



# HOMELESSNESS IN YORK REGION SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Presented to  
York Regional Council

Presented by  
Katherine Chislett

Presented on  
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# INTRODUCTION



# Outline

- Introduction
- Context Setting
- Presentations: Homelessness in York Region and Ontario
- Video: Our Story
- Presentations: Exploring Effective Solutions
- Proposed Priorities for the Homelessness Service System Plan
- Wrap Up and Discussion

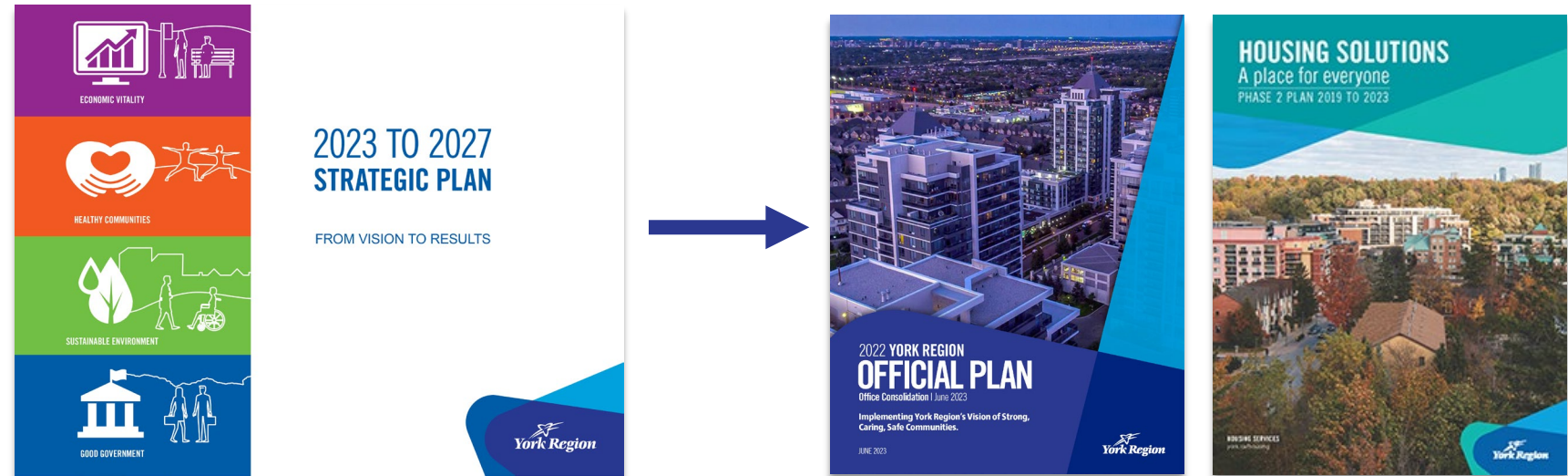


# Alignment with Provincial Direction and 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan

## *Housing Services Act, 2011 and Regulations*

Provincial  
Legislation

Regional  
Strategic  
Goals and  
Objectives



Implementation  
Plans

**Homelessness Services**

Homelessness Service  
System Plan

**Community Housing**

Community Housing  
Development Master Plan

**Private Market Housing**

Affordable Private Market  
Housing Implementation Plan

# Housing Continuum



**CONTEXT SETTING**

# Responsibilities of Federal and Provincial Governments



## Federal

**GOAL**  
Reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50% by 2027/2028

- National Housing Strategy
- Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy
- Provides Capital Funding through grants and loans
- Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)
- Mandates Point-In-Time Counts for federally designated community entities



## United Way Greater Toronto

- Federally Designated Community Entity

## Ontario

### Provincial

#### Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

- *Housing Services Act, 2011*
- Provincial Homelessness Prevention Program (PHPP)
- Requires Service Managers maintain a By-Name List
- Mandates Point-In-Time Counts for Service Managers

#### Ministry of Health

- Funds health-oriented programs delivered by Service Managers including mental health and addiction services
- Funds and oversees supportive housing

#### Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

- Social Assistance
- Funds and oversees Violence Against Women shelters

**GOAL**  
Prevent and address homelessness; reduce chronic homelessness



# Responsibilities of Federal and Provincial Governments



## Regional Municipality of York

**Service Manager, responsible for planning, development, implementation and delivery of housing and homelessness services under the *Housing Services, Act, 2011*.**

- 10-year housing and homelessness plan sets policy direction:
  - Increase supply of affordable and rental housing
  - Help people find and keep housing
  - Strengthen the housing and homelessness system
- Actions include emergency and transitional housing, eviction prevention programs, and outreach services



## Local Community Service Providers

- Funded by all levels of government to deliver front-line services
- York Region partner



## Local Municipalities

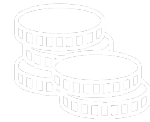
- Partner in planning and providing homelessness services
- Develop by-laws for public property
- Contributing to and approving plans for new developments



# Drivers Impacting Homelessness



**Growing housing unaffordability and lack of deep affordable housing options**



**Cost of living and inadequate income support programs**



**Overburdened healthcare system**

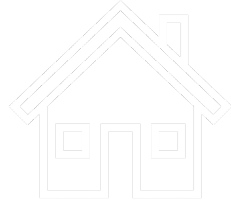


**Increasing frequency of extreme weather conditions**



**Housing as a Human Right and Justice  
Valente's Waterloo decision**

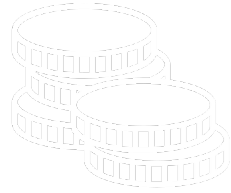
# Drivers Impacting Homelessness



## **Growing housing unaffordability and lack of deep affordable housing options**

- Average rent for purpose-built apartments in York Region in 2022 was \$1,489, up 9% from 2019 (Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation)
- York Region had highest proportion of renter and owner households spending 30% or more of gross income on housing costs in GTHA (Source: 2021 Census)
- Cost for room rentals in shared accommodation across the Region ranges from \$800 to \$1,000 per month (Source: Community Service Providers)

# Drivers Impacting Homelessness



## Cost of living and inadequate income support programs

- Rates for Ontario Works have not increased since 2018
- In March 2023, over 1.9 million visits to food banks reported in Canada, a 32% increase from March 2022 (Source: Food Banks Canada)
- In 2022, 29% of families whose major source of income was government income support, were food insecure (Source: Statistics Canada)

# Drivers Impacting Homelessness



## **An overburdened healthcare system**

- Ontario Medical Association estimates 2.2 million Ontarians are without a family doctor
- 1 in 5 Canadians experience mental illness each year (Source Canadian Institute for Health Information)
- 2021 Point-in-Time Count found that rates of mental health issues among people experiencing homelessness increased from 48% in 2018 to 64% in 2021
  - 48% of respondents self-reported a substance use issue
  - 56% self-reported visiting an emergency department within last year, and of these, 18% estimated they had over five visits



# Drivers Impacting Homelessness



## Increasing frequency of extreme weather conditions

- People experiencing homelessness may spend extended periods of time outside, which can have negative health impacts during extreme weather
- On average during each of the past 3 winter seasons, York Region has experienced 12-15 cold weather alerts

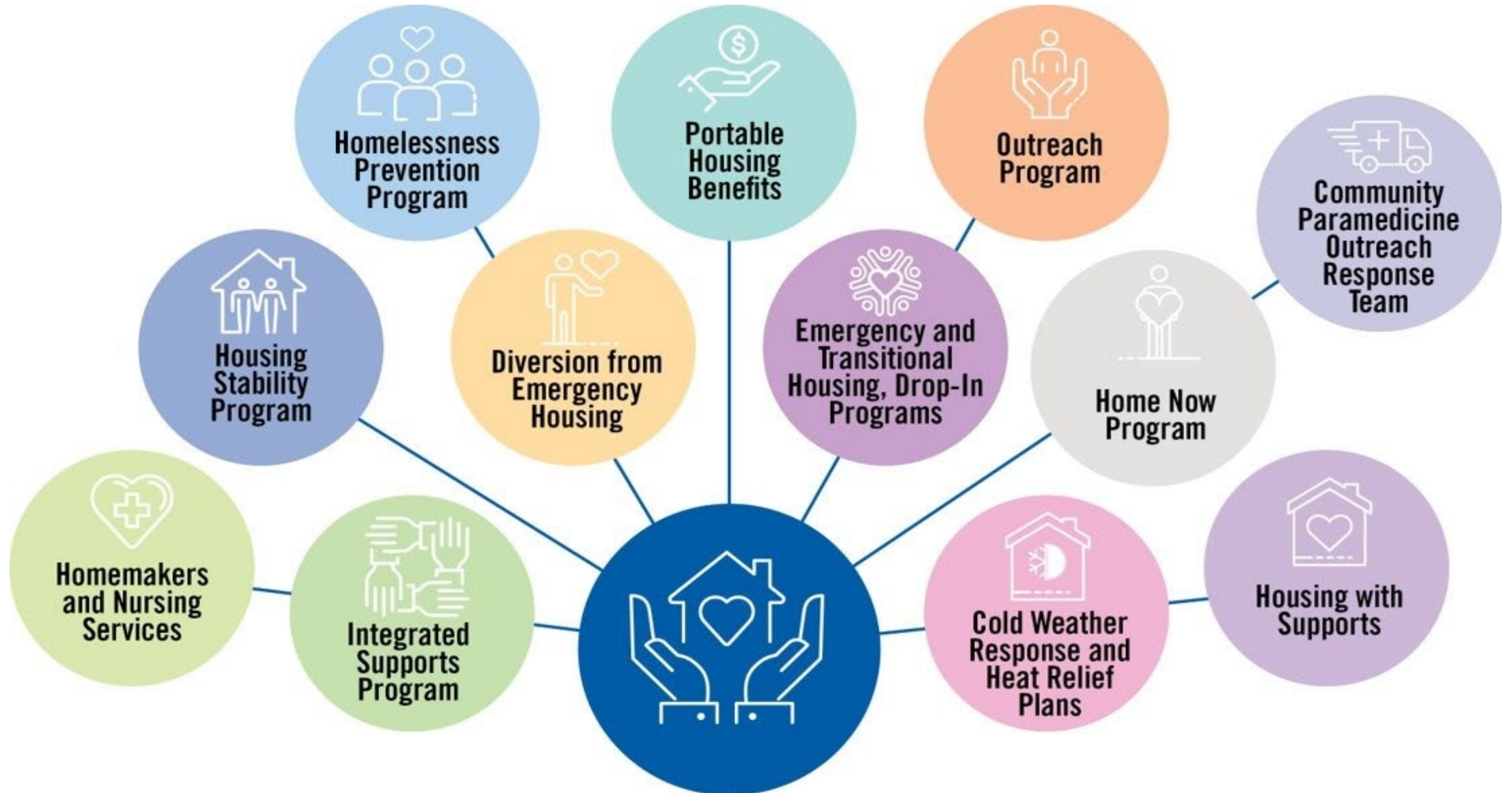
# Drivers Impacting Homelessness



## **Housing as a Human Right and Justice Valente's Waterloo decision**

- Encampments and number of people living unsheltered is increasing across Ontario and in York Region
- In some municipalities in Ontario, by-laws meant to restrict people from living on public property have been challenged or paused

# Homelessness Programs in York Region



# By-Name List

## Number of Unique People on York Region's By-Name List

July 2022 - October 2023





# Emergency and Transitional Housing Capacity in York Region

## BUILDING / SERVICE PROVIDER / BED CAPACITY



**Belinda's Place**  
(Women) Newmarket



28

9

**Sutton Youth Services**  
(Youth) Georgina



16

10

**Porter Place**  
(Men) East Gwillimbury



30

-

**Kevin's Place**  
(Men) Newmarket



10

-

**The Youth Hub**  
(Youth) Richmond Hill



14

11

**Leeder Place**  
(Family) East Gwillimbury



UP TO  
60  
  
/15 UNITS

3  
  
/1 UNIT

**Inn From the Cold**  
(Anyone 16+) Newmarket



25

5

**The Bridge**  
(Families, Couples, Youth)  
Georgina



-

10

**Passage House**  
(Men) East Gwillimbury



-

18

# Emergency Housing Needs Continue to Increase

**Average Length of Stay (days) in Emergency Housing in York Region**  
2018 - 2023 (Jan-Oct)



# More People are Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

## People actively experiencing chronic homelessness in York Region

# of unique people

