



Peterborough

10-year housing & homelessness plan

Progress Report

2020



## JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND WARDEN

### Joint Message from the Mayor of the City of Peterborough and the Warden of the County of Peterborough.

The 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan (the Plan) was developed in 2014 and reviewed 5 years later in 2019. While we have refreshed goals, the vision remains the same; to end long-term homelessness and ensure that all residents in our communities have quality housing that they can afford. Safe, secure, and affordable housing is essential to the quality of life that we enjoy in Peterborough City and County and contributes to a strong economy and a vibrant community.

The people of our communities, including those with lived experience, and representatives from community organizations and support services, offered guidance for the creation of the report and continue to contribute meaningfully as work progresses to meet the goals of the Plan.

2020 was a challenging year for our local, provincial, national, and global communities. COVID-19 presented many challenges but also highlighted the need for safe and secure housing and reinforced the importance of the Plan and its work. In this seventh annual Progress Report, you will see that despite many challenges, work has continued towards meeting the goals of the Plan and we have taken many positive steps towards a community in which every citizen has a safe and affordable place to call home.

Included in the 2020 Progress Report are a brief review of the goals of our two working groups – Ending Homelessness & Staying Housed and Building Housing. You will see a page detailing Highlights and Key Statistics, Local Stats and Local Challenges. We also include information on our local response to the COVID pandemic.

We continue to work with municipal, provincial, and federal governments and in partnership with community agencies and community members to realize the goals in the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. We encourage everyone to read the 2020 Progress Report and stay engaged in the process of the Plan as we continue to work toward our collective goals. Updates are posted at [www.peterborough.ca/housingandhomelessnessplan](http://www.peterborough.ca/housingandhomelessnessplan). Together we are working towards a future where everyone has a place to call home.

Sincerely,



Diane Therrien  
Mayor of Peterborough



J. Murray Jones  
Warden, Peterborough County



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The 2020 Progress Report is the first report on the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan (the Plan) that was reviewed in December 2019. The goals in the new Plan are centred around two new priority areas: Ending Homelessness & Staying Housed and Building Housing.

The Progress Report demonstrates important progress towards the key goals in the Plan. While we are proud of these accomplishments, we recognize that there is still a lot of work to do. Lack of safe, affordable housing continues to be a crisis for many individuals in Peterborough City and County and many people still struggle with homelessness.

This Progress Report has an appendix that includes goals from the Plan that are still in progress, but where we haven't made measurable impact in this year to report. We continue to work with our supportive and action-oriented community partners to address all the goals in the Plan.

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## HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY STATISTICS



### Ending Homelessness and Staying Housed

On average

**277**

people per month were experiencing homelessness in 2020.

There was a

**22%**

decrease in homelessness in Peterborough City and County in 2020.

In 2020,

**450**

shifts from homelessness to housing occurred. 38% of these shifts were from chronic homelessness.



### Building Housing

To meet all housing needs in Peterborough City and County by 2029 we need:

**580**

RGI Supportive Housing units (homelessness),

**2,680**

new rental units,

**796**

affordable homeownership units.

In 2019 and 2020 we added:

**26**

RGI Supportive Housing (homelessness),

**46**

affordable rental units,

**164**

affordable homeownership units.

109 rent supplements were also added to the system (some layered on affordable rental units) and 125 secondary suites.



### COVID-19 and Homelessness

From Mar. to Dec. 2020

**187**

isolation stays occurred in locations where homeless individuals are supported for testing and self-isolation.

From Apr. to Dec. 2020

**296**

shifts from homelessness to housing happened.

From Jul. to Dec. 2020 a

**98%**

increase in Social Housing Waitlist applications occurred (compared to 2019).

### Increased Acuity Level in Shelters

Shelters experienced an unprecedented increase in the acuity level of clients. There were challenges filling gaps in care for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Community partners worked together to find solutions.



## COVID RESPONSE



### Supporting People to Isolate and Stay Safe

Emergency shelters, Peterborough Public Health (PPH), Community Paramedics, and the City of Peterborough collaborated to develop an isolation plan for clients, support staff, and client safety in shelters, and an Outbreak plan to handle a positive COVID-19 case.

An isolation location was set up to support individuals experiencing homelessness to safely isolate, test, and wait for test results.



**There were zero positive COVID-19 cases in the emergency shelter system in 2020.**



### How the pandemic has affected people experiencing homelessness

**In 2020, 66% of all shifts from homelessness to housing happened between April and December, during the first waves of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Shelters, PPH, and Social Services staff worked together to ensure that shelters were kept as safe as possible, protecting clients and staff, and in turn, the greater community. Shelter bed capacity was reduced, and social distancing supports were put in place in late March 2020.

There was an increase in youth becoming homeless because of family breakdown. This was made worse by isolation restrictions. The acuity level – a measure of mental and physical health, and other risk factors – of youth in shelters has increased significantly.

Significantly more individuals who resided in rooming houses lost their housing in 2020 due to roommate tension and relationship breakdowns. This appears to have been amplified by COVID-19 restrictions.



## GOALS - ENDING HOMELESSNESS AND STAYING HOUSED

### Goal: Performance Framework

Ending Chronic Homelessness is a monumental task. To get there, we need to work collaboratively and with accountability among community partners. The Plan commits that all relevant partners will be engaged in and implementing a performance framework with:

- a shared vision of success,
- shared principles,
- standard operating procedures, and
- a dedication to continuous improvement.

### Goal: Housing-Focused Service

Resources will be dedicated to getting people housed and engaging landlords.

A dedicated “Housing Locator” position has been created to build relationships with landlords and encourage them to dedicate units to the By-Name Priority List.

### Goal: Youth Homelessness

Goals and targets will be developed dedicated to youth homelessness.

### Progress in 2020

- **4** new Service Agreements to deliver Home for Good funding completed with community partners including new key performance indicators.
- Negotiated all new shelter service agreements; all have signed on to a shared vision of Built for Zero as part of their contract.
- Housing Access Peterborough was brought in-house to Social Services to promote a one-door approach to client services.

### Progress in 2020

The Housing Locator secured units with **20** unique landlords for people on the By-Name Priority List and supported **105** shifts to housing.

The Youth Emergency Shelter for Youth and Families (YES) hired a family-specific worker who:

- Supported **9** families to move from homelessness to housing.
- Supported **15** families living in the community to maintain their housing.
- Added **4** families to their caseload waitlist at the end of 2020.

### Progress in 2020

- **103** unique youth under the age of 25 were temporarily housed at the YES Shelter for Youth and Families.
- YES outreach staff moved **103** youth from homelessness to housing.
- The YES Shelter diverted **45** youth from homelessness.



# Goal: Coordinated Access System and By-Name Priority List

**We will end chronic homelessness by December 31st, 2025.**

Ending chronic homelessness means that the number of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness will be no greater than the average monthly placement rate for people exiting the By-Name Priority List. .

There will be no one in our homelessness system who has been homeless for more than 6 months in the last year. Where possible, we will ensure everyone experiencing homelessness is connected to supports according to their needs.

An effective Coordinated Access System and By-Name Priority List will ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are prioritized for the right help first, and that planning for supports is based on evidence and a Housing First approach.

Housing First is a philosophy that guides our service system. It states that housing is a basic human right and every person deserves housing that is safe, affordable, and appropriate. It helps inform delivery of services and development of policies.

## Progress in 2020

In the Fall, Social Services launched a 6-week education campaign to increase community awareness and understanding of homelessness.

2020 was the first year that 12 full months of data from the By-Name Priority List was available.

## What we learned about homelessness in 2020:

On average	Of those,
<b>277</b>	<b>45%</b>
people experienced homelessness per month.	were experiencing chronic homelessness.

There was a	In 2020,
<b>22%</b>	<b>450</b>
decrease in homelessness in Peterborough City and County.	shifts from homelessness to housing occurred. 66% happened during the pandemic (296).

**8** community partners participate in Coordinated Access. This includes all homelessness-specific providers as well as other support organizations.

### Participation includes:

- Using common assessment and intake tools.
- Adding everyone experiencing homelessness to the By-Name Priority List.
- Providing service with a Housing First Philosophy.

There are **7** supportive housing programs and **2** rent supplement programs for people experiencing homelessness. Vacancies are filled using the By-Name Priority List.

## Goal: Financial Supports

Supports for stable and successful housing will be reviewed to provide the right supports to the people who need them most.

There are many different types of financial supports, and each program has its own rules and requirements. These programs may not match the most urgent needs in the community right now. All Financial Supports programs will be reviewed to ensure that 2021 program outcomes are met.

## Goal: Homelessness Priority

People who are homeless will be prioritized for housing options.

We will establish a community wide system for prioritizing people experiencing homelessness. This will be based on evidence and best practices from other communities.

## Progress in 2020

- Comprehensive reviews of rent supplement and Housing Stability Fund programs were conducted in 2020 and reports were produced. Action planning as a result of the reports continues in 2021.

## Progress 2020

- Homelessness priority policies for Social Housing waitlists were researched using information from 15 other communities across Ontario. This resulted in analysis and recommendations for implementation. Action planning continues in 2021.
- 9 RGI Supportive Housing units were created to provide homes with support services through a local Agency and dedicated to people on the By-Name Priority List.
- 77 people were approved for the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit, most of whom were exiting homelessness.
- With federal-provincial capital funding provided by the City through the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative, the YES Shelter was able to purchase a 12-unit apartment building.

YES Shelter added **17** housing units for youth by:

- Purchasing an apartment building (**housing 13 youth**).
- Opening 5 units in YES-owned properties (**housing 5 youth**).
- Partnering with a landlord to secure 2 units (**housing 6 youth**).

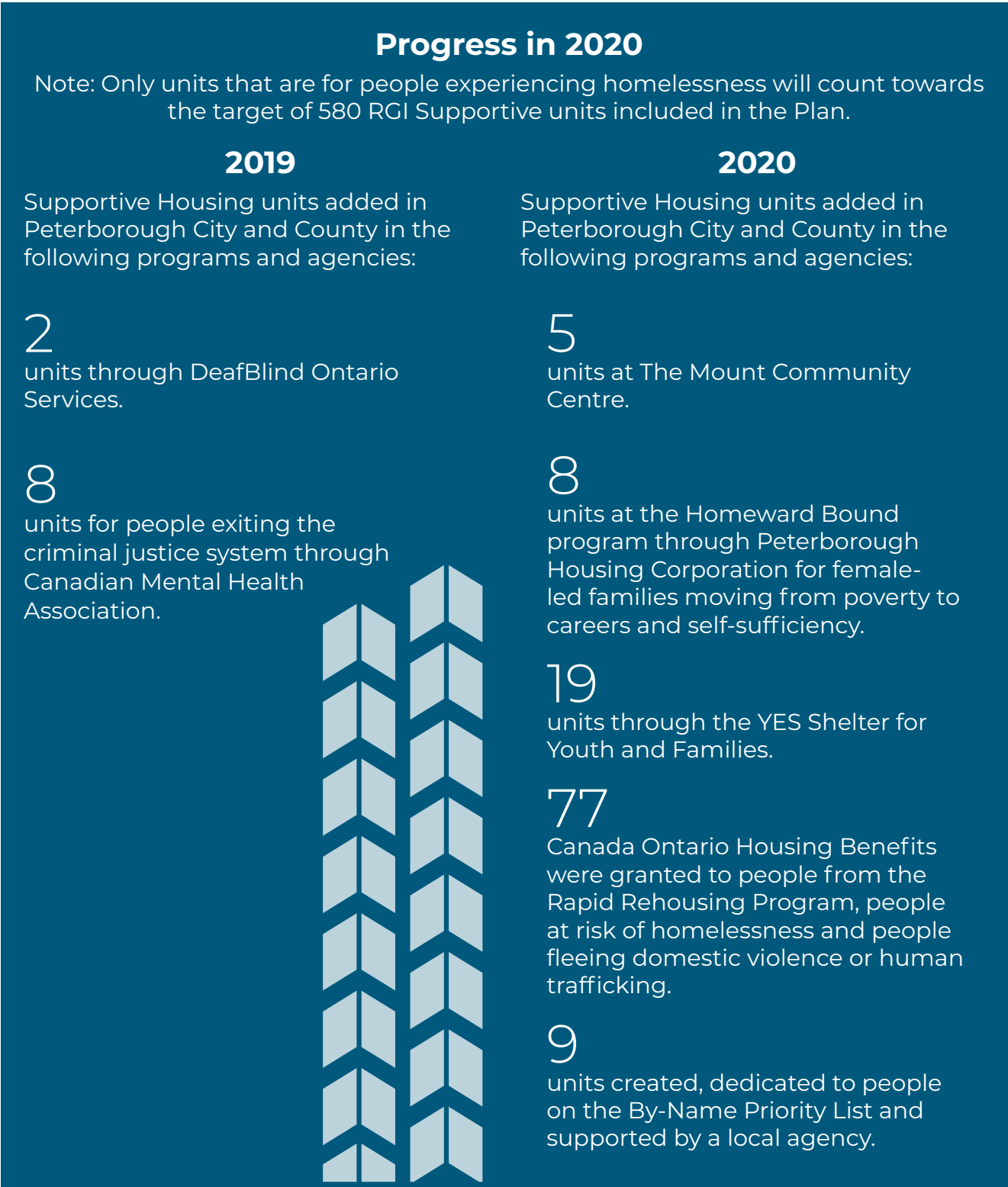




GOALS - BUILDING HOUSING

Goal: Successful Tenancies

We will match new housing development and financial subsidy with support and accessibility considerations that will lead to better outcomes for residents.



## Goal: Prevention

A proactive eviction prevention strategy will be launched that includes best practices in eviction prevention, including:

- Financial and legal supports.
- Communication support.
- Outreach case management support.
- Early detection and intervention for those at-risk of eviction.
- Education and information.

## Goal: Looking to the Future of Community Housing

We will protect and regenerate existing Community Housing for current and future residents.

We will develop a Strategic Plan for the end of Community Housing operating agreements and mortgages. The Strategic Plan will help to ensure that Community Housing is available for the people who need it.

We will work with Community Housing Providers to improve the accessibility, and financial and environmental sustainability of their assets. We will support improvements to energy efficiency and climate resiliency. We will look for opportunities to leverage resources within our community housing portfolio to create new housing opportunities.

## Progress in 2020

- The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) was offered to applicants who were exiting homelessness and others struggling to pay their rent.
- In 2020, there were **2,097** issuances of Housing Stability Funds through the Housing Resource Centre and Social Services that included payments of rent arrears, utility arrears, last month's rent and other housing costs.
- The City administers **9** rent supplement or portable housing benefit programs that assist **over 650 households** to pay their rent every month. Funding for these programs comes from all three levels of government.

## Progress in 2020

In order to complete the Strategic Plan, updated Building Condition Assessments (BCA's) need to be completed. The majority of BCA's were completed in 2020 with the remainder scheduled for early 2021.



## Goal: Private Sector Partnerships

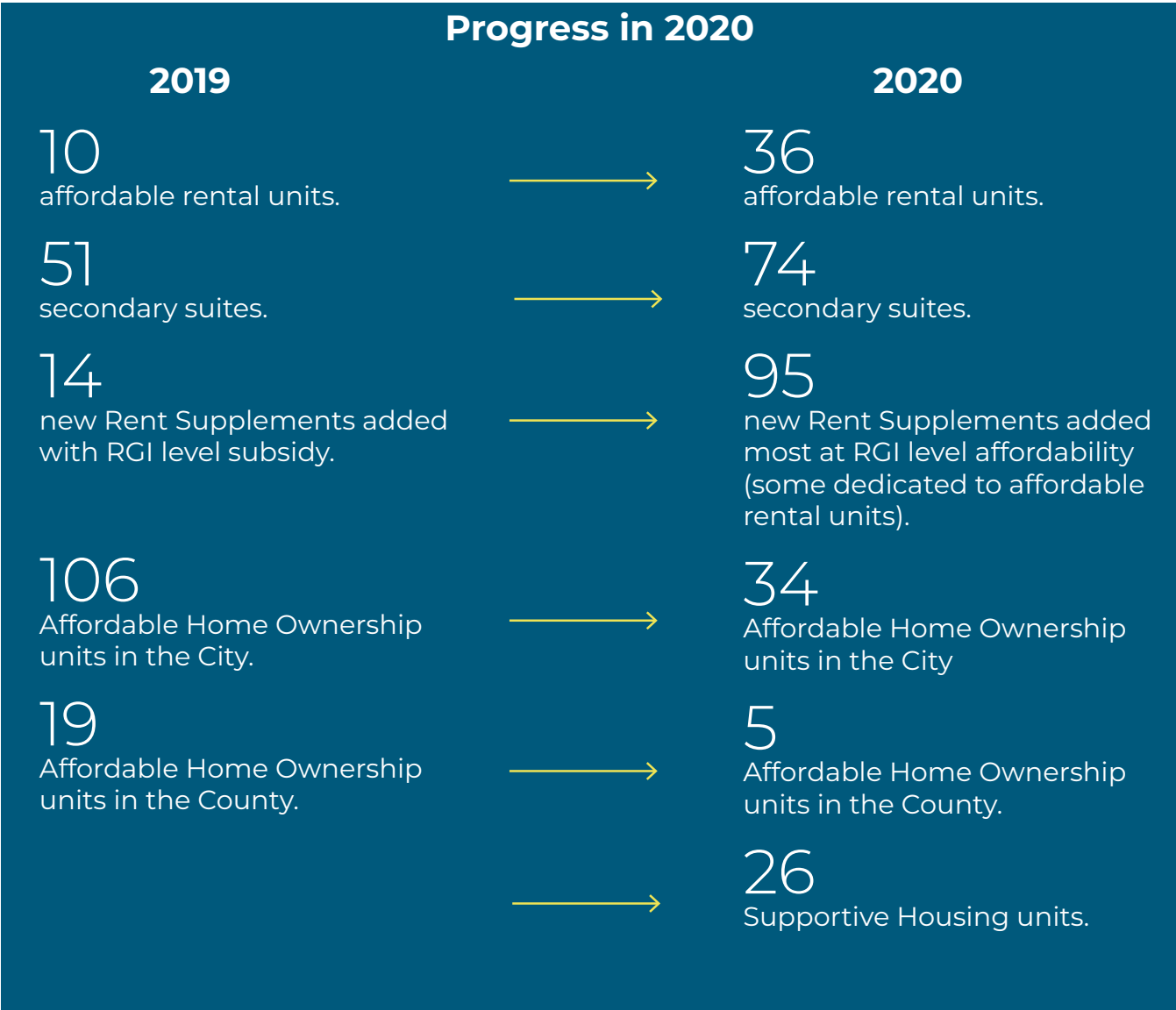
We will establish partnerships with private sector developers and landlords to explore innovative ways to integrate affordable housing into new and existing developments.

### Progress in 2020

- The Housing Action Task Force was established with representation from the private sector.
- 5 partnerships were created through the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan. This resulted in dedicated Municipal Housing Facilities, **with 62 units constructed and rented in 2020.**

## Goal: Building Housing to End Homelessness

We will leverage funding to create new housing that is dedicated to the By-Name Priority List. This includes 2,680 new affordable rental units and 580 new Rent Geared to Income supportive housing units.



## Goal: Broad Range of Community Need

We will work with partners to develop strategies and housing targets to meet a broad range of community needs. This includes Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, people with mental health and addictions challenges, survivors of domestic violence, seniors, people with developmental disabilities, children and youth, immigrants and refugees, and persons released from provincially funded institutions.

## Progress in 2020

- Working groups dedicated to both priority areas in the Plan (Ending Homelessness & Staying Housed and Building Housing) were established in 2020. Community representatives that represent the broad range of community needs are present either in the Working Groups or the Steering Committee that was established in 2019.
- The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit was offered to 55 people fleeing domestic violence or human trafficking.

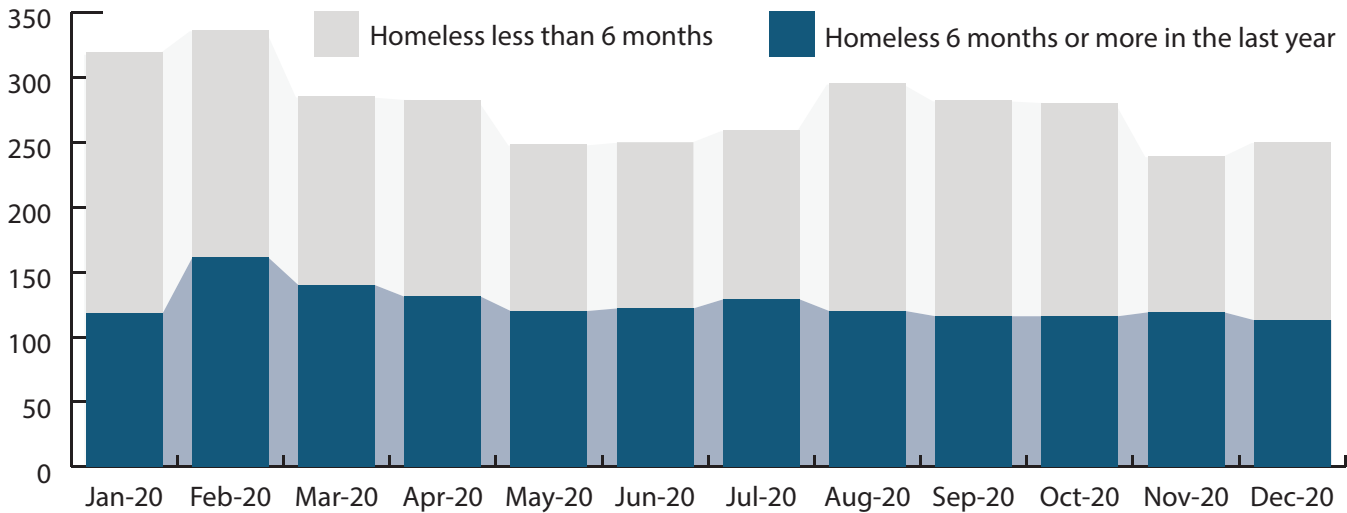




## LOCAL CONTEXT

### Experiencing Homelessness

Number of People Experiencing Homelessness in Peterborough City and County in 2020



On average,

174

Unique individuals accessed the emergency shelter system per month.

#### YES Shelter for Youth and Families

97%

Average occupancy

Average stays per night

15

#### Cameron House for Women

84%

Average occupancy

Average stays per night

6

#### Brock Mission for Men

99%

Average occupancy

Average stays per night

30

#### Overflow Shelter

55%

Average occupancy

Average stays per night

12

The Wellness Centre was used as a temporary shelter space between March 26th and July 21st to provide more space for social distancing. During that time, the Brock Mission downtown location and the Overflow downtown locations were closed.

**On average, 47 clients stayed at the Wellness Centre per night.**



# Waiting for Community Housing

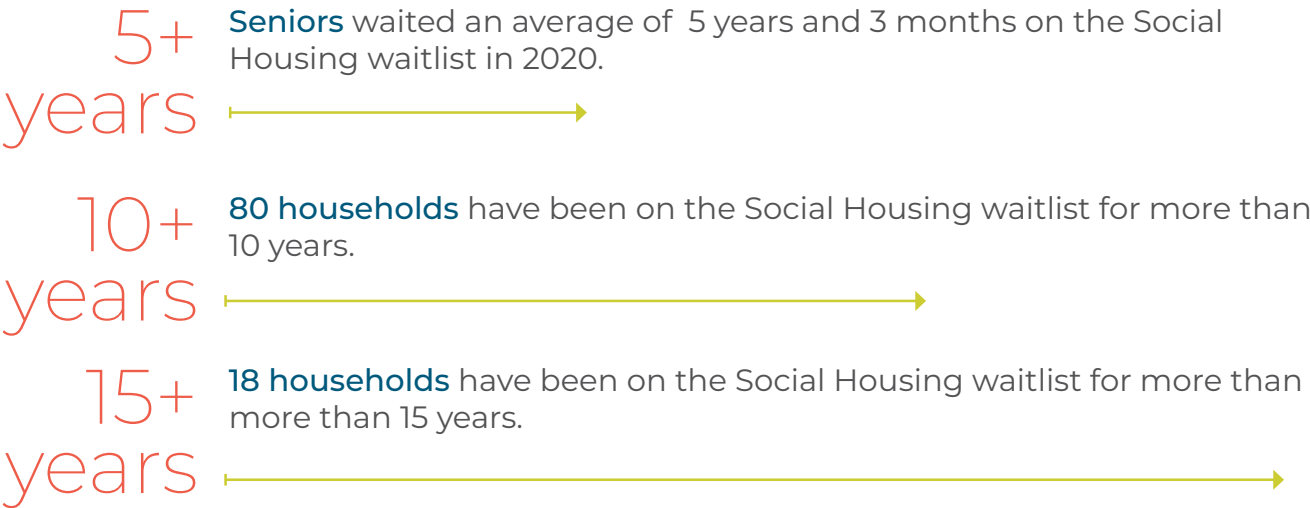
There were  
**1,563 households**  
on the Social Housing waitlist in 2020.



Turnover rates have been declining in Social Housing. Between 2015 and 2020, there has been a 54% decrease in housed applicants (from 181 to 84).

**56**  
households on the waitlist were fleeing domestic violence or human trafficking.

People fleeing domestic violence or human trafficking still have to wait an average of 1 year on the Social Housing waitlist.



## In 2020, 93% of the people housed in Social Housing were:

**Special Priority**

Fleeing domestic violence or human trafficking.

**Moving to the County**

Wait lists are shorter for units outside the City.

**People with Physical Disabilities**

Or with diverse needs.

**Over-housed Applicants**

Already living in Social Housing.  
Moving to a right-sized unit.

**Seniors**

Aged 60 and older.

**In 2020, only 6 families were housed in Social Housing without one of these factors; none of them were moving into in one-bedroom apartments.**



## APPENDIX

Due to many of the challenges listed in the Progress Report (including the global pandemic) there were a number of goals in the Plan that did not have measurable progress to report in 2020.

We continue to work with our supportive and action-oriented community partners to address all of the goals in the Plan. This includes the Steering Committee and two Working Groups that were formed in 2020 and are dedicated to the goals of the Plan.

### Ending Homelessness and Staying Housed

#### **Diversion**

People will be diverted from emergency shelter into more appropriate housing options. Shelter should be a last resort unless there is no other available option. Diversion from shelter means that fewer people enter the homelessness system. Diversion is a key strategy for youth-serving agencies.

#### **Indigenous Homelessness**

Goals and targets will be developed dedicated to Indigenous homelessness.

#### **Discharge into Homelessness**

We will create a plan in partnership with health, justice, and child welfare systems to rapidly re-house and support individuals who are discharged into homelessness from provincial institutions.

### Building Housing

#### **Development Incentives**

We will review the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan program to maximize its effectiveness in promoting new development.

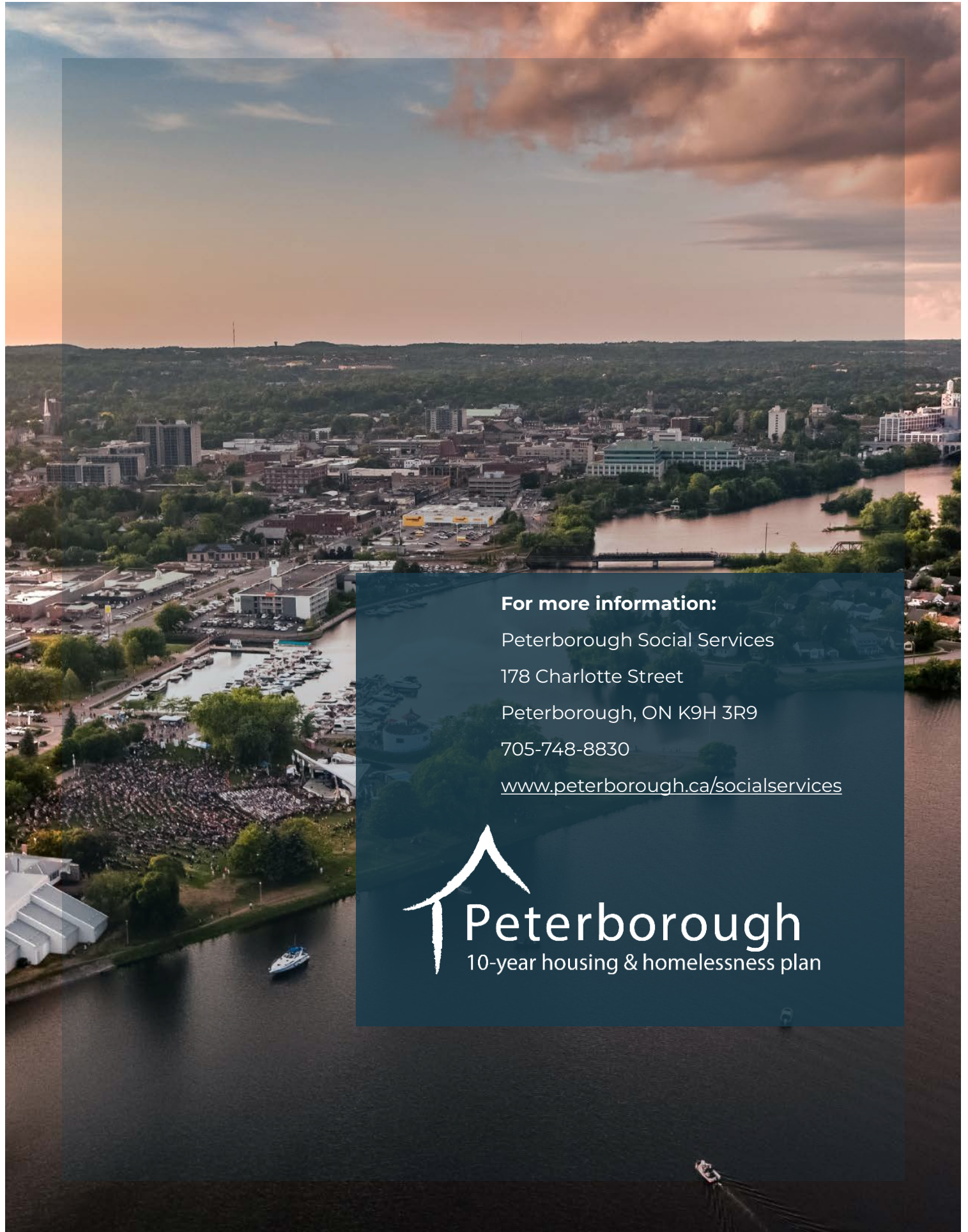
#### **Inventory Review**

A list of existing buildings and infrastructure will be completed that identifies potential for re-purposing as affordable housing units.

#### **Affordable Housing in Official Plans**

The City and County of Peterborough's Official Plans will support the development targets in the 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan.





**For more information:**

Peterborough Social Services

178 Charlotte Street

Peterborough, ON K9H 3R9

705-748-8830

[www.peterborough.ca/socialservices](http://www.peterborough.ca/socialservices)



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10-year housing & homelessness plan