



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Presented to
Housing and Homelessness
Committee

Presented by
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Purpose



1. Identify key roles within York Region's housing and homelessness system
2. Define current requirements for 10-year housing and homeless plans, which are under Provincial review
3. Review housing needs, challenges, and actions taken
4. Provide information on how this Committee will inform future actions

Government Roles and Responsibilities

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

National Housing Strategy



GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO

System steward, sets framework through *Housing Services Act, 2011*



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

Service Manager for housing and homelessness services under *Housing Services Act, 2011*

- Works with non-profit and private sector partners

Sole shareholder for Housing York Inc.

LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES

Local Planning Authority

- Enables new development, including non-profit and private sector development

Partners in homelessness response, working with bylaw, fire, and others



Service Manager 10-year Plan Requirements

Housing Services Act, 2011 and Provincial Policy Statement: Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans (2016)

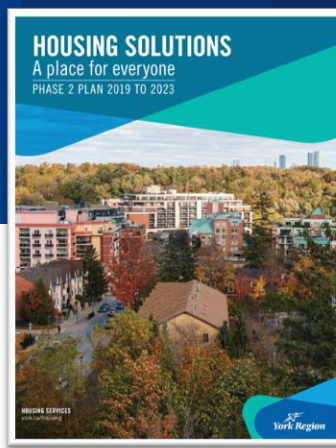
Vision:

Every person in Ontario has an affordable, suitable and adequate home to provide the foundation to secure employment, raise a family, and build strong communities.

Plans must address matters of provincial interest, such as:

- Allowing for a range of housing options
- Ensuring relevance to local circumstances
- Role for non-profits, cooperatives and the private market
- Goal of ending homelessness
- Partnership among governments and coordination with other community services
- Positive outcomes for individuals and families
- Accountability of public funds

Region's Current 10-Year Plan



Increase supply of affordable and rental housing

- Plan for range of housing options
- Build community housing, encourage affordable rental
- Tools and policies to increase supply



Help people find and keep housing

- Support long-term housing stability
- Advance prevention programs
- Strengthen homelessness and housing stability services



Strengthen the housing and homelessness system

- Sustain existing community housing
- Integrate homelessness and housing stability service system
- Build community capacity
- Facilitate expansion of long-term care

What Works Well: Progress Advancing the Plan's Goals Since 2019



Increase supply of affordable and rental housing

- **556** new community housing units and **26** new transitional housing units since 2019
- **400** new community housing units in pre-development, 915 units in capital plan
- **100** new units through **supply grant** for non-profit partners
- **1,089** new **purpose-built rental** units completed 2019-2023, **500** of which enabled through DC relief
- DC relief committed to additional **193 units** under construction



Help people find and keep housing

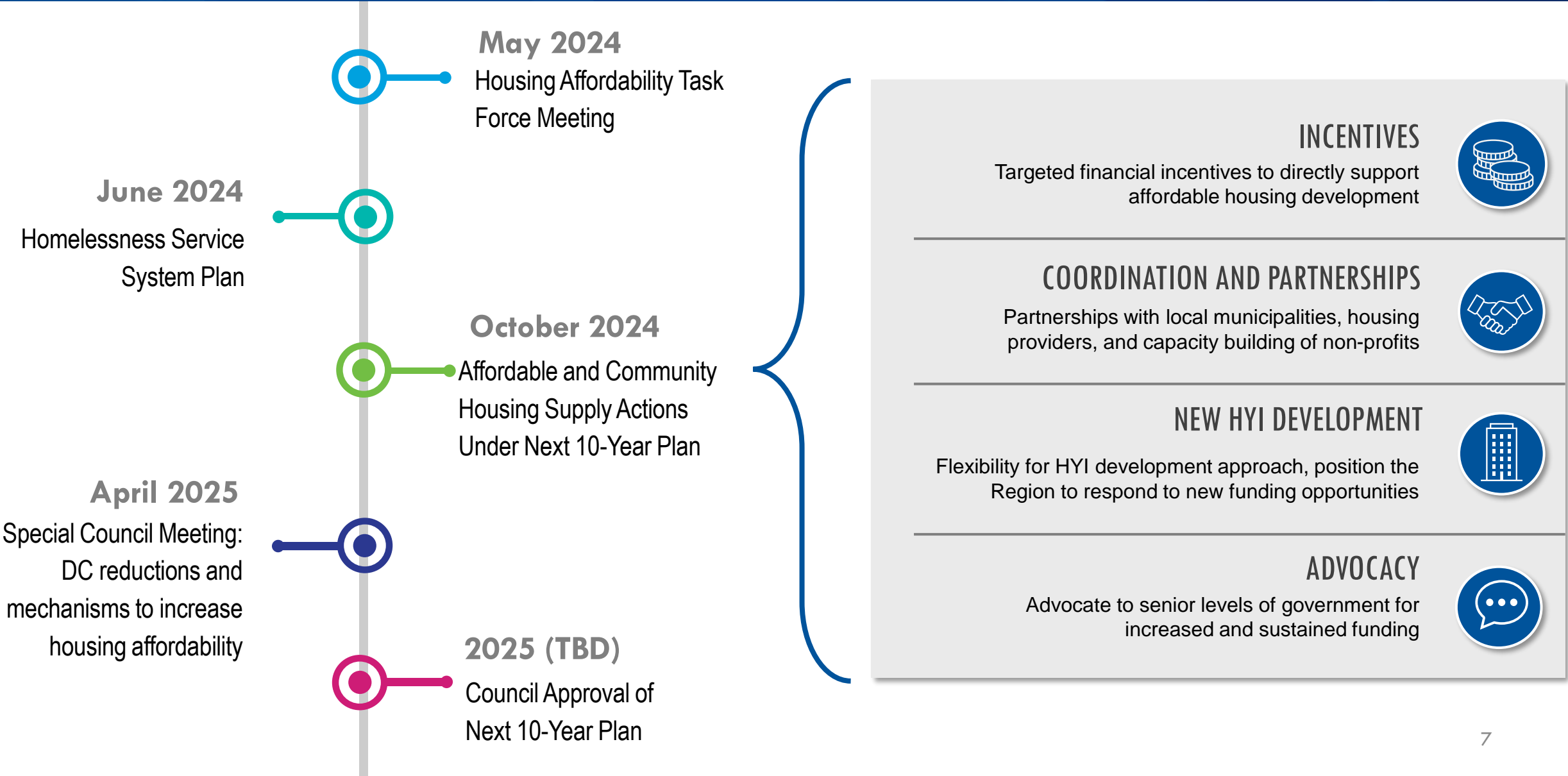
- **Rapid deployment** actions
- **1,400+** wait list households affordably housed through Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit since 2020
- **7,002** clients received support to improve housing stability in 2023
- **505** people provided with primary care, mental health, and addictions services in 2023



Strengthen the housing and homelessness system

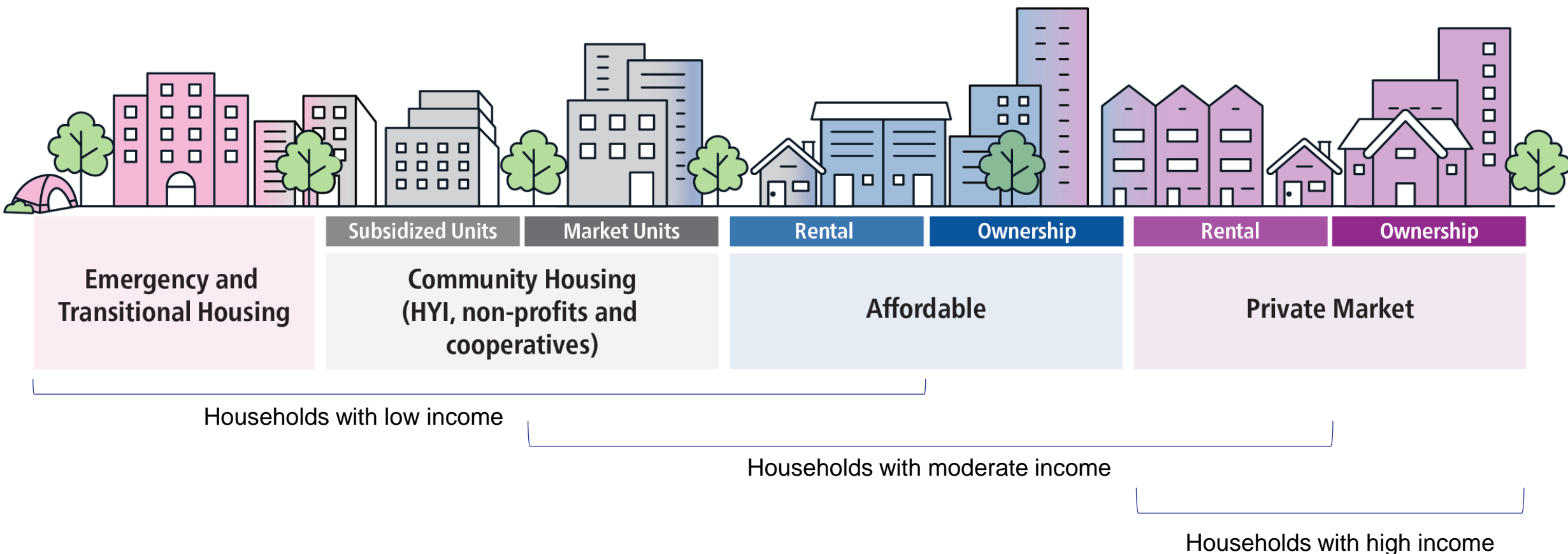
- Implemented **online housing offer process** so applicants can make informed decisions and decrease refusals
- Successful **advocacy** for *Housing Services Act, 2011* regulatory changes supporting housing providers' long-term sustainability following end of mortgage

Progress Towards Next 10-Year Plan



Housing and Homelessness Needs, Actions Taken, and Role of Committee

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



Ongoing Pressures and Challenges



About **50,000** York Region households **spend more than 30% of income on housing** and/or living in homes in need of major repairs or that are too small and have no alternative options

Projected to grow to over **70,000** households by **2045**



Ownership prices almost **doubled** in the last decade



Rents for private purpose-built units have increased **22%** since 2019



Vacancy rate of **2.3%**, below the **3%** benchmark for a healthy rental market



84% increase in number of people receiving social assistance in last six years

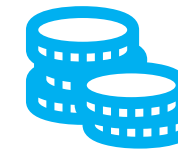


2,525 people experiencing homelessness in 2024



Over last 10 years, subsidized housing wait list increased by **60%** to over 18,000 households

- On average, **436** households housed annually



Federal/Provincial funding is **inconsistent and unknown** beyond 2026

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



Emergency and Transitional Housing

Challenges:

Increasing Homelessness and Chronic Homelessness

- 2,525 people experiencing homelessness in 2024, up from 1,402 in 2019
- 986 people experiencing chronic homelessness in 2024, up from 124 in 2019

More People Living Unsheltered

- 361 encampment locations visited in 2024, up from 62 in 2021
- Average of 63 outreach visits each month to encampments in 2024

Limited affordable housing options mean it takes longer to secure housing

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



Emergency and Transitional Housing

Actions taken:

- Rapid Deployment Actions
- Council approved funding for two new facilities and additional beds to be added to planned replacement facilities
- Leveraging \$12.2M in total Federal/Provincial encampment funding

To provide recommendations to Council, this Committee will:

- Receive update on Homelessness Service System Plan and Rapid Deployment Actions
- Receive an updated site selection framework for emergency, transitional, and community housing to recommend for Council's approval
- Provide feedback on work to advance emergency and transitional housing sites and make recommendations to Council

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



Challenges:

Growing subsidized housing wait list

- 18,419 households on subsidized housing wait list, up 60% from 2014

Region alone cannot sustain investment needed to meet growing demand

- Unpredictable senior government funding
- Increasing construction costs
- Removal of Housing Services as eligible service for development charges

Non-profit housing providers require increased development capacity

- Development supports and capital investment needed to enable supply

**Community Housing
(HYI, non-profits, and
cooperatives)**

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



**Community Housing
(HYI, non-profits, and
cooperatives)**

Actions taken:

Increasing Housing York Inc. supply:

- Completed Mosaic House, adding 97 new units
- Advancing additional 400 new units
- Secured Council approval to apply for CMHC Affordable Housing Fund
- Committed \$35.1M in Regional funding, which can enable HYI supply through 2026 budget for Council's consideration and/or non-profit supply
- Completing analysis of acquisition opportunities to assess value for money
- Exploring opportunities for local municipal contributions to HYI projects

Increasing non-profit supply:

- Enabled 100 new units through Community Housing Supply Grant in 2024
- Committed \$10M additional Regional funding for 2025 Community Housing Supply Grant, call for applications to be released this month
- Leveraging \$3.98M in Last Mile Funding for non-profit projects
- Advancing actions to increase supply presented to Council in October 2024, including pre-development supports for non-profits

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



**Community Housing
(HYI, non-profits, and
cooperatives)**

To provide recommendations to Council, this Committee will:

- Receive an updated site selection framework for emergency, transitional, and community housing to recommend for Council's approval
- Inform strategies to accelerate housing projects with heightened senior government funding
- Provide direction on actions to increase supply of community housing, including:
 - Housing development coordination program
 - Non-profit predevelopment supports and rent supplement opportunities
- Recommend a pilot project for Council's consideration from a list of potential options

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



Challenges:

Lack of affordable housing supply

- For the fifth year in a row, Region has not met its affordable housing targets, despite full DC exemption for affordable rental and ownership
- Lack of supply for households with moderate income
- Almost 80% of renter households rely on the secondary rental market

Increasing costs for new development

- Rising construction, land, and labour costs

Unstable policy environment

- Shifting planning legislation and uncertainty in policy environment

Addressing Housing and Homelessness System Needs



Actions taken:

- Special Council Meeting on impacts of DC reductions and mechanisms to increase housing affordability
- New Multi-Residential (Municipal Reduction) property subclass approved, and 35% municipal tax rate discount proposed for 2025 taxation year
- Continuous improvement of development review and data collection processes

To provide recommendations to Council, this Committee will:

- Inform approaches to accelerate housing projects
- Consider affordability initiatives that complement DC work
- Recommend a pilot project for Council's consideration from a list of potential options

Advocacy Across Housing and Homelessness System – Senior Governments



Increased investment

- Increased, direct, predictable funding to address Region's housing and homelessness challenges **(F/P)**
- One-third development funding model for new community housing **(F/P)**
- Additional funding for housing-enabling infrastructure **(F/P)**



Policy and program changes

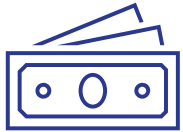
- Reinstate Housing Services as DC-eligible to help fund community housing **(P)**
- Make upper-tier municipalities eligible for funding programs (i.e., Housing Accelerator Fund, Building Faster Fund) **(F/P)**
- Leverage taxation tools, including incentivizing purpose-built rental **(F/P)**
- Program changes and increased funding for supports and rent benefits, including Ontario Works and Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit **(F/P)**
- Policy changes to help address NIMBYism **(P)**

Advocacy Across Housing and Homelessness System — Local Municipalities



Enabling new supply

- Buy-in to enable new developments through zoning and planning approvals
- Support for Minister Zoning Orders (MZOs)
- Support to help address NIMBYism



Leverage funding

- Leverage funding opportunities to help fund new developments (i.e., Housing Accelerator Fund)

Summary



- While the Region has made progress in advancing Council's housing priorities, more needs to be done
- Addressing housing needs requires each level of government to maximize the tools available to them
- Partnerships are key to success, including the use of public lands and coordination with local municipal initiatives
- In April 2025, Council established the Housing and Homelessness Committee as a Special Committee to:
 - Prioritize and recommend solutions for the next 10-year housing and homelessness plan, with a focus on supply and taking action