being a By-law to Regulate Traffic and Parking on Highways Under the Jurisdiction of the

Regional Municipality of Waterloo (No Parking, No Stopping, Pedestrian Crossovers, Through Highways, Rates of Speed, and No Heavy Trucks), be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-017, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.7 By-law 25-018

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Amend By-law 22-018, being A By-law to Authorize and Govern the Delegation of Signing Authority, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-018, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.8 By-law 25-019

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to further Amend By-law 20-027, being A By-law to Provide for the Appointment of a Chief Administrative Officer, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-019, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.9 By-law 25-020

Recommended Motion:

That a By law to Provide for an Acting Chair when the Chair is Absent from the Municipality, and to Repeal By law 23-001, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-020, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.10 By-law 25-021

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law Respecting the Use of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener (as Owned by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub and other Transit Development, be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-021, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

22.11 By-law 25-022

Recommended Motion:

That a By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Council of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo at this Meeting Held on April 23, 2025 be read a first, second and third time, finally passed and numbered 25-022, be signed by the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk and sealed with the Regional Seal.

23. Adjourn

Recommended Motion:

That the meeting adjourn at x:xx x.m.

Performance Audit

Implementation and Oversight of Ontario's Opioid Strategy

// Independent Auditor's Report



Our review of the government's internal documents noted that the Ministry recognized the potential impacts to the health system of closing the 10 supervised consumption services sites, including:

- an increased risk of deaths from overdoses and emergency department visits;
- increased instances of public drug use and the public discarding of drug supplies; and
- no access within a reasonable distance to supervised consumption services for Northern Ontarians going forward as a result of the closure of the only remaining site in Thunder Bay (see **Section 4.2.2**).

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en24/pa_ONopioid_en24.pdf

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the Ministry of Health complete all necessary planning work before transitioning to the new HART Hubs, including:

- working with providers to support CTS users being impacted by any closure of a CTS site and to perform impact, risk and financial analysis;
- engaging with all relevant stakeholders;
- developing a performance measurement plan; and
- deploying public health measures in areas where supervised consumption services sites are closing.

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en24/pa_ONopioid_en24.pdf

The Ministry is committed to working with providers to support clients who may be impacted by the closure of any CTS sites. This includes:

- Working with potentially impacted CTS sites that fall within the 200-metre buffer to transition into a HART Hub. CTS sites converting to HART Hubs will be eligible for more funding and be able to offer a suite of addiction, mental health and other treatment services not previously available to them as a CTS.

- Outreach to public health units to update their harm reduction strategies to enhance programs and partnerships that would identify alternatives to the services previously provided by a closing CTS site.

- CTS sites that are planning to convert to a HART Hub by March 31, 2025, are also required to develop wind-down plans that outline impacts, risk and financial analysis, timelines, communication with existing clients, and referrals to other health services.

- For the CTS sites that will continue, increased data collection and monthly reporting will assist with impact assessments and transition from supervised consumption to HART Hub services.

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en24/pa_ONopioid_en24.pdf

My understanding

- We see what **CTSs** have to offer, but we'll give you 4 times the funding for **HART hubs** instead
- While **CTSs** decrease risk of death and public drug use, they should provide different services than the ones that decrease risk of death and public drug use.
- In fact, we'll withhold funding for **HART hubs** if **CTSs** continue to operate.

https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/kitchener-guelph-safe-consumption-and-treatment-services-site-1.7496243

My understanding

- We see what **psychotherapy** has to offer, but we'll give you 4 times the funding for **antidepressants** instead
- While **psychotherapy** decreases risk of death and degree of disability, they should provide different services than the ones that decrease risk of death and disability.
- In fact, we'll withhold funding for **antidepressants** if **psychotherapy** continues to be offered.

My understanding

- We see what **chemotherapy** has to offer, but we'll give you 4 times the funding for **immunotherapy** instead
- While **chemotherapy** decreases risk of death and degree of disability, they should provide different services than the ones that decrease risk of death and disability.
- In fact, we'll withhold funding for **immunotherapy** if **chemotherapy** continues to be offered.

Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2024

Arrest without warrant

5. An officer may arrest, without warrant, a person who the officer believes on reasonable grounds is guilty of an offence under this Act.

Penalty

9. A person convicted of an offence under this Act is liable to a fine of not more than $10,000 or to imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.

https://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/showAttachment.do?postingId=49613&attachmentId=63395

Hospital data shows Ontario's hallway health care problem is worse than ever

Internal government data shows nearly 2,000 patients on average kept in 'unconventional spaces' like hallways and break rooms in January — the highest number ever recorded



Aidan Chamandy
Sep 9, 2024 6:00 AM

Ontario jails well over capacity, data shows

Data was obtained through freedom of information laws

The Canadian Press · Posted: Mar 06, 2024 4:53 PM EST | Last Updated: March 6, 2024



Data obtained through freedom of information laws shows most of Ontario's institutions were over capacity in 2023. (Radio-Canada)

https://www.thetrillium.ca/news/health/hospital-data-shows-ontarios-hallway-health-care-problem-is-worse-than-ever-9370235
https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ont-jails-1.7135927

			2022/23	
Site	City	Provincially Funded[1]	# of Visits[1]	# of Fatal Overdoses Prevented[1]
Sanguen Health Centre	Kitchener	✓	14,356	179

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en24/pa_ONopioid_en24.pdf

My understanding

- We see what **chemotherapy** has to offer, but we'll give you 4 times the funding for **immunotherapy** instead
- While **chemotherapy** decreases risk of death and degree of disability, they should provide different services than the ones that decrease risk of death and disability.
- In fact, we'll withhold money for **immunotherapy** if **chemotherapy** continues to be offered.

VOTE YES


Subject property
two catch basins
two catch basins
open creek
Bleams Rd
Wilmot Centre Rd
Bleams Rd property
Legend
Regulation Limit (GRCA)
Floodplain (GRCA)
Engineered
Estimated
Approximate
Floodplain - Special Policy Area (
Slope Erosion (GRCA)
Steep
Oversteep
Toe
Slope Valley (GRCA)
Steep
Oversteep
Regulated Watercourse (GRCA)
Regulated Waterbody (GRCA)
Wetland (GRCA)
Lake Erie Flood (GRCA)
Lake Erie Shoreline Reach (GRC
Lake Erie Dynamic Beach (GRCA
Lake Erie Erosion (GRCA)
Parcel - Assessment (MPAC/MNR
Contour 0.5m - CGVD2013 (GRC


Looking east from property line.
Note catch basin in foreground



April 22, 2025

To: Members of Regional Council
Re: Regional Support for the Kitchener CTS Site – April 23rd Council Motion

Dear Chair Redman and Members of Regional Council,

On behalf of Sanguen Health Centre, I am writing to express our gratitude and support for the motion currently before Regional Council regarding the continued operation and funding of the Kitchener Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) site.

We appreciate the effort that Councillor Wolf has made to bring this motion forward. It is encouraging to see local elected officials continue to affirm the value of CTS in our community. While we do not anticipate this motion moving ahead following the discussion on April 8, 2025 along with the ensuing conversations with partners, we feel it's our responsibility as an agency to continue to voice our support for this critical service—even in this deeply challenging and politically tense moment.

Sanguen Health Centre has proudly operated the CTS site since it opened in 2019. In that time, CTS has received more than 60,000 visits and supported more than 2,000 unique clients from our community. It has provided a space for people to use substances under the care of trained medical professionals, and it has prevented hundreds if not thousands of fatal overdoses in our community. It has also served as a vital point of connection to housing, primary care, mental health services, and treatment supports.

We understand that the introduction of HART Hubs marks a new chapter in how substance use services are delivered in this region. As a service provider within the HART model, we are committed to offering collaborative, wraparound care to those ready to pursue abstinence-based treatment. Where the tension lies for us is in our belief that HART Hubs are not a replacement for CTS. These services, while equally important, are not interchangeable. Supervised consumption services offer something entirely different, and entirely essential, to a population that may not yet be able to engage in treatment.

We also feel it is necessary to address the growing misinformation and misunderstanding around harm reduction. Harm reduction and supervised consumption in particular were never designed to "solve" the opioid crisis—these strategies exist as a crucial safety net that keeps people alive while we work toward longer-term solutions. Harm reduction approaches support people who are not yet ready for treatment, as well as those who may have recently completed treatment but experience a relapse, which is a common part of recovery. In the absence of policies and systems that can fully address the complexities of addiction and poverty, harm reduction stands as one of the few compassionate and evidence-based interventions we can offer to prevent further loss of life.

It is also deeply unfortunate that the current provincial direction has created a climate that pits organizations and service providers against one another. In a region historically recognized for its gold standard of collaboration and cross-sector partnerships, this division undermines the very strengths that have helped our community respond to crises with innovation and solidarity. We must rise above this forced dichotomy and continue to honour the unique and valued roles that each agency plays in supporting people who use substances.

We also recognize that in the current political climate, our advocacy for harm reduction services is at times being misconstrued as opposition to the HART model. This is a deeply uncomfortable and unfair position for our organization and others who serve people along the full continuum of care. We fully support the HART model for those ready to pursue treatment. Our advocacy is not against HART—it is for those who are not yet there, or who may never get there without life-saving interventions like CTS along the way.

We are grateful for the Region's historical support of CTS and harm reduction in general. You have demonstrated leadership in the face of a crisis that has grown more deadly and complex with each passing year. We ask that you continue to advocate for the funding and federal exemptions needed to maintain and rebuild supervised consumption services in Waterloo Region.

Sincerely,



Dr. Chris Steingart
Executive Director
Sanguen Health Centre

LS250401

The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Library Committee

Summary of Recommendations to Council

The Library Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo authorize the Manager, Library Services to enter into reciprocal borrowing arrangements with other public libraries from time to time on behalf of the Region of Waterloo Library, which forms part of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, with such agreements to the satisfaction of the Regional Solicitor.

April 1, 2025

The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee

Summary of Recommendations to Council

The Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the following actions regarding Duke Street West between Victoria Street North and Breithaupt Street in the City of Kitchener effective April 24, 2025 at 12:01 a.m.

    1. Pass a by-law to amend Road Consolidation By-law 01-059 (Regional Road System) to add the following parts of Duke Street West to the Regional road network, as per Report TSD-TRP-25-004 dated April 8, 2025:

        - Duke Street West (between Victoria Street North and rail corridor), legally described as: Edwards Street, Plan 374, Kitchener (AKA Duke Street) lying West of Victoria Street and South of CNR, City of Kitchener.

        - Duke Street West (between rail corridor and Breithaupt Street), legally described as: Part of Edwards Street, Plan 376, being Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 on 58R-22190, City of Kitchener.

    2. Pass a by-law to amend Traffic and Parking By-law 16-023 to:

        - Add to schedule 01 - No Parking on Duke Street West from Breithaupt Street to Victoria Street, both sides, anytime.

        - Add to schedule 04 - No Stopping on Duke Street West from Breithaupt Street to Victoria Street, both sides, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

2. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the following actions regarding Speedsville Road between Maple Grove Road (Regional Road 38) and Eagle Street (Regional Road 39) in the City of Cambridge effective April 24, 2025 at 12:01am.

1. Pass a by-law to amend Road Consolidation By-law 01-059 (Regional Road System) to add the following parts of Speedsville Road to the Regional Road network:

    a. Part of Lots 8, 9, 10 and 11, Concession 1 Beasley's Lower Block & Part of Lots 26, 27, 28 and 29, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Part 1 on 58R-18565; Part of Lot 27, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Parts 2 and 3 on 58R-18565; Part of Lot 28, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Part 4 on 58R-18565, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

    b. Part of Lots 28 and 29, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Part 1 on 58R-19923; Part of Lot 29, Beasley's Broken Front Concession, being Parts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 on 58R-19923, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

    c. Block 1, Plan 58M620, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo;

    d. Part of Lots 6 and 7, Concession 1, Beasley's Lower Block & Part of Lots 1, 25 and 26, Beasley's Broken Front Concession & 16 Foot Widening on Registered Plan 1046 & 16 Foot Widening on Registered Plan 1174 & 10 Foot Widening on Registered Plan 1353 & Part of Lots 13 and 14 on Registered Plan 1364, being Part 1 on 58R-18569, in the City of Cambridge, Regional Municipality of Waterloo; and

    e. Assign Regional Road number 82 to this segment of Speedsville Road.

2. Pass a by-law to amend the Region's Traffic and Parking By-law 16-023 as follows:

    a. Add to Schedule 10, Level 2 Pedestrian Crossover, Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82), 248 meters south of Rogers Drive (Mill Run Trail);

    b. Add to Schedule 11, Through Highways, Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82) from Maple Grove Road (Regional Road 38) to Eagle Street (Regional Road 39);

    c. Add to Schedule 17, Rates of Speed, 60 km/h on Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82) from Highway 401 to Eagle Street (Regional Road 39); and

d. Add to Schedule 19, No Heavy Trucks, Speedsville Road (Regional Road 82) from Maple Grove Road (Regional Road 38) to Eagle Street (Regional Road 39).

3. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo:

   a. Receives the Grand River Transit (GRT) Business Plan for information;

   b. Approves holding a Special Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee meeting on April 16, 2025 for the purpose of hearing public input on the GRT Business Plan; and

   c. Direct staff to present the final version of the GRT Business Plan to the Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee for a decision from the Committee, after meeting with all interested area municipalities in accordance with report TSD-TRS-25-005 dated April 8, 2025, as amended.

4. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo endorse the Levels of Service as outlined in Appendix A of report EES-SAM-25-001, dated April 8, 2025.

5. Whereas the prevailing narrative is that road speeds should reflect what a driver would naturally expect to drive; and
Whereas the two rural roads that we have reduced the school zone speed from 80 to 60 to 40 have created dangerous driving situations endangering both drivers and other road users; and
Whereas the lower speed limits at rural schools are only needed during school hours; and
Whereas rural roads have different traffic patterns and expectations than urban roads;
That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo:

   1. Prepare the requisite amending by-law(s) to lower speed limits in school zones from 80 km/h to 60 km/h (instead of the current 40 km/h) on Lobsinger Line near King Alfred Academy and Northfield Drive near Balsam Grove Parochial School.

   2. That staff be directed to investigate the installation of flashing lights in school zones that operate during school hours along side of active speed cameras as part of the rural strategy.

   3. That staff be directed to work with Townships' staff to create a rural speed zone strategy

The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Administration and Finance Committee

Summary of Recommendations to Council

The Administration and Finance Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to 2025 property tax policies and rates as set out in Report COR-CFN-25-005 dated April 8, 2025:

    a) Establish the following property class tax ratios for the 2025 property tax year:
    Residential and New Multi-residential 1.000000
    Multi-residential, Commercial and Industrial 1.950000
    Aggregate Extraction 1.586727
    Landfill 1.540000
    Pipeline 1.161300
    Farmland and Managed Forest 0.250000
    b) Direct staff to prepare the necessary by-laws to establish the 2025 property class tax ratios and the resulting 2025 Regional property tax rates for Regional Council's consideration on April 23, 2025; and
    c) Notify the Area Municipalities within Waterloo Region accordingly.

2. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2024 Plan Update and Year End Financial Results as set out in report COR-CFN-25-007 dated April 8, 2025:

    a) Receive the 2024 Plan Update that shows implementation and progress toward achieving the vision set out by Council in the Growing with Care Strategic Plan 2023-2027;
    b) Approve the preliminary 2024 financial results for the purposes of preparing the Region's 2024 Audited Financial Statements; and
    c) Apply the Surplus Allocation Policy to 2024 financial results.

3. Whereas The Fashion History Museum is ceasing operation in the City of Cambridge,
    And whereas its closure is a significant loss to the cultural fabric of the Regional community,

And whereas the museum carries an international reputation with a collection that ranges from ancient Egyptian cloth to important couture like Dior, Chanel and Balenciagas,
And whereas the museum in collaboration with the Historic School of Dress in London England is designing historic costumes for the Globe Theatre in London,
And whereas the museum is partnering with a fashion designer in Antwerp who is showcasing items from the fashion museum to be shown at the Paris Fashion Week,
Therefore be it resolved that the appropriate regional staff be requested to report on options to help promote the collection by partnering with other museums in the region and or securing space in an appropriate regional building or commenting on the possibility of a new stand-alone structure to service the whole regional community.

April 8, 2025

SS250408

The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Community and Health Services Committee

Summary of Recommendations to Council

The Community and Health Services Committee recommends as follows:

1. That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the proposed housekeeping amendments to the Property Tax Exemption for Affordable Housing Program as detailed in Appendix A and as outlined in report CSD-HOU-25-004, dated April 8, 2025.

   That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo request to the Province of Ontario and the Canadian Revenue Agency to change the eligibility requirements for the Ontario Trillium Benefit to allow for tenants in property-tax exempt housing deemed affordable by a municipality or other government body to remain eligible for the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit, as outlined in report CSD-HOU-25-004, dated April 8, 2025.

April 8, 2025

Region of Waterloo

Planning, Development, and Legislative Services

Legal Services

To:	Regional Council
Meeting Date:	April 23, 2025
Report Title:	100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener – Site Specific By-law

1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo pass a by-law in the form attached as Appendix 'A' to this Report PDL-LEG-25-017, being a Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub (KCTH) and other transit-related development.

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo direct staff to implement a plan for alternative accommodation for current residents of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, and add $814,333 to the 2025 regional Housing budget as outlined in this Report PDL-LEG-25-017.

2. Purpose / Issue:

The Kitchener Central Transit Hub ("KCTH") is a transformational project that has been in the planning stages since 2013. To advance construction, Metrolinx has advised that it requires the use of the Region's property at 100 Victoria Street North by March 2026. The process to prepare the site for use by Metrolinx will take several months, requiring the site to be vacant by December 1, 2025.

There currently is an encampment of residents located at 100 Victoria Street North (the "Encampment"). A bylaw is therefore being introduced to Regional Council to allow the Region to obtain vacant possession of 100 Victoria Street North.

The purpose of this report is to seek Regional Council approval of a Site Specific By-law for 100 Victoria Street North, to facilitate remediation of the property commencing December 1, 2025 and Metrolinx's use of the property by March 2026.

3. Strategic Plan:

The Region of Waterloo is on a journey of growth to an intentional, sustainable future of one million residents. KCTH supports the Homes for All, Equitable Services and Opportunities and Climate Aligned Growth focus areas within the Region's 2023 – 2027

Strategic Plan.

Upon completion, KCTH will enhance and integrate transit infrastructure, provide residential and commercial development opportunities and be a gateway for economic development for Waterloo Region.

4. Report Highlights:

- KCTH has been in the planning stages since 2013 and builds on the success of ION light rail. Designed to serve current and future residents, as well as visitors, the transit hub will redefine how people connect, commute, and experience Waterloo Region.
- Work on KCTH has advanced to the stage where construction is anticipated to begin in the next year. To further advance the project, the Region's property at 100 Victoria Street North is required by Metrolinx in March 2026.
- The Region is required to complete due diligence and site preparation at 100 Victoria Street North prior to handover of the property to Metrolinx. This work will take approximately three months to complete and cannot be undertaken with an encampment present on the property.
- To meet this timeline, a bylaw is now being introduced that requires the site to be vacant by December 1, 2025.
- In preparation for this transition, Regional staff will provide enhanced support by focusing efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options.
- In the context of the decision of Justice Valente in *The Regional Municipality of Waterloo v. Persons Unknown and to be Ascertained*, 2023 ONSC 670 ("Valente Decision") the Region intends to seek further direction from the Superior Court of Justice, to the extent this is feasible and compatible with the anticipated construction schedule.

5. Background:

<u>KCTH Development</u>

As the Region quickly grows to one million residents, the community is on the cusp of significant change. To help shape future growth, the Region, along with many partners, is leading transformational projects that will positively impact residents and visitors for generations to come.

Designed to serve current and future residents, as well as visitors from around the world, KCTH will redefine how people connect, commute, and experience our community. Building on the community investment in ION light rail, KCTH will connect ION light rail, GRT, GO Transit (rail and bus service), VIA, rail service, intercity bus,

active transportation, passenger vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians in one central location.

The transit hub is expected to generate ION ridership as an anchor development along the Central Transit Corridor with transit station functions integrated with a future mixed-use destination. It will be a gateway to the Region of Waterloo and will connect residents and visitors to the Toronto-Waterloo Region innovation corridor.

KCTH is a landmark development and has the potential to stimulate growth, development and sustainability well into the future.

As part of this project, the Region has procured land on Victoria Street, from King Street to Weber Street. Upon completion of the transit hub, the remaining land will be used for commercial and residential development, including affordable housing.

In 2016, the Province recognized the value of investing in the Region of Waterloo's transit infrastructure, providing $43 million to support the transit hub. In February 2023, the Region applied for funding through the Public Transit stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). A decision on the application is pending.

The timing of the Region's work for the KCTH is driven by Metrolinx's construction schedule for its railway track and platform improvements adjacent to the KCTH site. Since Region staff provided the Kitchener Central Update in December, 2024 (see Appendix B) Metrolinx has notified the Region that it requires the Region owned property at 100 Victoria Street North for its use by March, 2026.

As a part of the KCTH development, Metrolinx will raise the section of rail tracks between King Street and Weber Street and relocate the rail platform from between Weber Street and Ahrens Street to the rail corridor between King Street to Duke Street. Metrolinx will also construct a diversion track that will be incorporated in the rail system immediately behind 100 Victoria Street North. Construction of the diversion track will include the build-up of ground level and rail modifications in this area.

The Region will be obligated to provide 100 Victoria Street North to Metrolinx in a condition fit for Metrolinx's use. To do so, remediation work must be completed before vacant possession of the land is delivered to Metrolinx. This includes site clean up, site investigations and geotechnical testing. It is anticipated this work will take three months, allowing for contingencies for unfavourable weather.

The Region will commence its construction activity for the KCTH project in 2025 with the demolition of the section of the Rumpel Felt building that does not have a heritage designation.

In 2026, the Victoria Street North Modifications, between Weber Street West to King

Street West, will begin. From 2027 to 2030, a bus loop, pedestrian bridge, pedestrian ramp and the hub facility will be built.

Site Specific By-law Respecting Use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener

This proposed Bylaw is a Site- Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener, which is owned by The Region.

The intent of the By-law is to facilitate the development of the KCTH and other transit development. To do so, it provides for vacant possession of 100 Victoria Street North by December 1, 2025.

This will allow the requisite time for the Region to complete site preparation activities prior to the handover to Metrolinx, and for Region staff to engage with encampment residents and assist in relocating these individuals.

The By-law specifically regulates 100 Victoria Street North. The By-law provides for persons currently residing at 100 Victoria Street North and their need to transition to alternate accommodation prior to December 1, 2025. To enable vacant possession by December 2025, the By-law provides that no persons who were not residents on the date public notice of the By-law was provided may erect shelters or other structures or reside at 100 Victoria Street North.

To support current residents of the Encampment (i.e. those who were present on the property when public notice of the By-law was provided), Region staff will provide enhanced site support by focussing efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options and transition to alternate accommodation.

Transition of Current Encampment Residents

Region staff have developed a proposed plan to transition encampment residents from 100 Victoria Street North. This transition will be supported through additional new resources, which may be summarized as follows:

- That Regional staff provide enhanced site support by focussing efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options and ongoing site management
- That this work be accomplished with an approach consistent with the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness
- This operational effort would be coordinated by a cross departmental structure and will wind down before November 30th.

Region staff have been supporting residents at the Encampment since December 2021. This includes regular supports provided by outreach staff, connections with Ontario

Works Caseworkers, providing regular cleaning and maintenance of the site, hiring pest control, portable washrooms, lighting, and other health and safety interventions.

Site security has been provided 24/7 since the spring of 2022. These efforts will continue through the transition process.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:
Over the last number of years, Region staff have worked with various municipal staff in area municipalities, particularly at the City of Kitchener and with community partners, to advance KCTH and manage the 100 Victoria site.

Should this By-law be approved, Region staff would continue to work with area municipalities and interest holders in its implementation.

Public:

Individuals currently residing at 100 Victoria Street North are being informed about the proposed By-law by the Region staff who visit the site daily to provide supports.

Partners and key stakeholders are being notified about the proposed By-law.

Updates to the community on KCTH have been ongoing and regular updates will continue throughout construction. More information can be found at: https://www.engagewr.ca/king-victoria-transit-hub

7. Financial Implications:

Current costs to maintain the site at 100 Victoria are $793,944 annually ($66,162/month). These include costs for security, pest control, portable toilets, garbage removal, and ongoing servicing and maintenance. These do not include staffing costs for social supports, outreach, facilities, or by-law staff who attend the site regularly.

Site Support Budget April-November 2025

Item	**2025 Amount**
Supportive Housing Units (new)	$271,250
Scattered Site Rent Supplements with social supports (existing)	$183,750
Motels with social supports (new)	$466,083
Site Remediation (new)	$77,000
Total Investment	**$998,083**
Less: Internal Reallocation	$183,750

Total New net costs for 2025	**$814,333**

Annualized Site Support Net Financial Impact for 2026 & 2027

	2026	2027
Annualized Supportive Housing	$ 465,000	$ 465,000
Annualized Motels*	$ 799,000	$ 0
Site Remediation	$ 35,000	$ 0
Less: savings from closing 100V currently budgeted for security and maintenance	($ 793,944)	($ 793,944)
Total Net Impact	**$ 505,056**	**($ 328,944)**

**Motels will only be used for temporary support and will not extend beyond 2026*

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Approval by Council of the proposed Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, and the plan for alternative accommodation for current residents of 100 Victoria Street, North, to facilitate the transition of current residents to alternative accommodation so that vacant possession of the site is achieved by December 1, 2025. Site preparation can then be completed so that the lands are ready for Metrolinx use in March, 2026.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub and other Transit Development.

Appendix B: Report EES-SAM-24-002

Appendix C: Moving forward on Kitchener Central Transit Hub: Site Specific By-law Presentation

Prepared By: Katie Johnson, Director, Strategic Initiatives and Asset Management, Engineering and Environmental Services

Fiona McCrea, Acting Regional Solicitor/Director Legal Services

Ryan Pettipiere, Director, Housing Services

Reviewed By: Peter Sweeney, Commissioner, Community Services

Approved By: Jennifer Rose, Commissioner, Engineering and Environmental Services

Doug Spooner, Acting Commissioner, Transportation Services

Rod Regier, Commissioner, Planning Development and Legislative Services

BY-LAW NUMBER 25-***

OF

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO

A By-law Respecting the Use of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub and other Transit Development

---

WHEREAS The Regional Municipality of Waterloo (the "Region") owns the property municipally known as 100 Victoria Street North, in the City of Kitchener ("100 Victoria Street");

AND WHEREAS 100 Victoria Street is required for the construction of the Kitchener Central Transit Hub (the "KCTH") by the Region and Metrolinx commencing in 2026;

AND WHEREAS the Region requires vacant possession of 100 Victoria Street by December 1, 2025 to facilitate the construction of the KCTH;

AND WHEREAS the KCTH, once constructed, will bring significant economic opportunity to the Region, including providing more affordable transportation options and greater connectivity for all residents of the Region to access jobs, schools, and essential services both within and outside the Region;

AND WHEREAS the commencement of construction of the KCTH entails a significant investment in the Region;

AND WHEREAS there are currently persons, without permanent residences, who are occupying parts of 100 Victoria Street including through the erection of temporary shelters and the placement of personal property (the "Encampment");

AND WHEREAS the Region has enacted the Code of Use Bylaw, specifically By-law 13-050, as amended, respecting the conduct of persons entering upon certain buildings, grounds and public transportation vehicles owned or occupied by the Region;

AND WHEREAS the Region takes note of the decision of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, in the decision of the *Region v. Persons Unknown and To Be Ascertained*, (the "Decision");

AND WHEREAS the Region wishes to specifically provide for the persons currently occupying the Encampment at 100 Victoria Street to ensure that a safer and more orderly environment is maintained;

AND WHEREAS the Region, since the Decision, has greatly expanded the number of available accessible shelter beds in the Region and has allocated additional resources to provide accommodation for all persons presently occupying the Encampment;

AND WHEREAS the Region is enacting this By-law to specifically regulate and govern 100 Victoria Street and to obtain vacant possession as of December 1, 2025;

AND WHEREAS the Region has the capacity, rights, powers and privileges of a natural person and the ability to govern its affairs as it considers appropriate pursuant to sections 8 and 9 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended;

AND WHEREAS the Region has the authority to enact by-laws respecting its public assets and the protection of persons and property pursuant to subsection 11(2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

PART I - DEFINITIONS

1. In this By-law:

(1) "**Designated Personnel**" means those persons listed in Schedule "A" of this By-law;

(2) ***"Municipal Act, 2001"*** means the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, or any successor legislation;

(3) **"100 Victoria Street"** means the property municipally known as 100 Victoria Street North, in the City of Kitchener;

(4) "**Prohibited Activity**" means any activity that is listed in Schedule "B" of this By-law;

(5) **"Region"** means The Regional Municipality of Waterloo; and

(6) *"**Trespass to Property Act**"* means the *Trespass to Property Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.21, as amended, or any successor legislation.

(7) "**Resident**" means anyone residing at 100 Victoria Street as of the date that notice of this bylaw is provided through the posting of the agenda for the Council meeting at which this By-law will be considered on the Region's website ("Public Notice Date") .

PART II – PROHIBITION

2. No person shall engage in a Prohibited Activity on 100 Victoria Street.

3. (1) Commencing on December 1, 2025, no person shall enter onto, reside on, or occupy 100 Victoria Street or any part thereof.

(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to an employee or contractor of the Region or other person who has the authorization of the Region to enter onto or occupy 100 Victoria Street or any part thereof.

4. Every person who contravenes sections 2 or 3 of this By-law is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine not exceeding $5,000, exclusive of costs.

PART III - TRESPASS

5. Without limiting Part II of this By-law, Designated Personnel may exercise any of the following enforcement options at 100 Victoria Street when a person is contravening or has contravened sections 2 or 3 of this By-law:

(1) Issue a verbal direction to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(2) Subject to section 6 of this By-law, issue a verbal direction to leave 100 Victoria Street, citing as the reason the failure to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(3) Serve a written notice upon a person prohibiting a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law, citing as the reason the failure of the person to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(4) Subject to section 6 of this By-law, serve a written notice upon a person

prohibiting entry upon 100 Victoria Street citing as the reason the failure of the person to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(5) Post a sign so that the sign is clearly visible in daylight under normal conditions from the approach to each ordinary point of access to 100 Victoria Street prohibiting a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(6) Subject to section 6 of this By-law, post a sign so that the sign is clearly visible in daylight under normal conditions from the approach to each ordinary point of access to 100 Victoria Street prohibiting entry upon 100 Victoria Street by a person citing as the reason the failure to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(8) Subject to section 6 of this By-law, erect fencing or other barriers prohibiting entry upon 100 Victoria Street or any part thereof by a person citing as the reason the failure to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law;

(9) Subject to section 6 of this By-law, remove any personal property or fixture upon 100 Victoria Street or any part thereof that is owned by a person citing as the reason the failure to refrain from a Prohibited Activity or the contravention of section 3 of this By-law; and

(10) Exercise any other rights or powers pursuant to the *Trespass to Property Act* that are reasonable in the circumstances.

6. From the date of passage of this By-law until November 30, 2025, no Resident will be removed involuntarily from or prohibited from entering their temporary shelter at 100 Victoria Street as a result of engaging in a Prohibited Activity, unless the Prohibited Activity creates or contributes to a serious risk to their own health or safety or the health or safety of another person. For greater certainty, nothing in this By-law permits a Resident to relocate their temporary shelter to another part of the premises at 100 Victoria Street without the permission of the Region.

7. Designated Personnel may contact the Waterloo Regional Police Service, or any other police service having lawful jurisdiction, at any time to request assistance or to initiate any other action as the police service may deem necessary in the circumstances.

8. For greater certainty, and without limiting the above, Designated Personnel may erect a fence or other barrier to prohibit entry to any unoccupied area of 100 Victoria Street.

PART IV - GENERAL

9. This By-law may be enforced by a Designated Personnel or a police officer.

10. This By-law may be cited as the “100 Victoria Street Code of Use By-law”.

11. If any section or sections of this By-law or parts thereof are found by any Court to be illegal or beyond the power of Council of the Region to enact, such section or sections or parts thereof shall be deemed to be severable and all other sections or parts of this By-law shall be deemed to be separate and independent therefrom and shall continue in full force and effect unless and until similarly found illegal.

12. This By-law shall come into force and take effect on the date of final passage hereof.

By-law read a first, second and third time and finally passed in the Council Chamber in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo this 23rd day of April, A.D., 2025.

REGIONAL CLERK

REGIONAL CHAIR

SCHEDULE “A”

DESIGNATED PERSONNEL

1. The following are Designated Personnel:

(1) Supervisor, Security Services, for the Region, or any successor position thereto;

(2) a municipal law enforcement officer as appointed by the Region;

(3) a security guard under contract to the Region; and

(4) other persons from time to time as may be designated by Council of the Region.

SCHEDULE "B"

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

1. The following activities are Prohibited Activities:

(a) carrying any goods, without authorization, which are offensive, dangerous, toxic, corrosive, flammable or explosive in nature that are likely to alarm, inconvenience, cause discomfort or injure any person, or cause damage to property, whether or not such good are contained in an approved container;

(b) acts which are reasonably perceived as threatening, intimidating or sexual harassment;

(c) any activity contrary to the *Criminal Code of Canada*, R.S. 1985, c. C-46, as amended, other federal statutes, provincial statutes or municipal by-laws;

(d) erecting a shelter or other structure (provided, however, that this shall not apply to shelters or other structures that were in place on the Public Notice Date);

(e) residing on 100 Victoria unless the person is a Resident within the meaning of this bylaw.

(f) acts which interfere with the provision of services to residents of 100 Victoria Street; or acts which interfere with the use of 100 Victoria Street for the purposes of work relating to or in any way connected with KCTH; and

(g) acts which are contrary to any specific rules or terms of use for the Designated Premises provided that the specific rules or terms of use have been posted in a conspicuous location at the Designated Premises.

Report: EES-SAM-24-002

Region of Waterloo

Engineering and Environmental Services

Strategic Initiatives and Asset Management

To:	Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee
Meeting Date:	December 3, 2024
Report Title:	Kitchener Central Update

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1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Kitchener Central Transit Hub (KCTH). As progress on this landmark project advances, it is timely to highlight project updates and upcoming project milestones.

3. Strategic Plan:

The Region of Waterloo is on a journey of growth to an intentional, sustainable future of one million residents. The Kitchener Central Transit Hub supports the Homes for All, Equitable Services and Opportunities and Climate Aligned Growth focus areas within the Region's 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan.

Upon completion, the KCTH will enhance and integrate transit infrastructure, provide residential and commercial development opportunities and be a gateway for economic development for the Region and area municipalities.

4. Report Highlights:

≠ The Kitchener Central Transit Hub will be a focal point for higher-order transit, providing access to ION light rail, GO Transit (rail and bus service), VIA rail service, intercity bus, and GRT, passenger vehicles and active transportation.

≠ KCTH has been renamed from the King Victoria Transit Hub to align with Grand River Transit's ION Kitchener Central Station and GO Transit's Kitchener Station.

≠ The Region owns land on Victoria Street, from King Street to Weber Street. Upon completion of the transit hub and its related transit infrastructure, the remaining land will be developed. Development opportunities include commercial, and residential (including affordable housing).

≠ Work on KCTH has advanced to the stage where construction is anticipated to begin in 2025. This will include Region-led projects: the demolition of the Rumpel Felt building (the part without a historic designation), the installation of a bus loop, a pedestrian bridge, a pedestrian ramp and a parking lot.

≠ The Victoria Street North Modifications project will be added to the Transportation Capital Program and will create multi-modal links to KCTH.

≠ The Ministry of Transportation and the Region have agreed on an amendment to the existing Transfer Payment Agreement. The amendment extends the expiry date of the TPA. Staff on both sides are discussing appropriate measures to address TPA funding shortfalls.

≠ An application for funding through the Public Transit stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) was submitted in February 2023. The Region of Waterloo is awaiting a decision on the application.

5. Background:

As the Region quickly grows to one million residents, the community is on the cusp of significant change. To help shape future growth, the Region, along with many partners, is leading transformational projects that will impact the Region and area municipalities for generations to come. Similarly to the success that was experienced with ION light rail, KCTH has the potential to positively impact growth, development and sustainability well into the future.

In 2016, the Province recognized the value of investing in the Region of Waterloo's transit infrastructure, providing $43 million to support the transit hub.

KCTH will be a gateway to the Region of Waterloo through a landmark development and will connect residents and visitors to the Toronto-Waterloo Region innovation corridor through the co-location of ION light rail, GO Transit (rail and bus service), VIA rail service, intercity bus, active transportation, passenger vehicles and GRT.

The transit hub is expected to generate ION ridership as an anchor development along the Central Transit Corridor with transit station functions integrated with a future mixed-use destination.

Scope of Work

The scope of work for the Kitchener Central Transit Hub includes:

≠ the design and development of a transportation hub building,
≠ a pedestrian bridge over King Street,
≠ a bus loop for GRT and GO transit,

- a pedestrian ramp,
- a parking lot,
- stormwater management and
- site development.

Following completion of the work, the Region will seek to partner with a private developer to create a mixed-use site incorporating unused land into the vision for the transit hub.

Project Updates

The timing of the Region's work is driven by Metrolinx's construction schedule. Due to the complex nature of the project and adjacent construction sites close to one another, the sequencing of work will be critical to successful delivery. The Region will work collaboratively with Metrolinx to confirm the schedule following the award of the Metrolinx contract.

The Region expects further updates to the construction schedule as construction staging plans are finalized with the onboarding of contractors but anticipates construction work to begin in 2025 with completion by the end of 2029.

The Region and Metrolinx meet bi-weekly to review coordination items between parallel designs. Success during construction will be highly reflective of both parties' efforts to coordinate components between the designs. The Region is working with Metrolinx to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement. An executable copy of this agreement is currently being prepared by Metrolinx. Several additional agreements are being developed in alignment with the MOU that include a Grade Separation Agreement, lease agreements and a fee simple land transfer agreement.

- The Ministry of Transportation and the Region have agreed on an amendment to the existing Transfer Payment Agreement with the intent of having it actioned before the end of the calendar year. This amendment extends the expiry date of the TPA to December 31, 2030.

Region Progress

- The Region is concentrating their efforts on completion of the design by end of 2024 with the intent of procuring a Construction Manager in 2025.
- Alterations to the location of the pick-up and drop-off, the addition of more bus bays in the bus loop and detailed investigation into the stormwater flows for the site need to be finalized prior to continuing with the design of the transit building.

Corresponding Projects

There are a few key projects in the vicinity and in support of the transit hub that are noteworthy.

Acquisition of 70-84 Victoria Street North

The acquisition of 70-84 Victoria Street North (in March 2024) plays a pivotal role in the Kitchener Central Transit Hub lands project by expanding the site's footprint to enable comprehensive planning and development. This property is currently occupied with commercial tenants. The leases with tenants will be honoured and once complete, this additional land enhances the project by providing opportunities for improved connectivity between future transit services and urban infrastructure, while also creating space for complementary uses such as mixed-use development and public amenities. Ultimately, this acquisition strengthens the vision of the hub as a regional anchor for sustainable, transit-oriented growth.

Victoria Street Modifications (King Street West to Weber Street West)

This project includes modifications to Victoria Street to provide multimodal links to KCTH. A preferred preliminary design has been identified that involves the reduction from four vehicle lanes to two vehicle lanes to allow for transit priority lanes and active transportation infrastructure.

Site Development

Site development for the Kitchener Central Transit Hub lands is advancing steadily, with foundational planning and design milestones achieved. Key progress includes ongoing site preparation, and ongoing collaboration with stakeholders to finalize updated rail infrastructure. This will further inform the mixed-use development potential of the lands, and the integration of multimodal transit solutions into the design framework. At the project's core, the land visioning efforts ensure that site development aligns with the four regional strategic priorities, laying the foundation for transformative growth in the surrounding area.

Budgetary and Agreement Updates

Region and Metrolinx staff are negotiating a cost sharing agreement amendment for the additional works to be completed by Metrolinx within the rail corridor. This work includes:

- ≠ The multi-use trail underpass at Duke Street;
- ≠ The retaining wall on the south side of the rail corridor between Region and Metrolinx lands; Space for bike storage rooms, bus shelters and service rooms under the South Platform (equipment installation and fit-out of the space is not included); and
- ≠ Structural work for the station tunnel near King Street to provide direct access to the transit hub building from the North platform (equipment installation and fit-out of the tunnel is not included).

$10 million has been allocated within the MTO Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) for the Region in-corridor work. The TPA has been amended to transfer these funds directly from MTO to Metrolinx for the completion of the work. Ownership of this infrastructure will follow a Grade Separation Agreement. The MOU agreement provides for future licence, operations and maintenance agreements for the Region's long-term use of this infrastructure. The MOU agreement also includes provisions for dispute resolutions, access, insurance requirements and clearly identified role and responsibilities of both parties in relation to the cost shared scope as well as the overall project.

The current TPA is no longer sufficient to cover the estimate of the pedestrian bridge over King Street, the bus loop, the pedestrian ramp and the parking lot. The TPA was originally developed in 2018 and since then the project as seen significant alterations in scope, unprecedented inflation rates and modifications in funding structure. The funding challenges that been identified, stem from a change in the delivery model, inflation and scope alternations since the commencement of the TPA. The Region is delivering all "off-corridor" works required to meet Metrolinx's Station Access Requirements. This includes a pedestrian bridge over King Street, fit out of the Bus and Bike parking facilities, a bus loop, pick up/drop off area, parking and additional site works. Region staff are working with the Ministry of Transportation to discuss appropriate measures to address this funding shortfall that is currently around $9 million.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities: City of Kitchener staff have been consulted on design components of the multi-use trail, ownerships of Duke Street and associated utilities. In 2023, the Region completed a pre-submission for Site Plan Approval whereby the Region received City comments regarding transit, civil and environmental design components. The Region will look to submit a final site plan approval package for further comment from the City of Kitchener. Region staff will continue to engage and involve City of Kitchener staff on an ongoing basis as progress continues.

Public: In June 2024, projects updates were made to the EngageWR page. During the same timeframe, the Project Manager presented aspects of the Region's works to the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC). Committee members were given an opportunity to provide feedback on accessibility components. The Region's design team are evaluating recommendations brought forward to understand how they might integrate into the proposed workplan.

7. Financial Implications:

The 2024-2033 Facilities and Fleet Capital Program includes a budget of $347,000 in 2024 with an overall contribution of $35 million from 2024 – 2029 for the Kitchener

Central Transit Hub Project. This amount is to be funded from a TPA Agreement with the Province (MTO) in the amount of $33 million and RDC debenture. Of the $33 million, $4.7 million has been consumed to date.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Staff will continue to work with the MTO to ensure the Region has an amended TPA before the end of the calendar year. Coordination efforts with Metrolinx are ongoing to align both party's project plans. At the end of 2024, the Region anticipates having a complete design package.

Staff will continue to work with Metrolinx to finalize agreements to facilitate the work being carried out.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Rendering of Kitchener Central

Appendix B: Kitchener Central Transit Hub Presentation to SID Committee December 3, 2024.pptx

Prepared By: Christa De Wys, Senior Project Manager (Facilities – Large Capital), Engineering and Environmental Services

Katie Johnson, Director, Strategic Initiatives and Asset Management, Engineering and Environmental Services

Reviewed By: Mike Henderson, Director, Transportation, Transportation Services

Neil Malcom, Acting Director, Transit Services, Transportation Services

Aaron Moss, Director, Facilities and Fleet Management, Engineering and Environmental Services

Approved By: Jennifer Rose, Commissioner, Engineering and Environmental Services

Doug Spooner, Acting Commissioner, Transportation Services

Chris Wood, Acting Commissioner, Planning, Development and Legislative Services

Appendix A, EES-SAM-24-002: Rendering of Kitchener Central



Moving forward on Kitchener Central Transit Hub: Site Specific By-law

April 23, 2025

Region of Waterloo

Kitchener Central Transit Hub

- Key infrastructure for our growing community
- Building on our world-class transit system
- Connecting ION, GRT, GO, VIA, carshare, Neuron, and active transportation in one central, convenient location



Region of Waterloo

New phase of construction

- The Kitchener Central Transit Hub project is entering a new phase.
- Preliminary road work and demolition of the portion of the Rumpel Felt building that does not have heritage designation will start in 2025.
- Metrolinx requires the property at 100 Victoria Street, North by March 2026.
- Site preparation is required before this and is anticipated to take several months.
- A vacant site is required by December 1, 2025.

Region of Waterloo

Enhanced site support

- Focused efforts and resources on current residents for available housing and shelter options
- Ongoing site management
- An approach that is consistent with the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness

Region of Waterloo

Site Specific By-law Recommendation

- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo pass a by-law in the form attached as Appendix ‘A’ to this Report, being a Site Specific By-law respecting the use of 100 Victoria Street, North, Kitchener (as Owned by The Regional Municipality of Waterloo) to facilitate the Kitchener Central Transit Hub (KCTH) and other transit-related development.

- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo direct staff to implement a plan for alternative accommodation for current residents of 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, and add $814,333 to the 2025 regional Housing budget as outlined in this Report.

Region of Waterloo

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "E"** REFERRED TO
IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS
SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY
OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE
COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING
A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20,
ADMINISTERING OATH OR
DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th
DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

THE Trillium

How Metrolinx's plan to deliver European-style train service went off the rails



Jack Hauen
Jun 10, 2025 1:04 PM



A passenger leaves the Cooksville GO Station on Monday, Aug. 26, 2024. | Paige Taylor White/The Canadian Press

Listen to this article
00:24:19

The surprise split of a partnership to transform rail travel in southern Ontario was the result of a train wreck years in the making, sources say.

Five sources, including current and former Metrolinx employees, told *The Trillium* that its relationship with Deutsche Bahn, the German state railway company contracted to help massively expand GO train service, deteriorated quickly.

Three years after the GO Expansion project was announced, without explanation, Metrolinx dropped Deutsche Bahn and another key partner, who together were supposed to run the trains for the next 23 years.

Internally, Metrolinx told its employees that Deutsche Bahn failed to deliver on key milestones, and that the project must now be scaled back to keep it within its "current funding envelope." Sources, however, say Deutsche Bahn pushed for ambitious, European-style changes, while some of the Crown agency's leadership resisted, insistent that things work differently in Canada. Deutsche Bahn said Metrolinx ended the contract after a "significant realignment" in the project's scope.

As a result, sources say, what could have been a continent-leading regional transit project will likely be downgraded to a more straightforward service expansion. Even those most disillusioned with Metrolinx say it's important — even exciting — but a major missed opportunity, with years of work and untold millions of taxpayer dollars spent on a project whose vision remains murky.

"It could have been an eight out of 10 railway on the global standard," said one former Metrolinx employee. "But now it's going to be five out of 10. It's going to be GO, but better, instead of something new."

'This is nuts'

GO Expansion is a dull name for a monumental plan.

Since 1967, GO trains have shuttled workers in the Greater Golden Horseshoe to and from their jobs in downtown Toronto. Outside of rush hour, service is typically limited.

In 2018, however, to contend with a rapidly growing population in the region, Metrolinx prepared a business case for GO trains to run every 15 minutes, all day, both ways, on the core lines that carry the most people in and out of Toronto: Lakeshore East and West, Kitchener, Barrie and Stouffville. The diesel trains would be electrified, and several stations would be expanded.

Essentially, the agency planned to take the first steps to transforming its commuter train service into a European-style express regional rail system.



A map from the 2018 GO Expansion business case showing future predicted rail service. Metrolinx.

In 2022, the multi-billion-dollar plan became even more ambitious, calling for trains every three to eight minutes at peak hours — and with the backing of Premier Doug Ford's government, fully kicked into motion.

"When we first saw it, we were like, 'This is nuts,'" one former Metrolinx employee said. They and others were granted anonymity by *The Trillium* to allow them to speak freely and without fear of reprisal from Metrolinx or their current employers.

Publicly, Metrolinx was also excited. It pitched GO Expansion in 2022 as a project "unlike anything before in Canada," comparing it to rail in London, Tokyo, Paris and Sydney.

The ambition was not to last.

Metrolinx leadership, in internal town halls held this year and last, outlined plans to "descope" GO Expansion to cut costs, focusing the project on the two train lines running along the shore of Lake Ontario, delaying many improvements to unspecified future dates.

While the agency's GO Expansion web page still describes a plan for 15-minute service or better on the main lines, sources mourned the more ambitious version of the project, which they said would have made suburban cores feel fully connected to downtown Toronto, and made rail a top choice for riders looking to travel within the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

"And I think that a lot of people within the agency didn't understand that," a former Metrolinx employee said. "Or they didn't want it."

'I don't think anyone really knows exactly what the vision is'

When GO Expansion kicked off in 2022, Metrolinx handed off building out the track, signalling, and infrastructure for GO Expansion to ONxpress Transportation Partners. The conglomerate was made up of Canadian construction company Aecon, French train manufacturer Alstom, Spanish construction company FCC, and Deutsche Bahn.

The group would essentially handle everything but running the trains. Then, in January 2024, Metrolinx outsourced that, too.

The agency contracted a subset of ONxpress called OOI, or ONxpress Operations Inc., to operate and maintain GO trains for 23 years, starting on Jan. 1, 2025. OOI was made up mostly of Deutsche Bahn with a minority stake held by Aecon.

Despite the stereotype of German efficiency, Deutsche Bahn has a dim reputation in Europe. Recent analyses found that only between 62.7 per cent and 72 per cent of its trains arrive without significant delays.

Still, the German system is far more advanced than Canada's, where off-peak service is rare and passenger trains have to give way to freight, said Ahmed El-Geneidy, a transportation expert and professor of urban planning at McGill University.

"Their scale is way bigger than us — way, way bigger than us. So they manage a way more complex operating environment than what we have," El-Geneidy said.



Figure A-1: Overview of GO Rail Services After GO Expansion

An internal "configuration state" map from February 2024 detailing planned service expansions. Metrolinx.

Experts from all over western Europe came to Toronto to work for ONxpress on GO Expansion.

"There was a huge pool of talent here in Ontario for the first time — people who were experienced in working on world-class railways," a former Metrolinx source said. "The cream of the crop."

But the Jan. 1 takeover date came and went. It was pushed back, Metrolinx said internally, because Deutsche Bahn wasn't ready to take over.

Then, on May 15, Metrolinx cancelled its contract with OOI altogether. The agency said Alstom would "maintain its role supporting the operations and maintenance of GO Transit and UP Express, to continue delivering the best-in-class service that Ontarians have come to expect."

Behind the scenes, all five sources who spoke with *The Trillium* described an acrimonious relationship between Deutsche Bahn and Metrolinx, with varying degrees of shared blame.

One 40-year veteran of North American rail systems who worked for ONxpress said the Germans had an "autocratic" management style and didn't want to collaborate. Three younger transit experts who yearn for high-frequency intercity rail said Metrolinx stonewalled the very partners it hired to get it done.

Metrolinx's interim CEO said Deutsche Bahn "weren't close to being ready" to take over on January 1.

"It was a grand vision," Michael Lindsay, Metrolinx's interim CEO, said in a June 4 town hall about the 2022 plans. "But what clearly was true, not a year later, was that that consortium, and their ability to work with one another to produce that vision, it wasn't happening."

But five sources said the partnership was hampered by fundamental differences of opinion on the form and function of passenger rail between Deutsche Bahn and Metrolinx, and a lack of vision and leadership on the project from the Crown agency.

They also said proposals from Deutsche Bahn were received negatively, and that the project's scope is still unclear because Metrolinx frequently changed its mind on major decisions.

"What type of trains are we going to operate? What is Union Station going to look like? What actual service do you want to provide?" an ONxpress source said.

In town halls, Metrolinx leadership described defining the scope of the project as a major challenge that they hoped to figure out soon.

"We're getting close to being able to articulate … what the plan is going to look like and when service-level enhancements arrive," Lindsay said on June 4.

In the meantime, questions remain about "what to build, and when to build, and how that ties to a plan of operations," including the cost and feasibility of the service, coordination with freight rail companies that use the same tracks, and how Union Station will handle the increased service, he said.

"I don't think anyone really knows exactly what the vision is," one senior Metrolinx employee said, "because it has changed so much."

'They weren't really interested in changing the way they ran trains'

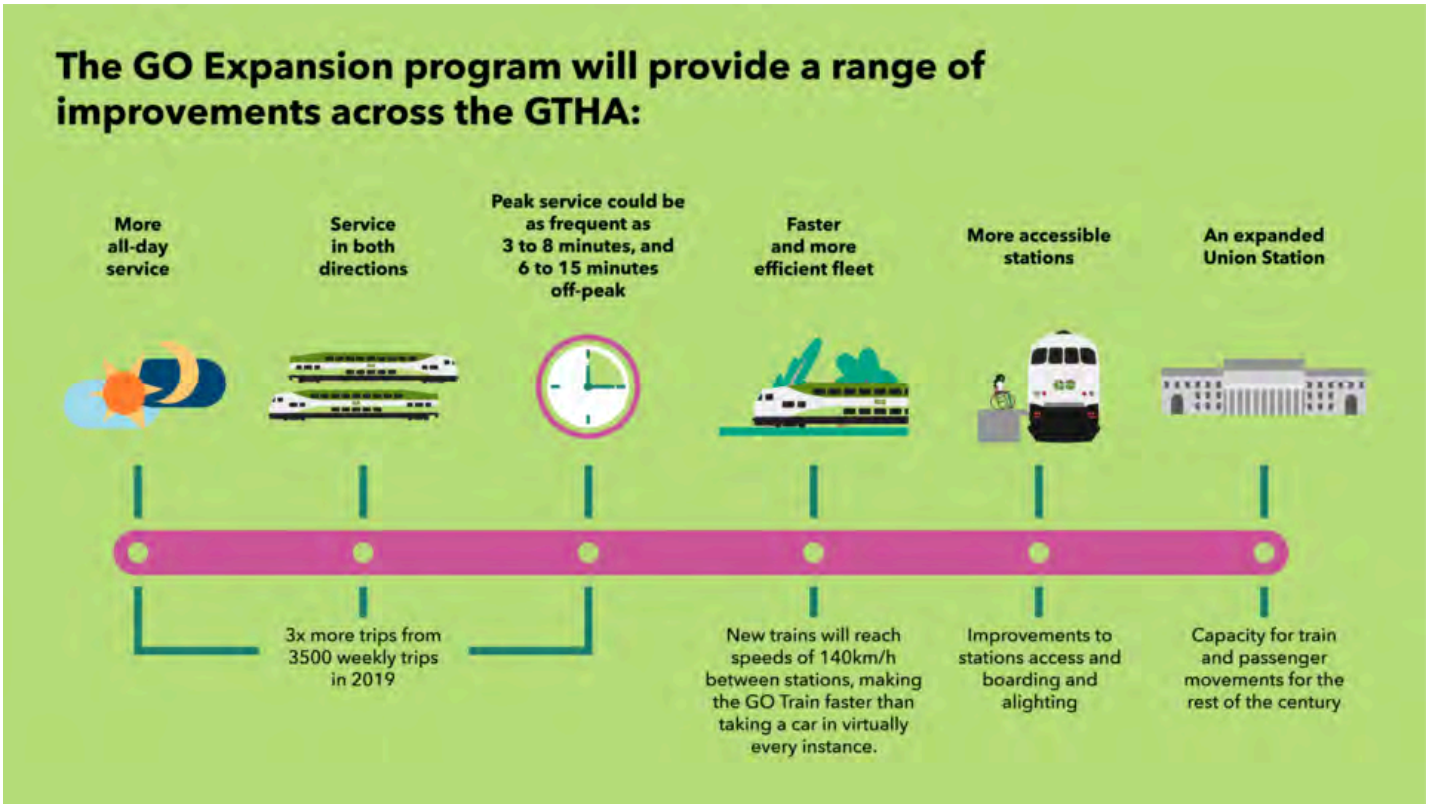
To deliver GO Expansion the way Deutsche Bahn proposed would require a massive mindset shift. But many of GO Transit's most experienced hands are proud of the commuter system they've built, sources said.

"There are a lot of people at GO that think running frequent trains in both directions is a kind of a dilution of their mandate, or an unnecessary frill, or a waste of money," one ONxpress source said.

Even getting buy-in to improve service outside of rush hour was a "huge hurdle," a former Metrolinx employee said. "Trying to break that mould is really difficult."

Sources said Metrolinx regularly pushed back against or added new requirements for Deutsche Bahn's GO Expansion proposals.

"They kept shifting the goalposts of what was considered acceptable," a former Metrolinx employee said. "So for ONxpress to get anything into service, it was basically impossible."



A 2022 infographic proposing GO trains as little as every three minutes during peak service. Metrolinx.

This seemed to confuse Deutsche Bahn's leadership, who thought they had been hired to take a leadership role, according to three sources.

For example, Deutsche Bahn wanted to revamp how crews were scheduled through automation, four sources said. Some crews spend long stretches of time deadheading or otherwise not carrying passengers — some of which is unavoidable, but it could be improved, several sources said.

One nine-hour shift description viewed by *The Trillium* called for under two hours of time spent working on a train carrying riders.

Metrolinx was not receptive to Deutsche Bahn's proposed German scheduling software and discouraged its use in various ways, four sources said.

Four sources said this was due to a disagreement in strategy. The rail veteran who worked for ONxpress, however, said Deutsche Bahn wanted software that hosted data in Germany, which wouldn't be allowed under Canada's cybersecurity laws.

Even this strong critic of Deutsche Bahn said Metrolinx frequently gave the Germans new requirements focused on improving the agency's "current methodology" instead of transforming it.

"So they weren't really interested in changing the way they ran trains," they said.

Decisions about GO Expansion regularly fell to senior management, which led to frustration among employees who saw key proposals deferred across multiple desks until they ended up at the top or disappeared altogether, three sources said.

"Anybody low down in the organization can say no, but it takes the CEO or senior management level to say yes," a senior Metrolinx employee said.

"So you'd have endless committees, and nobody actually empowered to make a final decision," an ONxpress source said.

Toward the end of its contract with Deutsche Bahn, two sources said Metrolinx would hire for the same roles posted by ONxpress due to a "deep distrust" of its partner, as one former Metrolinx employee put it.

ONxpress employees spent the majority of their time — several people estimated around 70 per cent — responding to comments from Metrolinx or the government, and the minority building a railway, Metrolinx and ONxpress sources said.

During an internal town hall in May, an employee asked why GO Expansion workers "have spun our wheels for years now, continuously fielding changes" to infrastructure plans, "which has driven a significant and concerning lack of progress."

"I feel the frustration here. This has also been a huge challenge for us," Metrolinx vice-president Jake Schabas said.

To decide on infrastructure, the organization has to be "bought in" to the operations plan, he said.

"And the challenge was what we started with three years ago, ultimately, was not something the organization had confidence in," he said.

"We had a lot of challenges, whether it was the number of trains that were proposed to go over level crossings, to a lack of understanding on the signalling system and a lack of understanding of how Union Station was going to accommodate all these things," he said.

The bureaucracy may have led to a "clash of cultures" between Metrolinx and Deutsche Bahn, transportation professor El-Geneidy said.

"Usually, in the Canadian context, most of these (operational) decisions are centralized in the head office," he said.

A senior Metrolinx employee, however, said the agency's bureaucracy is the cost of a uniquely large North American transit organization with a sterling safety record and good on-time numbers.

"That commitment to operations and safety takes people and time and money," they said.

A senior Metrolinx employee stressed that those working day-to-day on GO Expansion are largely on the same page.

"But people are far too stuck, especially at a senior level, because they are quote-unquote, 'railroaders,' who have been doing this for a long time, and who can't imagine another way of doing things," they said.

The issues with GO Expansion came from management, that source and others said.

"This wasn't some organic, like, 'Oh, everybody's realizing that this isn't working,'" they said. "No, it was a very top-down change."

'Minimum viable product'

Internal "configuration state" plans from as recently as February 2024 described eventual two-way all-day electrified service on the Lakeshore East and West, Barrie, Stouffville and Kitchener lines.

But at some point, sources said, Metrolinx had "a major rethink" about how the project should be delivered.

In a series of monthly town halls this year and last viewed by *The Trillium*, the agency said it was taking direct control over the project and would now focus on delivering a "minimum viable product."

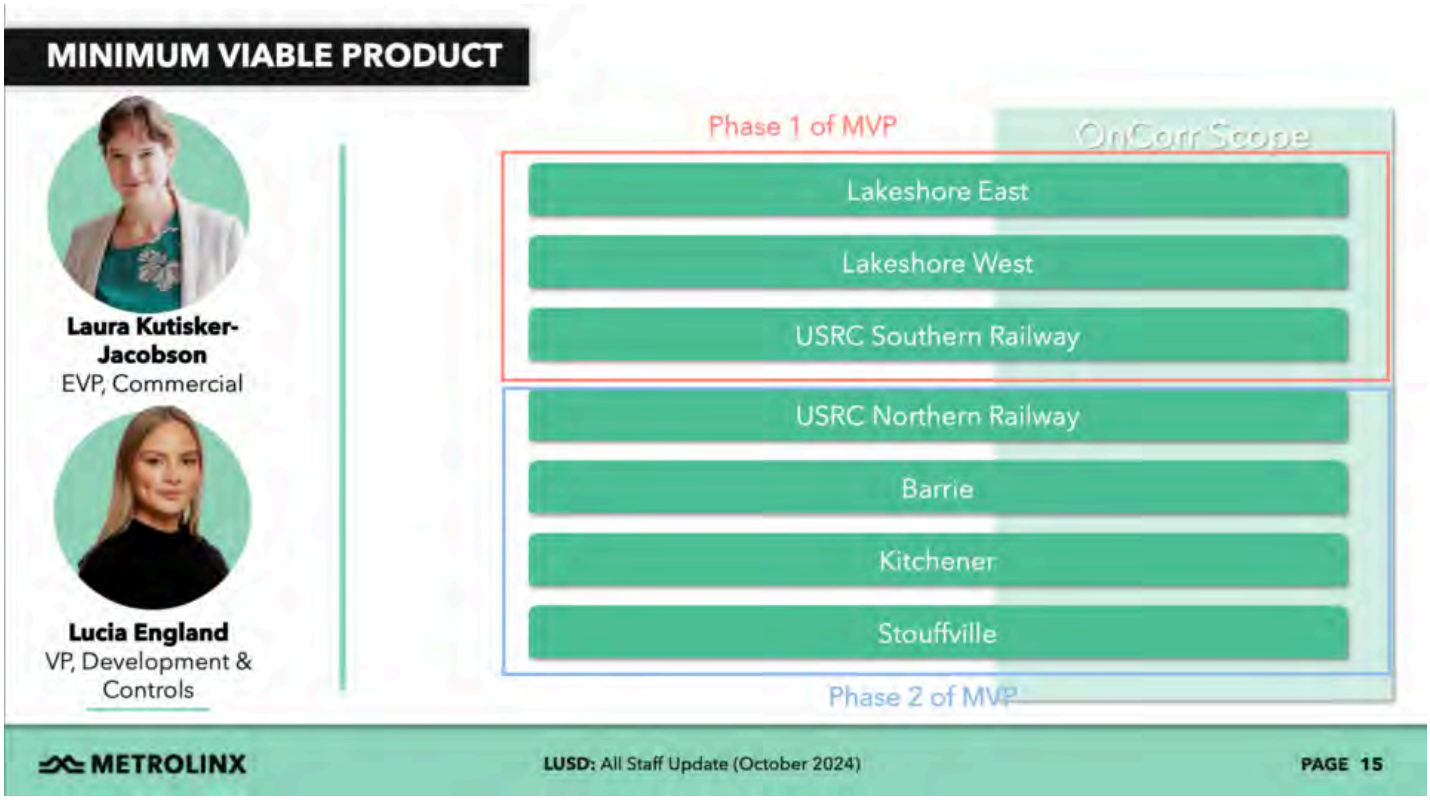
In a January 2025 town hall, Metrolinx executive vice-president Laura Kutisker-Jacobson referred to a "reset" in which the agency "(took) ownership" of several responsibilities that were once under ONxpress.

"They had an opportunity to contribute, but really, Metrolinx is now in the steering seat when it comes to these kind of high-level strategies," Kutisker-Jacobson said in a town hall last month. "And so we've called this the leaning in. We've called this, Metrolinx becoming the strategic network operator."

Originally, GO Expansion was supposed to build out capital projects (such as new tracks, signalling and electrification work) on the Lakeshore East and West, Barrie, Kitchener and Stouffville lines, as well as Union Station, said Lucia England, Metrolinx's vice-president of development and controls, in an October 2024 staff briefing.

Metrolinx has since "pivoted" to focus on Lakeshore East and Lakeshore West, which "generate the most economic benefit," she said.

The Barrie, Kitchener and Stouffville lines will be addressed in the next "phase" of the minimum viable product, she said.



An internal slide presented to Metrolinx employees in October 2024 describes how the agency will shift to focus on the Lakeshore lines to deliver a "minimum viable product." Metrolinx.

England presented the minimum viable product as "what can be done now versus what can be done in the future," but others made it clear that budget was a major concern.

“There is no point in building infrastructure we may or may not need for 30 years’ time,” Metrolinx deputy chief capital officer Richard Walker said in a November 2024 town hall.

The agency had been trying to “lock down scope for the better part of this year,” he said. “And we’re having to pivot again to make sure that what we’re delivering is value for money.”

The goal is to deliver “the maximum amount of benefit to our travelling public” within the agency’s “current funding envelope,” he said.

"In effect, we are seeing an affordability challenge, as you are probably all aware,” he said.

The number of trains per hour has been cut from 12 to eight, resulting in infrastructure changes, Molly Evans, Metrolinx’s vice-president of track specialized delivery, said in the November town hall.

Metrolinx leaders noted several other “de-scopes” in the town halls, including reductions in speed, cuts to the number and complexity of tracks, and abandoned platform upgrades.

Abandoning speed increases was a gut punch to one senior Metrolinx employee, who said travel time is the top reason people choose to drive, walk, bike or take transit.

“One of the biggest things that is going to really drive that modal share over to the rail network is travel time,” he said.

A high-level schedule presented to staff in April estimates that electrification will be complete in September 2035 for the Lakeshore West line, December 2036 for Lakeshore East, and January 2038 for the Union Station rail corridor.

But a December 2024 town hall only described electrification on the UP Express and Lakeshore lines. Under the minimum viable product, the agency plans to electrify from Burlington to Oshawa GO stations, with a gap at Union Station, Metrolinx consultant Shaun Kearney said in the town hall.

ELECTRIFICATION OF LAKESHORE EAST

- Full electrification solution will be delivered from Burlington to Ordinance:
  - Power will be drawn from two sources, the Burlington TPSS and Mimico TPSS, to meet loading and redundancy requirements
  - OCS on all mainline tracks from Burlington to east of Exhibition GO (MP 2.4 – Dufferin Road)
  - Cabling from east of Exhibition GO to Ordinance
    - Avoids impacts to future phases USRC construction
    - Maintains clearance for freight vehicles east of Mimico
  - Overhead conductor rails at LSW layovers (Walkers, Mimico South, and Willowbrook West)

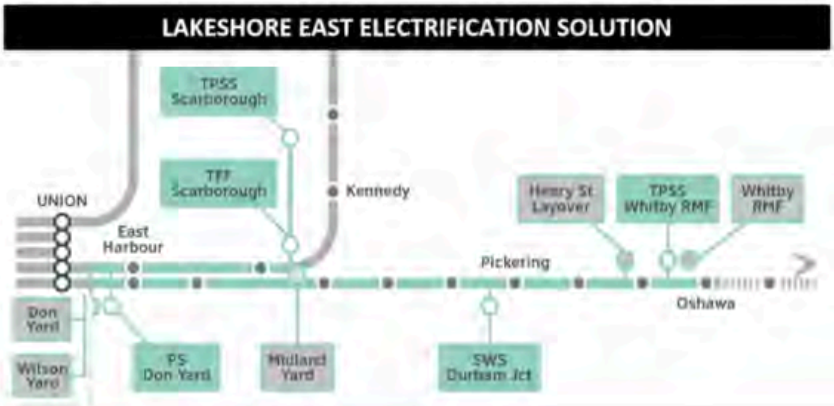


METROLINX LUSD: All Staff Update (December 2024) PAGE 26

An internal slide presented to Metrolinx employees in December 2024 describes electrification plans for the Lakeshore West corridor (the slide is mistitled). Metrolinx.

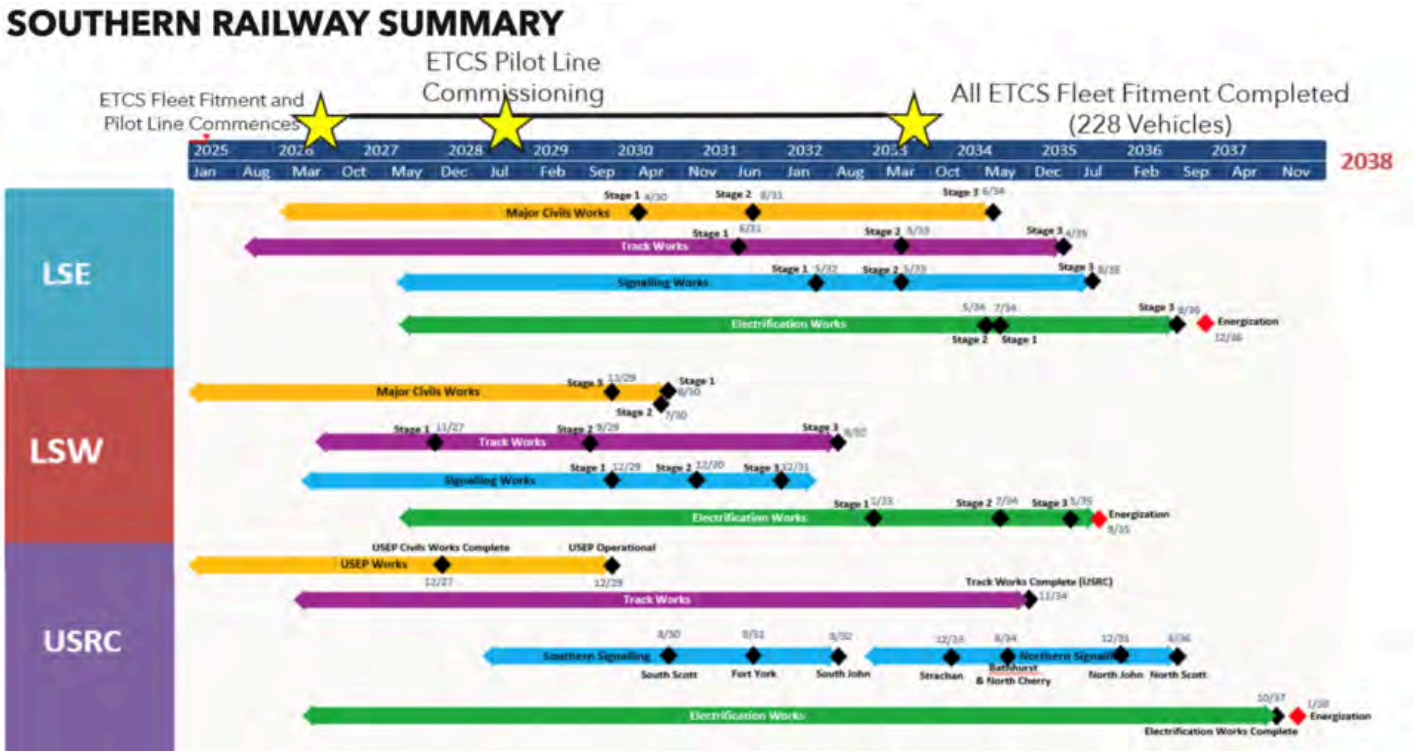
ELECTRIFICATION OF LAKESHORE EAST

- Full electrification solution will be delivered through OCS from Don Yard to Oshawa:
  - Power will be drawn from two sources, the Scarborough TPSS and Whitby TPSS, to meet loading and redundancy requirements
  - OCS on all mainline tracks from Don Yard to Oshawa GO including Whitby RMF
  - Install overhead conductor rails at all other layovers (Don, Wilson, Midland, and Henry).
  - Leverages completed utility relocations, vegetation removals, and foundation installations
  - Aligns with existing EAs and property to enable timely delivery
  - Enables phasing of OCS to ease transition and manage risk



METROLINX LUSD: All Staff Update (December 2024) PAGE 25

An internal slide presented to Metrolinx employees in December 2024 describes electrification plans for the Lakeshore East corridor. Metrolinx.



A high-level schedule presented to staff in April 2025 that estimates that electrification will be complete in September 2035 for the Lakeshore West (LSW) line, December 2036 for Lakeshore East (LSE), and January 2038 for the Union Station rail corridor (USRC). Metrolinx.

After several town halls, the project remains hazy to five sources.

"The thing that I personally find most frustrating, given that I use this system every day, and I want it to be as good as it can be, is that we're several years into this, and it seems like the plan is less clear now than it was a couple years ago," a senior Metrolinx employee said.

'They should learn whom they are dealing with before they sign contracts'

GO Expansion is still happening, providing those who have worked on the project some measure of relief — though Metrolinx won't say publicly exactly what that means.

In a statement, Deutsche Bahn said the end of the contract was "related to a significant realignment of Metrolinx's strategy, in particular with regard to the modernization and expansion of transport systems and the operation of regional transport in Toronto."

"We expressly regret this development, but respect the decision," a spokesperson said.

Deutsche Bahn and Metrolinx declined to answer a list of detailed questions.

OOI and Metrolinx "worked closely toward" the Jan. 1 takeover date, but now "the parties are working on an amicable settlement to end the partnership," Andrea Ernesaks, a spokesperson

for the agency, said in a statement.

Ernesaks didn't say whether Deutsche Bahn, which was involved in other areas of ONxpress, will continue to do any work for Metrolinx — or whether the scope of GO Expansion has been reduced as a result of Deutsche Bahn's exit.

Metrolinx did not answer questions about how much had been spent on the partnership, or how much the "amicable settlement" could be.

Two-way all-day GO service on the core network lines is still the plan, and "service increases, signalling, electrification and other works" under GO Expansion are proceeding, she said.

December marked the end of GO Expansion's "development phase," and early construction works have begun, Ernesaks said.

Asked at the June 4 town hall when 15-minute all-day service for all lines will happen, Lindsay, the agency's interim CEO, said he wanted to be transparent "soon," but only once the agency is "highly confident" about how it gets there.

While Deutsche Bahn wanted to create a regional train system that felt like an "express subway," several sources said 15-minute, two-way, all-day service is still a worthy goal.

Ontario Liberal MPP Andrea Hazell has requested the auditor general look into Metrolinx's decision to cancel the contract with OOI.

The contract's "abrupt cancellation threatens to delay the project by several years, risk hundreds of jobs, disrupt GO Transit and UP Express operations, and undermine public trust in Ontario's transit planning," Hazell wrote in her letter to the auditor general.

The auditor general's office has said the 2025 audits are set, but that she would consider the issue "when selecting future audit topics."

Meanwhile, Metrolinx is in a weak negotiating position with Alstom, the company it has announced will resume operations of GO Transit, El-Geneidy said.

"Alstom can ask (for) whatever they want," he said. "So don't expect Alstom to be merciful to Toronto commuters."

Metrolinx should have laid out its expectations clearly with Deutsche Bahn from the beginning, El-Geneidy said.

"They should learn whom they are dealing with before they sign contracts," he said.

Lindsay, in the recent town hall, said there are "exciting" conversations taking place about Metrolinx's role in running the GO network, versus that of third parties. The Alstom extension will be an interim step while those discussions take place, he said.

One senior Metrolinx employee said he was unsure whether the agency would be able to deliver 15-minute service beyond the Lakeshore East and West lines, given the current funding available. The rail veteran who worked for ONxpress said he also had doubts about Metrolinx's ability to deliver high-frequency rail.

Another senior Metrolinx employee, however, said the work already accomplished and the agency's public commitments make them optimistic that it will be able to at least get to 15-minute service intervals and electrification.

"That seems to be the only coherent plan at the moment," they said.

"Honestly," they said, "that is the part that is keeping me from going full doomer about the project."

This story was updated after it was initially published to correct a transcription error in a quote from Richard Walker.

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JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



RECLAIMING POWER AND PLACE

THE FINAL REPORT
OF THE NATIONAL INQUIRY
INTO MISSING AND
MURDERED INDIGENOUS
WOMEN AND GIRLS

Volume a

Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Volume 1a



Cette publication est également disponible en français :

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CHAPTER 7



Confronting Oppression – Right to Security

Introduction: "We're not safe. Nobody is safe."

Across the country, the right to security held by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is routinely compromised. As families, survivors, and others shared their truths with the National Inquiry, it became clear that, for the majority of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people living in all settings and regions, security is a key area where violence against Indigenous women and girls can and should be addressed. As we heard, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people live with an almost constant threat to their physical, emotional, economic, social, and cultural security. As Bernice C., who spoke in Winnipeg, observed when speaking about her daughter, who went missing on her 18th birthday in 2008: "We're not safe. Our women are not safe anymore. Nobody is safe."[1]

This chapter examines the right to security with reference to the four pathways that maintain colonial violence. We examine the ways that the security of Indigenous women and girls is compromised by interpersonal violence, and how the risk of interpersonal violence is heightened by such factors as intergenerational trauma, poverty, homelessness, addictions, and barriers to education, training, and employment, as well as a lack of anti-violence services and supports. In addition, we explore how the absence of basic economic, social, and political rights that can guarantee security contributes to the targeting of Indigenous women and girls. We then explore how an unwillingness on the part of institutions to address these issues maintains a status quo that ensures that the crisis continues, and how, ultimately, the solutions required to restore security, as understood in a holistic way, lie within the experiences and the knowledge of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people themselves.

Like many of the witnesses who shared their story of a lost loved one, Cee-Jai J. talked about her sister, Norma, who went missing from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside on September 28, 1992, and was found deceased a few days later. Twenty-five years later, to the day of her sister's death, Cee-Jai's daughter Shayla J. died after a car accident on September 28, 2017, when police took her home, rather than taking her to a hospital. As in the lives of so many of the other families and support people who shared their truths, the violent act that took the life of their loved one was only one of many incidents of violence in their lives. When Cee-Jai spoke about her sister's murder, she contextualized this act of violence as part of her own story of violent encounters and relationships she had experienced and witnessed, beginning from when, as she puts it, "I was just a baby in the crib."[2]

Like many of the witnesses, Cee-Jai experienced repeated acts of physical, sexual, and psychological violence throughout her entire life. From witnessing her father stab her mother when she was very young, to witnessing her mother being physically beaten and abused by men as a young girl, to repeated sexual and physical abuse and neglect in various foster homes, to the sexual assault and physical violence she experienced as a teenager and adult, violence permeates Cee-Jai's life story, and her relationships reflect a truth that is unfortunately not uncommon. She shared, "I feel like my spirit knows violence," summarizing what many Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people experience as the almost constant presence of violence that contributes to an overall absence of basic human security.[3]

Defining "Human Security"

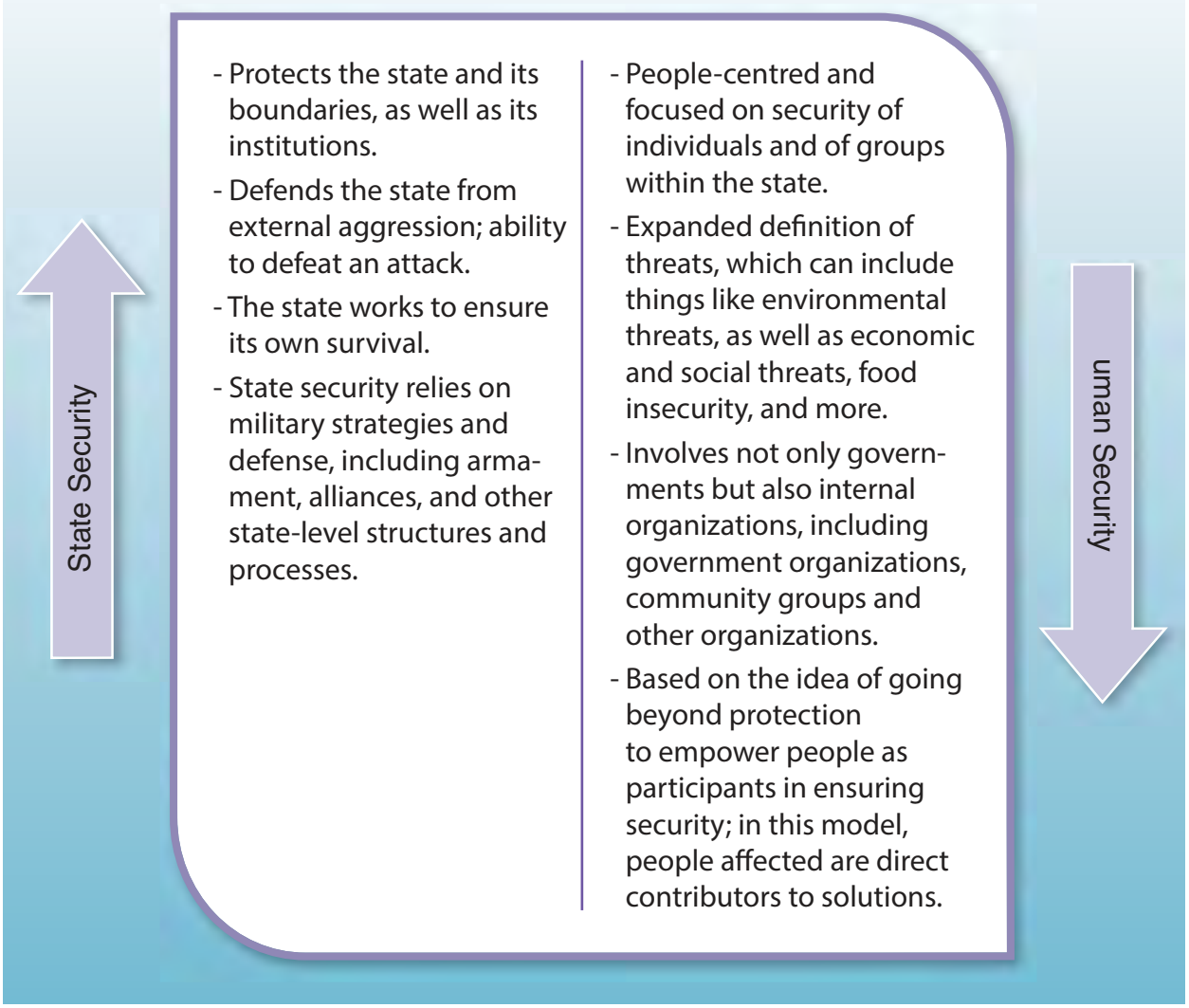
In many of the Indigenous world views presented within the context of the Truth-Gathering Process, the right to security includes both a physical right and a social right. International covenants and conventions also take a broad look at the concept of "security" as being both physical and social.

This broad sense of human security draws from an approach that places well-being at its very centre, and that recognizes complex economic and social interactions – encounters – that work to shape security, or a lack of security, in a person's life.[4] It moves human security beyond the agenda of the state alone, and instead considers other factors or "non-traditional" threats such as poverty, disease, and the roots of issues such as the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

"I FEEL LIKE MY SPIRIT KNOWS VIOLENCE."

Cee-Jai J.

STATE SECURITY VS. HUMAN SECURITY



The concept of human security was redefined in the 1990s, after a focus on military or traditional state security that went hand-in-hand with the Cold War period. As researcher Taylor Owen explains, the fall of the Berlin Wall made it clear that the biggest threats to human security might not come from militarized states anymore. Instead, citizens in the post-Cold War period "were being killed by the remnants of proxy wars, environmental disaster, poverty, disease, hunger, violence and human rights abuses."[5] In this context, the focus on the state as the only means for human security actually served to mask many of the ongoing human security crises targeting people all over the world.

In 1994, the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) "Human Development Report" (HDR) laid out four primary characteristics of human security, including that it is universal, that its components are interdependent, that it is best ensured through prevention, and that it is people-centred.[6] Importantly, it is *not* focused on militarized or state security apparatus, but on the safety of persons living in states, as conceived broadly and within the context of human rights. More specifically, the 1994 HDR listed seven "essential dimensions" of human security:

- economic security threatened by poverty;
- health security threatened by injury and disease;
- personal security threatened by various forms of violence;
- political security threatened by political repression;
- food security threatened by hunger and famine;
- environmental security threatened by pollution, environmental degradation, and resource depletion; and
- community security threatened by social unrest and instability.[7]

These elements are not comprehensive, as the HDR pointed out, but are dynamic and could be analyzed to understand the "particular threats experienced by particular groups of people, as well as the participation of those people in the analysis process."[8] They are also all interconnected, in that the threat to economic security is also linked, for instance, to threats to personal and political security, as well as to health. As Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan explained in 2000:

> Security can no longer be narrowly defined as the absence of armed conflict, be it between or within states. Gross abuses of human rights, the large-scale displacement of civilian populations, international terrorism, the AIDS pandemic, drug and arms trafficking and environmental disasters present a direct threat to human security, forcing us to adopt a much more coordinated approach to a range of issues.[9]

As it is commonly understood today, and as adopted by UN Resolution in 2012, the common understanding of human security now includes:

- the right of people to live freely and with dignity, free from poverty and despair, including freedom from fear and freedom from want;
- a people-centred and comprehensive approach that understands context-specific threats and that contributes to the empowerment of people;
- an approach that recognizes the connections among peace, development, and human rights, and that considers civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights as interdependent and indivisible;

- an approach that does not include the threat or use of force or coercion, and that does not replace state security;
- national ownership, or, in other words, programs and policies that consider the distinctions among nations, and that work to strengthen national solutions that "are compatible with local realities";
- a primary responsibility for government to ensure the "survival, livelihood and dignity of their citizens"; and
- a full implementation of human security with respect for the UN Charter and the sovereignty of nation-states.[10]

As UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro remarked in 2012,

> Let us remember that human security is more than an abstract concept. For a hungry family, human security means dinner on the table. For a refugee, human security is shelter and safe haven from the storms of conflict or disaster. For a woman caught in conflict, human security is protection from harm. For a child living in poverty, human security is the chance to go to school.[11]

DEFINING HUMAN SECURITY





For Indigenous women, as the testimonies showed, threats to human security and to their basic human rights occur on a daily basis. For them, human security means the ability to live in the world without being under a constant threat of violence or harm; the ability to say goodbye to children going out with their friends, and not wonder if they will ever return; and, among other issues, the ability to start a family, to raise children, without worrying about their being targeted by racism and discrimination, or being apprehended unfairly. Witnesses discussed security in a physical sense, as the right to life, liberty, and personal safety, including control over one's own physical and mental health. They also identified the need for protection and social assistance through essential services in areas of health, housing, access to water, food, and education, and, most notably, the overall reduction of poverty, as it impacts levels of violence. In this context, safety and security are guaranteed through the pursuit and maintenance of relationships that are respectful, equal, and safe. Security is more than a physical condition; it is also a deeply felt experience of belonging, purpose, trust, connection, and harmony with the broader human, natural, and spiritual world.

Looking to what families and survivors told us about violence and the lack of safety in their daily lives challenges attitudes and beliefs that often blame Indigenous women themselves for the lack of safety in their lives, because it becomes clear that the source of that lack of safety is in the colonial structures within which Indigenous women live, rather than in the women themselves.[12] This way of thinking about security also makes clear that restoring security – as we will discuss in the upcoming chapter – requires much more than band-aid solutions, and requires creating substantive and systemic change in areas this report has identified and that are at the root of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. As we heard from the voices of families and survivors, restoring security requires collective, Indigenous-led solutions that start by addressing the root causes of violence that so pervasively deny this basic human right.

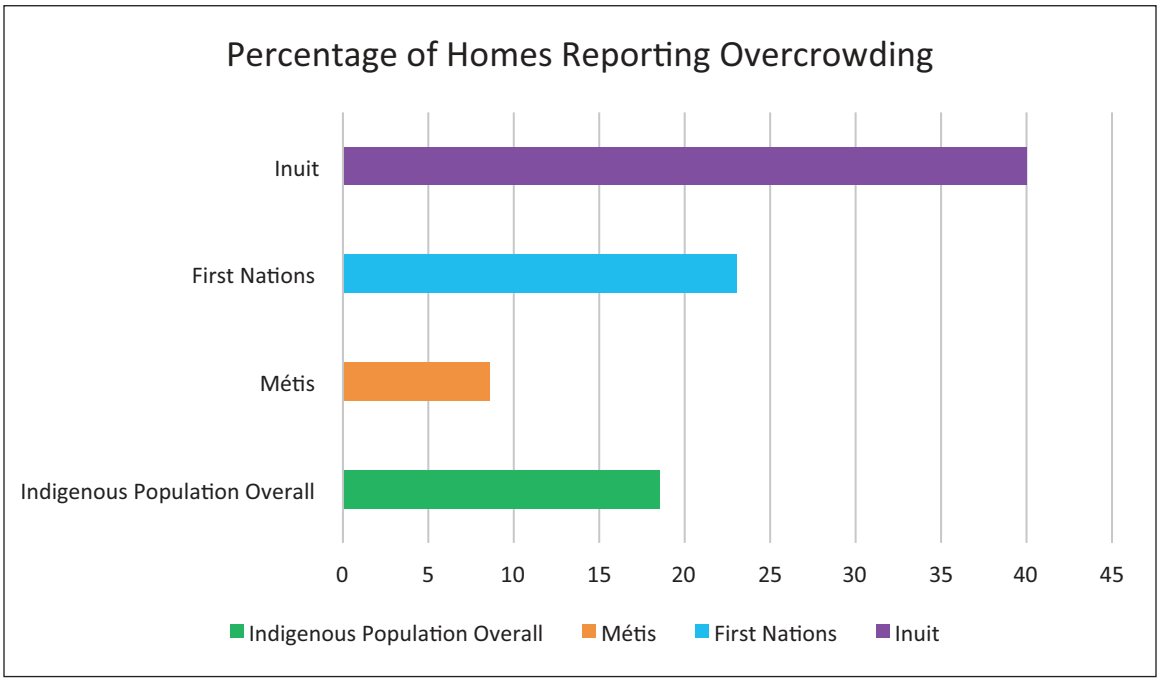
Pathway to Violence: Intergenerational Trauma and Interpersonal Violence

As Cee-Jai's story demonstrates, the security of Indigenous women and girls is threatened in ways that include, but go far beyond, a single act of physical violence. Addressing the violence that has caused the disappearance or death of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people must consider how these specific acts of violence are the outcome of the long-term, multi-faceted denial of measures that foster and protect the security of Indigenous women throughout their lives.

Drawing on her many years of experience working with Indigenous women and their families whose lives have been impacted by violence, Expert Witness Josie Nepinak, executive director of Awo Taan Healing Lodge Society, an Indigenous women's emergency shelter in Alberta,

Housing

For First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women, one of the ways poverty impedes them in seeking safety is in their search for safe, affordable, and accessible housing. Across the country, family members, survivors, Knowledge Keepers, and others drew attention to the link between the lack of access to safe housing and violence. The lack of availability of safe and affordable housing in many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities is well documented. In 2016, according to Statistics Canada, close to one-fifth (18.5%) of the Indigenous population lived in housing that was considered not suitable for the number of people who lived there.[64] Specifically, of those living in crowded housing, 8.6% of Métis, 23% of First Nations, and 40% of the Inuit population lived in these conditions.[65]



For Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people living in poverty, access to housing, especially within remote or isolated communities, is especially difficult. Violence may be compounded by both crowded living arrangements, as well as the difficulty in accessing housing at all for a variety of different reasons including economic capacity and availability of housing. For instance, according to Statistics Canada data for 2016, Inuit living in Nunangat were more likely to live in crowded housing than those who lived elsewhere in Canada, and within Inuit Nunangat, half (51.7%) of the Inuit population lived in crowded housing.[66] Inuit families of loved ones who died from intimate partner violence often mentioned the shortage of housing in Inuit Nunangat, the overcrowding, the incidence of infectious diseases, and the violence that inevitably follows overcrowded homes. According to ITK, "Crowded housing is associated with high rates of communicable disease (such as tuberculosis), stressors that can lead to friction and violence

between family members, poor conditions in which children must learn and study, and other challenges."[67] The 52% of Inuit in Inuit Nunangat who live in crowded homes do so at a rate about six times greater than the rate for non-Indigenous People in Canada, and nearly a third of Inuit live in homes in desparate need of repair. As ITK points out, "This clearly shows the inequity between Inuit and others with regard to housing suitability and gives concrete evidence to what most Inuit already know anecdotally: that Inuit face a housing crisis which needs to be addressed."[68] This echoes testimonies heard by the National Inquiry where, repeatedly, families referred to the lack of housing and shelters for Inuit women seeking refuge from abuse and violence at home.

The report of the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, *We Can Do Better: Housing in Inuit Nunangat*, documented the threat to the health and safety of Inuit families due to the housing crisis in 2017. The housing crisis in Inuit Nunangat has been of deep concern for Inuit families for many years. Within the communities, the lived experiences of Inuit men, women, and children stem from the reality of overcrowded housing: the lack of affordable homes, hidden homelessness, infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, respiratory infections, mental illness, vulnerability of children in experiencing or witnessing violence and abuse, and high rates of domestic violence. The issue of safe housing came up over and over again among Inuit who told their truths about themselves or their loved ones to the National Inquiry in Inuit Nunangat.

While the issue of safe housing in Inuit Nunangat was prominent, First Nations and Métis Peoples also face their own challenges. First Nations people were also more likely to live in a crowded dwelling on-reserve than off-reserve: 36.8% living on-reserve and 18.5% living off-reserve lived in crowded housing.[69]

In his testimony, Lance S. spoke about the condition of housing on reserves in Saskatchewan and how these conditions impact the health and well-being of community members.

> The poverty line that's out there, you know, the housing that's out on the reserves, the water that's out there – you know, there's a lot of things that us First Nations people on reserves, we still live like that today, that we lived 30 to 40 years ago, we still live that today. We still live in those old houses. Those old houses that are on these reserves are still being used. People, the Elders are getting sick from all that stuff.[70]

Minnie K. echoed these same concerns about safety and overcrowding in her description of housing in her community.

> Yes. Well, I did kind of look around at things like the families that are living in homes today. The homes they're living in today are not suitable for them.They're living in these homes that – well, their homes are crowded.Their homes are built, and so many families are in homes today that there's no room. And, also, that they built places they shouldn't be built and in rock piles and things and whatever. There's no spaces for kids to play even or anything like that.[71]

During the Heiltsuk Women Community Perspective Panel, Mavis Windsor spoke about how overcrowded and otherwise unsafe housing put First Nations women and girls in her community of Bella Bella, British Columbia, at an increased risk for violence.

> More often than not we have homes in our community where there are three or four families living together in very crowded circumstances and that affects the health and well-being of – of not only you know, the women in the family, but the men and the children, it can create situations where there's tension and you know, just it's not a very healthy situation.[72]

In her testimony, Rebecca M. talked about the housing-related challenges faced by Indigenous women living in Halifax, and how these challenges create a sense of insecurity.

> Housing security is a big issue for a lot of the Indigenous women that I know back home. So, like, for me and my family, we're always sort of, like teetering on whatever.
>
> Yeah, so I think that housing security – well, I can only speak of Halifax really, but that's a reoccurring issue that I always see our women struggle with. And it's for all kinds of different reasons, you know. It's not always just financial, you know. Like, a lot of the times I have a full-time job, or I'll have the money, but it's just either difficult to get one, find one.… Yeah. Or – or you have to leave one that you're at for whatever reason. Like, it could be, like I said, domestic, or it could be – it could be unsafe in some way, or – or it could have like, problems, but housing is – is a big issue.[73]

As scholars Ian Peach and Kiera Ladner point out, such conditions of vulnerability are direct corollaries to the urban migration of women, which, in turn, creates the conditions for women to go missing and be murdered, therefore perpetuating marginalization, rather than addressing it.[74]

"THE POVERTY LINE THAT'S OUT THERE, YOU KNOW, THE HOUSING THAT'S OUT ON THE RESERVES, THE WATER THAT'S OUT THERE – YOU KNOW, THERE'S A LOT OF THINGS THAT US FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE ON RESERVES, WE STILL LIVE LIKE THAT TODAY, THAT WE LIVED 30-40 YEARS AGO, WE STILL LIVE THAT TODAY. WE STILL LIVE IN THOSE OLD HOUSES. THOSE OLD HOUSES THAT ARE ON THESE RESERVES ARE STILL BEING USED. PEOPLE, THE ELDERS ARE GETTING SICK FROM ALL THAT STUFF."

Lance S.

Speaking about housing in the Northwest Territories, Pertice Merritt provided an example of the way the loss of even one residential structure can create significant challenges for the population, especially for women experiencing violence.

> And, I want to particularly mention transitional housing because that's what came to my mind to draw me back to this, because you may have heard in the news recently that [transitional housing apartments] in Yellowknife burned to the ground. This is where the

YWCA was housed. This was where transitional housing occurs. This has displaced 33 families. And, as I was preparing my – for the conference and to resolve the emergency protection orders, I said to ... the executive director, "This is an emergency protection order waiting to happen." And she said, "Pertice, it's already happened. They've moved people into other housing across Yellowknife, not with a security guard, and one woman has recently had her door kicked in and does not feel secure."

So, what they were providing in 2017–18, the YWCA provided transitional housing up to one year to 57 families and 94 children, and there were 21 youth in Hope's Haven, as we said, and the Yellowknife's Women's Society opened eight semi-independent units for single women.

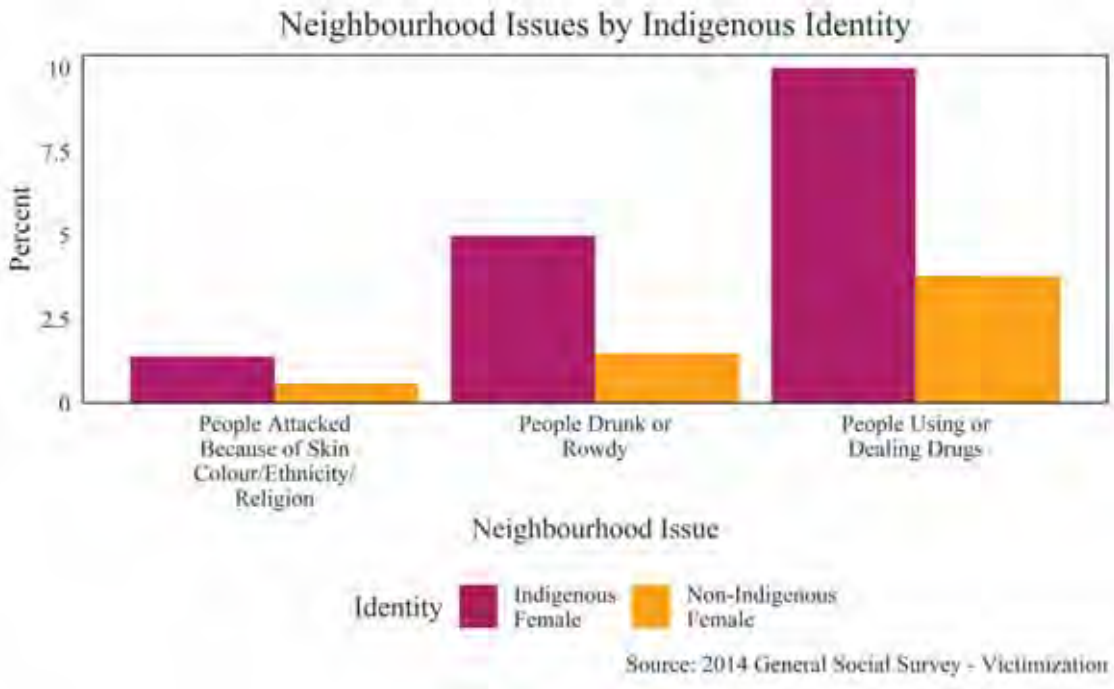
So, I think we have a further crisis brewing for our small population. And the numbers may not seem large to you, but we're a small population really spread across the North, and as an Elder said to me once in the community, "I count as a person."[75]

In other testimony, we heard how women whose relationships break down because of violence are then faced with challenges related to housing because of community policies or practices. Michele G. described how, because of band policy, she was not allowed access to her marital home.

Soon we decided to separate and divorce and it became a fight for who would get the marital home on the reserve that was in both our names. Because you can't sell the land on reserve – it's Crown land – you have to revert to band policy. I remained living in the house with my three kids and I became subjected to violence by some members of his family who didn't want me in there. One day I had 100 rotten fish dumped on my yard and a bicycle thrown through the front window. I wasn't home but my six kids were and they phoned 911 and hid in an upstairs closet terrified, but the police didn't attend. When I got home I was livid. Talked to some sergeant in [a police department] who apologized and said they thought it was a prank. I went to Chief in Council about the lack of policy to protect women from being shoved out of homes on the reserve to go live in poverty in the east end. They had no answer for me. I left the reserve at that time.[76]

For Indigenous women living in urban settings, or for the many Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people who decide to leave their community, access to safe and affordable housing continues to be a problem that puts them at additional risk for violence. For example, Jennisha Wilson, programs manager with Tungasuvvingat Inuit, talked about how, for Inuit women who resettle in the South, the only options for affordable housing are often in neighbourhoods where there are higher levels of violence and police presence: "Within Ottawa, Vanier tends to be one of the hubs where a lot of Inuit live. It also tends to be the number one spot that has the highest rates of sexual assault within the province. It also happens to be a place where surveillance and policing happens constantly." For Wilson, again, it is important to position these challenges in accessing safe and affordable housing within a colonial context that continues to jeopardize

women's security and safety. For her, the high number of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women living in low-income, high-crime neighbourhoods is an example of "how violence is rearticulated through geography."[77]



Indigenous women were 3.3 times more likely to report people being drunk or rowdy in their neighbourhood, 2.3 times more likely to report someone being attacked due to skin colour or ethnicity or religion, and 2.6 times more likely to report people using or dealing drugs than non-Indigenous women.

In her testimony, survivor Rebecca M. talked extensively about the difficulties she faced as a low-income First Nations woman seeking housing in Halifax. She spoke about how she perceived a connection between living in an unsecure public housing unit in Halifax and the increased likelihood of violence.

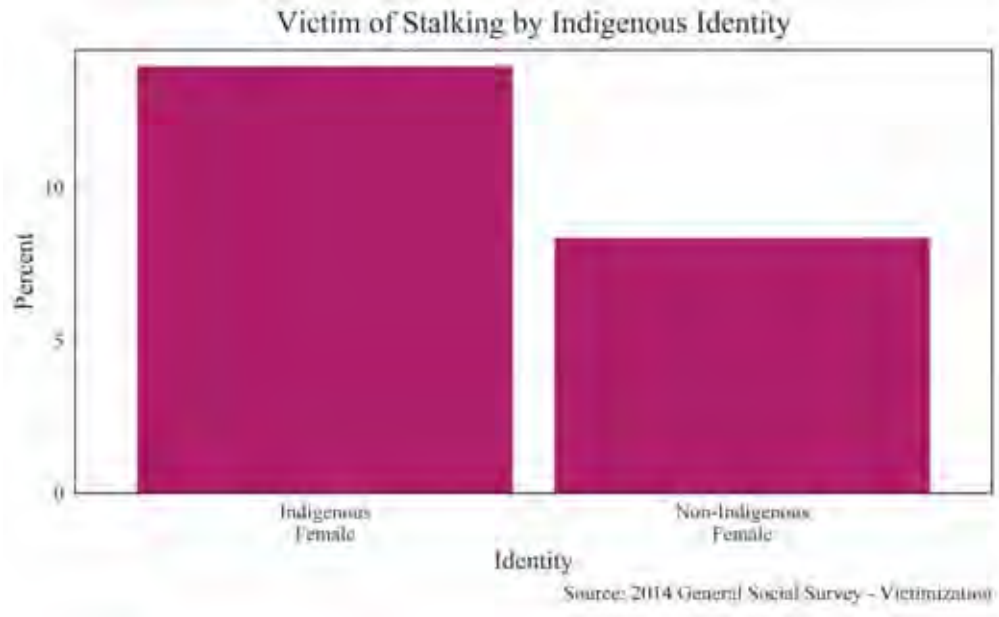
> [T.] Housing, that's Native housing in Halifax, so it's like public housing for Native people. And – and they're really slummy. They're like slum lords, so they have a lot of problems. The apartment – me and [my sister] lived there, we lived there for five years. The back door … was insecure, so like the wind could blow it in, and stuff, and it was like that the whole five years.
>
> From before we moved in to after, and it eventually led – so it was insecure the whole time, and even though I stressed to them, "You know, it's – it's me and my sister, my younger sister, like, we're young women and we live on our own, and you know, it's really unsafe," they never fixed it.

There was one time when I caught – we caught somebody trying to break into our place, and – like, I chased him down the road and everything. And then I called [T.] Housing, flipping out, because our back door wasn't secure. And they sent someone in and they just – I said they put an Indian lock on it, because they cut a two by four and then they put it between the back stair and the back door and they left it like that.

They said that they were going to order another door and – and it never came, never showed up. They never did anything about it, so needless to say they didn't really give a – a crap about me and my sister's safety at all.[78]

For Rebecca, unsafe housing was even more troubling because of other violence she faced in her life from a partner who was violent and who had previously breached orders to stay away from her. Not surprisingly, Rebecca's sense of a lack of physical and emotional security was compromised because of the threat of violence compounded by unsafe housing. As she described:

And so I kept on having nightmares of that person breaking in to my house because they knew where I lived. And so I couldn't really sleep well there, so when they were – they were in jail for a month, until their court date. And during that time, because I was really worried about what this person might do when they got out, I ended up … moving to the other end of the country. So I moved to Vancouver.[79]



14% of Indigenous women were victims of stalking in the last five years compared to 8.3% of non-Indigenous women; Indigenous women are 1.7 times more likely to be victims of stalking overall.

When Rebecca – like so many other Indigenous women – is forced to move in an attempt to restore safety, she is placed in additional danger.

For 2SLGBTQQIA people, access to safe housing within their territory or community may be complicated by sexism, transphobia, homophobia, and other discriminatory beliefs about gender identity, expression, and sexual orientation. Marge H. described how, as a lesbian, she was pressured to leave her community.

> I was outed from my community because I was a lesbian. I'd – there was no room … it was suggested by various family members for me to take a vacation. So I was working in the cannery at the time. And I was – saved up a couple of cheques. And I got on the – the ferry boat to Vancouver. And it really hurt because [of] the way I was treated. I had no – I lost friends really quick. And there was, of course, rumours and gossip, and stuff like that. And – so I left.[80]

Viola Thomas also commented on the lack of safety faced by 2SLGBTQQIA people in their communities and the pressures this puts on them to move.

> For many Two-Spirited people, they end up being displaced from their territory and from their communities because they're – they don't feel safe and they don't feel welcome because of their uniqueness. And so you have a large population of Two-Spirited peoples across the country that end up moving to urban areas, so that they have a space where they can feel a likeness to other folks and feel welcome for who they are.[81]

For many who are pressured or forced to move, these same problems exist within the city. For Jamie L. H., these concerns about finding safe, affordable housing are also complicated as she gets older and realizes the lack of housing options for aging transwomen and Two-Spirit people.

> I've been studying a model down in Mexico for Indigenous, retired women and they – and they have this home and it's a place that they live together in community. And I would like to see places like that for our LGBTQ+ communities. And, you know, we need that because I think right until you exit physically this earth, you need that sense of love and belonging. And so I fear the most that, you know, if I get really ill, where am I going to be put? And you know, so I think we need to address that.[82]

Homelessness and Exploitation

For many Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, poverty makes access to any form of housing impossible, and they are forced to live in shelters, on the street, or in other forms of precarious housing. In sharing the circumstances leading up to the disappearance or death of their loved one, many family members described how their loved one was homeless or precariously housed at the time of her disappearance or death. For example, Cee-Jai explained that it was when

her sister was living on the street that she was murdered. Despite Cee-Jai's efforts to protect her sister, the vulnerability she faced as an Indigenous woman living on the street was too great.

Monique F. H., who now works as an advocate with an AIDS organization, drew on her own memories of her life as a young homeless girl living on the streets and the fear she lived in as a result of the almost constant threat to her security and safety.

> The violence that I experienced in my life has made me I think, more understanding to the women that I work with. A lot of them don't realize when I hear their stories, I hear myself, so when I was – when I was younger and on the street it was very – very difficult.
>
> I remember seeing girls getting beaten up all the time. Shooting up. Living that lifestyle. Always fearful of what was going to happen next. And I was scared even though I may not have acted scared, I was scared.[83]

In sharing her experiences of living on the streets, Marlene J. talked about how violence becomes a way of life – and often something she endured to meet her basic needs for housing and food.

> I would say I was raped three sometimes four times a week.… I was just trying to survive. I was drinking a lot to not have the pain. I was always drunk. I drank pop to kill the pain of hunger. I'd steal. Go in the liquor store and steal bottles of booze. I'd be drunk and then I ended up with these men. They figured oh yeah we're going to have a party and then end up being raped. How many parks I had to crawl out of. I was always alone.[84]

Poverty can also contribute to violence because of the way people may use drugs and alcohol to cope with the challenges associated with having no money or home. As Marlene explained, alcohol allowed her to survive the violence, hunger, and emotional pain she endured on the streets, even though it increased the risk that others would target her for violence.

> These people that had raped me, they pretended to be my friend. They said, "We can just sit and talk." Because I was homeless they decided that they would take advantage of the situation. Sometimes I'm drunk I don't remember, but I do know – I don't know. Like I said, being in residential school what they tell you every day that you'll amount to nothing sort of sticks with you and then you just don't care about yourself the way you should.[85]

Mealia Sheutiapik, an Inuk woman who shared her experience of homelessness on the streets of Ottawa, talked about how drug use became a way of surviving not only the harsh living conditions but also the trauma she carried with her as a result of the violence she had witnessed and the separation she felt from her family and culture.

> I was smoking hash. I didn't know any other drug that time. He got me into smoking hash. So, I tried to kill that pain when I was a witness to that murder. So, I just ended up

> carrying on and smoking hash, and it escalated to other drugs just to kill the pain and just to get numb, just to forget about that thought and what happened before. And, thinking about my grandma and my siblings, leaving them behind, I ended up using more hard drugs. And that also escalated me to go on the street and try and get more money to get high.[86]

Hearing from witnesses about the challenges poverty poses for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people demonstrated how the violation of their right to social security directly contributes to, and underlines, the many stories of violence, disappearance, and death shared by families and survivors.

Barriers to Education and Training

In the same way that poverty denies Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people access to housing, so, too, does it create barriers to education, training, and employment – the very tools that might stop the cycle of poverty in many Indigenous families and communities, and are known protective factors against violence.[87]

Access to education and to training and meaningful employment is a factor known to decrease the likelihood of perpetrating and being victimized by violence. In her testimony, Robyn Bourgeois, a Cree professor at Brock University and a survivor of trafficking, talked about how, for her, education empowered her and became a way of understanding her culture and the ways she might challenge colonial violence.

> I grew up feeling really empowered with school. I know that sounds funny, because for so many Indigenous Peoples, school isn't empowering. But, for me, it had always been. And I saw an opportunity.… I remember reading scholarly work by Indigenous thinkers and thinking, "This is amazing." Like, just how they can use the words of the government in particular, because I'm always obsessed with the government of Canada, and I've been struggling, you know, how to make sense of what goes on in this country in relation to Indigenous Peoples. And so, I remember thinking, "I can do that. I could do that." And so I went back to university.[88]

Likewise, in describing her experience growing up in foster care, Cheylene Moon, who participated on the Youth Panel in Vancouver, talked about how school offered a sense of security: "I loved school growing up, because it was like my safe place away from my foster homes."[89]

Security through education will become more and more important in Inuit Nunangat, as the Inuit population increases at a greater rate than in southern Canada. This makes for a very young society: Inuit children under 14 years of age comprise about 33% of the Inuit population.[90] One of the consequences of such a young population is a greater number of young Inuit mothers, and they are often single mothers. Sometimes these young mothers stop going to high school because of pregnancy. The financial strain on young single mothers makes life difficult for them and even



Findings: Right to Security

- Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people continue to experience social and economic marginalization and exclusion as a direct result of colonialism and of racist and sexist government policies. This marginalization and exclusion is the objective of the colonial policies of the Canadian state. Colonial policies violate the social, economic, and political rights of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and jeopardize their rights to human security and, in turn, safety. These colonial policies are tools of genocide.
- The Canadian state has caused Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people to be removed from their homelands and territories and from their families and communities. They experience disproportionately high rates of poverty and insurmountable barriers to obtaining secure housing, food, education, employment, transportation, and other basic needs. Indigenous children and the elderly are especially vulnerable under these circumstances. Marginalization and exclusion decrease safety and increase the risk of violence, and often force Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people to remain in violent and unsafe situations or to end up in violent and unsafe circumstances in an attempt to have their basic needs met.
- The social and economic marginalization, compounded by complex and intergenerational trauma, also forces many Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people to resist the marginalization and to meet their basic survival needs by resorting to the sex industry, remaining in violent relationships, and joining gangs. This further marginalizes and endangers them. Marginalization and trauma are pervasive reasons for the institutionalization of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people within the criminal justice system and in the child welfare system.
- The safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people cannot be realized without upholding and implementing social, economic, and political rights, alongside cultural, health and wellness, and justice rights. A reliable and consistent livable income for all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is necessary to address the state of crisis related to their well-being and to their socio-economic and safety needs.
- Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people experience extreme rates of overcrowding and homelessness. The lack of safe housing, transition homes, and shelter impacts the health, wellness, and safety of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The housing crisis is a significant contributor to violence.
- Existing social and economic services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are often plagued by huge gaps in resources and infrastructure. Further, such services are often placed in unsafe areas, and are not culturally appropriate, thereby perpetuating a lack of safety and security.
- Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people continue to experience disproportionately low rates of educational achievement and high rates of unemployment. Employment opportunities and services, as well as resources to promote educational and employment success, are urgently needed as a way to combat social and economic marginalization and violence and to support community and individual safety.

The National Inquiry heard several stories from northern or more remote communities, as well, where the absence of services and poor services chronicled elsewhere in this report forced people to head south, where they were subsequently trafficked. Traffickers were cited as targeting group homes, medical travel homes, bus stations, and buses coming from remote communities, as Alaya's story also revealed. In this way, the lack of infrastructure and services in northern and remote communities feeds the sex industry and further exploitation. As the National Inquiry heard, those who exploit women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are well aware of how to target these people; they go so far as to station themselves outside of group homes or places where they know these potential victims might be, in order to bring them into human trafficking rings. In addition, studies have pointed to key recruitment areas including airports, and in particular the Montreal.[BB] Other key recruitment zones include schools, the boyfriend method (where a trafficker approaches a woman as a suitor, rather than as a trafficker),[CC] other girls or women, hitchhiking, and virtually any place that is away from home where victims can be isolated.[DD]

For many young Indigenous girls who are forced to, or choose to, leave abusive families or foster homes or want to seek out a better life for themselves, early experiences of sexual exploitation and trafficking continue into adulthood, during which engaging in survival or street-level sex work becomes a way of making ends meet. Mary Fearon explained how poverty and addiction are factors that make it necessary for Indigenous women to exchange or trade sex to meet their basic needs.

> One of the things that we see with a lot of our participants, particularly our younger participants, is survival sex. And, that idea that if they need to get a place to stay, if they're homeless, then they will often trade sex as a means to get some other need met, whether it be housing or food. Food security is a big issue. So, yes, there was – it was out of the need, that people are living in poverty in our province and across our country was certainly a big driving factor.[EE]

She continued, "One [factor] is that we recognize that 95% identify as living in poverty when they come into our program, so poverty is clearly a big indicator; that 79% have had some kind of addiction, or currently are dealing with addictions, or recovered from addictions."[FF]

Many survivors who shared their experience of poverty, homelessness, and violence talked about exchanging sex in order to meet their basic needs for food, housing, clothing, transportation, or other basic items – a practice often referred to as "survival sex work."

As Monique F. H. explained: "I slept, you know, with people for a place to live, for a place to stay, for food. But that is what survival does, that's survival for you, right? You – you do what you need to do in order to continue to live and to continue to survive."[GG]

Doris G. talked about how she turned to sex work in order to pay for housing for herself and her child.

> I needed help with [the] damage deposit, and no one would help me. It was hard being a single Native mother on welfare with an infant, so I went and found my friend, and she introduced me to her friends, otherwise known as johns, who would help me with cash. I could raise money for housing or for me and my child, for food. I remember stopping before I started to pray to Creator to keep me safe: I've got to make it home to my son.[HH]

In her testimony, Lanna Moon Perrin offered a slightly different perspective and explained that for some Indigenous, trans, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, sex work offers an empowering and financially rewarding way to support oneself and one's family.

> You know, I started with street-level sex work at 16 so that I could buy things for myself, a winter jacket, winter boots, decent food to eat. In my life, when I was young, I did experience violence on a lot of different levels, but I don't want to, in any way, frame it that it was my choice of getting into sex work that led me to be victimized.[II]

National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



RECLAIMING POWER AND PLACE

THE FINAL REPORT
OF THE NATIONAL INQUIRY
INTO MISSING AND
MURDERED INDIGENOUS
WOMEN AND GIRLS

Volume 1b

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Christi Belcourt, for *This Painting is a Mirror*

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Access to Housing or Shelter

Several participants echoed the notion that access to shelter is a basic human right, and that a lack of safe and affordable housing or shelter increases risks of violence and harm, presents a barrier to fleeing unsafe situations, or forces individuals in rural, remote, or northern communities to migrate to urban centres.

> "What is it that will keep you safe? Housing – a place to go back to at night." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)

> "The base [should be] that everyone have a roof over their heads. [Priority] number two is food. You can put more effort into your challenges, once you have a roof and food." (Inuit Perspectives)

Barriers to accessing housing and shelter include:

insufficient capacity in shelters, including warming shelters and emergency shelters for individuals fleeing violence, as well as **lack of shelters**;

shortage of subsidized housing, creating long wait-lists;

deferred maintenance challenges that limit available housing or shelter space, adding financial burdens to shelter and housing organizations. This creates poor living conditions, which negatively impact the sense of self-worth of individuals in need of shelter and housing;

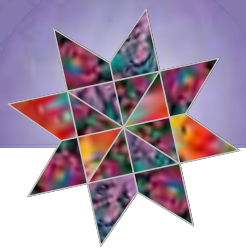
> "It's very expensive to build houses, and utilities need to be upgraded. It's very hard to catch up. Maintenance services are also a big issue, especially for infrastructure. Small communities have a hard time getting things done to maintain housing." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "[The] homeless shelter has been shut down, because of bedbug infestation. Takes a long time to get someone to clean it. It's run by an NGO [non-governmental organization], which can't afford to bring it up to code." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "Non-profit housing is built in sub-par standards, making it seem like [clients] are not appreciated, [because] they are living in … subsidized housing." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)

risks of discrimination in shelters, including racism, homophobia, and transphobia;

lack of transitional housing for individuals returning to communities from correctional facilities or from substance use treatment programs, or aging out of care. Participants noted that individuals at these transition points are particularly vulnerable to violence or harm, and that the lack of shelter funding from justice, health, or child welfare sectors increases the burden on shelter spaces;



> "Judges are releasing men to the 'care' of a shelter, but there is not [enough] funding to house these men through the justice system, and they expect the shelter to absorb or find space for them.… [There are] men sleeping on [the] floor and in [the] kitchen." (Inuit Perspectives)

strict policies against substance use in shelters, which create barriers for individuals struggling with addictions. One participant from Inuvik described her experience on the board for a men's shelter where other members lacked an understanding of addictions, espousing the belief that "if [someone] wants the shelter enough, they will stay sober." She said there was little support for "wet" shelters that allow substance use due to complications of insurance and risk management. Another participant described how substance use policies "further marginalize the already marginalized";

> "It sends the message that you're not welcome here, because you use drugs and alcohol. Some women were murdered because they used drugs. They will use drugs to stay awake and stay safe. This stigma around drug use and alcoholism makes people feel unwelcome, unsafe, and puts them on the street and at risk." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)

> "The rules [for substance use] for [2SLGBTQQIA] clients in facilities cannot be so stringent. These people are at the facilities in crisis." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)

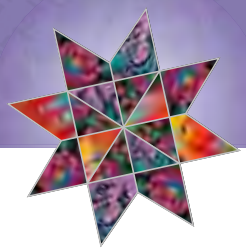
> "Men in the system are in crisis. [It is] unrealistic to expect them to avail themselves of services. These men are not choosing to use. One should not have to choose using or housing." (Inuit Perspectives)

gender-based shelters and prioritization of women with children in housing. This supports the safety of women and girls, but also creates complications and barriers for families, men, and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals. For instance, some participants described how policies against teenage boys in shelter spaces force women to have to choose whether to leave their sons behind when seeking emergency shelter spaces. Other women may feel safer staying with their partners on the streets instead of seeking shelter space. The prioritization of women with children limits available shelter and housing space for 2SLGBTQQIA individuals (particularly those without children) and for men, who have to leave their home during situations of family violence;

> "I wouldn't have been able to take my son with me to the shelter if I had needed to do it. Daughter, yes. That's what mothers have to think about." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "Often women on the street want to stay with their boyfriend for security reasons." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "A lot of 2S don't have housing because there are requirements to have children … and a lot of 2S folks don't have children. That doesn't make sense. They're not included in the list." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)



> "There is no transitional housing for the abuser, for these mainly men, to go, to live." (Inuit Perspectives)

financial barriers to public housing for individuals who are marginally above the low-income threshold, or are receiving limited income support; and

inequitable access to housing, where individuals with connections to influential people may receive preferential treatment.

Recommendations and Best Practices: Addressing the Crisis of Housing and Shelter

There was a strong call for increased and well-maintained shelters and subsidized housing in all communities, with sufficient capacity to meet current and projected demands. While many participants discussed the need for priority shelter spaces for women fleeing violence, groups also recommended establishing a variety of housing and shelter alternatives in communities, in order to meet the needs of different populations, including:

- ☑ **mixed-gender shelter and housing**, accommodating couples and families with teenage boys;
- ☑ **wet shelters** accommodating individuals struggling with substance use;
- ☑ **dedicated 2SLGBTQQIA housing and shelters**, or dedicated beds in shelters for trans and non-gender binary individuals; and

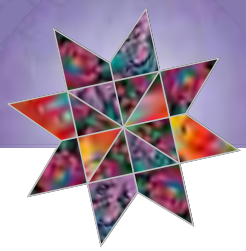
  > "Establish 2S treatment centres and shelters with practitioners who are 2S themselves or [who] 'get' it." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)

- ☑ **transitional housing with relevant support services** for individuals fleeing family violence, youth aging out of care, or individuals returning to communities from correctional institutions or substance use treatment programs.

Participants spoke of housing and shelter as a critical first step that establishes the security, stability, and trusting relationships needed to address more complex risk factors. Many described housing and shelter models that integrate support services, such as substance use treatment programs, employment services, cultural supports, and mental health services.

> "First, you house the person. You give them a place to live and be safe. Then you start focusing on the other issues that lead to homelessness and addictions." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "We need a place that's not like a conventional shelter, but a living space; not necessarily a permanent space, but you need space where you have access to a phone, Internet, a



> place to study, a place to get training.… You need these things to get a job. We need supports for employment. I wouldn't see it like a shelter, where there are bunk beds. We need dignity and privacy. Maybe you moved from the reserve to the city, and you don't have your supports there. Transitional housing that helps you and mentors … you could hire 2S people to do that." (2SLGBTQQIA Perspectives)

Some participants described the importance of providing long-term housing options for individuals and families, with recommendations to increase transitions from shelter spaces to subsidized housing.

> "Shelters [are] such a dehumanizing experience.… The place you belong [to] is constantly stripped away. There's never any place you belong." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "[The] assumption was that sending men out in the cold, even in extreme cold weather, would motivate them. These men were being turned out in the morning. At 7:00 or 8:00 a.m. these Inuit men are being turned out into the cold, with harmful impacts, [including] on their self-esteem." (Inuit Perspectives)

> "Not just shelters and safe houses, but stable, reliable housing, where they can live long-term. It's not temporary, it's permanent. So, if they have children, they can go to school. Stable home.… They don't have that grounding space, to shut the door and go to bed, and then get ready for the day to go to work or school." (Inuit Perspectives)

As with other support services, participants emphasized the importance of providing culturally specific support services in shelters and housing, adapted to the identities of local clientele: for instance, including Inuit- and/or Métis-specific support services in urban shelters, and housing for those arriving from rural, remote, or northern communities.

> "For people who are not in their home communities, which are very far away, it gets really hard when they can't find a stable and safe place to rest their head. There needs to be more subsidized housing for women and families…. First Nations-specific, Métis-specific, Inuit-specific; even though we are all Indigenous, we need specific services. When you are in a vulnerable place, it is most comfortable to be with your community." (Inuit Perspectives)

resource community-based supports and solutions designed to improve social and economic security, led by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This support must come with long-term, sustainable funding designed to meet the needs and objectives as defined by Indigenous Peoples and communities.

4.3 We call upon all governments to support programs and services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people in the sex industry to promote their safety and security. These programs must be designed and delivered in partnership with people who have lived experience in the sex industry. We call for stable and long-term funding for these programs and services.

4.4 We call upon all governments to provide supports and resources for educational, training, and employment opportunities for all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. These programs must be available within all Indigenous communities.

4.5 We call upon all governments to establish a guaranteed annual livable income for all Canadians, including Indigenous Peoples, to meet all their social and economic needs. This income must take into account diverse needs, realities, and geographic locations.

4.6 We call upon all governments to immediately commence the construction of new housing and the provision of repairs for existing housing to meet the housing needs of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This construction and provision of repairs must ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people have access to housing that is safe, appropriate to geographic and cultural needs, and available wherever they reside, whether in urban, rural, remote, or Indigenous communities.

4.7 We call upon all governments to support the establishment and long-term sustainable funding of Indigenous-led low-barrier shelters, safe spaces, transition homes, second-stage housing, and services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people who are homeless, near homeless, dealing with food insecurity, or in poverty, and who are fleeing violence or have been subjected to sexualized violence and exploitation. All governments must ensure that shelters, transitional housing, second-stage housing, and services are appropriate to cultural needs, and available wherever Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people reside.

4.8 We call upon all governments to ensure that adequate plans and funding are put into place for safe and affordable transit and transportation services and infrastructure for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people living in remote or rural communities. Transportation should be sufficient and readily available to Indigenous communities, and in towns and cities located in all of the provinces and territories in Canada. These plans and funding should take into consideration:

- ways to increase safe public transit;
- ways to address the lack of commercial transit available; and
- special accommodations for fly-in, northern, and remote communities.

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "G"** REFERRED TO
IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS
SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY
OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE
COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING
A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20,
ADMINISTERING OATH OR
DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th
DAY OF JULY, 2025

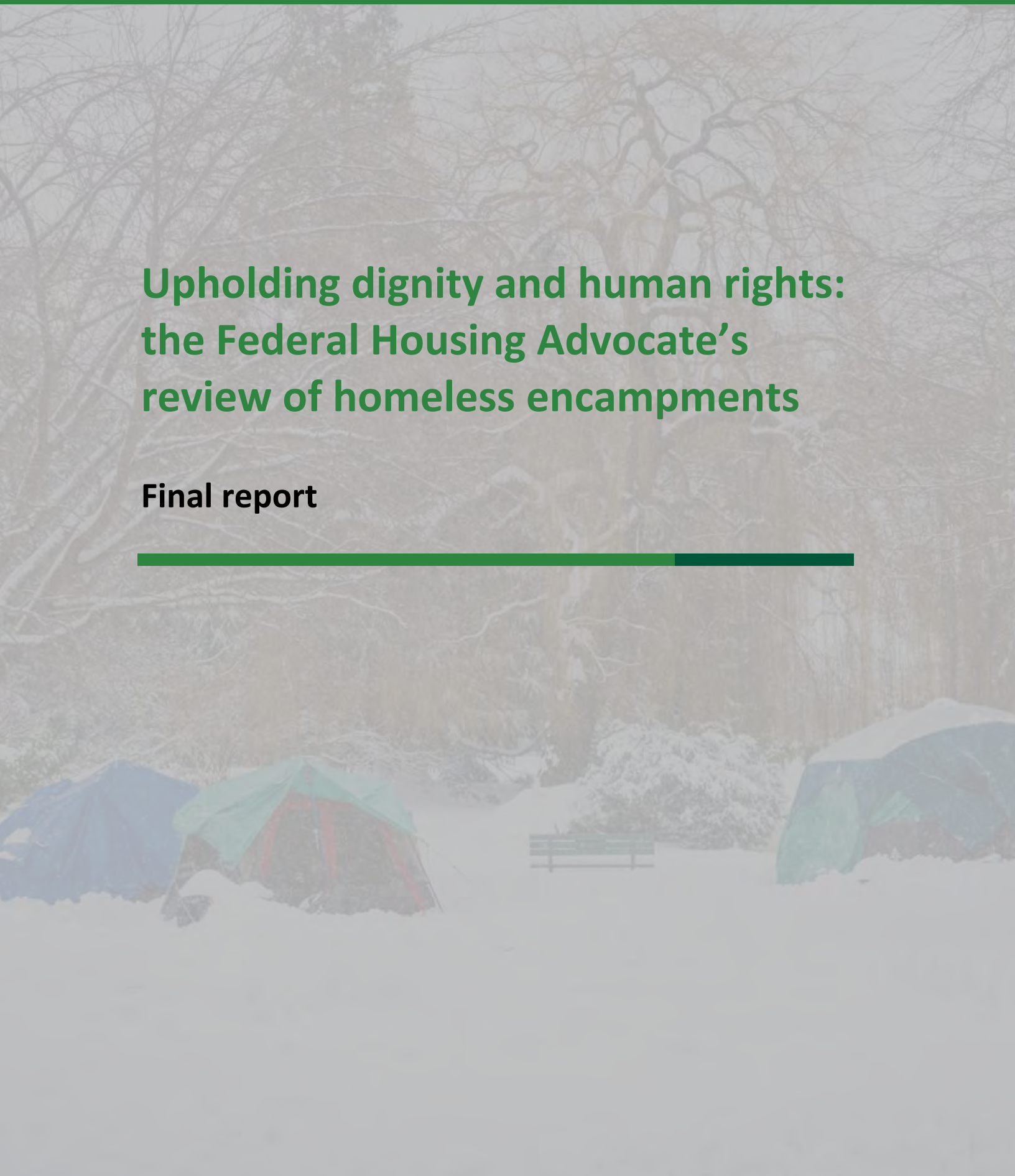


JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Canadian human rights commission | Commission canadienne des droits de la personne

Upholding dignity and human rights: the Federal Housing Advocate's review of homeless encampments

Final report



Office of the Federal Housing Advocate, Canadian Human Rights Commission

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NOTE OF GRATITUDE

As Canada's first Federal Housing Advocate, my role is to drive change on key systemic housing issues and to hold government decision makers to account for their human rights obligations related to housing and homelessness. The right to adequate housing means that all people are equally entitled to live in dignity in a safe and secure home without discrimination or harassment. Recognizing housing as a human right means that government "duty bearers" at all levels have legal obligations to protect this right for everyone, and especially for people whose right to housing is being violated.

During the past year, I have had the privilege of meeting with and hearing from people who have experienced encampments across the country. First and foremost, this report is designed to place them at the centre of efforts to address homelessness. I want to thank them for sharing their stories and insights. I also want to recognize and commend their courage and resilience in the face of systemic failures to uphold their human rights.

As you read my Final Report and reflect on my recommendations, I urge you to consider how your actions can better respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of people experiencing homelessness and living in encampments.

I live and work much of the time in unceded Anishinabe Algonquin territory and have appreciated the opportunity to visit the territories of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to learn more about the challenges of Indigenous Peoples related to encampments. My discussions across the country have highlighted the direct links between homelessness, encampments and the colonial dispossession of land.

My report would not have been possible without the work of national and local advocates who are working tirelessly to support people in encampments. This report has also been enriched through discussions with duty bearers from all levels of government. I thank all those who met with me or provided information for my review and I was encouraged to learn more about how human rights principles are informing responses in a number of places.

I recognize my work does not end with the launch of my report. I will continue to work with all governments to push for the implementation of my recommendations and hope this report can be used as a tool to support local advocacy to protect the human rights of people experiencing homelessness.

Change depends on all of us working at all levels, starting in our own communities.

Sincerely,

Marie-Josée Houle, Federal Housing Advocate

Please see Annex A for the list of key partners who contributed to the review and to this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada's homeless encampments are a national human rights crisis.

A growing number of people in Canada are having to live in tents or informal shelters to survive due to a lack of affordable housing, limited support services, and nowhere safe to go.

There has been a significant rise in encampments in the last five years, and particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Encampments are now being reported across the country – in both large and small municipalities, as well as in more rural areas.

Encampments are not a safe or sustainable solution for housing. For people living in these encampments, every day is a matter of life and death.

At the same time, encampments represent an effort by people who are unhoused to claim their human right to housing and meet their most basic needs for shelter. For reasons discussed in this report, encampments are often people's only housing option, or the only option that meets their needs for safety, security and dignity. Many encampment residents have highlighted the sense of community they experienced when living in an encampment with others facing similar struggles.

Recognizing the severity of this crisis, the Federal Housing Advocate launched a systemic review of encampments in February 2023. This systemic review has been carried out pursuant to subsection 13.1(1) of the National Housing Strategy Act.

In October 2023, the Advocate published an interim report setting out the context of the crisis and documenting in detail what had been heard through the engagement process. The engagement process consulted directly with people living in encampments, local community advocates, Indigenous governments and representative organizations, and duty-bearers across all governments.

This final report includes the Advocate's conclusions about the factors leading to the rise in encampments and, most importantly, the concrete measures that must be taken by all governments to fulfill their human rights responsibilities in order to reduce or eliminate the need for encampments.

What has emerged is a clear picture of a two-fold human rights crisis.

First, encampment residents are at dire risk of harm due to the failure to uphold their basic rights.

Second, the encampments exist only because of a larger, systemic failure to uphold the right of all people to adequate housing without discrimination.

The engagement process made it clear that Canada has the capacity to solve this crisis. Encampment residents are acutely aware of the measures required to meet their most pressing needs. What is lacking is sufficient political will, resources and coordination.

The absence of effective coordination between the many agencies, departments and jurisdictions involved limits the effectiveness of responses to the homelessness crisis. While municipalities are on the frontlines in responding to encampments, they don't have all the powers and resources they need to provide human rights-based services. Provinces and territories must work closely with municipalities and the federal government must play a leadership role.

This national crisis calls for a national response.

National Encampments Response Plan

The Federal Housing Advocate is recommending that the federal government establish a National Encampments Response plan. The plan must drive urgent change that responds to the Calls to Action developed in this report and addressed to all governments in Canada. The Calls to Action have been developed as the result of extensive consultation with encampment residents, community organizations, and municipalities across the country.

The Federal Housing Advocate calls on the federal government to establish a National Encampments Response plan by August 31, 2024, that will:

- **Act immediately to save lives.**
    - Ensure that everyone living in encampments has access to the basic necessities they need to survive and live in dignity, and to services to protect their physical and mental health.
    - This includes access to clean water, sanitation, food, heating and cooling, accessibility supports, healthcare, and harm reduction.
    - Ensure drop in-shelters are accessible 24/7 throughout the year to provide people with a dignified place to rest, take refuge from the elements and access services.

- **End forced evictions of encampments.**
    - Forced encampment evictions make people more unsafe and expose them to a greater risk of harm and violence. Evictions destabilize people, remove them from their support systems, and cause them to lose the tools and equipment they need to survive.
    - Immediately end forced evictions of encampments, particularly on public lands. Forced evictions are a violation of human rights, as contained in section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the right to adequate housing under international law.
    - Put in place alternatives to removal of encampments that are designed following meaningful engagement with encampment residents to find solutions that meet their needs.
    - All governments must ensure that laws, regulations and bylaws do not further destabilize encampments nor expose residents to greater risk of harm and violence.
    - The role of police and by-law officers should be de-emphasized in responses to encampments. Police, by-law enforcement, and emergency service need clear direction to halt the confiscation of belongings, surveillance and harassment, which violate the human rights of encampment residents. All enforcement measures undertaken must be compliant with human rights standards.

- **Work with all governments and provide support to municipalities.**
    - Immediately convene meetings with provinces, territories, and municipalities to coordinate an all-of-government response.
    - Develop all encampment response measures in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments and their representative organizations.
    - Commit the maximum available resources and funding to address this crisis.

- Ensure municipalities have the resources and powers they need to respond to the urgent needs of encampment residents and uphold their human rights.
- Include clear targets and timelines for the National Encampments Response Plan.

- **Respect the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.**

  - All governments must commit to upholding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and work in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments to fully implement its provisions. In particular, all governments must work with Indigenous governments to more effectively respond to the distinct needs of urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals, particularly those who are unhoused and living in encampments.
  - Recognize the jurisdiction of Indigenous governments to determine, develop, and administer programs and services related to housing and homelessness and support First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations to develop and provide self-determined, culturally appropriate housing and related services and supports, including in urban centers in partnership with existing Indigenous service providers.
  - First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations must be fully supported to develop and provide self-determined, culturally appropriate housing and related services and supports, including supports in urban centers.

- **Respect and uphold human rights.**

  - In the absence of adequate, affordable and accessible housing alternatives, all governments must recognize that people have a right to live in encampments.
  - People living in encampments must play a leading role in decision-making processes that affect them. All governments must implement ongoing and meaningful engagement with people living in encampments and those who support them.
  - People living in encampments must have access to timely, effective recourse when their rights are threatened or violated.
  - All governments and political leaders at all levels have obligations to promote and protect the human rights and dignity of people experiencing homelessness. Leaders must refrain from actions and language that further stigmatizes the residents of encampments, or people experiencing homelessness, and exposes them to greater risk of rights violations.
  - All governments must publicly commit to applying a human rights-based approach to encampments that recognizes and addresses the distinct needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals, Black and other racialized individuals, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, people fleeing gender-based violence, youth, seniors and people with disabilities. These approaches must align with Canada's human rights obligations as affirmed in international human rights instruments, the Charter and domestic law.

- **Offer people permanent housing options as rapidly as possible.**

  - Immediately develop and fund adequate housing solutions and supports so that people living in encampments can be re-housed as rapidly as possible.
  - These housing solutions must meet the definition of adequate housing which includes security of tenure, affordability, accessibility, suitable location, availability of services, habitability and cultural adequacy.

- In the absence of available adequate housing, all governments and service providers must work to address the structural barriers that result in existing emergency shelters not being accessible or appropriate for all people who might choose to use them.

- **Address the root causes of encampments.**

  - Encampments are the symptom of systemic failures – all governments must urgently prioritize investments in adequate housing and support services to prevent and address homelessness. All governments must work together to address the systems that drive homelessness, including systemic racism and discrimination and failings in the Canadian child welfare, corrections, and healthcare systems.
  - The National Housing Strategy must be greatly enhanced and its programs must prioritize the elimination of chronic homelessness and reduction of core housing need, with a focus on Indigenous peoples and disadvantaged groups, to fulfill commitments under the National Housing Strategy Act.
  - All governments must ensure that they are monitoring the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing and put in place measurement systems that include accurate, comprehensive, and replicable data on homelessness.

Next steps

Specific Recommendations are outlined in the report to enable governments at all levels to implement the Calls to Action.

This report's findings and recommendations will be submitted to the federal Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities. The National Housing Strategy Act specifies that the when the federal government receives the report of such a systemic review, the Minister responsible for housing must respond within 120 days.

This report is an urgent call to action to governments at all levels to uphold the human rights and the right to housing of encampment residents.

INTRODUCTION

The term "encampments" refers to emergency accommodations established by people who are unhoused, usually on public property or privately-owned land, and often without permission.[1] Encampments are a consequence of Canada's failure to meet its human rights obligation to ensure that all individuals have access to adequate housing – housing that is secure, affordable, habitable, accessible, culturally appropriate, and in a suitable location with access to services.

While encampments have always been a feature of homelessness in Canada, in the last five years, and particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic, "encampments have become more numerous, more densely populated, and more visible across the country."[2] The growth of encampments has been driven by a range of inter-related human rights failures, including the impacts of colonial laws and policies on Indigenous Peoples, systemic discrimination in the housing market, a severe lack of available and affordable housing that has become a deepening national crisis, and barriers to accessing emergency shelters.

There is no systematic data collection on who lives in encampments in Canada. The Observatory on Homelessness at York University has suggested that at least 35,000 individuals are unhoused at any given time across the country.[3] One survey of Canadian municipalities estimated that between 20 to 25% of unhoused individuals in Canada now live in encampments.[4] This is consistent with reports from frontline service providers who talk about thousands of people currently living in encampments across Canada.

It is important to emphasize that while encampments vary from region to region, as do patterns of homelessness, the rise of encampments is a truly national crisis. Encampments are reported in both large and small municipalities, as well as in more rural areas.

Encampments represent an effort by people who are unhoused to claim their human rights and meet their most basic needs. For reasons discussed later in this report, encampments are often the only housing option currently available to many, or the only available option that meets their needs. Living in an encampment may also offer the advantage of living in community with others facing similar struggles.

While recognizing the resourcefulness and collective organizing involved in establishing and maintaining an encampment, it is important to be clear that the conditions in encampments do not represent adequate housing. The Federal Housing Advocate is acutely conscious of the tragic deaths that have

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[1] The Advocate has chosen to use the term "encampment" as the language most commonly used, and mostly widely understood in Canadian contexts. The Office recognizes, however, that the term may not reflect everyone's reality or experience and that it differs from terms commonly used internationally, such as informal settlements.

[2] Alexandra Flynn et al., *Overview of Encampments Across Canada: A Right to Housing Approach*, The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate (2022). https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/overview-encampments-across-canada-right-housing-approach

[3] Homeless Hub, "How many people are homeless in Canada?" https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/how-many-people-are-homeless-canada

[4] Infrastructure Canada, *Homelessness Data Snapshot: Findings from the 2022 National Survey on Homeless Encampments* (November 2023). https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/reports-rapports/encampments-survey-2022-enquete-campements-eng.html

occurred in encampments due to cold, fire and drug poisoning – and the likelihood that more deaths will occur even as this report is being written. Furthermore, it is clear the precarious situation of encampments is made much worse when municipalities deny residents access to the essentials of life, including clean water and sanitation, or add to the insecurity of encampment residents through forced relocation and other punitive responses.

Recognizing the severity of this crisis, the Advocate launched a systemic review of encampments in February 2023. As part of this review, the Advocate has engaged with encampment residents and local advocates in communities across Canada. In addition to meetings in Montreal, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto, and Calgary, the Advocate also launched an online portal to invite individual and organizational submissions to inform this review. Because many people living in encampments would face challenges accessing this tool, the Office partnered with The Shift and local organizations in Victoria, Vancouver, Hamilton, Peel, Ottawa, Gatineau, Montreal, Moncton, and Halifax to support encampment residents using this portal to share their experiences and their proposals for solutions. With the help of these local partners and others, 313 people with lived experience in encampments made submissions. There were also 53 submissions from municipalities, frontline workers, advocates, and other community members.

The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate (OFHA) also worked with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the FCM's Big City Mayors' Caucus, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario to obtain input from municipalities across the country. Recognizing the significant over-representation of Indigenous individuals living in encampments, the Advocate has also taken part in a number of targeted engagements with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and organizations.

What has emerged is a clear picture of a two-fold human rights crisis.

First, encampment residents are at dire risk of harm and the failure to uphold the human rights of encampment residents, including the right to adequate housing and numerous interrelated rights such as the right to life and the right to health, has left them at dire risk of harm.

Second, the encampments exist only because of a larger, systemic failure to uphold the right of all people to adequate housing without discrimination. These rights are protected in international human rights laws, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which Canada has explicitly committed to uphold to the fullest of its ability.

The engagement process also made it clear that Canada has the capacity to solve this crisis. What is lacking is sufficient political will, resources and coordination.

To be clear, some important advancements have been made. The National Housing Strategy and the 2019 National Housing Strategy Act (NHSA) provide an important, rights-based foundation. The federal government's ten-year National Housing Strategy marks an important return to funding affordable housing programs after decades of absence. Promising practices related to encampments have been put into place by some municipal governments.

Overall, however, the scale of response falls far short of what is required to address this crisis. Furthermore, the evident lack of coordination across jurisdictions remains a barrier to effectively addressing the larger issue of housing and homelessness. The Auditor General's 2022 Report on Chronic Homelessness found that the government was not able to determine whether the National Housing

Strategy's efforts to prevent and reduce chronic homelessness were, in fact, leading to improved outcomes.[5]

People who are unhoused in general, and encampment residents in particular, continue to be stigmatized. Negative perceptions of encampment residents as authors of their own misfortune, or as threats to community safety, impact the political will of governments to recognize and act on their human rights responsibilities. As more than one person commented in our engagement process, Canada has a long history of mobilizing resources to rapidly rehouse people on a mass scale in wake of natural disasters. The failure to respond to the encampments crisis is a telling illustration of attitudes toward people who are unhoused.

In this context, it is crucial to acknowledge that Indigenous persons are much more likely to experience homelessness. For example, in Edmonton, it has been reported that approximately 60 percent of people experiencing homelessness identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis.[6]

Overall, the risk of experiencing homelessness, and the needs of unhoused persons, are impacted by intersecting, and compounding experiences of systemic discrimination. This includes racism directed against Indigenous persons, Black Canadians, and members of other racialized communities, as well as gender-based discrimination that particularly impacts women, member of 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities, and discrimination against persons with disabilities.

In October 2023, the Advocate published an interim report setting out in detail what had been heard through the engagement process. This final report focuses on the Advocate's conclusions about the factors leading to the rise in encampments and, most importantly, the concrete measures that must be taken by all governments to fulfill their human rights responsibilities to reduce or eliminate the need for encampments.

The Advocate has identified the need for an urgent national response that leverages the resources and powers of all governments. The role of the federal and provincial and territorial governments is particularly important given that municipalities are on the frontlines in responding to the crisis, but they do not have the resources or powers to address the scale or complexity of the issues.

This systemic review has been carried out pursuant to subsection 13.1(1) of the National Housing Strategy Act. The Act specifies that the when the federal government receives the report of such a systemic review, the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities must respond in writing within 120 days.

[5] Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *Report 5 – Chronic Homelessness* (2022). https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/english/parl_oag_202211_05_e_44151.html (accessed August 31, 2023).

[6] Letter from Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK

The right to adequate housing

The human right to adequate housing, and interconnected rights such as the right to life, are clearly established in international human rights law, including in treaties that Canada has signed and ratified as well as in human rights declarations and other international norms and standards.[7] With the NHSA enacted in 2019, the human right to adequate housing is now also explicitly enshrined in domestic law.[8]

Recognizing the human right to adequate housing means that governments have legal obligations to recognize and respect this right, protect against its violation, take positive measures and mobilize maximum available resources to ensure that everyone can enjoy this right without discrimination, and promote broad public awareness and understanding of the right. These obligations are heightened in respect to those who have experienced prior human rights violations and who are at heightened risk of further violations.

As it has been interpreted in the international human rights system, adequate housing is housing that is:

- secure,
- affordable,
- habitable,
- accessible,
- culturally adequate,
- in a suitable location, and
- able to ensure access to basic services.[9]

All people should have equitable access to adequate housing, without discrimination based on gender, race, disability, faith, place of birth, age, sexual orientation, or other grounds.

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[7] Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948, UN Doc. A/810, art. 25; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 16 December 1966, UN Doc. A/6316, 993 UNTS 3 (entered into force 3 January 1976; accession by Canada 19 May 1976), art. 11(1) [ICESCR]; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 16 December 1966, UN Doc. A/6316 (entered into force 23 March 1976; accession by Canada 19 May 1976), [ICCPR]; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 21 December 1965, 660 UNTS 195 (entered into force 4 Jan. 1969, accession by Canada 14 Oct. 1970), art. 5(e)(iii) [ICERD]; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 21 December 1965, 1249 UNTS 14 (entered into force 3 Sept. 1981; accession by Canada 10 Dec. 1981), art. 14(2) [CEDAW]; Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, 1577 UNTS 3 (entered into force 2 September, 1990, accession by Canada 13 Dec. 1991), art. 27(1) [CRC]; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 13 Dec. 2006, (entered into force 3 May 2008, accession by Canada 11 March 2010), arts. 9 and 28 [CRPD]. See also article 10 of the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, section III (8) of the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, article 8 (1) of the Declaration on the Right to Development, and the ILO Recommendation Concerning Workers' Housing, 1961 (No. 115)). Further, UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), General Comment No. 4, The Right to Adequate Housing, U.N. Doc. E/1992/23 (1991).

[8] See, National Housing Strategy Act, S.C. 2019, c. 29, s. 313 [NHSA].

[9] Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN Habitat, *The Right to Adequate Housing, Fact Sheet 21* (2014). https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/FS21_rev_1_Housing_en.pdf (accessed August 1, 2023).

Failure to uphold the right to adequate housing has harmful consequences for the enjoyment of other human rights. Former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, Leilani Farha, explained:

Homelessness is a profound assault on dignity, social inclusion and the right to life. It… violates a number of other human rights in addition to the right to life, including non-discrimination, health, water and sanitation, security of the person and freedom from cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment.[10]

International human rights standards require states to make every effort, and to use all available resources to eliminate homelessness in the shortest possible period of time.[11] Specific human rights obligations include requirements to:

- In consultation with people who are unhoused, adopt and implement action plans to eliminate homelessness that must include clear, time-bound goals, and clear delineation of responsibilities across all levels of government.
- Measure and monitor the extent of homelessness using data disaggregated by gender, race, disability and other relevant characteristics;
- Combat discrimination, stigma, and negative stereotyping of people who are unhoused;
- Ensure access to justice for rights violations, including government failures to take adequate measures to address homelessness; and
- Regulate non-state actors such as private corporations so that they respect the rights of people who are unhoused and undertake actions consistent with the imperative to eliminate homelessness.[12]

The prohibition of forced evictions

International human rights standards prohibit measures that would arbitrarily and unnecessarily deprive individuals of housing, including temporary or informal shelter such as encampments. The prohibition of forced evictions requires that individuals and communities be relocated only after adequate consultation. Relocation without consent is limited to exceptional circumstances. When individuals or communities do not wish to be relocated, there is an obligation for the state to demonstrate that the relocation is strictly necessary and that all other alternatives have been explored. In all instances, any relocation must be consistent with the right to adequate housing: alternative shelter must be provided

[10] Leilani Farha, Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing: Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non- discrimination in this context, UN Doc. A/HRC/43/43, UN Human Rights Council (2019), para. 30 [Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing].

[11] Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 3 on the nature of States parties' obligations, UN Doc. E/1991/23 (1990), paras. 10 and 12.

[12] Leilani Farha, Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing, para. 32; Leilani Farha, Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, UN Doc. A/HRC/31/54, UN Human Rights Council (2015), paras. 49, 73, and 90; Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 20 on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights, UN Doc. E/C.12/GC/20 (2009), para. 35, and Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 36 on the right to life, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/35 (2018), para. 61.

that is secure, habitable, culturally appropriate, in a suitable location and where access to essential supports and services can be maintained.[13]

The right to adequate housing and the human rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is also particularly important given the disproportionate number of Indigenous individuals living in encampments. The Declaration affirms a wide range of interconnected rights of Indigenous individuals and Peoples relevant to the right to adequate housing. These include the right of Indigenous Peoples to determine and control provision of social services such as housing, the right of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their relationship to, and use of, their traditional territories for livelihoods, subsistence and ceremony; the obligation of states to work in cooperation and consultation with Indigenous Peoples' chosen representatives, the right not to be forcibly removed from their lands or territories, and the duty of states to support Indigenous Peoples in the exercise of their right to self-determination. In July 2021, Canada passed national legislation to implement the UN Declaration which requires the federal government to "take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration."[14] These obligations are particularly significant given the greatly disproportionate number of Indigenous persons living in encampments.

The right to life

Finally, the United Nations Human Rights Committee underscores that States should take particular measures to uphold the right to life, including actions related to housing:

> The duty to protect life also implies that States parties should take appropriate measures to address the general conditions in society that may give rise to direct threats to life or prevent individuals from enjoying their right to life with dignity. These general conditions may include [...] extensive substance abuse, widespread hunger and malnutrition and extreme poverty and homelessness. The measures called for to address adequate conditions for protecting the right to life include, where necessary, measures designed to ensure access without delay by individuals to essential goods and services such as food, water, shelter, health care, electricity and sanitation, and other measures designed to promote and facilitate adequate general conditions, such as the bolstering of effective emergency health services [...] and social housing programmes.[15]

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[13] Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 7: The Right to Adequate Housing: Forced Evictions, UN Doc. E/1998/22, annex IV (1997) and Leilani Farha, Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing: Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, UN Doc. A/HRC/43/43, UN Human Rights Council (2019), "Guideline No. 6. Prohibit forced evictions and prevent evictions whenever possible" [Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing].

[14] SC 2021, c 14. Royal Assent, 21 June 2021.

[15] Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 36 on the right to life, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/35 (2018), para. 26

A LIFE AND DEATH CRISIS

Encampments arise as a direct consequence of Canada's persistent failure to protect and fulfill the right to adequate housing. Until encampment residents can access adequate housing options that meet their needs, urgent measures must be taken to protect their human rights and reduce the precariousness of their current living conditions.

It is important to acknowledge that the encampments crisis is taking place in the context of a national opioid crisis and the greatly heightened risks created by an unsafe drug supply. A review panel convened by the British Columbia Coroner's Office recently reported that between April 2016, when the province first recognized the opioid crisis as a public health emergency, and September 30, 2023, "at least 13,000 lives have been lost to toxic, unregulated drugs in British Columbia."[16] For reasons set out below, the risks created by an unsafe drug supply and the unaddressed mental health and addictions needs, compound the dangers faced by many encampment residents.

Forced evictions

Forced encampment evictions make people more unsafe and expose them to a greater risk of harm and violence. Evictions destabilize people, remove them from their support systems, and cause them to lose the tools and equipment they need to survive.

As was detailed in the interim report, the Advocate has repeatedly heard about municipal enforcement actions that have made the lives of encampment residents much more precarious. There have been numerous incidents of encampments forcibly closed down by municipal officials without provision of adequate housing to address the safety and well-being of the residents. In addition to full-scale evictions, there have widespread incidents of municipal officials tearing down tents and seizing individual property, including personal identification, photo albums, money, and clothing.

Actions to restrict or relocate encampments are often taken in the name of safety and public security. However, the failure to consult encampment residents, protect their belongings, and provide adequate and acceptable alternative housing has the direct consequence of increasing risks to their health and safety.

In an investigation of forced evictions of encampment in Toronto, the city ombudsperson found that the municipality "[c]hose to clear encampments quickly, instead of focusing on the needs of the people living in them."[17] In doing so, the report concluded, "the city caused undue confusion and harm."[18]

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[16] British Columbia Coroners Service, *BC Coroners Service Death Review Panel: An Urgent Response to a Continuing Crisis* (1 November 2023.) https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/death-review-panel/an_urgent_response_to_a_continuing_crisis_report.pdf

[17] Ombudsman Toronto, "Toronto's Ombudsman says City Chose Speed over People in Clearing Encampments," (24 March 2023). https://www.ombudsmantoronto.ca/news/torontos-ombudsman-says-city-chose-speed-over-people-in-clearing-encampments/ (accessed August 31, 2023).

[18] Ombudsman Toronto, *Ombudsman Toronto Investigation Report: Investigation into the City's clearing of Encampments in 2021* (24 March 2023), p. 2. https://www.ombudsmantoronto.ca/investigative-report/investigation-into-the-citys-clearing-of-encampments-in-summer-2021/ (accessed August 31, 2023).

Encampment residents, and advocates who work closely with them, point out that established encampments have informal systems through which residents look out for each other. In other words, they are a community with a kind of safety net of their own. Forced evictions disrupt these communities and the benefits they provide.

Forced evictions are also inherently violent. Residents experience their rights being disregarded and trampled on. Outreach workers told the OFHA that police involvement in forced evictions can invoke a trauma response in many people who are or have been experiencing homelessness. The Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness told the OFHA:

> Security approaches do not work in addressing homelessness, or in stopping people from setting up encampments. It traumatizes already vulnerable and marginalized people and increases their vulnerability to becoming chronically homeless, forcing people into often even more precarious places.

For unhoused Indigenous persons, the trauma of encampment clearings is often added to previous traumas, including the forced removal of children from their families and communities. Indigenous organizations and frontline workers said that police involvement in the housing crisis is a continuation of colonial state violence and is deeply inappropriate.

Unmet basic needs and a lack of essential supports

Most encampments lack necessities such as clean water, bathrooms, a place to shower, or secure storage for belongings. Tents and tarpaulins that are not meant for winter use, inadequate clothing and blankets, no electricity or access to heating and cooling, lack of first aid supplies and fire extinguishers, no provision for garbage removal, and no place for safe needle disposal create significant risks to the safety and well-being of residents.

The OFHA has received reports of how conditions in encampments add to mental health challenges and may worsen chronic physical conditions such as back injuries. There are also demonstrated risks of injury and even death from exposure in winter and heat exhaustion in summer.

The failure of many municipalities to provide for the basic needs of encampment residents led to individuals and community groups stepping in with donations of tents, sleeping bags, clothing or food. However, there have also been accounts of some municipalities interfering with the delivery of such basic amenities in a misguided attempt to force encampments to disband.

In many communities that allow overnight camping in public spaces, people experiencing homelessness must pack up their belongings early every morning until they can set up their shelter again in the evening. People who are already exhausted, and who may be in ill-health, are forced to carry all their possessions with them, or risk their loss. Encampment residents describe how carrying large packs or bags means that they are more likely to be refused entry to spaces where they might rest or access washrooms. By-laws establishing these rules ignore the needs of people for rest and privacy during the day and also represent an attack on their basic dignity.

Housing is a social determinant of health and it comes as no surprise that encampment residents have a wide range of health and wellness needs, some of which are linked to their challenges in finding and maintaining long-term secure housing. These needs include treatment for chronic illness and counselling for mental health and addictions issues.

Encampment residents who cannot securely store their belongings are severely limited in how far they are able to travel to access services. The situation is compounded by an overall shortage of community-based supports, the challenge of navigating a complex service system, and the fact that many encampments have been pushed into isolated locations.

There is an additional concern about the scarcity of culturally appropriate resources for unhoused Indigenous persons. An Elder told the Advocate about the lack of Indigenous crisis workers able to provide culturally appropriate assistance to encampment residents.

Responding to safety and security concerns

During this review, the Advocate heard about violent incidents in encampments such as robberies, sexual violence, beatings, harassment, and sexual exploitation. Violence, exploitation and coercion within encampments is a particular concern for women, youth, gender-diverse people, persons with disabilities, and persons experiencing multiple forms of systemic discrimination. The Advocate also heard that incidents of violence in encampments are treated differently. For example, all the tenants of an apartment building are not evicted when an incident of violence is reported.[19]

It should be noted however, that violence, including gender-based violence, disproportionately impacts all people experiencing homelessness, including people using shelters, and is not necessarily a greater risk for those living in encampments. In fact, many encampment residents expressed greater fear about being alone on the streets or in certain temporary housing situations, such as shelters and single room occupancy units. Many expressed that they see encampments as a place that provides community, support, and safety for most of the people living there.

The stigmatization of encampments, and the reasonable fear that police and other authorities may tear down the encampment, may discourage residents seeking the protection of law enforcement. One community organizer stated that the constant threat of displacement, and lack of reliable access to food and water, increases stress, exacerbates mental health issues, and can lead to a rise in violent incidents.

People living in encampments face life and death risks throughout the year, but in the winter months, these risks are heightened dramatically. Efforts to stay warm without access to appropriate shelter, clothing, and heat sources greatly increases the risk of fire. This risk is often cited as a reason to forcibly remove encampments. However, as noted earlier, removal from one site, without provision of adequate alternatives, only causes further disruption and harm to the lives of encampment residents while doing little or nothing to reduce the risks they face. In fact, if encampments are pushed to more isolated locations, the risks may be further increased.

A human rights-based response to the risk of fire would include mitigation measures, including provision of more weather resistant forms of temporary shelter, safe sources of heat, and access to fire extinguishers, along with fire safety training. Above all else, public officials should be meeting regularly with encampment residents so that residents can identify their own safety needs and the best ways to address them.

[19] If governments don't provide adequate housing, they must allow people to shelter in public spaces" by Kasari Govender, Vancouver Sun, September 14, 2023 (accessed January 24, 2024)

HOW WE GOT HERE

A national housing crisis

A recent study commissioned by the Office of the Federal Housing Advocate calculates that Canada has a total shortage of 4.3 million homes affordable to very low- and low-income households.[20] In some locations, there is now a ten-year waitlist for rent-geared-to-income housing. During this review, one community worker said simply: "There is no housing to offer people."

The severe housing shortfall, and the soaring cost of rental accommodations, have also meant that there are only very limited options available to very low-income households. The Advocate heard that many of these apartments have no running water or extreme infestations of rodents, and bedbugs. Some encampments residents said they would rather live outside than try to live in the uninhabitable housing options that are available to them.

The Advocate also heard that the housing crisis is compounded by the discrimination facing members of Indigenous Peoples, racialized communities, people with disabilities, youth, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals and others. There is also a severe lack of supportive housing that meets the specific needs of people with mental health challenges including active and severe addictions. Alongside a limited supply of detox and rehab programs, there are not enough housing options for people leaving those programs.

The limited housing available to low and very low-income individuals is often highly insecure. There are widespread reports of people being evicted by landlords wanting to upgrade units to a higher rent.

Challenges with emergency shelters

There is a clear link between the growing encampments and inaccessibility of the emergency shelter system. Shelters are intended as an emergency measure before being rehoused. They fall far short of meeting government obligations to fulfill the right to adequate housing.

The surge in the number and size of encampments was initially linked to the decreased capacity of shelters during the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the challenges have proven to be more persistent and systemic.

Firstly, there is an overall shortage of available shelter space. Frontline workers describe a crisis in which individuals are being routinely turned away because there is no available space.

Secondly, there are also significant concerns about living conditions in the overcrowded and overstrained shelter system. "Shelters are dead spaces," according to one participant in the review, noting that conditions like theft, crowding, violence, and the threat of catching illnesses encourage people to opt to live in encampments.[21]

Thirdly, emergency shelters are not available, or safe and suitable, for all. During the review, encampment residents and advocates indicated that some women and gender-diverse people reside in

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[20] Carolyn Whitzman, *A Human Rights-Based Calculation of Canada's Housing Supply Shortages*, The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate (2023). https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Whitzman-Human_Rights_Based_Supply_Report-EN_1.pdf

[21] Encampments Roundtable – Toronto – June 1, 2023.

encampments because there are no gender-specific shelters in their community. Data shows that the vast majority of shelter beds in Canada are either designated for men or are co-ed (68 percent), with only 13 percent dedicated specifically for women.[22]

Furthermore, most shelters in the violence against women or homelessness systems have physical barriers for people with disabilities. They also lack appropriate and accessible spaces for persons with mental health, sensory and environmental disabilities.

As noted earlier, people living unhoused face a disproportionately high risk of violence. Many women have experienced harassment or violence in co-ed and congregate shelters. These concerns are particularly acute for many trans women. Roundtable participants lamented the lack of emergency resources specifically for women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Emergency shelters often have rules that restrict personal autonomy, freedom of movement, privacy, and access to friends and family. They may also set expectations that are difficult to meet for people who have been living on the street. For example, shelters may require sobriety, impose disruptive bed checks, restrict the quantity of belongings residents can bring, or not provide space for pets. The Advocate repeatedly heard concern over policies that prevent couples from staying or sleeping together. Numerous participants compared shelters to prison-like conditions. Faith-based shelters can also raise legitimate concerns for some who have had negative experiences with religious institutions. The restrictive environment can have a triggering effect, depending on the individual's mental health and prior experiences of trauma.

Shelters designed for women fleeing violence may also impose restrictive admission criteria. One assessment estimates that approximately 699 women and 236 accompanying children are turned away from domestic violence shelters every day across Canada.[23]

People who use drugs are also particularly affected by shelter restrictions. The Pan Canadian Women's and Housing and Homelessness Survey demonstrates that people who use drugs were banned from shelters at a rate three times greater than those who did not use drugs.[24]

Indigenous Peoples and the homelessness crisis

Indigenous persons are greatly overrepresented among people experiencing homelessness. A recent national study found that 35 percent of unhoused respondents identify as Indigenous compared to the 5 percent of the overall population that identified as Indigenous in the 2021 census.[25]

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[22] Kaitlin Schwan et al., *A Rights-Based, GBA+ Analysis of the National Housing Strategy*, Office of the Federal Housing Advocate (2021), p. 11. https://womenshomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/EN-Rights-Based-GBA-Analysis-of-NHS-28-Sept-2021.pdf (accessed August 30, 2023).

[23] Kaitlin Schwan et al., *The Crisis Ends with Us: Request for a Review into the Systemic Denial of the Equal Right to Housing of Women and Gender-Diverse People in Canada*, Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network (2022). https://womenshomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/WNHHN-Claim-15-June-2022.pdf (accessed August 31, 2023).

[24] Kaitlin Schwan et al., *Pan Canadian Women's and Housing and Homelessness Survey*, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2021). https://womenshomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/EN-Pan-Canadian-Womens-Housing-Homelessness-Survey-FINAL-28-Sept-2021.pdf (accessed August 30, 2023).

[25] Infrastructure Canada, *Everyone Counts 2020-2022: Preliminary Highlights Report* (April 2023). https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/reports-rapports/pit-counts-dp-2020-2022-highlights-eng.html#h2.5.4 (accessed August 31, 2023).

High rates of Indigenous homelessness are linked, in large part, to inter-generational harms caused by Canada's colonial laws and policies and the longstanding lack of equitable federal investment in housing and related infrastructure in First Nations, Inuit, Métis communities. While Indigenous communities face a severe housing crisis, there is also a critical lack of resources and supports for Indigenous individuals living in urban centres away from their home territories, which increases the risks of homelessness. Gaps in services and supports include a lack of transition services for those moving from reserves and remote to communities to urban centres, a lack of culturally appropriate housing, and the limited number of urban Indigenous housing providers.

The full scale of housing needs for Indigenous persons is uncertain, however, because of the prevalence of hidden Indigenous homelessness. Rather than living unsheltered, it is common for unhoused Indigenous individuals to live in overcrowded family homes, couch surf, or live out of cars and hunting shacks, particularly in Northern, rural, and remote locations.

There are also significant gaps in available data. Failure to separately track the experience of First Nations, Inuit, Métis individuals means that their distinct needs are often overlooked.

It has been reported that in Western Canada the majority of encampment residents in many communities are Indigenous.

Indigenous governments and service providers face significant jurisdictional barriers in meeting the needs of their communities. At the same time, First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments are not resourced to support Indigenous people living away from their home territories and their jurisdiction to provide such support may not be recognized. A representative of an Indigenous organization observed that third party, non-Indigenous entities are receiving funding to provide services to urban Indigenous people but are not delivering culturally appropriate care and services.

Inadequate program funding for community services

Frontline services are underfunded, operating over capacity, and facing high rates of staff turnover and burnout. Reliance on project-based and short-term funding – the model used by the federal Reaching Home program – is a barrier to long-term planning and ties up staffing in managing administration and reporting requirements. By the time someone is hired and trained, one person noted, the funding for the position is gone, which leads to instability for staff, and precludes being able to build trust with clients, many of whom have complex needs. The result, some noted, is that vulnerable and neglected people are being underserved, and not receiving the qualified, trauma-informed care to which they are entitled.

Furthermore, limited funding results in "unproductive competition" between organizations as they fight for the same funding opportunities. This competition can lead groups to under report their real financial needs when submitting applications, which makes it difficult to maintain projects, even if they are successful in meeting needs.

Mental health and addictions support

Without proper housing supports in place, mental health and addictions can create significant barriers to finding and maintaining housing. At the same time, the circumstances of living unhoused or in precarious housing can greatly add to mental health or addictions challenges.

During the review, encampment residents and advocates consistently drew attention to the inadequacy of resources for people living with mental health and addictions challenges, and the difficulty accessing

the supports that do exist. Municipalities and frontline service providers emphasized the need for greater integration and coordination between housing and homelessness services and mental health and addictions support. In particular, many called for the creation of integrated response teams available to support individuals living in encampments.

A critical issue is access to a safe, regulated drug supply. Reliance on unregulated, criminalized supplies exposes people using drugs to increased incidents of violence and coercion, as well as a much greater risk of overdose or other harm from adulterated or "poisoned" drugs.

Many communities lack harm reduction services, or the services are limited or otherwise inaccessible to encampment residents. Encampment residents described a lack of access to specialized care or treatment, clean needle distribution programs, safe consumption sites, and naloxone.

Lack of coordination and accountability

Efforts to address homelessness have been stymied by lack of clear coordination and accountability across government ministries and between various levels of government. "Everyone keeps acting like it's not their responsibility and trying to pass the issue on to another government entity. They need to just come together and resolve this issue," one person told the Office.[26]

The absence of effective coordination between the many agencies, departments and jurisdictions involved limits the effectiveness of responses to the homelessness crisis. For example, the two issues of affordable, accessible housing and mental health and addictions support are directly linked in practice, but fall under the purview of different, unconnected federal, provincial and territorial programs and agencies, without any established structure of coordination.

Critical areas of integration and coordination include income supports, housing allowances, access to health care, and policies and practices related to public safety. All such services should be developed and assessed on the basis of compliance with Canada's human rights obligations and a gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) of the differential impacts on Indigenous Peoples, racialized communities, people of diverse genders, youth, and people living with disabilities. While municipalities are on the frontlines in responding to encampments, they don't have all the powers and resources they need to provide human rights-based services. Provinces and territories must work closely with municipalities and the federal government must play a leadership role.

EMPHASIZING DIGNITY AND RESPECT

All responses to the encampments crisis must respect the inherent dignity and rights of encampment residents. The stigmatization of encampments, and homelessness more generally, fuels enforcement-based responses that do nothing to alleviate the crisis, and only add to the marginalization and precariousness of life for unhoused people. This stigmatization also masks the systemic causes of the crises and obscures the accomplishments made by encampment residents in asserting their rights and meeting their own basic needs.

[26] Encampments Roundtable – Calgary – August 8, 2023.

Meaningful engagement

Any human rights-based response must begin by engaging with encampment residents, respecting their ability – and their right – to make decisions for themselves. It is also important to recognize that they have valuable knowledge and insights as a result of their lived experiences of homelessness or in encampments. Many encampment residents are distrustful of authorities, often based on a history of negative interactions. It is vital that anyone engaging with encampment residents build a relationship of trust. This requires experience in cultural safety and trauma informed approaches. Police and emergency services should not be the primary point of contact between governments and encampments.

In many encampments, informal structures have emerged that help organize the space and make it safer for residents. These informal structures should be the starting point for any engagement. To the extent that it is welcomed, such structures should be supported and strengthened.

There is a wealth of guidance available to assist in respectful, trauma-informed and culturally appropriate engagement with encampments. In particular, the OFHA encourages application of the National Protocol on Homeless Encampments in Canada, authored by former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing Leilani Farha and Dr. Kaitlin Schwan and published by The Shift. The Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network also presented key principles at the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness' National Conference on Ending Homelessness in November 2023. Drawing on these and other sources, the Advocate recommends the following key measures for meaningful, transparent, and accountable engagement:

- Engagement should be managed through people trusted by encampments residents.
- Wherever possible, people with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity should be employed as leaders and contact points in the process.
- Value the time of people taking part in the engagement process, including by providing stipends to compensate for their time; provide food and beverages at meeting; provide transportation as needed; and ensure meeting spaces are culturally safe.
- Ensure that there is enough time for meaningful engagement, including the time needed to build trust and good communication.
- Respect Indigenous protocols and decision-making processes.
- Any community consultation processes must take into account the tremendous power imbalances between encampments and their housed neighbours.
- Avoid unnecessary turnover of staff involved or too many people being involved.
- Make clear commitments to effective monitoring and follow up.
- Ensure that all aspects of an engagement process are documented and that these documents are publicly available.

THE URGENT NECESSITY OF FEDERAL LEADERSHIP

Effective responses to encampments require both mobilization of significant financial resources and effective coordination of a complex web of departments, agencies and programs among federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments as well as Indigenous Peoples and their representative institutions. Federal leadership is critical.

The federal government has unique responsibilities to ensure Canada lives up to its international human rights obligations. This includes specific obligations toward Indigenous Peoples and their rights affirmed in Treaties, international law more generally and in the Canadian Constitution.

Federal leadership is necessary to recognize the urgency of this national human rights crisis affecting large, medium and smaller communities across the country. Federal leadership is also necessary to confront the stigmatization and discrimination faced by people living in encampments. The federal government is in a position to model appropriate and effective responses.

The federal government is also uniquely positioned and has the spending powers to bring about comprehensive and coordinated responses required to address housing, income supports, physical and mental health, and public safety in every region of the country. The National Housing Strategy, the 2019 National Housing Strategy Act, and the 2021 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act provide a foundation for responding to this crisis on the basis of internationally recognized human rights principles and obligations. The federal government has the capacity to convene the national coordination and planning processes needed to resolve jurisdictional barriers and confusion. Through its transfer agreements with the provinces and territories, it has also the means to ensure provinces, territories and municipalities have human rights-compliant standards to address the needs of people living in encampments.

CALLS TO ACTION

In response to the urgency of the current crisis – including the life and death risks faced by the growing number of people now living in encampments – the Federal Housing Advocate is issuing the following Calls to Action addressed to all governments in Canada.

It is the Advocate's hope that the Calls to Action will also be useful to service providers, other civil society organizations, and the public as a whole. Public awareness of the need for urgent action should drive governments to uphold their responsibilities to protect and fulfil the human right to housing.

The Calls to Action provide a high-level road map to guide the actions need to respond to homeless encampments in compliance with Canada's human rights obligations, including those affirmed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Constitution, the National Housing Strategy Act, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Calls to Action are followed by a set of specific, actionable recommended measures that federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments must each take to implement the Calls to Action.

1. The Federal Government must lead the development of a human rights-based National Encampments Response Plan in cooperation and consultation with all other governments.

a. Immediately convene meetings with provinces, territories, and municipalities to coordinate an all-of-government response.

b. Commit maximum available resources to promote, protect and fulfill the human rights of encampment residents.

c. Provide a coordinated all-of-government response and ensure resources are available to address the range of housing, healthcare, income and other supports needed by people experiencing homelessness using human rights-based approaches.

d. Include clear targets and timelines.

2. Commit to a human rights-based approach to address the needs of encampment residents.

a. All governments must publicly commit to applying a human rights-based approach to encampments that recognizes and addresses the distinct needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals, Black and other racialized individuals, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, people fleeing gender-based violence, youth, seniors and people with disabilities. These approaches must align with Canada's human rights obligations as affirmed in international human rights instruments, the Charter, and domestic legislation.

b. In the absence of adequate, affordable and accessible alternatives, all governments must recognize the rights of people to live in encampments. Supporting the dignity and autonomy of the person means governments must respect the rights of encampment residents to decide for

themselves if shelter solutions best meet their needs, including for safety and security.

c. People living in encampments must play a leading role in decision-making processes that affect them. All governments must implement ongoing and meaningful engagement with people living in encampments and those who support them.

d. All governments and political leaders at all levels have obligations to promote and protect the human rights and dignity of people experiencing homelessness. Leaders must refrain from actions and language that further stigmatizes the residents of encampments, or people experiencing homelessness, which exposes them to greater risk of rights violations.

3. Respect the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.

a. All governments must commit to upholding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and work in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments to fully implement its provisions.

b. Federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments must recognize the jurisdiction of Indigenous governments to determine, develop, and administer programs and services related to housing and homelessness. Such recognition must not result in any reduction in levels of funding or other supports provided by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments.

c. Develop all encampment response measures in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis governments and their representative organizations.

d. First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations must be fully supported to develop and provide self-determined, culturally appropriate housing and related services and supports, including supports in urban centers.

e. All government departments and agencies engaged in the design and delivery of housing-related services should make a concerted effort to ensure their staff, management and boards are representative of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, and introduce mandatory cultural safety training.

4. Take immediate action to protect the right to life and dignity of all people living in encampments, reduce the risks that they face, and help them to stabilize their situation.

a. Immediately end forced evictions of encampments, particularly on public lands, as a violation of human rights protected by section 7 of the Charter as well as the right to life and the right to adequate housing under international law. Put in place alternatives to evictions that are designed following meaningful engagement with encampment residents to find solutions that meet their needs.

b. All governments must ensure that laws, regulations and bylaws do not further destabilize encampments and expose residents to greater risk of harm and violence. All enforcement measures undertaken must be compliant with human rights standards.

c. All governments must fulfill their human rights responsibilities to ensure that everyone living in encampments has access without discrimination to the necessities of life and the services needed to protect their physical and mental health, including access to water, food, sanitation, and heating and cooling, accessibility supports, healthcare and harm reduction services.

d. Ensure drop-in shelters are accessible 24/7 throughout the year to provide people with a dignified place to rest, take refuge from the elements and access services.

5. Implement immediate measures to address the root causes of encampments and provide access to adequate housing.

a. All governments must immediately fund and/or develop adequate housing solutions and supports so that people living in encampments are re-housed as rapidly as possible. These housing solutions must meet the definition of adequate housing which includes security of tenure, affordability, accessibility, suitable location, availability of services, habitability and cultural adequacy.

b. In the absence of available adequate housing, all governments and service providers must work to address the structural barriers that result in existing emergency shelters not being accessible or appropriate for all people who might choose to use them.

c. The National Housing Strategy must be greatly enhanced and its programs must prioritize the elimination of chronic homelessness and reduction of core housing need, with a focus on Indigenous peoples and disadvantaged groups, to fulfill commitments under the NHSA.

d. All governments must strengthen collaboration to address the systems that drive homelessness, including systemic racism and discrimination and failings in the Canadian child welfare, corrections, healthcare, income security and other systems.

6. Ensure government accountability and that people experiencing homelessness have access to justice.

a. All governments must ensure that they are monitoring the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing and put in place measurement systems that include accurate, comprehensive, and replicable data on homelessness.

b. People living in encampments must have access to timely, effective recourse when their rights are threatened or violated.

DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE CALLS TO ACTION

The following recommendations set out essential measures for all governments to put the Calls to Action into practice, with emphasis on the measures that must be taken immediately to address the urgent risks facing encampment residents. It is essential that all measures be adapted to the specific needs of each community, taking into account that needs in rural, remote and northern communities will differ from larger urban centres in the south. In every instance, people living in encampments are the ones best able to identify their own needs and must be fully engaged in determining and implementing solutions.

These Recommendations include legislative and regulatory measures, policies, and programs that advance the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing in accordance with Canada's human rights obligations, including those affirmed in the Charter and Constitution and international instruments such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These obligations place responsibilities on all levels of government.

The Recommendations identify a series of distinct actions to be undertaken by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to respect, protect and fulfill the right to adequate housing and other human rights implicated in the context of encampments.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis are over-represented among people living in encampments. This is a result of historic and ongoing failures to uphold the distinct rights of Indigenous Peoples affirmed in domestic and international law. Therefore, the Recommendations include specific measures that need to be undertaken in partnership with Indigenous governments and representative organizations.

1. The Federal Government must lead the development of a National Encampments Response Plan in cooperation and consultation with all other governments.

- In consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations, **the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities and Infrastructure Canada must** lead development of a **National Encampments Response Plan** that recognizes Canada's human rights obligation to commit maximum available resources, all available means and demonstrate progress in a timely manner.

    - The plan must include **new resources** commensurate with the scale of the problem and a clear human rights-based strategy to ensure sustained and meaningful engagement with people with experience living in encampments.

    - The plan should aim to provide coordinated responses among all governments and across all government departments and agencies and ensure local authorities have the resources they need to address the range of housing, healthcare, income and other supports needed by people experiencing homelessness using human rights-based approaches.

    - The Plan should include clear targets and timelines for offering adequate housing to people living in encampments in response to the findings of the Auditor General's **Ending Chronic**

Homelessness as well as a strategy for monitoring progress towards the established targets.

- The plan should recognize the urgency to act and be in place by August 31, 2024.
- Development of the plan must include provincial and territorial governments, First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, municipalities (coordinated and convened by Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) between municipalities and the federal government) and right to housing organizations who can convene people with lived experience in encampments and people with human rights expertise.
- In consultation with the Federal Housing Advocate, **The Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities** must establish an advisory process which includes lived experts and Indigenous leadership to guide development of the plan.
- The plan must leverage existing Federal, Provincial and Territorial bodies such as the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Forum on Housing and similar bodies addressing mental health and addictions to ensure better coordination of human rights-based responses.
- Explore how to mobilize resources and coordinate efforts with other federal action plans (e.g. Addictions and Mental Health, Gender-based violence, Anti-racism, 2SLGBTQQIA+, Poverty reduction strategy, UNDRIP Action Plan, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan)
- Establish mechanisms to monitor the results of the Response Plan In fulfilling the right to adequate housing for people in encampments.

- As a first step, **The Minister Housing Infrastructure and Communities must** immediately convene meetings on homelessness and encampments with provinces, territories, and municipalities to coordinate an all-of-government response.

2. Commit to a human rights-based approach to address the needs of encampment residents.

- **The Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities'** response to this report must publicly commit to a human rights-based response to encampments and to developing a National Encampment Response Plan.

Federal, Provincial, Territorial and municipal governments must:

- Integrate the human rights principles and guidance set out in the National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada and the Homeless Encampments: Municipal Engagement Guidance, both produced by The Shift.

- Consistently use the human rights language of the National Housing Strategy Act across all government legislation, policy, and communications.

- Cease using language that stigmatizes or discriminates against people living in encampments or undermines the work of grassroots organizations providing support to them.

- Adopt policies and procedures on how to conduct meaningful, culturally safe, and trauma-informed engagement with people living in encampments or experiencing homelessness.

- Recognize the right of people in encampments to be part of the decision-making process which means:
    - Recognizing and engaging with the informal peer leadership in encampments;
    - Supporting the emergence of camp-led consensus-based decision making.

- Ensure people who have lived/living experience with addictions and substance use have a central role in designing the health solutions they need.

The Federal Government:

- **Infrastructure Canada and the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation must** include conditions in funding agreements with provinces, territories, and municipalities that ensure that all use of federal housing-related funds respects and fulfills Canada's international and domestic human rights obligations.

Provincial and Territorial governments must:

- Adopt provincial or territorial legislation recognizing the human right to adequate housing as defined in international law.

- Review provincial and territorial human rights codes to ensure explicit prohibition of discrimination based on social condition such as income levels, being unemployed or experiencing homelessness.

- Develop programs to ensure that people residing in encampments, shelter and precarious housing are aware of their human rights, including the right to housing.

Municipal governments must:

- Develop a human rights-based policy related to encampments and ensure that any response to encampments prioritizes upholding the human rights of encampment residents. The role of police and by-law officers should be de-emphasized in these responses.

- Ensure the development of all relevant by-laws, policies, programs and plans includes meaningful engagement with people with lived experience in encampments.

3. All measures must respect the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments must:

- Support Indigenous governments to provide self-determined, culturally appropriate housing and supports to their citizens regardless of place of residency, including through recognition of First Nations, Inuit and Métis jurisdiction, accelerated transfer of care and control of housing and homelessness programs and programs in other areas such as mental health and addictions (as

requested); and respecting existing funding arrangements with Indigenous governments and their representative organizations.

- Support and allocate funds to ensure the full and effective implementation of housing and homelessness action plans developed by First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and organizations, including the First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy, the Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy, and the Canada-Métis Nation Housing Sub-Accord.

- Substantially increase investment in adequate, sustainable, and culturally appropriate housing in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities based on accurate assessment of needs and the actual costs of building and maintaining housing in small, remote and northern communities.

- Work with Indigenous Peoples to more effectively respond to the distinct needs of urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals, particularly those who are unhoused and living in encampments.

- Support Indigenous governments and engage with relevant Indigenous service providers to develop and implement holistic strategies to provide wrap-around supports to Indigenous individuals who are unhoused or living in encampments with a goal of providing access directly into adequate housing.

- Ensure that all departments and agencies engaged in the design and delivery of housing-related services make a concerted effort to have their staff, management and boards be representative of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. All departments and agencies must also provide cultural safety training for all staff and management.

- Implement Indigenous-led training on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada and prioritize implementation of all Calls to Action relevant to resolving the crisis of housing and homelessness.

- Support the role of cultural workers, Elders and Knowledge Keepers in the process of finding solutions and supporting individuals experiencing homelessness.

- Work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and organizations in building capacity to collect and analyze relevant homelessness data and ensure data collection initiatives respect Indigenous data sovereignty as reflected, for example, in the principles of First Nations Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP®).

- Take action to “support the establishment and long-term sustainable funding of Indigenous-led low-barrier shelters, safe spaces, transition homes, second stage housing, and services for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who are homeless, near homeless, dealing with food insecurity, or in poverty, and who are fleeing violence or have been subjected to sexualized violence and exploitation” as called for by the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and prioritize implementation of the Inquiry’s other Calls to Justice relevant to addressing the housing needs of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons.

4. Take immediate action to respect and protect the human rights and dignity of all people living in encampments and reduce the risks that they face.

The federal government:

- **All federal ministries must** prohibit forced evictions of encampments on federal lands, including lands that are operated by agencies and other federal entities.

- **Infrastructure Canada must** increase funding designed to prevent and reduce homelessness. New money must be added to address encampments, reflect the increased scope of the problem and to reach the increasing number of communities facing a homelessness crisis.

- **The Minister of Health and the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions must** ensure healthcare funding, including allocations for mental health and addictions, specifically references the urgent needs of encampment residents.

- **Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada must** invest in upstream interventions to prevent mental illnesses and substance use disorders and promote good physical and mental health.

- **Health Canada and Public Safety Canada must** take measures to protect people living in encampments from the poison drug epidemic by supporting access to safe supply and other harm reductions services in order to save the lives of encampment residents who rely on the unregulated drug supply and are at risk of overdose.

Provincial and territorial governments must:

- Prohibit forced evictions of encampments on public lands[27].

- Support municipalities in putting in place alternatives to removal of encampments.
    - Support meaningful engagement as the priority for finding solutions that fulfill the human rights obligations to provide safety and security for encampment residents.
    - Support Indigenous-led interventions to provide culturally appropriate services and supports for First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals living in encampments.
    - Ensure funding for services and supports is available for municipalities (regardless of their size), including healthcare funding to address the complex needs of encampment residents.
    - Ensure adequate housing alternatives are available when people are ready to leave an encampment.

- Adopt provincial or territorial action plans for the safety and well-being of encampment residents based on meaningful engagement with those residents and their advocates and in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, as well as federal and municipal governments.

- Adequately fund individualized social and mental health supports and other measures that help individuals to maintain a stable living situation.

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[27] The prohibition of forced evictions in international law does not distinguish between public and private lands. However, as encampments are generally established on public lands, the Advocate's recommendation focuses on public land.

- Provide direction to law enforcement agencies to halt the confiscation of belongings, surveillance and harassment which can be violations of the human rights of encampment residents. This includes providing direction to law enforcement and relevant authorities to end practices which make drug use grounds for displacement, seizure of property, mandatory referrals to health and social services and treatment, and other measures that impose coercive limitations on the rights of encampment residents who use drugs.

- Ensure greater coordination amongst provincial service providers and systems to meet the needs of people living in encampments (i.e. healthcare, income-support, housing).

- Take measures to protect people living in encampments from the poison drug epidemic by supporting access to safe supply and harm reduction services for encampment residents.

- Leverage and adequately fund community-based organizations to provide urgent care for mental health, addictions, and substance use, including grief counselling and trauma support for those who use drugs, their families, and those who work with them.

- Increase support to facilitate access to low-barrier shelter options.
    - Ensure adequate funding for shelters to remover barriers and address individualized needs of women, Indigenous individuals, racialized groups, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, families, people with pets, people with disabilities and people who use drugs.
    - Ensure provision of on-site supports and harm reduction for people who use drugs as well as people with mental health issues and brain injuries.
    - Ensure shelters implement trauma-informed approaches.
    - Ensure funding for shelters for people fleeing gender-based violence.

Municipal governments must:

- End the practice of forced evictions of encampments on public lands.[28]

- Put in place alternatives to removal of encampments.
    - Ensure meaningful engagement as the priority for finding solutions that meet the needs of encampment residents.

- Implement measures to protect and support people living in encampments:
    - In consultation with encampment residents, identify needs and provide dignified access on site or in reasonable proximity to essential facilities and services such as clean drinking water, sanitation, cooking facilities and waste collection (see the list of essential services developed by the National Working Group on Homeless Encampments).
    - Respect people's right to refuse services.
    - Eliminate any policies or practices that restrict access to encampment sites during daylight hours or require daytime tear down of tents and removal of personal effects.
    - Facilitate delivery of existing services and supports such as health care and income supports to encampment residents which are the responsibility of other governments.

[28] The prohibition of forced evictions in international law does not distinguish between public and private lands. However, as encampments are generally established on public lands, the Advocate's recommendation focuses on public land.

- In discussion with women and gender-diverse encampment residents, provide services for persons who have or are experiencing gender-based violence and identify and support measures to enhance the protection of women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, particularly those who are Indigenous.
- Ensure protection from the poison drug supply through access to harm reduction services and regulated safe supply for encampment residents who are at risk of overdose because of reliance on an unregulated supply.
- Provide access to storage facilities for people to protect their belongings.
- Ensure availability of transportation so that encampment residents have ready access to clinics and other supports.
- Ensure that police, bylaw enforcement officers and private security firms do not play any direct role in managing encampments.
- Respect Indigenous protocols and ensure municipal services are culturally appropriate.
- The availability of services to people experiencing homelessness should not be a justification for an eviction.

- Ensure drop in-shelters are accessible 24/7 throughout the year to provide people with a dignified place to rest, take refuge from the elements and access services.

- Repeal any regulations that restrict people experiencing homelessness from accessing public space.
  - Repeal by-laws and other regulations which prohibit encampment residents from using public spaces.
  - Ban “hostile architecture” (e.g. spikes on sidewalks, armrests on benches) that is designed to stop homeless people from sitting, sleeping and sheltering.

- Repeal and/or refrain from passing by-laws that restrict community members from offering support services to encampment residents.

- Empower and support residents to manage their encampments themselves to the extent possible. Government resourcing and supports should not be used to undermine resident autonomy or decision-making. Government should support encampment residents in creating collective camp-wide processes for decision-making, but they should not run these processes.

- Provide direction to by-law enforcement officers and emergency service to halt the confiscation of belongings, along with surveillance and harassment which may constitute violations of the human rights of encampment residents. This includes providing direction to all relevant municipal agencies to end practices which make drug use grounds for displacement, seizure of property, mandatory referrals to health and social services and treatment, and other measures that impose coercive limitations on the rights of encampment residents who use drugs.
  - Ensure that drug use – or perception of drug use – is not a pretext for restricting access to essential supports and services.

- Promote collaboration among municipal agencies and community-based service providers to provide an integrated approach to meeting the needs of encampment residents and referring people to the available services.

- Provide financial and other support to organizations serving encampment residents to ensure adequate staffing levels and address risk of overwork and burnout.

- While permanent housing remains the ultimate goal, immediate improvements to existing emergency shelter services are also needed. Shelter providers must:
    - Ensure that their facilities and services are designed to accommodate and be accessible for people with specific needs (e.g., for Indigenous individuals, women, Black and racialized individuals, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, couples, families, youth, seniors and people with disabilities).
    - Put in place policies and practices that are trauma-informed and that meet the needs of and respect the dignity and human rights of people experiencing homelessness.

5. Implement immediate measures to address the root causes of encampments and provide access to adequate housing.

The Federal Government:

- In consultation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations, **Infrastructure Canada and the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation** must re-orient the current and future National Housing Strategies to ensure there is a priority on initiatives that will rapidly increase the supply of adequate and affordable non-market housing for people transitioning out of encampments and others experiencing homelessness.
    - Provide **new** long-term and predictable funding and ensure resources are also available to small, medium, rural, remote and northern communities who are experiencing growing problems of homelessness.
    - Expand and sustain funding to rapidly create new housing units building on lessons learned from the Rapid Housing Initiative.
    - Establish a properly funded Acquisition Fund to allow municipalities, local land trust organizations and non-profit housing providers to acquire, repair, and operate existing affordable market rental housing.
    - Review the Canada Housing Benefit to ensure it is being leveraged to prevent homelessness, address core housing need, and assist people to return to housing.
    - Create efficient and cost-effective long-term programs (such as direct transfer of adequate public lands, direct lending and preferential lending rates) that allow for the creation of new non-market adequate housing that meets the needs of encampment residents and people at risk of homelessness.
    - Prioritize making resources available to address groups that are in greatest need, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals, Black Canadians, other racialized communities, women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, people fleeing gender-based violence, youth, seniors and people with disabilities.

- Recognizing that housing is an important social determinant of health and that unaddressed mental and physical health needs contribute to homelessness and that homelessness can have severe mental and physical health impacts, **Infrastructure Canada, Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada must work with Women and Gender Equality Canada** to ensure better integration of housing and public health policies, particularly for women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals and youth.

- **Infrastructure Canada must** support the documentation and sharing of promising practices to facilitate the spread of effective human rights-based responses to homeless encampments.

- **The Minister of Health and the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions** must develop national legislation, parallel to or within the National Health Act, to bring parity, accountability and transparency to federal funding to provinces and territories for programming and services related to mental health and substance use.

- **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada** must increase funding for refugee housing supports.

- **Statistics Canada and Infrastructure Canada must** facilitate the collection of better data that captures the diverse needs and experiences of people living in encampments, including women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Provincial and Territorial governments must:

- Work with the federal government, municipalities as well as First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments and representative organizations to identify and implement permanent and affordable housing solutions.

- Increase funding for supportive housing, including units inclusive of trans and non-binary people.

- Increase funding for municipal services that provide access to housing and address the needs of those who are unhoused and living in encampments, including providing funding to ensure sufficient staffing.

- Increase income supports as well as the minimum wage to reflect the high cost of living and to reinforce efforts to prevent homelessness and allow for successful transitions to adequate housing solutions.

- Strengthen protection of tenant rights, including rent control and vacancy control, as well as protection against above-guideline rent increases, forced evictions for rent arrears and evictions into homelessness.

- Provide adequate funding to housing organizations who are housing people exiting out of chronic homelessness, including encampments, in order to ensure individualized social and mental health supports for high acuity tenants.

- Provide supports for community-based organizations that allow them to retain and meet the mental health needs of frontline workers.

- Reduce bureaucratic barriers to accessing permanent housing, such as requirements to provide tax returns and establishing accessible processes for other requirements, such as obtaining identification.

- Undertake reviews to better understand and address systemic failures that drive homelessness during transitions out of the child welfare system, the prison system, hospitals, gender-based violence shelters and other institutional environments.

- Reduce bureaucratic barriers for unsheltered individuals to access permanent housing, such as obtaining identification.

Municipal governments must:

- Ensure programs are available to rapidly rehouse anyone entering encampments using available housing allowances and providing individualized supports where necessary to support them in maintaining their housing.

- Put in place measures to facilitate the rapid construction of non-market affordable housing.
    - Immediately provide surplus municipal land at no cost in areas close to transit and other necessary amenities to non-profit affordable housing providers or land trusts.
    - Implement zoning and other changes to fast track the development of community housing.
    - Waive development and other municipal fees to fast-track non-profit affordable housing and support the operations of the housing providers over the long-term.

- Maintain strong standards and enforcement for state of repair in rental units and other landlord obligations to address conditions which can lead to homelessness.

- Strengthen housing loss prevention initiatives, including accessible emergency funds to reduce incidents of evictions due to late payment of rent.

6. Ensure government accountability and that people experiencing homelessness have access to justice.

All governments must:

- Require that all officials with responsibilities relevant to housing, homelessness, and encampments receive training on the right to adequate housing, Gender-based Analysis (GBA) Plus, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Federal government:

- **Justice Canada must** change government litigation strategies to ensure access to justice for violations of the right to life, security and equality experienced by those who are experiencing homelessness or living in precarious housing and instruct government lawyers to cease from arguing that the right to adequate housing is non-justiciable or that courts in Canada should not require governments to ensure access to housing in order to comply with the rights to life or equality.

- **Global Affairs Canada, Canadian Heritage and Justice Canada** must lead a process aimed at ratifying the Optional Protocol of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to afford all in Canada a right to make complaints to the Committee.

- **Canadian Heritage must** ensure that the Forum of Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for Human Rights, the Senior Officials Committee Responsible for Human Rights, and the Continuing Committee of Officials on Human Rights follow up on Canada's obligations to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of people living in encampments.

- Recognizing that access to justice is a fundamental principle of human rights, **Canadian Heritage must work with Justice Canada and Infrastructure Canada** to provide funding to enable both civil society organizations and rights holders to better organize and access the human rights

accountability mechanisms established under the NHSA as well as mechanisms established by other governments**.**

- **Canadian Heritage must** expand Federal Court Challenges program or develop a similar type of program so that encampment residents and advocates working with encampment residents have recourse to litigation as necessary to advance the right to adequate housing.

- **Public Safety Canada must** develop and publicize guidelines for the RCMP on their human rights obligations when engaging with encampment residents, such as in the investigation of a violent crime targeting residents. RCMP officers should also receive Cultural Sensitivity Training and be made aware of local Indigenous supports before working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis encampment residents.

Provincial and Territorial Governments must:

- Establish and/or strengthen systems such as legal aid so that encampment residents and people experiencing homelessness or precarious housing have timely access to mechanisms to protect their rights or pursue redress for rights violations.

- Develop alternative mediation and dispute resolution mechanisms accessible to people living in encampments, consistent with principles of restorative justice, and able to give due regard to Indigenous legal traditions.

- Ensure that an independent body such as human rights commission, ombuds office, or housing advocate has the mandate and resources necessary to review systemic housing issues.

- Review provincial and territorial human rights codes to ensure prohibition of discrimination based on social condition, housing status and other forms of discriminatory treatment experienced by people experiencing homelessness.

- Develop guidelines for provincial police services on their human rights obligations when engaging with encampment residents.

Municipal governments must:

- Establish independent municipal accountability mechanisms. Larger municipalities should consider creating Ombuds offices.

- Document and make public all decisions related to municipal services for encampments in a manner that makes this information accessible to encampment residents and the wider public.

- Prohibit any restrictions on freedoms of association and assembly.

- Ensure journalists have access to and can report on encampment clearances and evictions.

- Ensure advocates and trusted service providers are allowed to support encampment residents if an eviction is threatened. Peaceful demonstrations and protests must be allowed.

ANNEX A

List of Engagement Partners

Facilitating the collection of submissions from encampment residents
Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario
BRAS Outaouais, Gatineau, Quebec
Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network (CLELN)
Caroline Leblanc, Université de Sherbrooke
Le Centre d'intervention et de prévention en toxicomanie de l'Outaouais (CIPTO), Gatineau, Quebec
Clinique interdisciplinaire en droit social de l'Outaouais (CIDSO), Gatineau, Quebec
Dopamine, Montreal, Quebec
Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
Hamilton Social Medicine Response Team, (HAMSMART), Hamilton, Ontario
Lived and Living Experience of Homelessness Network (LLEHN), Victoria, British Colombia
Neighbourhood Solidarity with Unhoused Neighbours (NSUN), Victoria, British Columbia
Peel Alliance to End Homelessness, Peel, Ontario
Pivot Legal Society, Vancouver, British Columbia
Spectre de Rue, Montreal, Quebec
Stop the Sweeps, Vancouver, British Columbia
The Housing Justice Project, Victoria, British Columbia
The John Howard Society of Southeastern New Brunswick, Moncton, New Brunswick
The Shift

Supporting Engagement Activities
Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) 2023 National Conference Halifax
Canadian Drug Policy Coalition (CDPC)
Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network (CLELN)
Caroline Leblanc, Université de Sherbrooke
CRAB Park tent city residents
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Fiona York, Advocate
Main Street Project and West Central Women's Resource Centre, Winnipeg
National Indigenous Housing Network (NIHN)
National Right to Housing Network (NRHN)
Pivot Legal Society, Vancouver
Regent Park Community Health Centre
Réseau d'aide aux personnes seules et itinérantes de Montréal (RAPSIM)
Réseau SOLIDARITÉ itinérance du Québec (RSIQ)
Stop the Sweeps, Vancouver
Table des Organismes Montréalais de Lutte Contre le Sida (TOMS)
The Salvation Army, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Women's National Housing and Homeless Network (WNHHN)
Western Aboriginal Harm Reduction

Engagement with Indigenous government entities and National Indigenous Organizations
Assembly of First Nations (AFN)
British Columbia Assembly of First Nations
Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP)
Inuit Housing and Homelessness Caucus
Manitoba Metis Federation
Métis Nation Government in British Columbia
Métis National Council – Métis Nation Housing Working Group
National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)
Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)
Nunatsiavut Government (NG) and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI)

Methodology

Lived and living experts who attended meetings with the Advocate were compensated according to Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) guidelines. Sharing of information was purely on a voluntary basis.

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "H"** REFERRED TO
IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS
SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY
OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE
COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING
A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20,
ADMINISTERING OATH OR
DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th
DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Region of Waterloo

COMMUNITY SERVICES
Telephone: 519-575-4400
TTY: 519-575-4608
www.regionofwaterloo.ca

December 23, 2024
The Honourable Paul Calandra
Office of the Minister
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Calandra:

RE: Written Pledge

The Region of Waterloo, like other communities across Ontario, has a significant and increasing number of people who are experiencing homelessness. This is evidenced by the recent Point in Time count conducted to assess the depth of need in our community as it pertains to homelessness. The Housing and Homelessness Services team is working every day to support people experiencing homelessness, who are unsheltered, or who are staying in temporary shelter to move to permanent housing. This occurs through outreach efforts, collaboration with service providers, and increased efforts to end homelessness our community.

In April 2024, Regional Council endorsed and approved the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, a co-developed community approach to addressing chronic homelessness in Waterloo Region. Additionally, through the Region's Strategic Plan, we are committed to building a community where everyone has a place to call home. Of central focus in these efforts is an encampment response protocol. We know that continued investment and collaboration with community service providers and those that it serves, are required to do so.

Year to date, in 2024, Housing Services has supported 508 households to have positive exits from homelessness to permanent housing. The announcement of the top-up to the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) will further increase this positive flow of people from homelessness toward permanent housing.

Please accept this letter as a written pledge of our continued commitment to support unsheltered people living in encampments to successfully transition to safe and stable housing, and to optimize use of shelter spaces by ensuring effective flow into the system.

We appreciate the enhanced funding to help us address this ongoing challenge.

Sincerely,

Peter Sweeney,
Commissioner, Community Services

THIS IS **EXHIBIT "I"** REFERRED TO
IN THE AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS
SWORN REMOTELY AT THE CITY
OF KITCHENER BEFORE ME AT THE
COUNTY OF WELLINGTON DURING
A VIDEOCONFERENCE IN
ACCORDANCE WITH O.REG. 431/20,
ADMINISTERING OATH OR
DECLARATION REMOTELY THIS 9th
DAY OF JULY, 2025



JOANNA MULLEN
A Commissioner, etc.,
Province of Ontario,
While a Barrister and Solicitor.
LSO # 64535V

Sanguen Health Centre Statement on the Impact of Encampment Evictions

Sanguen Health Centre provides low-barrier, health-focused outreach and harm reduction services to people across Waterloo Region, many of whom are living in highly marginalized and precarious situations, including encampments. As a trusted community partner, we recognize the complexity of addressing unsheltered homelessness and remain committed to working collaboratively toward long-term, dignified housing solutions for all.

We also know that encampments are not an appropriate or fair solution for anyone. No one in our community should have to live without reliable access to shelter, sanitation, food, or safety. But in the absence of accessible alternatives, encampments are sometimes the only option available to individuals facing severe gaps in housing affordability, food security, and access to essential care. The decision to stay in an encampment is often made for safety, community, and stability in an otherwise unpredictable and chaotic landscape.

Evictions—no matter how thoughtfully approached—can have serious impacts on the health and well-being of people who live in these spaces. These include:

- **Emotional distress and trauma**: For many, displacement retriggers past trauma and can result in heightened anxiety, depression, and fear.

  Disruption of care: Residents who require ongoing medical support—such as wound care, antipsychotic medication, or harm reduction services—may lose touch with outreach teams, risking serious health complications.

  Loss of belongings and relationships: Personal items, survival gear, and even social connections can be lost during evictions, compounding instability.

  Geographic displacement: When residents are dispersed, they may move to locations that are less accessible to service providers, making it more difficult to provide consistent care.

Trust is foundational to our work. Disruptions that fracture that trust—especially without viable, individualized alternatives—make it harder for people to seek or accept support in the future.

We are hopeful that any transitions that occur as a result of encampment evictions will continue to include meaningful options that reflect the lived realities of those affected, including considerations for couples, pets, and proximity to essential services. In the meantime, it is critical that responses continue to be grounded in compassion, care continuity, and a commitment to human dignity.

— Sanguen Health Centre Leadership Team

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO Applicants	and	**PERSONS UNKNOWN AND TO BE ASCERTAINED** Respondents	Court File No.: CV-25-00000750-0000

ONTARIO
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

Proceeding commenced at KITCHENER

AFFIDAVIT OF LYNN KUBIS

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RESPONDING RECORD

VOLUME 4 of 4

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