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The Future of HOUSING

LED BY THE SOCIAL RESEARCH & PLANNING COUNCIL'S
RESEARCH DATA ADVISORY CONSORTIUM

*ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: TO THE COMMUNITY MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN THE
HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND NOT IN MY BACKYARD (NIMBYISM) DISCUSSION*

Executive Summary

Over the last 12 months, the average price for a detached home in Perth and Huron Counties increased over 35% to \$549,000. At the same time, rent for a two-bedroom unit has increased by 18% to over \$1,200 a month. Provision of adequate and attainable housing is one of the most critical issues facing our communities. This report presents a detailed overview of the housing crisis across Perth and Huron Counties. More specifically, by presenting recent data on market trends, population projections, income and workforce and an explanation of the changing expectations of the workforce, four actions are proposed: 1) Education Campaign, 2) Workforce Attraction & Retention 3) Collaboration, Consolidation and Clarity of Direction and 4) Potential BIG System Change. It is critical that all levels of government collaborate to tackle the housing crisis to ensure all residents from our communities have access to adequate and accessible housing.

While Canadian home prices have gained almost 60% since 2016, household income is up a little less than 30% in the same period.

STORIES OF LIVING AND WORKING IN PERTH-HURON

Huron Story

Jane started a new job in Goderich and lives in Exeter. Her starting salary is \$50,000. Jane has one 3-year-old child going to child care. **She is a teacher.**

Jane's student loan is \$13,400 per year (\$40,200 over 3 years payback). Jane commutes to work daily and pays \$8,849 a year for transportation (gas and car payments), \$20,400 a year for rent (\$1,700 a month), \$3,600 a year for insurance, \$12,000 a year for child care (\$1,000 a month and she does not currently qualify for a subsidy) and \$3,744 a year for food (\$312 a month).*

Her expenses total \$61,993 and she is almost \$12,000 a year in debt while making \$50,000 a year.

The caveat here is that she has not paid for any expenses related to clothing, birthday parties, cleaning supplies, hygiene products and social activities for her child who wants to play Timbits hockey.

*These figures do not include other government transfers

Stratford Story

John has a full-time job in Stratford and lives in Kitchener, is divorced and supports two kids, 9 and 11. He makes \$40 per hour working 37.5 hours a week plus overtime when possible. His annual salary is approximately \$72,000. One of his sons plays soccer and the other plays the piano and baseball. **John works in the manufacturing sector.**

John has lived in a small house in Kitchener for over 20 years with a mortgage payment of \$2,000 a month, his taxes are \$450 a month and he uses a car to get to work that costs him approximately \$600 a month plus repairs. His house, auto and personal insurance is \$1,090 a month, he pays \$200 a month for food and his child support payments are \$1,711 a month (currently under review due to age).

He makes \$6,000 a month and his expenses are \$6,051.00, not including any home maintenance. John has visitation and spends time with his children, but any health-related needs or social activities for himself and his children add more to his expenses.



Perth Story

Gary, Nancy and their three children (ages 3, 5 and 7) want to move to Perth County. **Gary is a plumber and Nancy is a nurse at the hospital.** They both have student debt, pay for two vehicles, full-time child care for their 3-year-old, before and after school child care for their 5- and 7-year-olds and they are renting a home in Guelph.

Gary and Nancy are commuting to work in Perth but want to raise their children in the area and buy a home. Gary and Nancy have been putting in offers to buy a home for almost a year. They have made many unsuccessful offers with the same result; properties selling for \$50,000–\$100,000 over asking price, or cash offers site unseen.

The housing market is too high and moving too quickly and they cannot find a home to buy within their approved mortgage range. Gary and Nancy have been offered employment in Guelph and have a line on a house there but they really wanted to raise their children in the Perth community.

Heading into winter they are struggling with commuting, feel frustrated and are running out of time because the owner of their current home in Guelph sold it and the family needs to be out by the end of the year.



OVERVIEW

While the housing crisis is a growing concern across our communities and conversations about what we can do to alleviate some of the concerns are common, potential solutions remain unclear.

Often, potential responses to this crisis begin with a discussion around the obligation of the federal government; is the Canadian government obligated to provide shelter for all Canadians? However, housing challenges do not fall under the control of one level of government. Rather, housing is the responsibility of all levels of government, including local communities, since many of the most critical factors that influence housing (e.g., zoning, planning, permits) are within municipal jurisdiction.

In addition to two decades of disinvestment in the provision of attainable housing, the current flow of 'big money' into residential real estate is contributing to the rapid disappearance of relatively affordable units. As investors "revitalize" the sector through "value-add" projects, tenants are often evicted or have no choice but to leave because of significant rent increases. Additionally, investors are supporting (i.e., financing) new rental construction, almost all of it ultra-luxury, unaffordable units. This construction is largely designed for and purchased by residents from large, urban centres (e.g., Greater Toronto Area) who have sold their houses for significant profits and are migrating to small and rural communities.¹

In November 2021, the National Bank of Canada² reported, "mortgage payments now engulf 45% of income for a representative household".

In addition to ranking among the highest nominal and real housing prices in the world,³ Canada has one of the highest price-to-income ratios. Concurrently, there are significant discussions around the potential for interest rate increases across Canada⁴ that could have catastrophic implications for Canadian homeowners.

Juxtaposing discussions around home affordability, in 2020, Statistics Canada noted that, "almost one-third of Canadian households live in an inadequate or unaffordable or unsuitable dwelling".⁵ What this means is in Canada there is not only a housing supply shortage, but Canadians are spending twice as much on unaffordable housing as we are on addressing housing affordability.

Growing tensions around workforce attraction and retention combined with providing available, attainable housing has communities concerned.

While Canadian home prices have gained almost 60% since 2016, household income is up a little less than 30% in the same period.⁶

This means a buyer with a \$2,500 monthly housing budget has lost almost \$30,000 in purchasing power.⁷

Exacerbating the housing crisis, Ontario's population has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic through both an increase in mortality and urban-to-rural migration⁸ producing complex social, economic and political implications for both rural and urban communities.

Ontario experienced a growth rate of 1.3% (2019–2020) and the rate is expected to increase to 2.1% between 2021–2022. The growth rate is expected to stabilize to 1% per year by 2045–2046.⁹

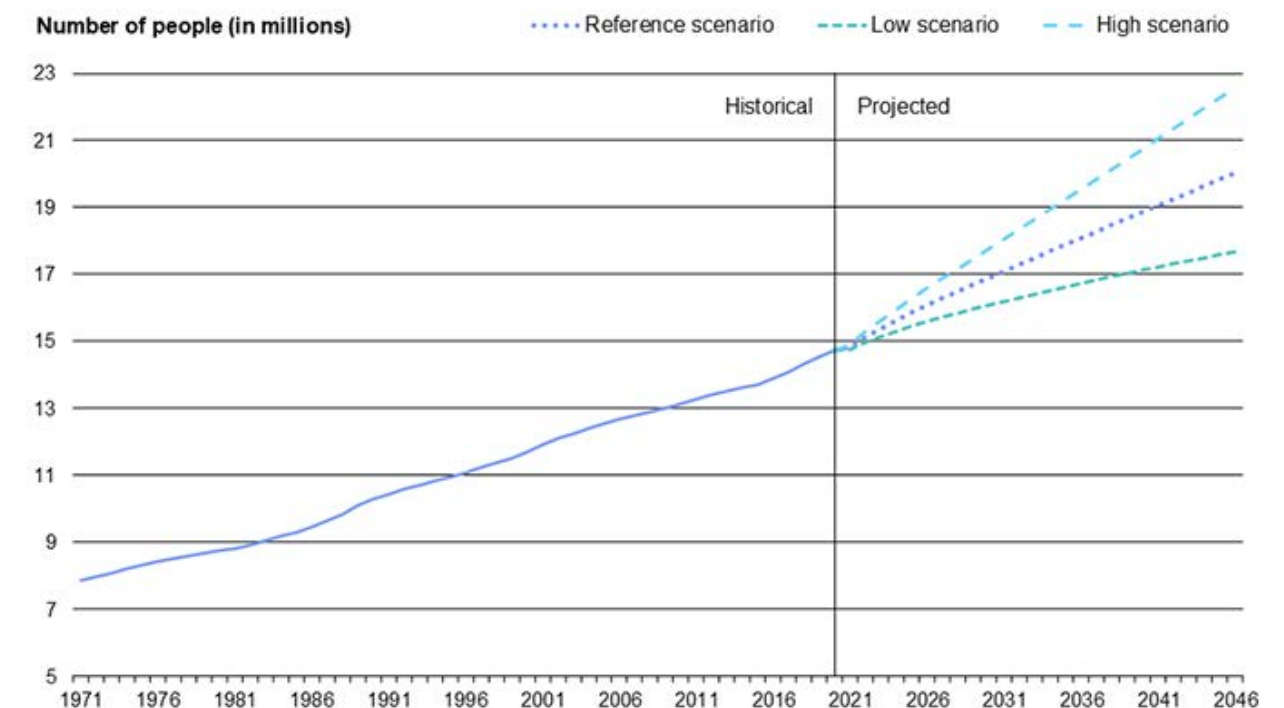


Figure 1: Ontario Population, 1971–2046

Source: Statistics Canada for 1971–2020 and Ontario Ministry of Finance projections

Perth-Huron Population Growth

Population projections indicate an expected population of 75,771 for Huron and 99,572 for Perth. This growth is anticipated to be mainly migration from larger urban areas as well as an influx of new Canadians. Demographic shifts are projected that see older populations moving into Perth and Huron communities. This trend parallels what we are seeing in who is buying homes¹⁰ in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Projections imply that Huron will grow by 16,474 people and Perth by 22,776 people by 2046, an increase of 22% and 22.8% respectively. These trends have significant consequences to the available and attainable housing market. Community development and planning around policing, health and hospital care on already strained infrastructure will not sustain this level of growth.

Housing and Rental Price Trends

On average the housing market¹¹ price in 2016 was \$265,000, \$474,000 in July 2020 and \$616,000 in July 2021. In one year the average increase was over \$140,000. The benchmark price (the price of a typical home in a given area) for single-family homes was \$549,000, an increase of 35.6% on a year-over-year basis in September 2021. By comparison, the benchmark house price was \$474,400, an increase of 24.6% from 2018 levels.

Across Perth-Huron the average price of homes sold in September 2021 was \$615,459, up 33.7% from September 2020.

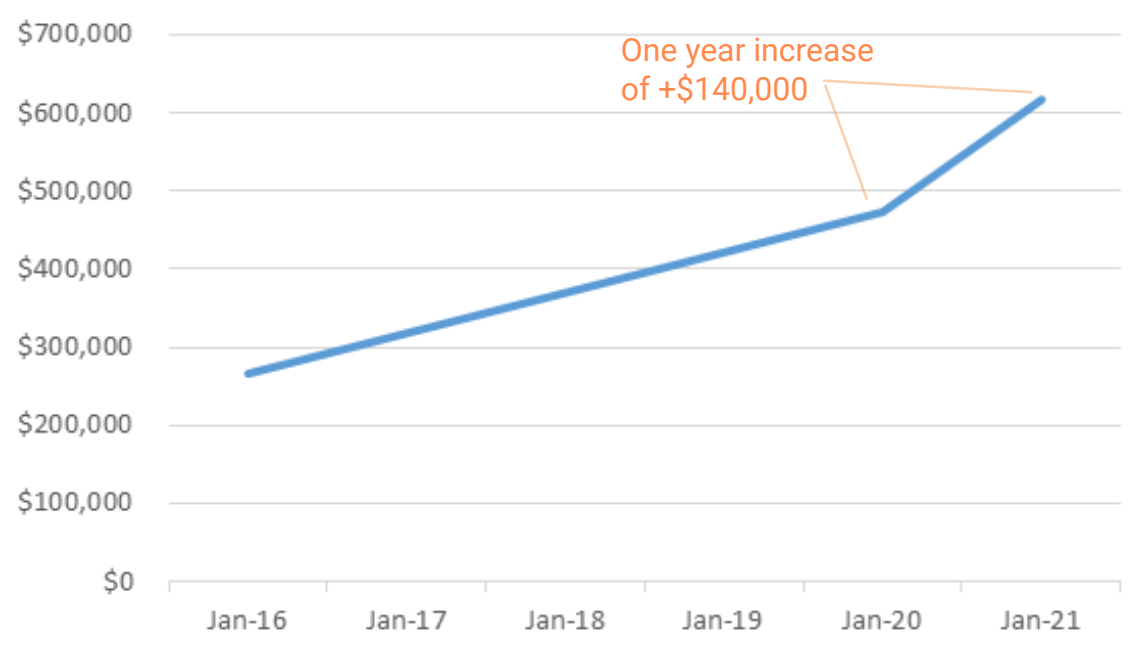


Figure 2: Perth-Huron Housing Prices 2016–2021

Rental Market¹²

A jurisdictional market scan (2018–2021) highlighted a continued increase in rental market rates (Table 1). There has been a range of 58–74% increases in rental rates since 2018 (Table 1). Source: Stratford Business Case for Alternate AMR 2021.

Table 1: Alternate AMR (Perth Local Rental Scans) and Four-Year Change

Unit Type	2018	2019	2020	2021	Four-Year Difference	Four-Year % Change
Bachelor	\$723	\$910	\$1,231	\$1,050	\$327	45%
1 Bedroom	\$793	\$1,023	\$1,239	\$1,253	\$460	58%
2 Bedroom	\$958	\$1,351	\$1,421	\$1,487	\$529	55%
3+ Bedroom	\$1,090	\$1,663	\$1,720	\$1,894	\$630	74%

*Data is only available for Perth, St. Marys and Stratford

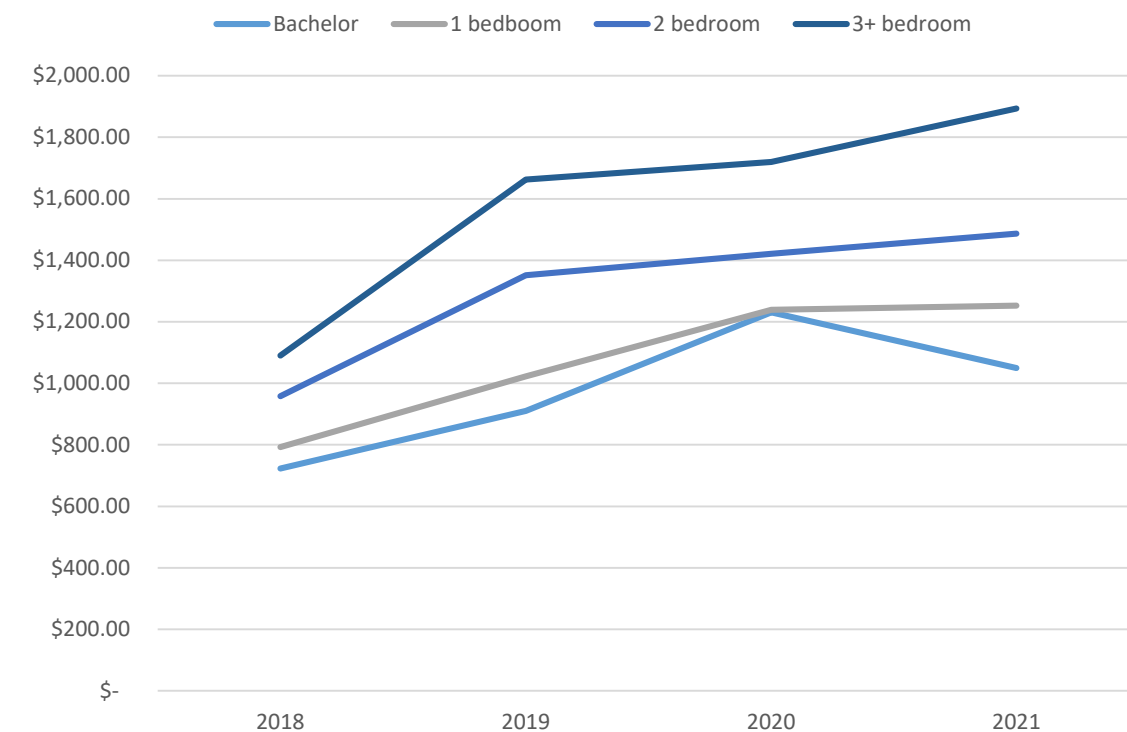


Figure 3: Alternate AMR (Perth Local Rental Scans) Rent Rates Over Four Years



Comparison to CMHC Average Market Rents¹³

As illustrated in Table 2, local rental housing costs are higher than the AMRs surveyed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) in October 2020. Depending on unit size, the variance ranges from \$334 for a bachelor unit to \$712 for a 3+ bedroom unit in 2021.

Table 2: CMHC and AMR

Unit Type	Oct 2020 AMR CMHC	2021 Service Manager Area Rental Scan Perth	\$ Difference	% Difference
Bachelor	\$716	\$1,050	\$334	47%
1 Bedroom	\$889	\$1,253	\$364	41%
2 Bedroom	\$1,034	\$1,487	\$453	44%
3+ Bedroom	\$1,182	\$1,894	\$712	60%

*AMR is based on CMHC Rental Market Survey for the Stratford Service Manager area

*Insufficient data for 4-bedroom units from both CMHC and local rental market scan

Income and Workforce: The Affordability Gap

Taking into account the core housing needs, there are three aspects to consider:

- 1. Affordability:** If the household spends 30% or more of their before tax income on shelter (i.e. shelter-cost-to-income ratio);
- 2. Suitability:** If there are enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the household
- 3. Adequacy:** If the dwelling is in need of major repair

Table 3: Income in Perth and Huron 2021

Income Source (single person households)	Monthly Income	Annual Income
Ontario Works	\$733	\$8,796
Ontario Disability Support Program	\$1,169	\$14,028
Minimum Wage	\$2,161	\$25,932
Living Wage	\$2,692*	\$35,002*
Nurse	\$4,438	\$53,262
Retail and Hospitality Worker	\$2,338	\$28,066

*The monthly income is calculated by multiplying \$17.95/hr. by 37.5 hrs/wk., then multiplying by 52 weeks/yr.

Source: The City of Stratford. July 2021–2022 Request for Alternative Average Market Rents for Housing Allowance and Rent Support Programs—Business Case for the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, County of Perth AND Four County Labour Market Board *Connect2jobs.ca*.

Table 4: Average Income. Change 2016–2020¹⁴

Region	2016	2020
Perth	\$53,319	\$76,364
Huron	\$52,904	\$72,808

Overview of Perth-Huron Occupations

Fifty most common Jobs in Huron and Perth County by Hourly Wage (2020). 81% are below \$25/hr and 19% are above.¹⁵

Table 5: Common Jobs and Wages in Perth-Huron

# of Postings	Occupation Name	Average Wage 2020 Huron	Average Wage 2020 Perth
98	Professional occupations in nursing	\$53,262	\$56,172
60	Retail and hospitality workers	\$28,066	\$28,491
58	Other technical occupations in health care and social services	\$46,202	\$45,344
58	Agriculture and horticulture workers	\$35,195	\$29,044
58	Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	\$55,974	\$51,376
57	Accommodation and food services	\$16,302	\$19,697
44	Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	\$44,435	\$33,007
22	Construction	\$60,281	\$53,978
20	Transportation and warehousing	\$55,657	\$50,513
17	Utilities	\$88,044	\$69,691
16	Educational services	\$64,916	\$62,893
15	Arts, entertainment and recreation	\$28,841	\$51,473

Source: *Connect2jobs.ca Job Demand Report, EMSI Analyst*

Source: *EMSI Analyst OMAFRA*

Implications of an Aging Workforce

The reality in Perth-Huron is we see a higher percentage of individuals over the age of 65¹⁶ than other regions in the province, many of whom are collecting Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS). When we further explore the population growth and the number of people entering the labour market there is a clear gap between those paying into CPP and OAS vs the number of people drawing on it. For example, when you look at

one pension plan's (e.g. OMERS¹⁷) projections there will be 1 worker/contributor supporting 1 retiree by 2030 (in 1976 it was 9:1 ratio, with 9 workers/contributors to 1 retiree). To maintain a defined benefit, indexed pension plan it is going to take a significant increase in individual contributions, affecting today's take-home pay and the ability to meet current financial obligations. It is expected that by 2030 with proportionally fewer contributing members making up for potential investment losses, the Plan will become more vulnerable to economic downturns and the likelihood of negative cash flows (annual pension payments exceed contributions) will intensify. On this deficit funding model trajectory, we are more and more people experiencing poverty while working.

Who is in the Workforce? What Do They Want?

At a macro level, demographics are shifting; there is a need to balance housing for aging baby boomers who are downsizing and millennials who now make up the bulk of the workforce.

Millennials are not the 'future workforce' anymore, they are in it!

Millennials are more racially and ethnically diverse than previous generations and are delaying both marriage and children. They prefer the services available in cities, but housing options are tight. Education debt is a burden, making it hard to save for a down payment. Their perception of real estate is also different from prior generations. As children, millennials have experienced an economic downturn with fewer employment opportunities, decreased savings and reluctance to purchase homes as well as the impact of the pandemic and many felt its' effects firsthand. This experience has left a lasting impact.

Because of these characteristics, millennials are looking for smaller units (often rentals) with connectivity to transit options, walkability within the community and that are amenity-rich (i.e., gardens, fitness facilities, coffee shops, pet friendly establishments and guaranteed high-speed internet). Millennials are not simply looking for a job; they are seeking an environment that stimulates and inspires. More significant than these trends however, people need housing they can afford.

CONSEQUENCES OF DOING NOTHING

Perth-Huron is in a prolonged housing crisis with no end in sight. Housing must be considered essential economic infrastructure since the local labour market depends on it. The lack of appropriate and available housing contributes significantly to the ability of businesses to attract and retain staff.

By 2043, Ontario's population will grow by an estimated 4–5 million people and Canada's population could surge to 50 million. Together with the existing housing crisis and out-migration of urban populations due to COVID-19, smaller cities and rural communities will

see significant impacts. This is a crisis all levels of government and community stakeholder groups need to address.

Currently, taxpayer contributions (in billions)¹⁸ are used to address workplace shortages as underemployment^{19,20} (full-time workers working less than 35 hours) grows and more part-time workers cannot find full-time work. Between workforce attrition and the growth of precarious employment the taxpayer base will decrease, leaving fewer people paying more. Continuing down this path is not sustainable economically or socially.

Personal Costs of Underemployment

- Potential homelessness. Most often those underemployed are paid less, leaving people without sufficient income to meet housing costs. Rises in underemployment often exacerbate the rates of homelessness.²¹
- Lower job satisfaction and lost human capital. When workers are in jobs that do not adequately deploy the full breadth of their abilities, the economy is at risk of performing well below potential by missing out on the talents, productivity, ideas and innovation of the full workforce.
- Harms future prospects. In addition, workers faced with these challenges are increasingly at risk to continue struggling to find their full place within the workforce.²²

Cost of Insufficient Attainable Housing

- In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, all of Canada was in a state of emergency and self-quarantine by the end of March 2020. Thousands of businesses shut down, sending hundreds of thousands of workers home indefinitely, with or without pay. In one week alone, a million people applied for employment insurance. Canadians with mortgages struggled to secure deferred payments from banks and while some provinces temporarily banned rental evictions, none offered to pick up rent payments for those who lost their income.



- According to Statistics Canada, 1,644,900 Canadians are in core housing need, meaning they are living in unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable accommodations.²³
- The number of actually affordable units on the market (renting below \$750 a month) declined by 830,000, according to data from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Rental Market Survey.^{24 25} Canada's rental stock over that same period was typically priced at 140% of the average market rent and therefore did not contribute to the affordable housing supply.^{26 27}
- The Canadian Housing Survey by Statistics Canada found that 628,700 Canadian households—more than one in ten renter households nationally (13.5% of 4,652,500)—reported living in social and affordable housing.²⁸ Over a quarter million households, representing 1.9% or 283,800 households, had at least one member on a waiting list for social and affordable housing. Of these households, almost two-thirds (61.0% or 173,600 households) had been on a waiting list for two years or longer.
- The main challenge facing the Canadian housing market remains the chronic insufficiency of supply relative to demand owing to the high rates of population growth registered in recent years. While not a near-term solution, policymakers should respond by easing obstacles to new construction for all forms of housing; affordable housing, rentals and owned accommodations. Home prices are likely to trend upward until there is a better balance between the number of homes in Canada and the number of Canadians needing housing.²⁹

Costs to Society

- **Lower GDP for the economy.** High unemployment and underemployment indicates the economy is operating below full capacity and is inefficient, leading to lower output and incomes. The unemployed are also unable to purchase as many goods, so will contribute to lower spending and lower output. A rise in unemployment can cause a negative multiplier effect.³⁰
- **Increase in social problems.** Areas of high underemployment and unemployment tend to have more crime and vandalism. It can lead to alienation and difficulties in integrating young unemployed people into society.
- **Political instability.** If local government is unable to attract and retain a robust labour force, services are cut and the concept of community breaks down.

- **Lack of community engagement.** Without the income needed, young people are less likely to be able to participate in community activities such as sports teams, swimming lessons, music, community programs and arts & culture activities. Community engagement is important for young people to develop important protective factors related to mental health and wellbeing, builds networks, connections to peers and an increased sense of belonging.³¹

Health and Well-being

- **Crisis Responses.** Increased demand on hospitals (\$805 emergency room visit; \$3,760 daily ward; \$14,535 daily intensive care),³² police (anywhere from \$634 to \$2,809+ depending on the severity of response required)³³ and ambulance services (\$848 to \$4,394 per hour depending on the severity of response required).³⁴
- **Stress and Mental Health Problems.** Amongst studies of underemployed individuals, signs of depression, mental anxiety and health problems are noticeably higher.³⁵ Other common outcomes of underemployment include depression, substance abuse, anxiety, death by suicide and violence.³⁶
- **Food Insecurity.**³⁷ Income has a direct impact on the ability to provide adequate healthy food options for families. Health conditions ranged from \$7,370 (arthritis) to \$8,380 (emphysema, respiratory disease, neurological, allergies).³⁸
- **Chronic Disease.**³⁹ Evidence shows higher rates of chronic disease ran from \$8,470 (diabetes) to \$9,160 (emphysema). Longer-term use of health care system needs.
- **Supply and Demand of Health Care Workforce.**^{40,41} Increased demands on the health care workforce as well as the accessibility of supplies in rural and small communities are a growing concern (e.g. pharmacies, optometrists, dentists). Smaller hospitals closing or reducing operating hours means people are not getting the health care they need.

The impact of staying the course has a drastic negative effect on labour market outcomes in our community. The largest effect is on younger families, the unmarried/co-habitant and less educated workers all with no housing options and low income levels. We will see the social consequences with workers exposed more to disease, decreased mental well-being, a gap of essential workers and significantly lower overall health among the most affected workers.

Every day in Canada, 1.7 million households live in a home that is either unaffordable, overcrowded and/or needs major repairs.⁴² Locally, our trajectory is no different; we lack access to all levels of housing (e.g., supportive housing to market housing) with vacancy rates at a record low. We lack accessible, local data. We are witnessing an unfortunate but significant public bias and lack of education toward what housing availability is and what economic value housing all community members hold.



ACTION CONSIDERATIONS

Education Campaign

To change the narrative and support housing as a human right. Housing must meet social, economic, environmental and/or cultural needs.

Education and shared knowledge is required to shift the perception of what a 'home' is and develop a better understanding about the severity of issues across the general population. Current stereotypes, stigma and prejudice feed opposition (Not In My Backyard) to developments that move away from single-detached housing. Development of homes for individuals and families reflecting community needs and concerns is paramount. Issues include our children finding their first home, addressing the homelessness crisis with supportive housing, housing needs of women and children fleeing violence and smaller options for retirees.

The goal is developing a collaborative, inclusive and directed campaign, including government, non-profit, social services, infrastructure (health, education), police services and resident groups. The campaign message must be bold and accept our community's collective responsibility to make our shared space(s) welcoming and inclusive by helping everyone find a place to call home. We must ensure people have access to quality housing. It should be safe, stable, accessible, affordable, promote positive health outcomes, encourage social inclusion, support participation in education and employment and proven to reduce public costs associated with healthcare and emergency services. Our whole community benefits when people have housing that meets their needs.

ACTION:

Phase 1: Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Secure funding to support development and hire a communication/housing specialist.
Phase 2: Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage key stakeholders who will lead and collaborate on this educational awareness campaign.
Phase 3: Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a public campaign.Identify specific public calls to action
Phase 4: Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Educate partners; identify roles and responsibilities of all sector leaders for maximum impact.
Phase 5: Communicate and Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Launch the campaign by utilizing evidence-based research for effective public communications.Monitor, track and mobilize over the course of ten months.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER:

Stratford and Area Builders Association, Municipal Staff and Politicians, Ontario Health Teams, Police Service, Labour, Business Improvement Association, Chambers of Commerce, Social Services, Non-profits, Financial Institutions, Municipal Planning, Economic Development, etc.

Workforce Attraction & Retention

Workforce attraction and retention will need a different strategy to suit the workforce of today and the future which may include the following;

- A **livable income** is critical. Promoting and adopting living wage policies or other standards that promote income fairness within, and between, workplaces.
- **Inclusive Housing & Transportation.** Have appropriate housing options (i.e., location-work/ transportation) and diverse and feasible transportation options.
- **Employment Security.** Huron & Perth have a large amount of precarious work (e.g., part-time, limited-term). In some instances this can be justified (e.g., relief and emergency workers). However, this practice can also be used to avoid added costs associated with full-time, permanent work (e.g., benefits, pension, sick leave).
- **Diversity in the Workplace.** Including women and underrepresented groups in leadership roles is imperative.
- **Diversified Methods.** COVID-19 has brought attention to the validity and (sometimes) preference of non-traditional work outside the standard 9–5. (i.e. virtual possibilities, 4-day work week).

Steps to Certify as a Living Wage Employer

1. **Expression of Interest.** Complete initial contact form online. Anne Coleman, manager of the *Ontario Living Wage Network (OLWN)* employer program, will contact you to discuss certification details and answer questions.
2. **Application Review and License Agreement.** OLWN will review the details of your application and contact you to determine the level of recognition. You will sign the license agreement and pay the employer certification fee.
3. **Certificate Presentation.** OLWN will connect you with the living wage group in your local community (United Way Perth-Huron) to arrange the presentation of your Living Wage Employer Certificate.
4. **Recognition.** OLWN and United Way will recognize your business organization through social media and publications, as well as listing you in the online employer directory and map on both the United Way Perth-Huron and OLWN websites.
5. **Periodic Review.** Each year on the anniversary of your certification you will receive a renewal survey and invoice for the annual employer certification fee. When the living wage calculation is updated we'll contact you with the new rate. Employers have 6 months to make adjustments once the new rate is announced.





ACTION:

Phase 1: Increase the number of Living Wage employers in Perth-Huron.

- Identify potential living wage employers.
- Celebrate living wage employers as they certify.

Phase 2: Housing innovation and development

- Adopting local policies that can support housing needs.
- Missing Middle: Identify diversified housing options, smaller lots, smaller housing.
- Living large in smaller dwellings: more density builds.

Phase 3: Increase diversity in the workforce

- Provide opportunities for underrepresented groups and gender parity in leadership positions.
- Acknowledging those companies who have achieved equity in leadership and highlighting companies' practices for increasing the number of underrepresented groups and women in senior leadership roles.

Phase 4: Consideration of hybrid working models

- Where applicable, hybrid workplaces are agile. Balancing in-office and remote work employees can provide an opportunity to attract an inclusive, skilled workforce that may not be attainable otherwise.

Phase 5: Advocate for paid sick leave, benefits for the precariously employed

- The concept of precarious employment is broad and means work for remuneration characterized by uncertainty, low income and limited social benefits and statutory entitlements. For some, precarious employment is limited to work that has an element of contingency, while for others it is used synonymously with non-standard employment such as part-time and temporary work. However, employees in contingent work include people who are well paid, sometimes precisely because of the uncertainty inherent in their work.
- To fulfill these roles effectively in Huron and Perth, consideration of paid sick leave and/or other benefits is crucial to thriving people and communities.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER:

Employers, United Way, Labour Market Planning Board, Employment Agencies and Services, Municipal Planning Departments, Economic Development, Huron County Immigration Partnership, etc.

Collaboration, Consolidation and Clarity of Direction

A coordinated Community Improvement Plan is imperative. The plan should address housing development, building safe and strong urban and rural communities with dynamic local economies and look to ensure a high quality of life and affordable and suitable homes for everyone, while taking into account population growth and social infrastructure needs (e.g. health care, schools).

Clear identification of roles and responsibilities for federal and provincial government, upper- and lower-tier municipal governments (City/Town/Township Government, County Government), non-profits, financial institutions and developers are essential for coordination and action.

ACTION:

Phase 1: The Development of Community Improvement Plans

- Help municipalities with community improvement policies and plans.

Phase 2: Collective understanding

- Agreement on roles and responsibilities.
- Utilization of consistent language.
- Policy and procedural updates (e.g. mitigation of red tape, time constraints, financial burdens reduced).

Phase 3: Make information accessible

- The need to raise awareness and develop a shared understanding of key issues, challenges and solutions.
- Champions identified to mobilize knowledge and create a cultural shift in understanding.
- Creation of tools (e.g. graphics, fact sheets, presentations, training).

POTENTIAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER:

Local Builders/Developers, Municipal Planning Departments, Economic Development, United Way, Municipal Councils, etc.



Potential BIG System Change

Shifting culture, mindsets and behaviours is the hardest of all the system change strategies and is potentially the most powerful. It is how we profoundly shift the big picture context in which the system operates.

Bringing about change takes all of us as individuals, not just as part of influential organisations, governments or communities.

Structural changes that facilitate and reinforce systemic change use economic tools like taxation and subsidies, as well as political influencing, to gradually shift behaviours and goals. Social and political institutions set the context for individual and group behavior and are meant to provide the resources individuals need to survive. How people act and live is shaped in large part by the social structures in which they find themselves. Social justice (how we act in accordance with the requirements of a law and whether rules are grounded in human consensus or societal norms) is, in part, a matter of ensuring these structures and institutions do in fact satisfy basic human needs (e.g. food, water and shelter; followed by the need for safety, security and belonging). Questions to ask ourselves are;

- How do we effectively address barriers?
e.g., bureaucratic & regulatory
- How do we improve and streamline costly and time-consuming regulatory processes?
e.g. zoning, bylaws
- How do we support and educate businesses?
e.g. regulatory policies and processes
- How can we influence and change local governance?
e.g. multi-tier servicing issues, processes, etc.
- How do we advocate for change & streamline processes?
e.g. legislative requirements, policies and practices



ACTION:

Phase 1: Housing policies and legislative advocacy	• At Provincial, Federal and Municipal levels.
Phase 2: Advocacy efforts regarding current real estate practices and trends	• At Provincial and Federal levels. e.g., bidding wars for homes and rental units; waiving home inspections, etc.
Phase 3: Advocacy efforts regarding improved coordination, processes and proactive infrastructure investments for housing development	• At Municipal level.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER:

Local Builders/Developers, Federal and Provincial Members of Parliament; Municipal Planning Departments, Economic Development, United Way, Municipal Councils, Chambers of Commerce, etc.



Social Research & Planning Council
Operated by United Way Perth-Huron

About the SRPC

The Social Research and Planning Council (SRPC), operated by United Way Perth-Huron, is comprised of community representatives who are dedicated to the collection, analysis and distribution of information relating to social trends and issues in Perth and Huron Counties. The SRPC approaches its work in two ways:

- a. Commissioning research into specific social issues.
- b. Developing recommendations for community improvement based on local findings and working collaboratively with community members to implement change.



Social Research & Planning Council

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WHAT IS THE RESEARCH DATA ADVISORY CONSORTIUM

About Us

Reports To: Social Research and Planning Council (SRPC)

Purpose: The primary role of the Research and Data Advisory Consortium (RDAC) is to support the identification and development of research priorities, create linkages to other data sources, and offer sector specific insights.

Membership: RDAC is comprised of representatives from multiple service organizations, reflecting the composition of our community and encompassing a broad range of community perspectives, geography, organizations, sectors, working groups, tables and networks

Overview: Research and Data Advisory Consortium (RDAC) are knowledge brokers with an objective to act as a conduit between producers and users of knowledge and work towards action-oriented outcomes. As knowledge brokers, RDAC will explore data and research, coalesce relevant information and experiences, and influence, engage, and encourage stakeholders towards action-oriented outcomes.

Knowledge Broker: We facilitate, educate, and disrupt. In our community consultations we directly engage with stakeholders to address challenges. We explore partnerships to transform industry practices and lead events to share expert thinking and promote discussion on a variety of relevant and locally driven issues.

Action: We collaborate on complex social, community challenges. We discuss practical responses to challenges confronting communities and share actions with relevant stakeholders in cross-disciplinary conversations and network dialogue. Through collaborative efforts representing diverse interest groups and relevant and respected expertise, we seek to inspire holistic problem solving. We design our work to provide communities and stakeholders with a clear path forward.

Outcome: The goal of the Research and Data Advisory Committee event aims to achieve three levels of impact:

Individual Level: As knowledge brokers utilizing the information to inform decisions within individual organizations and in community interactions.

Partnership, Collaborative and Relationship Level: Working together for collective impact where objectives align is important in achieving better outcomes for everyone.

Policy, System Level: Sharing knowledge and information brings new ideas and actions to the table to enable change and social justice

OTHER RESOURCES

Economic Development & COVID-19: Impacts Across Perth Huron Counties

<https://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2022-01-05-Economic-Development-COVID-19.pdf>

Gender & COVID-19: Impacts Across Perth Huron

https://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021-11-17-gender-p-h_53978948-3.pdf

Housing & COVID-19: Impacts Across Perth & Huron Counties

https://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021-11-17-Housing-Report-SRPC_Sept-27.v2.pdf

Mental Health & COVID-19: Impact Across Perth & Huron

https://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-04-23-Response-to-COVID_Mental-Health-Across-P-H-FULL-REPORT.pdf

Community Safety and Wellbeing Stratford, St. Marys, North Perth, West Perth, Perth East, Perth South

<https://www.cswb-stratfordperthstmarys.com/>

Community Safety and Wellbeing Huron

<https://www.southhuron.ca/en/government/resources/Community-Safety--Well-Being/CSWB-Plan-Huron.pdf>

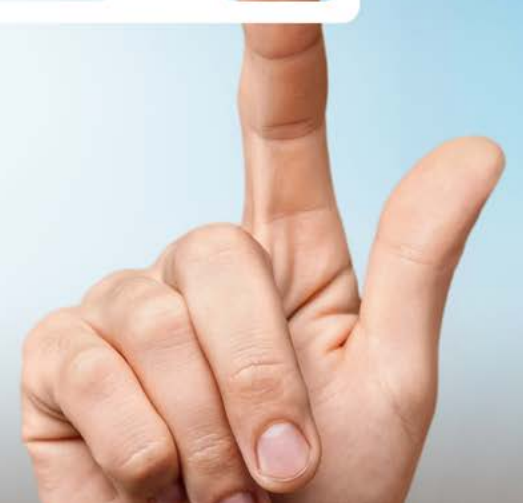
Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys Housing and Homelessness Plan 5-Year Update 2020-2024

https://www.stratford.ca/en/inside-city-hall/resources/Social_Services/Housing/Ten-Year-Housing-and-Homelessness-Plan-Update-2020-2024.pdf

A Long-Term Affordable Housing and Homelessness Plan for the County of Huron 2014-2024. 5 Year review

<https://www.huroncounty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Long-Term-Affordable-Housing-and-Homelessness-Plan-Update.pdf>

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