



York Region's 2024 to 2027 Homelessness Service System Plan

Presented to
Committee of the Whole

Presented by
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Presentation Overview



CONTEXT



DEVELOPMENT OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICE SYSTEM PLAN



PROPOSED SYSTEM PLAN GOALS AND PRIORITY AREAS



RAPID DEPLOYMENT ACTIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS

Our Story





Rental Housing is expensive in York Region



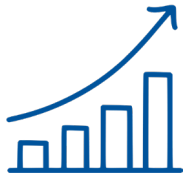
\$1,664 per month in 2023 for purpose-built rental

\$800 to **\$1000** per month for a room in shared accommodation

Increasing Homelessness and Chronic Homelessness in the Region

1,784 people experiencing homelessness in 2023, up from **1,395** in 2019

473 people experiencing chronic homelessness in 2023, up from **124** in 2019



Challenges for Income Support Recipients



\$390 per month for housing for a single individual on Ontario Works (has not increased since 2018)

81% increase in number of residents receiving Ontario Works benefits between 2018 and 2024

More People Living Unsheltered

204 encampment locations visited in 2023, up from **62** in 2021

2,100 to **2,300** people forecasted to experience homelessness a year, by 2030



Context



\$48.4 M

TOTAL BUDGET

Homelessness Community Programs budget
70% provincial and 30% taxy levy funded

249

TOTAL EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING BEDS

York Region funds 183 emergency housing and 66
transitional housing beds

182

TOTAL OVERFLOW EMERGENCY HOUSING BEDS

Emergency housing being regularly at or near
capacity means overflow beds are required

50 +

COMMUNITY AGENCY PARTNERS

Community Agencies are essential partners in
providing frontline services and supports





2023 PROGRAM FACTS



5,356

PEOPLE SUPPORTED
THROUGH
HOMELESSNESS
COMMUNITY
PROGRAMS



1,460

PEOPLE SUPPORTED
IN EMERGENCY AND
TRANSITIONAL
HOUSING



505

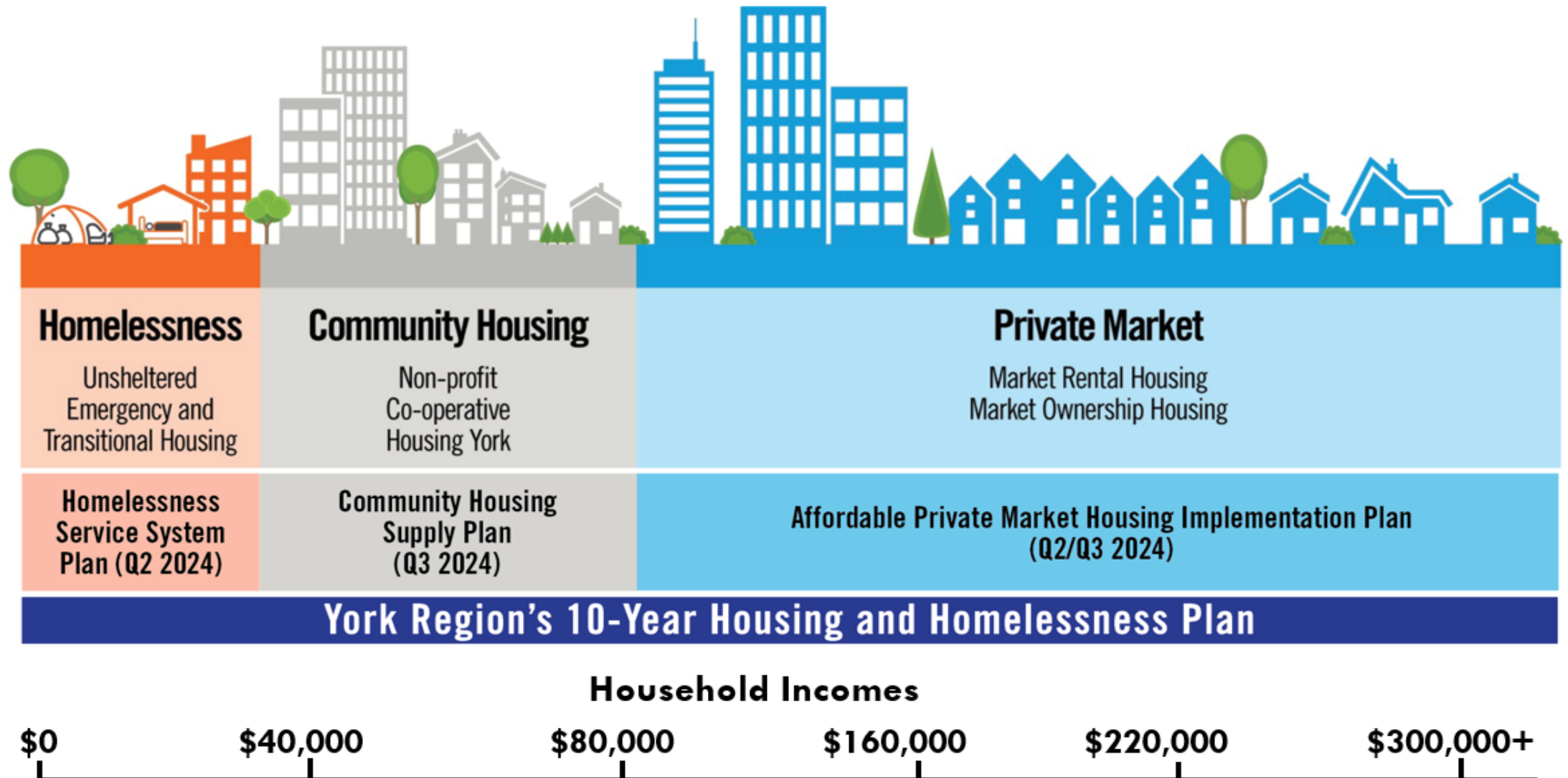
PEOPLE PROVIDED
WITH PRIMARY CARE,
MENTAL HEALTH AND
ADDICTIONS SERVICES



730

PEOPLE PROVIDED
WITH OUTREACH
SUPPORTS AND
CASE MANAGEMENT

Context



Development of Homelessness Service System Plan



ANALYSIS OF HOMELESSNESS IN YORK REGION



ENGAGEMENT AND SYSTEM PLANNING



FINALIZING GOALS, PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

- Key Informant Interviews identified proposed priority areas
- Data analysis and forecasting to quantify scope of need
- Jurisdictional scan and literature review to identify emerging and best practices

- Need a practical action-oriented plan
- Invest in system capacity; enhance and expand services
- Need for affordable housing and increased rent subsidies
- Collaboration, partnerships, and the community are key
- Include role for advocacy, education and awareness-building

- Validated and refined goals and Priority Areas
- Developed detailed actions and implementation plan

Proposed System Plan Goals



GOAL 1

**End Chronic Homelessness
in York Region**

GOAL 2

**Strengthen York Region's
human rights-based approach
to addressing homelessness**

Proposed System Plan Priority Areas



PRIORITY 1

PREVENTION AND DIVERSION

Actions that reduce likelihood that a person will experience homelessness

PRIORITY 3

SYSTEMS RESPONSE

Aligns actions across system to establish integrated homelessness services

PRIORITY 2

INTERVENTION AND HOUSING STABILITY

Supports to help people find permanent housing

PRIORITY 4

ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

Identifies opportunities to advocate to other levels of government



PRIORITY AREA 1: Prevention and Diversion



Activities	Milestones
Improve eviction prevention	<p>Identify opportunities to support and enhance eviction prevention programs</p> <p>Work with partners to develop a broader eviction prevention strategy for the Region, including landlord/tenant education</p>
Strengthen homelessness prevention programs	<p>Evaluate Region-delivered homelessness prevention programs and identify opportunities to strengthen these programs, including enhanced case management</p> <p>Develop a “prevention toolkit” to provide an information resource for community service providers and residents</p>
Enhance diversion supports to help people find alternatives to emergency housing	<p>Evaluate Region-delivered Emergency Housing Diversion program</p> <p>Identify options to enhance the Diversion program, including flexible support</p>

PRIORITY AREA 2: Intervention and Housing Stability



Activities	Milestones
Provide wraparound support services when and where needed to help people find and keep housing	<p>Enhance outreach support services for people who are living unsheltered/in encampments by expanding hours and adding services*</p> <p>Develop a protocol through engagement with all local municipalities including bylaw, police, fire and other community agencies to coordinate the response to people who are unsheltered/in encampments</p>
Provide housing programs for people with high needs and complex barriers, including those experiencing chronic homelessness	<p>Strengthen and expand Housing First approaches to programs to more effectively support people with complex needs, such as Home Now*</p>
Increase emergency housing capacity	<p>Implement new emergency housing and seasonal/overnight shelter spaces, pending confirmation of funding*</p>

* Identifies rapid deployment actions

PRIORITY AREA 3: Systems Response



Activities	Milestones
Collaborate with partners to effectively manage the service system	Establish a homelessness service system leadership table
Strengthen and build partnerships to respond to homelessness	Work collaboratively with York Regional Police, York Region Transit, and local municipal staff to support people experiencing homelessness, including people who are unsheltered
Improve coordination and planning across the service system to connect people to appropriate and available services	<p>Evaluate the Emergency Housing Central Intake Line to identify opportunities for continuous improvement</p> <p>Implement and expand prioritization for housing programs for people experiencing homelessness in collaboration with the Coordinated Access Governance Group</p>
Enhance use of tools and service system data to support planning	Continue to explore and expand use of data forecasting for long-term system planning

PRIORITY AREA 4: Advocacy and Engagement



Activities	Milestones
Develop and implement an agenda to guide advocacy to the Provincial and Federal governments	<p>Develop an agenda to guide advocacy to the Provincial and Federal governments to address factors including income security and housing affordability</p> <p>Continue to advocate for sustained federal and provincial funding and policy changes to increase the supply and access to affordable housing of all types</p> <p>Advocate for predictable, long-term investment in portable housing benefits, including for people who are experiencing homelessness</p>
Increase community knowledge and awareness of homelessness in York Region	<p>With community partners, develop a coordinated information campaign</p>

Rapid Deployment Council Motion



ON MARCH 7, 2024, COUNCIL APPROVED MOTION THAT:

- Staff prepare a report by June 2024 that outlines a rapid deployment plan, with funding options, for emergency and transitional housing to address the exponential growth in homelessness
- The Region approach other Regional municipalities and the City of Toronto to establish a Greater Toronto Area Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Group consisting of elected officials



Rapid Deployment Actions



GOALS OF RAPID DEPLOYMENT ACTIONS:

- Increase community presence through additional Outreach Workers to provide supports to people living unsheltered, with a strong focus on encouraging them to accept accommodation
- Increase emergency bed capacity to provide spaces for people willing to access services

PRINCIPLES USED TO IDENTIFY RAPID DEPLOYMENT ACTIONS:

- Implementation could begin in summer 2024
- Can visibly reduce the number of people living unsheltered and expand emergency housing capacity
- Contract with existing service providers to help speed up implementation and reduce requirements for Regional FTEs
- Actions started in 2024 can continue in 2025 and beyond
- Fiscally prudent while delivering immediate results



Rapid Deployment Actions



01

Add 30 new beds into existing emergency and transitional housing buildings



02

Increase hotel room beds available by 34 beds



03

Increase seasonal shelter beds by 75



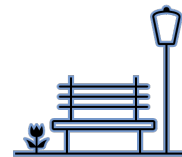
04

Add 4 staff to the Community Paramedicine Outreach Response Team



05

Add 4 outreach workers to support clients living unsheltered/in encampments



06

Help people who are chronically homeless connect to housing and support



Rapid Deployment Actions



Actions	Description/Performance Measures	Costs
Add beds to existing emergency and transitional housing buildings	One-time capital funding and ongoing operational funding to increase existing emergency and transitional housing capacity by 30 additional beds	Annual ongoing costs: \$1,530,000
Add additional hotel beds	Provide funding to secure, operate and support an additional 34 hotel room beds	Annual ongoing costs: \$2,000,000
Add seasonal shelter beds	Work with service providers across the Region to secure an additional 75 seasonal shelter beds for the cold weather season	Annual ongoing costs: \$3,000,000

Rapid Deployment Actions



Actions	Description/Performance Measures	Costs
Adding staff to the Community Paramedicine Outreach Response Team	Adding four additional Outreach Workers (PFT) to CPORT program and expanding hours of service	Annual ongoing costs: \$480,000
Adding Outreach Workers to support clients living unsheltered/in encampments	Adding four additional Outreach Workers (TFT) to support clients living unsheltered and in encampments and expanding hours of service	Annual ongoing costs: \$420,000
Additional Program funding to help people who are experiencing chronic homelessness	Provide operating funding for service providers to provide case management, intensive supports, and additional housing benefits to help people experiencing chronic homelessness find and keep housing	Annual ongoing costs: \$1,000,000

Rapid Deployment Actions



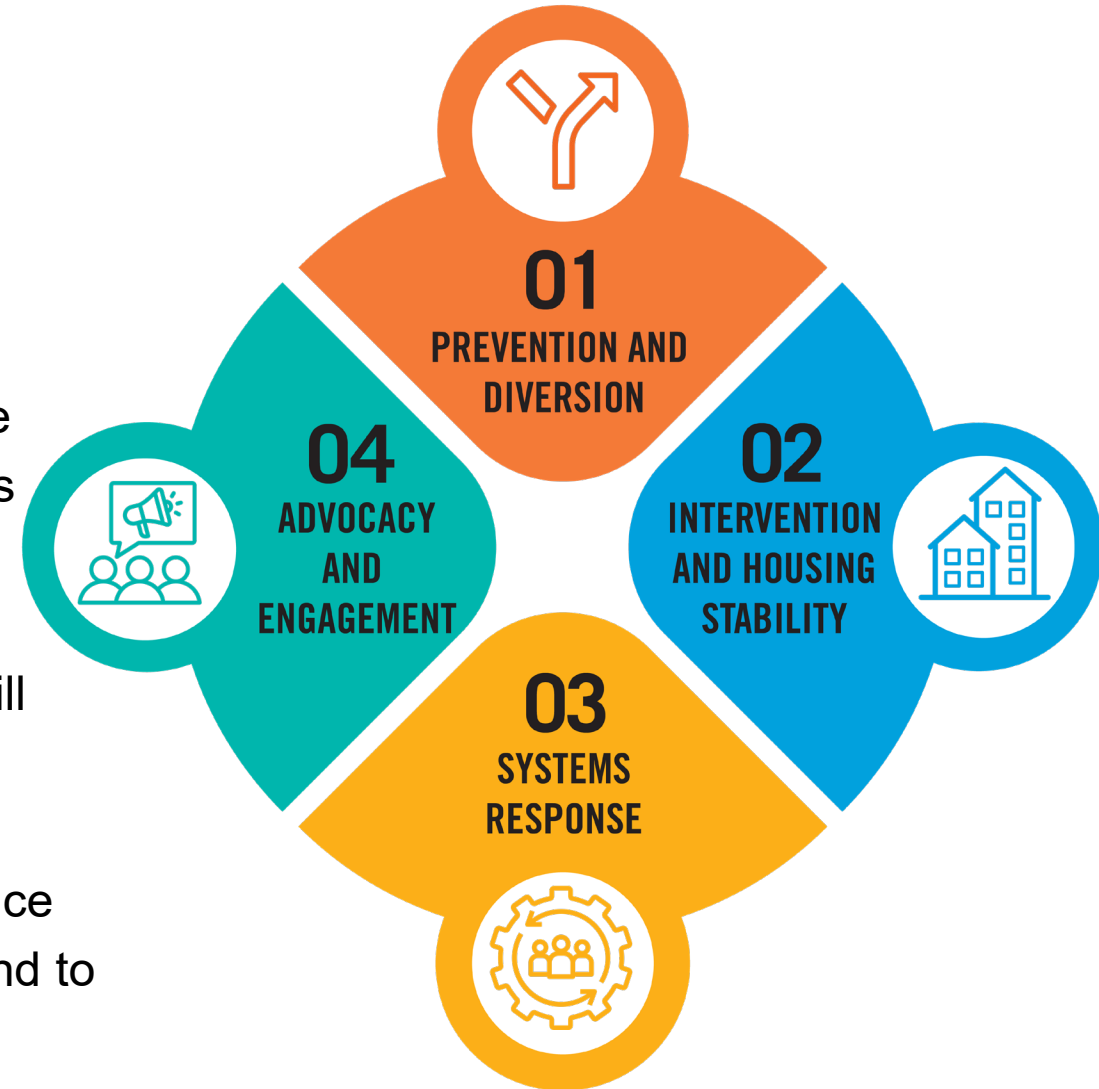
- Two new emergency and transitional housing projects will be brought forward in the 2025 budget, in addition to three planned emergency housing replacement projects already in the 10-year capital budget
- Pre-development work is ongoing and aligns with Council direction to review Regional and municipal land and property that may be available



Summary



- As Service Manager, York Region is responsible for Homelessness and Housing
- Homelessness is increasing across York Region
- Homelessness Community Programs will continue to lead the sector in planning, coordinating, and delivering homelessness services and supports
- Homelessness Service System Plan is action oriented and will work towards attaining its two aspirational goals
- Rapid deployment actions will begin in 2024 to increase service capacity. Operating funding will be needed in 2025 and beyond to continue these actions





IT IS RECOMMENDED:

1. Council approve York Region's 2024 to 2027 Homelessness Service System Plan (Attachment 1).
2. Council approve the rapid deployment actions for Emergency and Transitional Housing set out in Appendix A, including approval of immediate actions with an estimated net operating cost of up to \$3.1 million in 2024, to be funded from within the existing Community and Health Services Budget, with funding for ongoing annual net operating costs of up to \$7 million beyond 2024, equivalent to 0.5% of the 2025 net tax levy, to be identified and considered through the 2025 Budget process.
3. Commissioner of Community and Health Services be directed to include a capital plan for consideration as part of the 2025 budget process for development of new emergency and transitional housing projects.
4. The Regional Clerk circulate York Region's 2024 to 2027 Homelessness Service System Plan to all local municipalities, the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Associate Minister of Housing, as well as local area MPs and MPPs, Ontario Health Teams in York Region, Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the United Way Greater Toronto.

Thank You

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