

# Housing & Homelessness

2019 Report

Lanark County and Town of Smiths Falls



**LANARK  
COUNTY**

June 2020

## **Message from Warden Brian Campbell**

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I am pleased to share the County's 2019 report on our 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. This is a time to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year and the initiatives undertaken to ensure everyone has access to suitable and affordable housing. While we have made progress in some areas, such as the current condition of our housing stock (good state of repair), new housing subsidies, and programs to ensure people stay housed; there is still more to be done.

As we consider the update to the 10-Year Plan, it is important that we set strategic directions and goals that are supported by achievable actions to provide affordable housing for all residents and end homelessness.

## **Message from Chief Administrative Officer Kurt Greaves**

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Housing is a basic need that everyone should have access to. Unfortunately, obtaining housing and maintaining housing are not always easy. Our Housing Services Team works very hard to help many across our communities with their housing needs. The importance of their work cannot be overstated. Their success in helping others is the very definition of community. It is great to reflect on the many successful projects in 2019.

## **Foundations for the Future**

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Our 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is a framework for improving access to safe and affordable housing for our residents. We are committed to achieving this through our strategic directions and actions: increase the supply of affordable housing; plan for a range of housing choices; stabilize and revitalize current social housing stock; ensure an adequate supply of appropriate, supportive and universal housing; educate the community on local housing needs and offer incentives to developers building affordable housing.

## **Overview of Housing Services**

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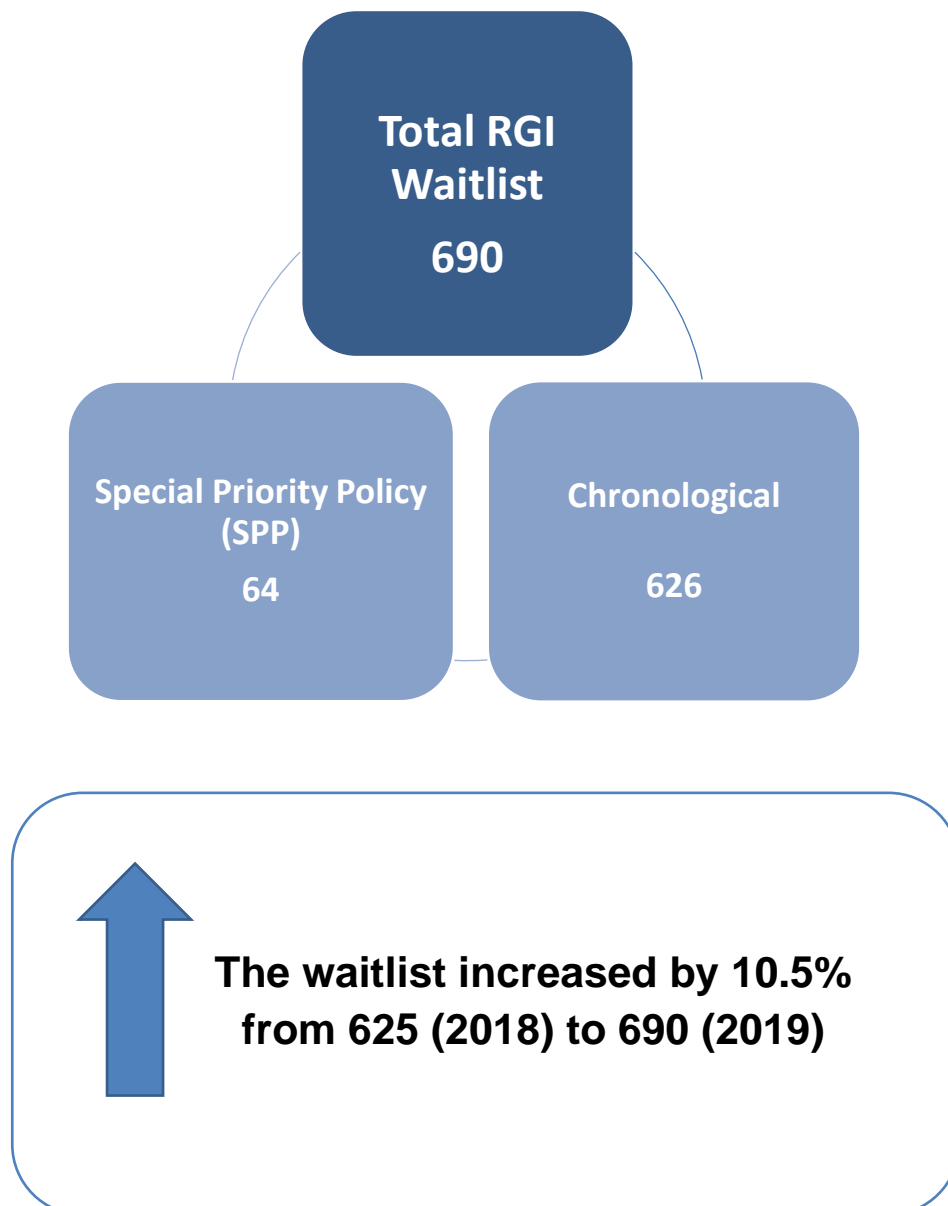
2019 was the first full operational year of integrated County Housing Services (administration of housing and homelessness programs and the Lanark County Housing Corporation). This change provides a system that is more responsive to the needs of our residents, including improved service coordination, long-term service planning, and sustained and adequate funding.

The Housing Services Team consists of a Service Manager, a Housing Supports Supervisor, a Maintenance Supervisor, five Caseworkers, seven Maintenance Workers and two Clerks, working together for the betterment of the community we serve.

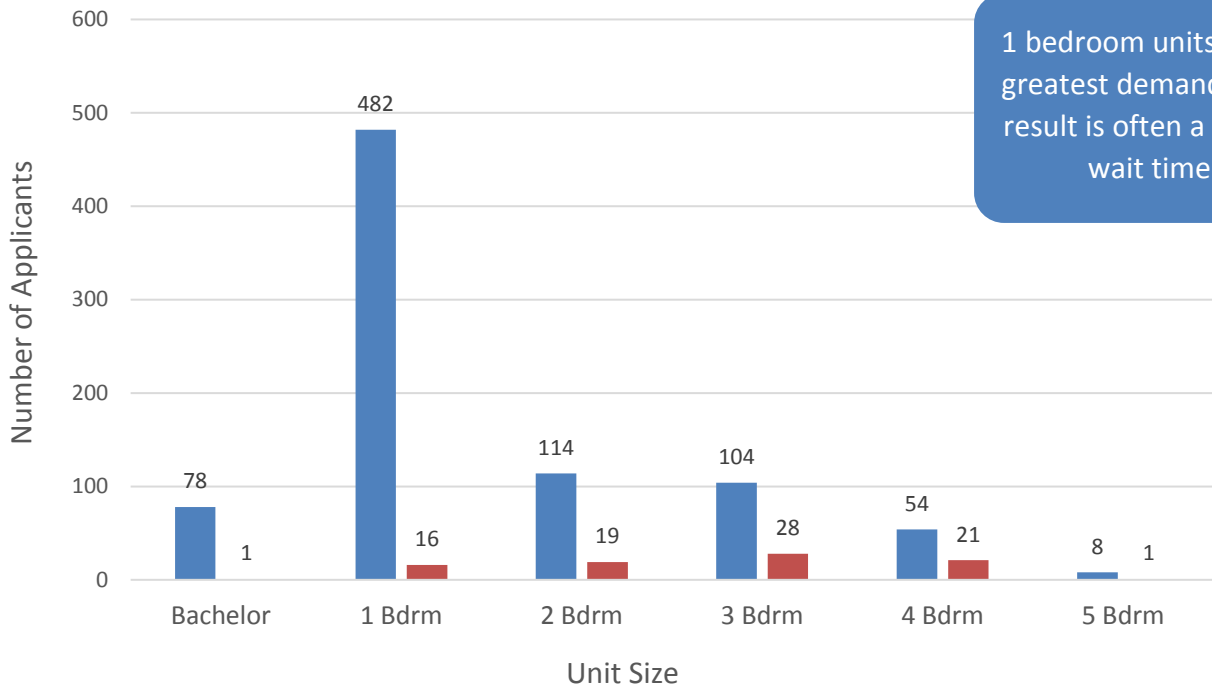
## COMMUNITY HOUSING

### Centralized Waiting List

Access to rent-geared-to-income housing (subsidized or community housing) is through an application to the centralized waiting list. The centralized waiting list is a modified-chronological waiting list of all applicants eligible for **rent-geared-to-income (RGI)** housing in accordance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011*. Under the Special Priority Policy (SPP) (Ontario Regulation 376/11), a special priority household has the highest ranking above all other applicants on the waitlist (e.g. victims of domestic violence, human trafficking).



### RGI Waitlist By Unit Size

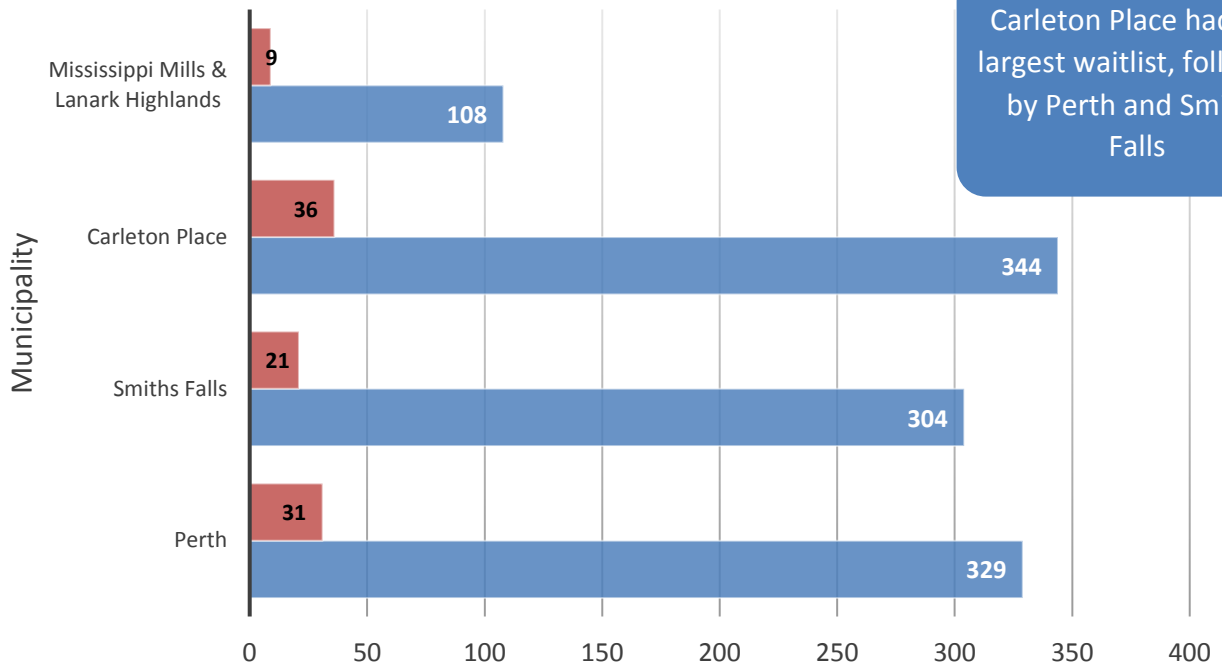


1 bedroom units are in greatest demand; the result is often a longer wait time

Note: applicants may select multiple unit sizes.

■ ALL ■ SPP

### RGI Waitlist by Municipality

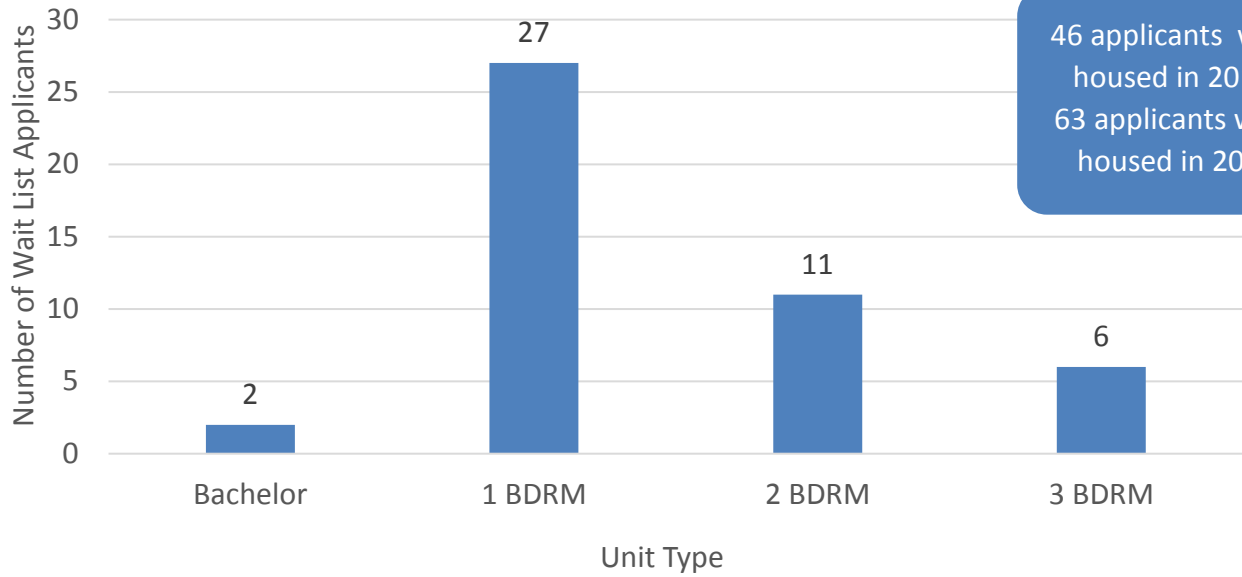


Carleton Place had the largest waitlist, followed by Perth and Smiths Falls

Note: applicants may select multiple locations.

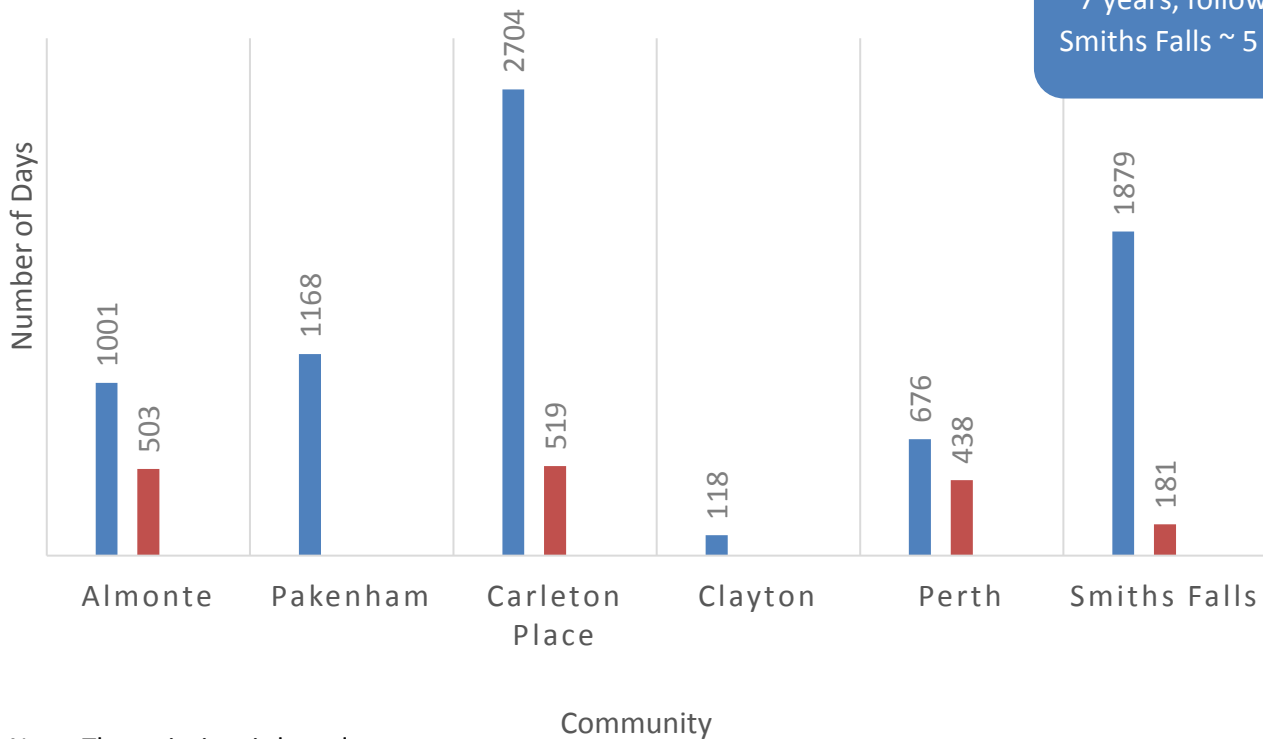
■ ALL ■ SPP

### Applicants Housed By Unit Type



46 applicants were housed in 2019; 63 applicants were housed in 2018

### RGI Average Wait Time By Community (in days)



Carleton Place had the longest wait time ~ 7 years, followed by Smiths Falls ~ 5 years

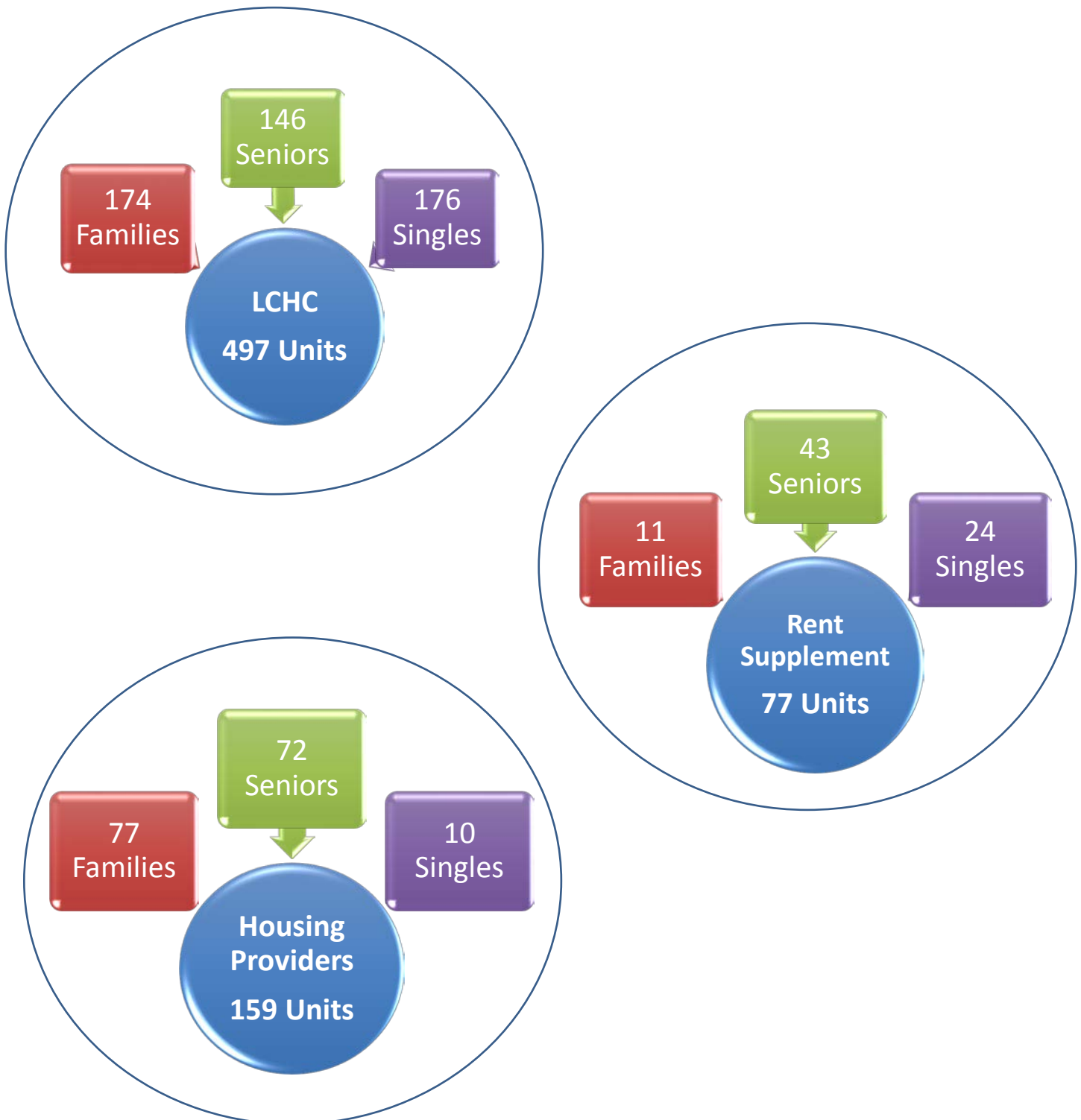
Note: The wait time is based on the original application date to when the applicant is housed.

■ ALL ■ SPP

## Community Housing Portfolio

The community housing portfolio is comprised of three different groups that provide subsidized housing – Lanark County Housing (LCHC), rent supplement (private landlords), and non-profit Housing Providers (we have agreements with five non-profit providers).

Number of subsidized units:



# LANARK COUNTY HOUSING CORPORATION

## Energy Efficient Housing

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In an ongoing effort to make our buildings more energy efficient and environmentally friendly, we have installed Light Emitting Diodes (L.E.D.) lighting throughout our apartment buildings; inside and out. Our entire building portfolio is now equipped with L.E.D. lighting. This initiative will save us money and improve our carbon footprint.

## Fire & Safety Initiatives

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We continue to work with local fire departments in Carleton Place, Almonte, Perth, and Smiths Falls to perform annual inspections of all rental units. Through education and outreach, we have seen an overall improvement in our rental units. During the 2019 inspections, fire and safety citations were down 6% from 2018, with most being minor in nature and easily rectified.

## Hoarding

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Since the introduction of the hoarding support program in 2015, we continue to have success with on-site supports for tenants with a hoarding disorder. In 2019, there was a 50% decrease compared to 2018 in the number of fire and safety citations as a result of hoarding.

## Pest Control

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Pest control is now performed in-house. We have a certified maintenance staff who handles all pest control and exterminations in our housing units. The result is a speedy and efficient resolution to any kind of infestation.



## Unit Makeovers

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Managing move-ins and move-outs can be a daunting task, depending on the condition of the unit. Maintenance staff work hard to ensure that tenants move into a home in immaculate condition; one that they can take pride in. Maintenance staff completed **54-unit turnovers** last year.



**Before**



**After**

## Community Gardens

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With the assistance of our summer students, we undertook a project to revitalize the landscaping and gardens at three of our Carleton Place locations.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE**

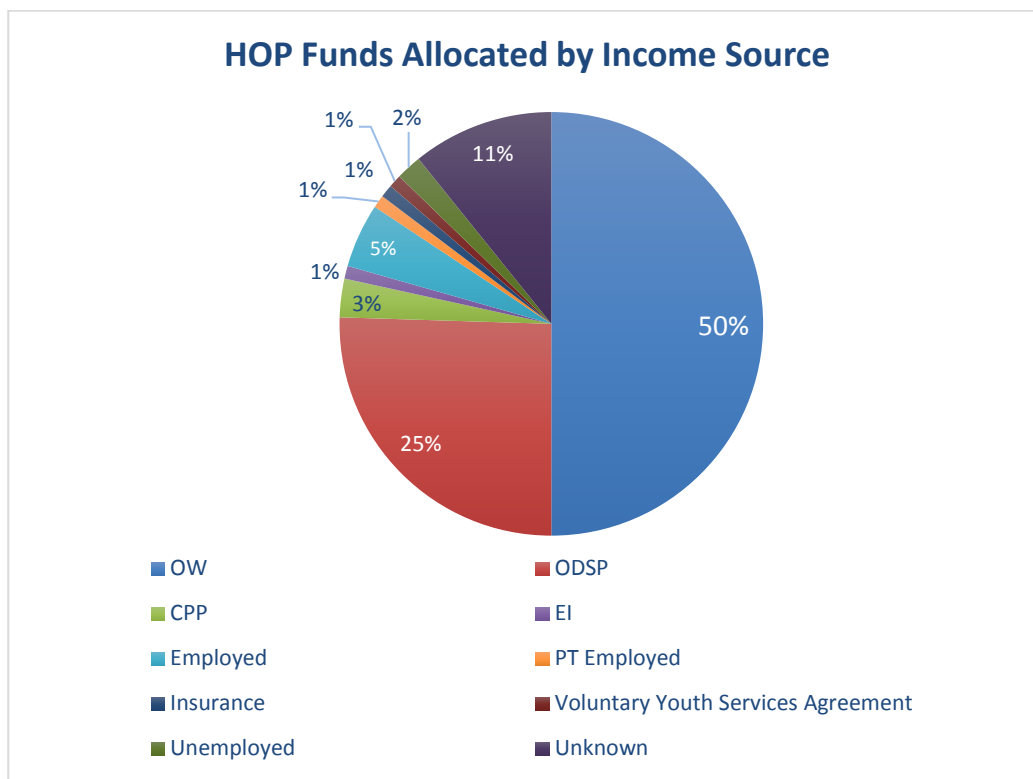
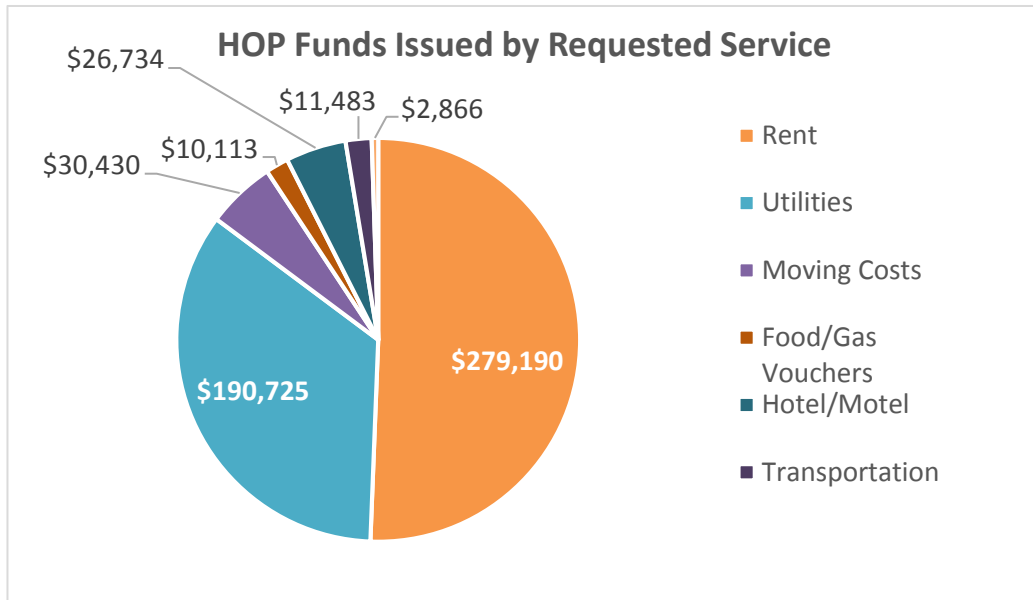


**AFTER**



## COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION INITIATIVE

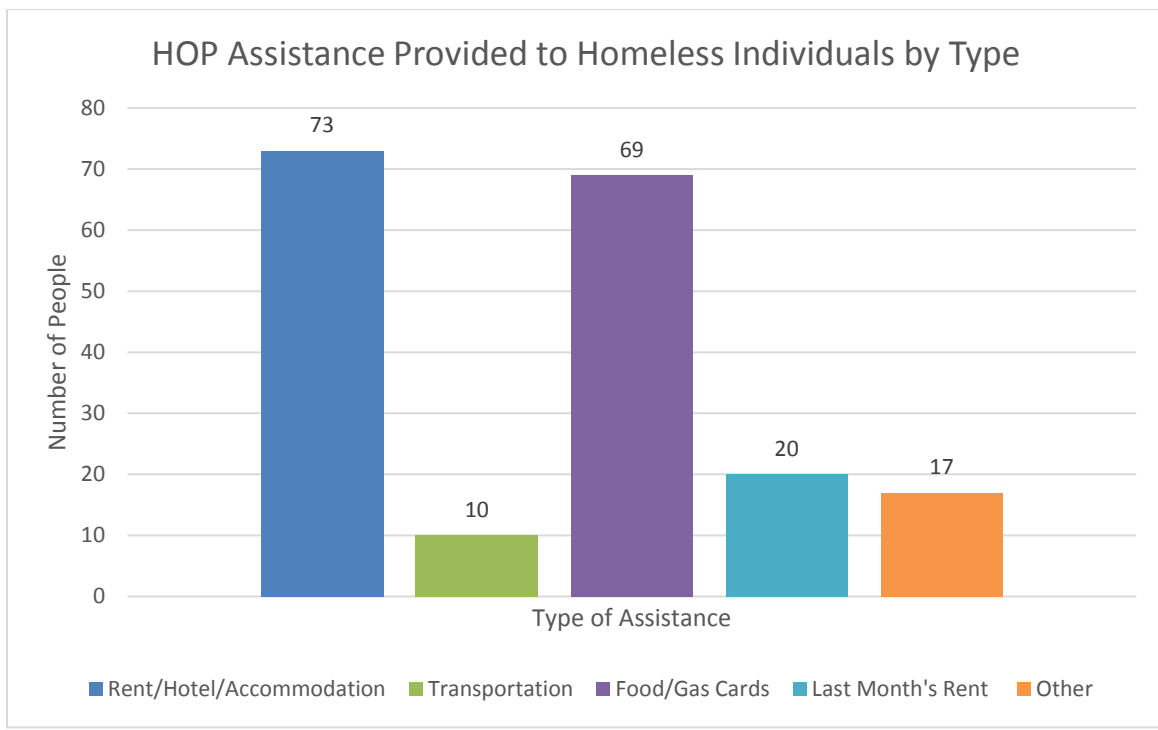
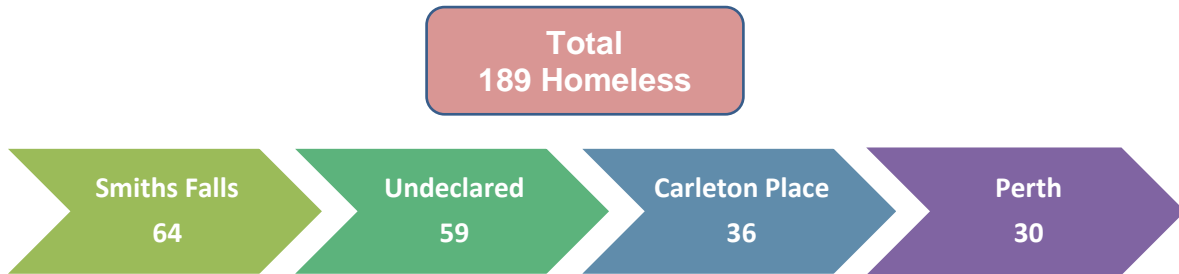
The Housing Options Program (HOP) is funded through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). This program assists people who are at risk of being homeless or experiencing homelessness. Income and asset criteria apply for an applicant to be deemed eligible. It is one of our most popular programs, accessed by many in our community.



Lanark County  
spent **\$551,541**  
helping  
**1,085** people.

## Homelessness

A variety of supports are available to those experiencing homelessness including accommodation, food, and transportation. Tracking homelessness in Lanark County is difficult because initial contact with people who identify as homeless, soon to be homeless, or unstably housed, often do not maintain contact for follow-up.



## Backpack Program

We supported 46 people last year through this program. In addition to financial support, the backpacks provided include essentials such as blankets, socks, and toiletries.



## After-Hours Emergency Services

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We continue to partner with **Victim Services** to provide after-hours homelessness support.



**VICTIM SERVICES**  
Lanark County

**\$13,000** contributed to the after-hours program  
**77 homeless** provided with assistance

## Lanark County Mental Health (LCMH)

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LCMH received **\$40,000** to provide assistance to households struggling with hoarding to ensure they maintain a safe and healthy home. The funding provides \$2,000 per household to cover costs such as dumpster rentals, temporary storage facilities, cleaning and repair services, pest control and organization supplies.



## Cornerstone Landing Youth Services

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Cornerstone Landing received **\$12,000** to support their financial assistance program to provide a \$200/month rent support to five (5) youth (ages 16-24) over a 12 month period.

## The Table Community Food Centre

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The Table received **\$35,950** to provide a series of workshops and training focused on housing retention; transportation; and staff remuneration for a new benefits assessment pilot.



# HOMEOWNERSHIP

The Homeownership Program provides down payment assistance (up to 5% of purchase price), in the form of a forgivable loan, for low and moderate-income households who are currently renting and looking to purchase their first home.

The program is intended to provide eligible households with the opportunity to move along the housing continuum and up the socio-economic ladder to reach homeownership, freeing up units in the rental market and encouraging developers to build affordable housing by fostering demand.

## Highlights

\$ 118,725 invested (\$50,000 allocation + \$68,728 revolving fund)

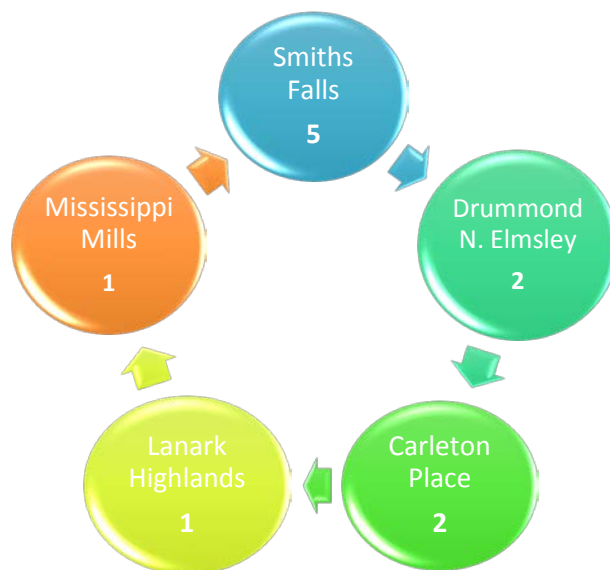
11 families became home owners

On average, recipients received a \$10,793 loan

Maximum house purchase price - \$305,372

Maximum household income - \$91,400

## Home Purchase by Municipality

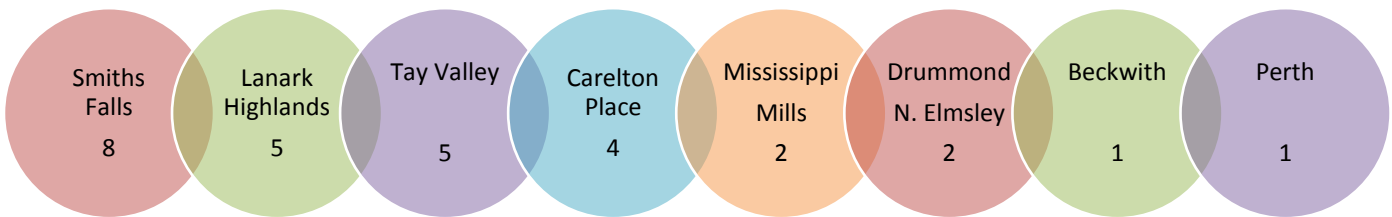


# RENOVATE LANARK

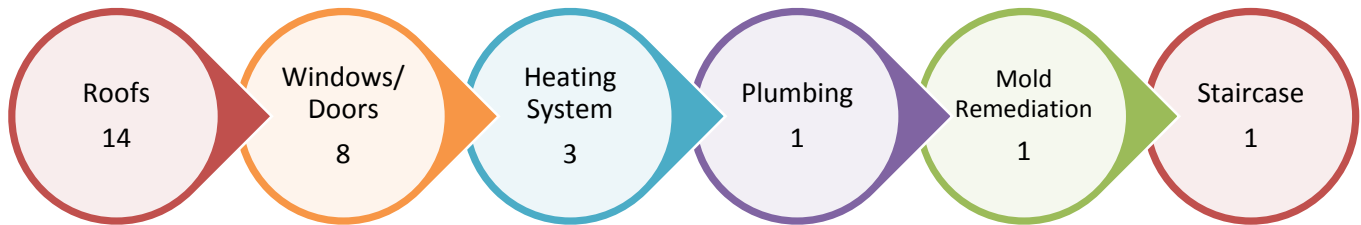


Under Renovate Lanark, a total of **\$247,305** was issued in forgivable loans to help **28 qualified households** undertake essential projects to allow them to continue to reside safely in their homes. Most of the repair projects were roofs, windows/doors and heating systems.

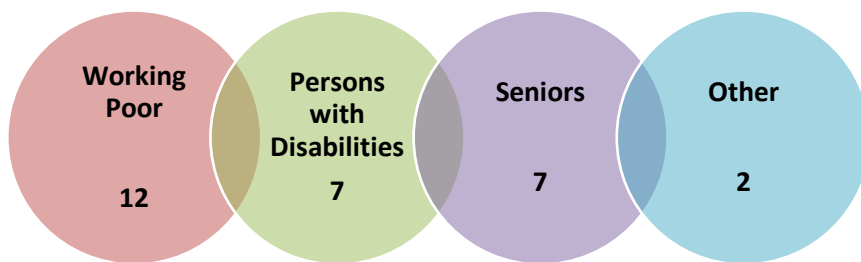
## By Municipality



## By Project Type



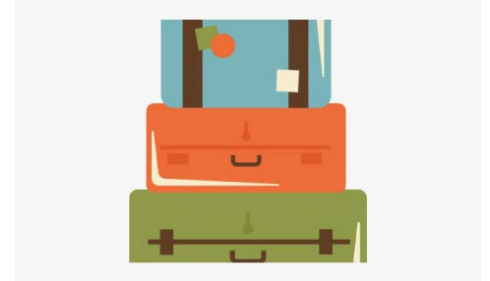
## By Target Group



## PORTABLE HOUSING BENEFIT

### Portable Housing Benefit - Accessibility

This is a County funded program for those on the centralized waiting list who require an accessible unit. The limited number of accessible units in the social housing portfolio often results in longer wait times, so this program is an excellent alternative. It allows recipients to find appropriate accommodations to meet their specific needs, while providing a rent supplement that makes housing more affordable. The benefit is completely portable and permits recipients to move within Lanark County.



**Total 15 households**  
**Average monthly benefit = \$282.00**

### Portable Housing Benefit – Survivors of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking

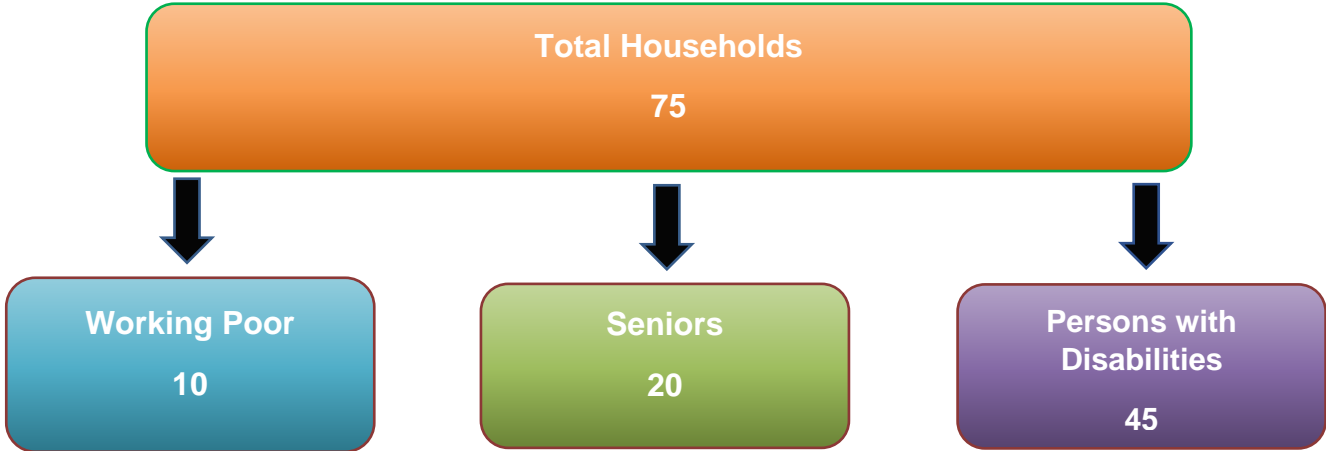
This is a provincially funded program for survivors of domestic violence and survivors of human trafficking who qualify for Special Priority Policy (SPP) status. Eligible households received a monthly benefit payment and accessed money towards first and last month's rent.

**Total 20 households**  
**Average monthly benefit = \$173.61**



# RENT SUPPORT

The Rent Support Program, under the provincial Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH), is a housing allowance that helps low-income households by providing a portion of their rent (up to a maximum of \$200 per month). It is paid directly to the landlord and is intended to help offset high shelter costs.



This program is being phased out over the next three years, with final payments being issued to recipients in March 2023.

# HOMEMAKERS PROGRAM

The Homemakers Program supplements home care services to qualified applicants, usually in the form of light housekeeping or other household tasks that the applicant is unable to undertake on their own. Typically, an applicant can receive a maximum of 4 hours per month in assistance.

**Total 8 recipients**



## RENT SUPPLEMENT

Rent supplement programs provide rent-geared-to-income assistance to qualifying individuals. We have 77 rent supplement units including a partnership with Lanark County Interval House (LCIH) to support women and children fleeing domestic violence through Second Stage Housing.

### LCIH Second Stage Housing

LCIH Second Stage Housing opened their doors and welcomed residents in early November 2018. Since that time, a number of the original residents have moved into permanent housing in the community. Currently, all four units are occupied and there is a waiting list of applicants who have applied to get into Second Stage.



Approximately 12 children and 14 adults have been assisted through this program with the rent supplement support from the County. This partnership demonstrates the importance of safe alternatives for families fleeing violence. Women have been vocal in expressing their gratitude for the benefits that Second Stage has provided in their recovery and living a life free from violence.

Second Stage Housing continues to provide a safe, affordable, and supportive environment for women and their children. Here, they may begin to heal, stabilize, and get connected to relevant services while living independently. This service is enabling families affected by abuse to safely move one step closer toward integration back into the community. From program enhancements to formal resident meetings and group support, this program continues to offer truly remarkable outcomes. We appreciate the ongoing support of the County for this program and look forward to further model development in other areas of our County as the future unfolds.





## DOMICILIARY HOSTELS

The Domiciliary Hostel Program assists residents who require assistance with the tasks of daily living and who meet the income criteria. Hostels support clients with accommodation, meals, and regular intake of medications.

We funded 50 beds for those at-risk of becoming homeless without the additional supports offered in this setting. The hostels have also provided emergency housing support on occasion. Due to an increased demand for supportive housing, funding for this program has been increased to provide 55 beds in 2020.

The County has agreements with four hostel providers located in Smiths Falls, Drummond North Elmsley Township, Montague Township, and Carleton Place.



**Rideau Ferry Country Home**  
Drummond North Elmsley



**Victoria House**  
Smiths Falls



**Paradise Valley**  
Carleton Place



**Shardon Manor**  
Montague Township

## CANADA-ONTARIO COMMUNITY HOUSING INITIATIVE (COCHI)

The Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) was introduced in 2019 with the goal of repairing and renewing the existing community housing supply; to protect affordability for households in community housing including the non-profit housing sector; and to expand the supply of community housing over time. Our allocation of \$116,000 was distributed evenly across all housing providers on a per-unit basis.

Housing Provider	Repair Component	Investment
Carebridge Community Support Corporation	Plumbing and Water Conservation	\$ 22,942
Clayton Seniors Housing	Siding Replacement	\$ 3,630
Carleton Place Municipal Non-Profit	Installation of Accessible Showers/Tubs	\$ 4,501
Tay Valley Non-Profit	Installation of Screen Doors	\$ 4,356
Tayside Community Residential and Support Options	Shingle Replacement	\$ 2,614
Lanark County Housing Corporation	Shingle Replacement Sussex/Empress	\$ 72,159

**\$116,000** invested in the repair of social housing units

The new shingles at our Empress Avenue and Sussex Street buildings in Smiths Falls (total 31 units) are an energy efficiency improvement and are more esthetically pleasing for the community.



**Empress Avenue Roof – Before**



**Empress Avenue Roof – After**

## FUTURE INITIATIVES

### Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) – New Build in Carleton Place



In November 2019, County Council awarded a contract to provide a 20-unit community housing building at 130 Lansdowne Avenue in Carleton Place. Construction is set to commence in the Spring of 2020.

The building will consist of 17 one-bedroom units and 3 two-bedroom units. 3 one-bedroom units and 1 two-bedroom unit will be fully accessible.

“Constructing this building in Carleton Place will help us to meet an urgent need for community housing units in that town and to work towards attaining service level standards required by the province.”  
Warden Richard Kidd (Beckwith Reeve).

### Canada Ontario Housing Benefit

In December 2019, the Province, along with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), announced the new Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) program.

The COHB program is a portable housing support intended to benefit thousands of households in Ontario. This will include about 1,500 households that will transfer from Ontario’s existing portable housing benefit program for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking (PHB-SPP). The COHB program is set to begin in April 2020 and is expected to provide an average rent subsidy of about \$2,500 annually (approximately \$200 per month) to qualified applicants.



## NATIONAL HOUSING DAY

We launched a social media campaign the week of November 18-22 to recognize National Housing Day. Throughout the week, we shared information about housing and homelessness as we reflected on the challenges that many people face in finding a safe and affordable place to call home. We presented myths about those experiencing homelessness; statistics of those experiencing homelessness; costs of homelessness; ways to change the conversation and remove the stigma; and concluded with a proclamation from Council.

### *National Housing Day* November 22, 2019

WHEREAS the lack of affordable, stable and available housing in Lanark County impacts the well-being of all residents, including our most vulnerable and low-income households, and limits their ability to fully participate and contribute in our community.

The Government of Canada has designated November 22 as National Housing Day to commemorate housing partnerships that contribute to the social and economic health of Canadians.

The goal of National Housing Day is to raise awareness about local housing issues while striving for effective solutions. The day is an opportunity to remind us that there is still much work to do to ensure that all residents have access to safe and healthy homes that help to build strong local communities.

The County is committed to working with the federal and provincial governments, as well as private and non-profit housing organizations to deliver positive housing outcomes for our residents.

On National Housing Day, Lanark County recognizes the many individuals and organizations that play an important role in providing safe, secure and affordable housing opportunities to those in need.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Warden Richard Kidd, on behalf of Lanark County Council, do hereby proclaim November 22, 2019 as National Housing Day in Lanark County.



For more information:

Email: [housingapplications@lanarkcounty.ca](mailto:housingapplications@lanarkcounty.ca)

Call: 613-267-4200  
Toll-Free: 1-888-952-6275

Visit: [www.lanarkcounty.ca](http://www.lanarkcounty.ca)

52 Abbott Street North, Unit 4  
Smiths Falls, ON K7A 1W3

*Photograph Courtesy of Sean Ritchie*