



## **The Corporation of the County of Wellington**

### **Social Services Committee**

#### **Minutes**

October 13, 2021

Council Chambers

Present: Warden Kelly Linton  
Councillor David Anderson (Chair)  
Councillor Campbell Cork  
Councillor Don McKay  
Councillor Steve O'Neill

Regrets: Mayor Cam Guthrie

Also Present: Councillor Jeff Duncan  
Stephen Dewar, General Manager/Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service

Staff: Eddie Alton, Social Services Administrator  
Luisa Artuso, Director of Children's Early Years  
Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works  
Donna Bryce, County Clerk  
Shauna Calder, Manager of Finance  
Mark Poste, Director of Housing  
Scott Wilson, CAO

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#### **1. Call to Order**

At 1:00 pm, the Chair called the meeting to order.

#### **2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

**3. Delegation:**

3.1 Stephen Dewar, General Manager/Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service

1/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor O'Neill

**Seconded by:** Councillor McKay

That the Paramedic Service Palliative Care Programme Report by Stephen Dewar, General Manager/Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service be received for information.

**Carried**

**4. Social Services Financial Statements and Variance Projections as of September 30, 2021**

2/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor McKay

That the Social Services Financial Statements and Variance Projections as of September 30, 2021 be approved.

**Carried**

**5. Children's Early Years Division**

5.1 2022 Directly Operated Child Care User Fees

3/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That the user fees charged by Directly Operated Child Care Centres as of January 1, 2022 be approved as set out in report CEYD-21-11; and,

That staff be directed to prepare the necessary by-law.

**Carried**

5.2 EarlyON Child and Family Centres Update

4/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor McKay

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That the report, EarlyON Child and Family Centres Update, be received for information.

**Carried**

5.3 Temporary Casual Active Screeners at Directly Operated Child Care Centres

5/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor McKay

That the report, Temporary Casual Active Daily Screeners at Directly Operated Child Care Centres, be received for information.

**Carried**

**6. Ontario Works**

6.1 2021-2022 Ontario Works Service Plan

6/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor McKay

That report OW-21-06 2021-2022 Ontario Works Service Plan be received for information.

**Carried**

6.2 Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination – Host Agency Transition

7/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor O'Neill

That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to enter into an ongoing funding agreement with United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin to support the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination community collaborative initiative, subject to the agreement satisfying the requirements of staff and the County Solicitor; and

That reimbursements provided through this Agreement align with the previous funding provided to WDGP to support the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination; and

That staff take appropriate action to terminate the existing agreement with Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health related to the delivery of the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination.

**Carried**

6.3 Ontario Works Statistics

8/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor McKay

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That the Ontario Works Statistics as of August 31, 2021 be received for information.

**Carried**

**7. Housing**

**7.1 Housing Services Status and Activity Report - Q1 and Q2 (January1-June 30, 2021)**

9/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor Cork

**Seconded by:** Councillor McKay

That the Housing Services Status and Activity Report - Q1 and Q2 (January1-June 30, 2021) be received for information.

**Carried**

**7.2 Housing Services Tenant Support Partnerships**

10/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor O'Neill

That report HS-21-27 Housing Services Tenant Support Partnerships be received for information.

**Carried**

**7.3 Warming Centre Extension**

11/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That report HS-21-28 Warming Centre Extension be received for information; and

That staff be permitted to commit funding to support the 12 month extension of the warming centre programme in partnership with the Welcome In Drop In Centre; and

That staff be permitted to draft all the necessary agreements required to carry out the funding, to the satisfaction of staff and the County Solicitor.

**Carried**

7.4 2022-23 Federal Provincial Housing and Homelessness Funding

12/8/21

**Moved by:** Councillor McKay

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That report HS-21-29 2022-23 Federal and Provincial Homelessness Funding be received for information.

**Carried**

7.5 Health Care Support Services Update

13/8/21

**Moved by:** Warden Linton

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cork

That report HS-21-30 Health Care Support Services Update be received for information.

**Carried**

**8. Adjournment**

At 1:57 pm, the Chair adjourned the meeting until November 10, 2021 or at the call of the Chair.

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David Anderson  
Chair  
Social Services Committee

# Staff Report



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To Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee

From Stephen Dewar, Chief, Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service

Date October 13, 2021

Subject **Paramedic Service Palliative Care Program**

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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

To provide awareness of a new program involving Guelph Wellington Paramedics that provides better care for patients registered as palliative, and aiming at respecting their dignity and addressing their end-of-life needs with compassion and respect.

## Report

Guelph Wellington Paramedic Services has begun a new program to provide better services to end-of-life patients in Guelph and Wellington County. The services include new and different medical directives for treating pain, shortness of breath, delirium and nausea and vomiting. Paramedics were also provided with additional education designed to allow them to provide better support for patients and their families in very difficult circumstances. Unlike other medical directives utilized by paramedics, these directives are designed to assist the patient so that they are able to stay in their home if they prefer to.

The new program was adapted from a similar program that was introduced in Nova Scotia, and implementation included additional education for paramedics that was provided by physicians who specialize in palliative care. Guelph Wellington Paramedic Service is one of several paramedic services in Ontario to introduce this program as a trial to determine if it will successfully meet the needs and respect the wishes of our patients.

This program is in addition to another initiative introduced at Guelph Wellington Paramedic service in 2020 that allows us to transport patients directly to a hospice centre where appropriate.

Patients must be registered with the palliative team of Home and Community Care to participate in the program, and the service is working closely with that team to

ensure that consistent care is provided. Other partners in the program include Hamilton Health Sciences Centre for Paramedic Education and Research and Hospice Wellington. Palladium Canada has provided course materials and program training to paramedics.

The Palliative program is being introduced as a trial that will involve surveys of patients and their families to ensure that these services meet their needs. The trial will continue through March, 2022 and will be reevaluated at that time before potentially becoming permanent.

### **Implications of the Program**


The introduction of this program will involve a small cost for additional medications and equipment. The costs of providing paramedics with the additional education were absorbed into the annual continuing education programs already in place.

Home and Community Care registers approximately 200 patients in their palliative care program annually. GWPS anticipates that we will be involved with 20 – 30 of those patients per year.

The program is expected to add additional scene time when assisting a patient at end of life. The additional scene time is expected to be offset by a decrease in patient transport times, and the reduced number of patients being transported to the Emergency Departments through this and other strategies is expected to help mitigate time lost to delays in offloading patients in hospitals.

At the core this Palliative Care Program is good, patient-centred care that respects the dignity and end-of-life wishes of our patients and their families, allowing Guelph Wellington Paramedics to care for them with respect and compassion.

### **Respectfully Submitted**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Dewar', is written over a horizontal line.

Stephen Dewar  
General Manager / Chief  
Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Service  
519-822-1260 ext. 2805  
[Stephen.dewar@guelph.ca](mailto:Stephen.dewar@guelph.ca)





# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Shauna Calder, Manager of Finance  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 15, 2021  
**Subject:** **Social Services Financial Statements and Variance Projections as of September 30, 2021**

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### Background:

This report is respectfully submitted in accordance with the County's Budget Variance Reporting policy, and provides an updated projection to year-end based on expenditures and revenues to September 30, 2021 for Social Services.

Operations across all County departments have continued to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are likely to see financial implications in various ways throughout the remainder of 2021. Impacts specific to COVID-19 are identified where applicable.

### Ontario Works

- Grant and subsidies are under budget for the first nine months by approximately \$3.6 million due to lower expenditures on the social assistance line. This is directly related to Ontario Works caseload which continue to decrease as clients access federal benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Salaries, wages and benefits are currently under budget by \$263,000 and year-end projected savings are approximately \$350,000. These savings are due to vacancies and gapping.
- Supplies, materials and equipment are under budget by \$28,000 for the first nine months of the year. It is projected that by year-end savings will be \$36,000 on this line.
- Purchased services are tracking under budget by a \$125,000 year-to-date. This is largely driven by savings in conferences, mileage, postage, training and education in light of COVID. Year-end savings are projected to be \$167,000 on this line.
- Programmes reported in the social assistance line are tracking significantly under budget due to caseload remaining low as clients continue to access federal COVID-19 benefits. Since Ontario Works benefits are 100% covered by the province, there will be no levy impact. Year-end savings anticipated in discretionary benefits total \$180,000 (\$121,000 County and \$59,000 City). These savings are largely made up of lower dental, prescribed drugs, optical, medical travel and funeral expenses in light of COVID.
- The transfer payment line appears over budget due to several annual payments being issued early in the year, and the unbudgeted payment made to the Integrated Youth Services Network. At year end this line will remain over budget by \$115,000, but will be offset by the transfer from reserves line.
- Overall, municipal savings of \$760,000 (\$226,000 County and \$534,000 City) are projected for year-end.

## Capital

Ontario Works capital addresses facility needs related to buildings that house administration staff and is overseen by County Maintenance staff. This report provides a summary of the 2021 Ontario Works capital spending for the period ending September 30, 2021.

Ontario Works capital began 2021 with a total approved budget of \$395,000 consisting of five projects. To date staff have completed and closed out two projects.

The table below accounts for life-to-date spending and purchase order commitments for total available funding of \$171,018.

| <b>Ontario Works</b>                      | <b>Sept 30, 2021</b> |
|---|----------------------|
| Open Capital at Dec 31, 2020              | \$ 255,000           |
| plus: 2021 Approved Capital budget        | \$ 140,000           |
| plus: 2021 In-Year Budget Adjustments     |                      |
| 2021 Total Approved Capital budget        | \$ 395,000           |
| less: Previous Years Capital Spending*    | \$ (33,982)          |
| <b>Available Capital Funding for 2021</b> | <b>\$ 361,018</b>    |
| 2021 Capital Spending to date             | \$ -                 |
| Open Purchase Orders                      | \$ -                 |
| Closed Projects                           | \$ (190,000)         |
| <b>Uncommitted Approved Funding</b>       | <b>\$ 171,018</b>    |

\*Previous year capital spending represents open projects only

The following table details spending to date and project spending plans for 2021.

| <b>Ontario Works Capital</b>      | <b>LTD Budget</b> | <b>LTD Actuals</b> | <b>Remaining Budget</b> | <b>Comments</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 129 Wyndham Generator Upgrade     | \$40,000          | -                  | \$40,000                | The generator upgrade is required based on updated building code requirements. Staff continue working with GenCare to review options and costing. Should additional budget be required it will be included in the 2022 capital budget.   |
| 129 Wyndham: Flooring Replacement | \$35,000          | \$25,199           | \$9,801                 | Delays in obtaining the appropriate materials for the job have been resolved and the work is ready to move forward. Staff are coordinating the timing of works with the elevator work budgeted under the property capital budget. No significant variance is anticipated at this time. |
| 129 Wyndham Exterior Stone Work   | \$130,000         | \$8,783            | \$121,217               | Work continues on the façade and, weather permitting, will be complete in year.  |
| <b>Total Ontario Works</b>        | <b>\$205,000</b>  | <b>\$33,982</b>    | <b>\$171,018</b>        |  |

## Children's Early Years

- The grants and subsidies line is currently tracking under budget. This line does include one-time provincial funding of \$1.4 million that was not included in the budget (Safe Restart, Reinvestment & Emergency Child Care). Staff are reviewing the needs of our community partners to ensure they are supported during the challenging times created by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is expected that the full budgeted provincial subsidy allocation as well as the one-time provincial funding will be fully spent at year-end.
- Parent fees collected from our directly operated centres are currently slightly under budget. During the multiple stay at home orders, parents had the option to not utilize their full-time spots and were only billed for the days they attended the centre. Several infant and toddler rooms have also not been at full capacity at different points in the year. Based on our current capacity, it is estimated that the City will be slightly above budget by \$25,000 (Willowdale) and the County will be under budget by \$70,000 (Mt. Forest, Palmerston and Wellington Place) at year-end.
- Salaries, wages and benefit expenses are tracking under budget by approximately \$685,000. Half of this relates to staff leaves that have not been backfilled, and full capacity not being reached at our four directly operated centres. This has been partially offset by additional positions added during the year in order to help with the duties required related to the pandemic. The remaining savings relate to vacancies and gapping. It is expected that there will be savings of \$930,000 at year-end (\$500,000 County and \$430,000 City).
- Supplies, materials and equipment continue to track under budget. Savings have been seen at our directly operated child care centres due to the centres not being at full capacity. At year-end, it is expected we will have \$190,000 in savings (\$115,000 County and \$75,000 City).
- Purchased services are currently tracking under budget due to reduced spending in conferences, mileage, room and facility rentals, grounds maintenance, and professional services. Due to the nature of the pandemic limiting purchases and services the County can acquire or provide, it is expected that \$150,000 in savings will be realized at year-end (\$65,000 County and \$85,000 City).
- The social assistance line reflects significant year-to-date savings related to lower expenditures in Fee Subsidy as this need has been reduced during the pandemic. Other areas experiencing savings include General Operating Grants, Wage Enhancement, and Repairs and Maintenance. This has been partially offset by \$1.4 million in one-time spending as mentioned above under grants and subsidies.
- It is anticipated that savings seen to date will be reallocated into the community to support the child care system as they manage the pandemic, and no significant savings are expected at year-end for either the County or City.

## Capital

| Children's Early Years Capital | LTD Budget | LTD Actuals | Remaining Budget | Comments   |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|--|
| Rockwood Child Care Grant      | \$210,000  | -           | \$210,000        | Project construction delays pushed the centre opening to the first quarter of 2022. Staff will have a better idea of the status of this payment closer to the end of the year. |

| Children's Early Years Capital               | LTD Budget       | LTD Actuals | Remaining Budget | Comments   |
|--|------------------|-------------|------------------|--|
| 133 Wyndham: Roofing                         | \$100,000        | -           | \$100,000        | Staff anticipate completion this fall. The work is currently awaiting curbs to support the HVAC systems while the roof work is underway. |
| <b>Total Children's Early Years Division</b> | <b>\$310,000</b> | -           | <b>\$310,000</b> |  |

## Social Housing

- Administration:
  - Salaries and benefits are currently tracking close to budget and it is expected that this line will be on budget at year-end.
  - Supplies and purchased services have a positive year-to-date variance of \$245,000 from areas such as conferences, legal, consultants, office supplies, security and office furnishings. A large portion of these savings are due to timing (annual software license payment and a one-time chair replacement) and it is estimated that \$55,000 in savings will be realized at year-end (\$10,000 County and \$45,000 City).
- County-Owned Social Housing Units:
  - Rent revenue collections are currently under budget and is anticipated that this trend will continue resulting a year-end position of \$135,000 under budget (\$10,000 County and -\$145,000 City).
  - Supplies, materials and equipment is tracking below budget due to the timing of heating and plumbing expenses and no year-end savings are projected.
  - Purchased services currently has a positive variance of approximately \$400,000. A portion of these savings are due to the delay of annual inspections from spring to fall as a result of the pandemic. An increase in work orders is expected now that inspections are moving ahead and this will lead to year-end savings of \$225,000 (\$70,000 County and \$155,000 City)
- Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI):
  - The CHPI programme is tracking significantly under budget due to utilizing one-time COVID-19 funding in the first quarter, lower than expected costs in rent bank and retirement homes, and staff vacancies and gapping.
  - Community needs are being closely monitored and it is anticipated that all provincial funds and municipal contributions will be exhausted, resulting in zero savings at year-end.
- Rent Supplement:
  - Overall, rent supplement programmes are currently experiencing savings. The majority of these savings are in programmes that are 100% funded (IAH, IAH-Ext & SIF) and have no cost implications to the municipal tax levy. It is expected that the City will have approximately \$90,000 in savings and the County will be over budget by \$5,000 at year-end.
- Mental Health and Addictions:
  - Programme expenditures are over budget by \$420,000. These costs are fully covered by provincial funding and a one-time funding allocation that was received in the first quarter. No municipal impact will be seen at year-end.

- COVID-19:
  - The County has received several funding allocations that have been partially or fully utilized in 2021: \$1,526,715 (Federal - Reaching Home Expansion Phase 1 & 2), \$9,774,730 (Provincial – Social Services Relief Fund Phase 2, 3 & 4) and \$100,000 (Mental Health and Addictions). The County has currently utilized \$3,646,905 of this funding in 2021. These programmes require zero municipal contributions in order to receive the entire allocation. Community needs are constantly being analyzed to ensure we are working towards maximizing our allocations. At this time, it is not expected that we will require municipal contributions to cover the additional costs during the pandemic.
- Non-Profit & Co-op Housing:
  - Recent Annual Information Return reconciliations have resulted in balances owing to a small number of housing providers. This combined with budget renewals will result in the City being over budget by \$45,000 and the County to be close to budget at year-end.
- Overall, year-end savings are projected to be approximately \$165,000 (\$65,000 County and \$100,000 City).

## Capital

Social Housing capital began the year with a total approved budget of \$9,732,300 consisting of 20 projects. To date there have been two budget adjustments and five projects are now complete and ready to close.

The table below accounts for life to date spending, in year budget adjustments and purchase order commitments for total available funding of \$2,876,588.

| <b>Social Housing</b>                     | <b>Sept 30, 2021</b> |
|---|----------------------|
| Open Capital at Dec 31, 2020              | \$ 4,616,900         |
| plus: 2021 Approved Capital budget        | \$ 5,115,400         |
| plus: 2021 In-Year Budget Adjustments     | \$ 864,000           |
| 2021 Total Approved Capital budget        | \$ 10,596,300        |
| less: Previous Years Capital Spending     | \$ (2,619,470)       |
| <b>Available Capital Funding for 2021</b> | <b>\$ 7,976,830</b>  |
| 2021 Capital Spending to date             | \$ (3,276,376)       |
| Open Purchase Orders                      | \$ (1,446,324)       |
| Closed Projects                           | \$ (377,542)         |
| <b>Uncommitted Approved Funding</b>       | <b>\$ 2,876,588</b>  |

The following table details spending to date and project spending plans for 2021.

| <b>Social Housing Capital</b>              | <b>LTD Budget</b> | <b>LTD Actuals</b> | <b>Remaining Budget</b> | <b>Comments</b>   |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Provincially Funded Grants to Providers    |                   |                    |                         |   |
| COCHI Community Housing Initiative         | \$1,468,000       | \$1,350,270        | \$117,730               | 100% Provincially funded programmes continue with additional funds in 2022. |
| OPHI Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative | \$2,605,600       | \$876,043          | \$1,729,558             |   |

| Social Housing Capital                           | LTD Budget | LTD Actuals | Remaining Budget | Comments  |
|--|------------|-------------|------------------|---|
| Design / Planning Projects                       |            |             |                  |   |
| 65 Delhi Renovations                             | \$0        | \$100,187   | (\$100,187)      | Project was approved with no budget allocation by Council in March 2021. Spending to date reflects the submission of a planning application to the City and consulting fees. Staff are currently working through issues with a neighbourhood group and will provide updates as they become available. |
| Willow/Dawson Shingle Replacement                | \$20,000   | -           | \$20,000         | The concept work is complete and under review by staff. Invoicing to follow. Additional funding is included in the 2022 capital budget for the construction phase.  |
| 33 Marlborough Lighting/Ceiling/Recirculation    | \$5,000    | -           | \$5,000          | The asbestos removal plan is complete, invoicing to come. Construction and additional budget occurs in 2022.  |
| Applewood/Sunset Roofing Replacement             | \$20,000   | -           | \$20,000         | The concept work is complete and under review by staff. Invoicing to follow. Additional funding is included in the 2022 capital budget for the construction phase.  |
| Algonquin / Ferndale Siding                      | \$35,000   | -           | \$35,000         | The scope of work includes windows and siding. Staff will initiate consulting work this fall.   |
| Applewood/Sunset Site Development                | \$300,000  | \$8,395     | \$291,605        | Design work is complete, staff intend to put this work out to tender this fall with construction carrying forward to 2022.  |
| 2021 Construction                                |            |             |                  |   |
| Various Full Fire Alarm Replacements             | \$750,000  | \$363,038   | \$386,963        | 2021 work includes upgrades at 33 Marlborough, 232 Delhi and 263 Speedvale Ave in Guelph. The tender award in June projected budget savings, however, staff included a healthy contingency to address any potential change orders.  |
| 576 Woolwich Kitchen Refurbish                   | \$650,000  | \$6,931     | \$643,069        | The tender award in September included a budget adjustment, which is reflected here. Work begins this fall.   |
| 500 Ferrier Window Replace                       | \$290,000  | \$4,528     | \$285,472        | Work is progressing as expected. Staff anticipate project completion in year with savings.  |
| 387 Waterloo Lighting, Ceiling and Recirculation | \$285,000  | \$185,032   | \$99,968         | The majority of work is complete. Remaining items will be complete in-year with a positive variance anticipated.  |

| Social Housing Capital             | LTD Budget          | LTD Actuals        | Remaining Budget   | Comments  |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| 2021 Housing Building Retrofit     | \$985,000           | \$605,201          | \$379,799          | Work continues in this budget line. Staff do not anticipate a variance at this time.  |
| Substantially Complete             |                     |                    |                    |   |
| 33 Marlborough Window Replace      | \$380,000           | \$4,528            | \$375,472          | The windows are installed, project close out and invoicing to come. A positive variance is projected.   |
| Adult Building Fob System Upgrade  | \$1,055,700         | \$1,022,235        | \$33,466           | Work is complete; the project remains open for final invoicing.   |
| Complete and Ready to Close        |                     |                    |                    |   |
| 232 Delhi Elevator Modernization   | \$161,000           | \$128,882          | \$32,118           | Work is complete or no longer required and projects are set to close.<br><br>The County share of project savings return to the Housing Capital Reserve (approx. \$90,000) |
| Applewood / Sunset Windows         | \$647,000           | \$492,672          | \$154,328          |   |
| Mohawk / Delaware Windows & Siding | \$819,000           | \$731,209          | \$87,791           |   |
| 51 John Balcony Rehab              | \$110,000           | \$16,695           | \$93,305           |   |
| 450 Albert Balcony Rehab           | \$10,000            | -                  | \$10,000           |   |
| <b>Total Social Housing</b>        | <b>\$10,596,300</b> | <b>\$5,895,845</b> | <b>\$4,700,455</b> |   |

### Affordable Housing

- Rent revenues are tracking above budget by \$33,000 and staff anticipate a favourable variance of approximately \$45,000 at year-end.
- Supplies, material and equipment, and purchased services are showing year-to-date savings largely from heating supplies (seasonal expense), move-out repairs and general maintenance.
- The insurance and financial line appears high but this is due to insurance premium payments that are made early in the year.
- Overall, a small positive variance is anticipated in the operation of the facilities, which will be transferred to the Housing Development Reserve Fund at year-end as per policy.

### Capital

Affordable housing capital began the year with a total approved budget of \$689,000 consisting of six projects. The table below accounts for life-to-date spending and purchase order commitments for total available funding of \$619,493.

| <b>Affordable Housing</b>                 | <b>Sept 30, 2021</b> |
|---|----------------------|
| Open Capital at Dec 31, 2020              | \$ 40,000            |
| plus: 2021 Approved Capital budget        | \$ 649,000           |
| plus: 2021 In-Year Budget Adjustments     | \$ -                 |
| 2021 Total Approved Capital budget        | \$ 689,000           |
| less: Previous Years Capital Spending     | \$ -                 |
| <b>Available Capital Funding for 2021</b> | <b>\$ 689,000</b>    |
| 2021 Capital Spending to date             | \$ (38,664)          |
| Open Purchase Orders                      | \$ (30,843)          |
| Closed Projects                           |                      |
| <b>Uncommitted Approved Funding</b>       | <b>\$ 619,493</b>    |

The following table details spending to date and project spending plans for 2021.

| <b>Affordable Housing Capital</b> | <b>LTD Budget</b> | <b>LTD Actuals</b> | <b>Remaining Budget</b> | <b>Comments</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| 165 Gordon Air Conditioning       | \$500,000         | \$17,381           | \$482,619               | Preliminary estimates indicate the need for additional budget in 2022. Staff are currently exploring short term measures while working through the details of the installation.  |
| 165 Gordon 2021 Capital Retro     | \$32,000          | \$6,737            | \$25,263                | Spending to date reflect door operators and move outs. The remaining budget will be used as required on move out or to accommodate accessibility requests.   |
| 169 Gordon 2021 Capital Retro     | \$30,000          | \$6,161            | \$23,839                |  |
| 169 Gordon St FOB System          | \$40,000          | -                  | \$40,000                | Staff have secured the contractor and issued the PO. Work will commence this fall with savings anticipated on project completion.  |
| 182 George 2021 Capital Retrofit  | \$79,000          | \$8,386            | \$70,614                | The scope of work includes the replacement of the intercom system, roofing and move out flooring and appliances as needed. The intercom work is experiencing delays as staff search for an appropriate system for the location. The roof inspection is complete and indicated that the roof will be ok for several more years. |
| 250 Daly 2021 Capital Retrofit    | \$8,000           | -                  | \$8,000                 | This budget line is for flooring replacements as needed on move out.   |
| <b>Total Affordable Housing</b>   | <b>\$689,000</b>  | <b>\$38,664</b>    | <b>\$650,336</b>        |  |



## Summary:

| Service                      | Projected Savings | County           | City             | Comments   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| Ontario Works                | \$760,000         | \$225,000        | \$535,000        | Lower than anticipated office supplies, purchased services, discretionary expenses, as well as vacant positions, and gapping because of COVID have attributed to these savings.  |
| Children's Early Years       | -                 | -                | -                | Lost parent revenue has been offset by savings in salaries, day care centre supplies (operating, programme and food), conferences and mileage. Any additional savings/deficits will be reconciled through the fourth quarter operating grants. |
| Social Housing               | \$165,000         | \$65,000         | \$100,000        | Administrative, Rent Supplement, and Maintenance savings partially offset by rent revenue lower than expected and AIR payments.  |
| Affordable Housing           | -                 | -                | -                | No significant variances projected.  |
| <b>Total Social Services</b> | <b>\$925,000</b>  | <b>\$290,000</b> | <b>\$635,000</b> |  |

## Recommendation:

That the Financial Statements and Variance Projections as of September 30, 2021 for Social Services be approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Shauna Calder  
Manager of Finance



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Luisa Artuso, Director of Children's Early Years Division  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** 2022 Directly Operated Child Care Centre User Fees

### Background:

User fees charged by Directly Operated Child Care Centres are reviewed by staff on an annual basis when preparing for the operating budget of the upcoming year in addition to the preliminary ten-year plan.

The review considers the projected cost of living increase for Ontario as well as special circumstances that may increase operating costs such as enhanced COVID-19 requirements. It also considers the average public rates being charged by local licensed child care centres to ensure competitive neutrality in user fees.

### Update:

Based on the review for 2022, staff recommend the following user fees to be in effect at all Directly Operated Child Care Centres as of January 1, 2022, representing a 2% increase.

| Programme              | Current 2021 Daily Rates | Proposed 2022 Daily Rates | % Increase |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| <b>Infants</b>         |                          |                           |            |
| Full day, 5 days/week  | \$60.10                  | \$61.30                   | 2%         |
| Full day < 5 days/week | \$71.95                  | \$73.40                   | 2%         |
| ½ day with lunch       | \$39.05                  | \$39.85                   | 2%         |
| ½ day without lunch    | \$36.00                  | \$36.70                   | 2%         |
| <b>Toddlers</b>        |                          |                           |            |
| Full day, 5 days/week  | \$48.60                  | \$49.55                   | 2%         |
| Full day < 5 days/week | \$53.20                  | \$54.25                   | 2%         |
| ½ day with lunch       | \$33.10                  | \$33.75                   | 2%         |
| ½ day without lunch    | \$28.50                  | \$29.05                   | 2%         |
| <b>Preschoolers</b>    |                          |                           |            |
| Full day, 5 days/week  | \$42.70                  | \$43.55                   | 2%         |
| Full day < 5 days/week | \$47.10                  | \$48.05                   | 2%         |
| ½ day with lunch       | \$27.40                  | \$27.95                   | 2%         |
| ½ day without lunch    | \$23.90                  | \$24.40                   | 2%         |

#### Notes:

1. User fees are rounded to the nearest .05
2. Authority to impose fees and charges is set out in Part XII of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c. 25 and in by-law #5681-20 of the Corporation of the County of Wellington.

**Recommendation:**

That the user fees charged by Directly Operated Child Care Centres as of January 1, 2022 be approved as set out in report CEYD-21-11; and,

That staff be directed to prepare the necessary by-law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Luisa Artuso". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Luisa Artuso

Director of Children's Early Years Division



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Social Services Committee  
**From:** Luisa Artuso, Director of Children's Early Years Division CEYD-10-12  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **EarlyON Child and Family Centres Update**

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### Background:

As the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for Child Care and the Early Years, the Children's Early Years Division is responsible for planning, implementing and funding EarlyON Child and Family Centres in alignment with the Ministry of Education's vision of high-quality, inclusive programming that provides young children the best possible start in life.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer safe and welcoming environments for all families with children ages birth to 6 years old to make connections, find support and advice about parenting and child development. They also offer high-quality early learning programmes facilitated by Registered Early Childhood Educators who model responsive adult-child interactions with children and who respond to the needs of parent/caregivers for parenting workshops and courses. EarlyON Centres are also a place for families to access resources and links to community supports and specialized services.

### Update:

#### New Virtual Programmes and Services

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the physical closure of all EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations across Ontario in March 2020. To support families during a time of isolation and additional challenges, EarlyON Centres shifted to using virtual platforms, phone calls and digital posts to stay connected with families. Like many other areas across the province, these virtual services resulted in the participation of families who previously did not engage with EarlyON Centres for in-person services, therefore increasing access for a wider number of families.

However, some families reported challenges in accessing virtual service delivery. Those challenges include but are not exclusive to:

- Not owning or having access to devices to access virtual programming
- The cost of data plans needed to access virtual programming
- Technological issues and expertise to utilize virtual platforms
- Lack of availability of cellular bandwidth in some areas in Wellington County

From January 1 to June 30, 2021, 2,587 parents and 2,902 children participated in 1,177 virtual EarlyON programmes in our service delivery area. EarlyON Centre staff also made 2,427 individualized connections with families and released 574 digital posts.

Given the success of virtual services, EarlyON Centres are now mandated to provide both in-person and virtual programmes and services to promote increased access to families across the service delivery area.

### Pilot Bridge Support Programme

As part of their services, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDHPPH) receives completed 'Healthy Babies, Healthy Children' screens from hospitals and midwives for new births. WDGP staff will then contact families who identify as "high-risk" on the screens to complete an assessment and offer resources and supports to the family.

Due to staffing pressures at WDGP created by the pandemic, WDGP and the Children's Early Years Division worked together to create a pilot Bridge Support Programme to ensure continued services for these families through an EarlyON Centre located in their area.

The Bridge Support Programme allows for screened families to give consent for an Early Childhood Educator from the EarlyON Centre to contact them within 2 weeks of the birth of their child. These virtual conversations focus on making connections, answering parenting and developmental questions and sharing resources without conducting assessments on the family.

This programme commenced in June 2020 and has served over 175 families who, for some, continue to connect with EarlyON staff on a monthly basis. On average, 12 new families are being served by EarlyON staff per month.

### Resuming In-Person Programmes

In July 2021, the Ministry of Education announced that EarlyON Child and Family Centre's could re-open for in-person programmes and services, provided that they:

- Adhered to local public health zone restrictions for gatherings
- Had policies and procedures in place that aligned with the Ministry of Education's Operational Guidance during COVID-19

As such, the Children's Early Years Division (CEYD) developed operational COVID-19 guidelines that allow for the implementation of indoor and outdoor programming and services in Guelph and Wellington County. The guidelines ensure that screening protocols, use of PPE, enhanced cleaning, safety measures, and social distancing are in place to limit the spread of COVID-19, similar to the COVID-19 guidelines for licensed child care.

At this time, in-person programming is limited to:

- One household to attend at a time (max 10 including staff)
- One hour sessions
- One in-person session in a seven-day period

The registration process includes EarlyON staff speaking with families prior to their session to provide programming that would best meet their needs. In-person programming continues to be in high demand as evidenced by waitlists to participate at each centre. CEYD is currently updating the COVID-19 Operating Guidelines for EarlyON Centres to allow two households to participate at the same time provided all adults are fully vaccinated.

**Recommendation:**

That the report, EarlyON Child and Family Centres Update, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Luisa Artuso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Luisa" being more prominent than the last name "Artuso".

Luisa Artuso  
Director of Children's Early Years Division



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**To:** Social Services Committee  
**From:** Luisa Artuso, Director of Children's Early Years Division CEYD-21-13  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **Temporary Casual Active Screeners at Directly Operated Child Care Centres**

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### Background:

As reported to Council in May 2020, the Ministry of Education and Public Health required all child care centres to perform an Active COVID-19 Screen on anyone entering a child care centre. The report indicated that the Children's Early Years Division had created 4 temporary 8-month part-time Active Screener positions (one for each child care centre) commencing mid-April 2021. This allowed for Teacher Assistants to return to their regular duties with children in programme as enrolment increased to full capacity.

To date, our Directly Operated Child Care Centres have experienced no outbreaks of COVID-19 and only 2 temporary room closures since April 2020 due to possible positive cases of COVID-19. Staff feel that the Active COVID-19 Screen process has contributed to this success of keeping the virus out of the centres. This is especially important given that there are no vaccines available to children under the age of 4 years.

### Update:

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health have recently made the following changes to COVID-19 requirements for licensed child care:

1. Licensed child care operators need to verify that individuals who enter a child care site have conducted a COVID-19 Self-Screen prior to entry.
2. The prohibition for parents of children who attend the programme has been lifted. This means that parents wishing to enter the child care site beyond the COVID-19 Screening table must be able to do so whether or not they are fully vaccinated.
3. Parents entering the child care site must be tracked and monitored to ensure they wear medical masks and face shields while maintaining a 2 metre distance from others at all times.

Given that active screening should continue in addition to allowing parents in the building, the Children's Early Years Division has extended the temporary casual AM Active Screener positions (3 hours per day) to June 30, 2022 and have created 4 additional temporary casual PM Active Screener positions (2 hours per day) for the period of November 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

This will ensure we continue our proven efforts to protect the children and families we serve while meeting legislative requirements that result in more adults entering our child care sites.

Staff will continue to stay current with the changing landscape of operating licensed child care during the pandemic and will review the need for Active Screeners in June 2022.

**Financial Implications:**

The total cost of adding four AM and four PM active screeners for 2022 will be \$63,600. A portion of this will be covered by provincial funding (\$44,500) leaving a cost of \$4,800 for the City and \$14,300 for the County.

**Recommendation:**

That the report, Temporary Casual Active Daily Screeners at Directly Operated Child Care Centres, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Luisa Artuso". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Luisa Artuso  
Director of Children's Early Years Division





# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**OW-21-06**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **2021-2022 Ontario Works Service Plan**

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### **Background:**

The Ontario Works division is pleased to present the 2021-2022 Ontario Works Service Plan. The Service Plan provides analysis of service delivery and outcomes in 2020 and identifies important priorities for the 2021-2022 period. The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) requires that each Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) complete an Ontario Works Service Plan that outlines the strategic plan for service delivery and the achievement of employment outcomes for participants in receipt of Ontario Works. The Service Plan is accompanied by an annual budget submission, once reviewed and approved by MCCSS these documents form the basis of our service contract with the Province. The budget submission to the Province aligned with the Ontario Works portions of the approved 2021 County Budget. Our service planning documentation was submitted earlier this month to MCCSS for their consideration and we anticipate completing the service contracting process with the province by November 30, 2021. The submitted documentation also included the 2019-2021 Caseload Snapshot that was previously shared with Committee and Council in September of this year.

In 2022, the second year of the planning cycle, our office will submit a service plan addendum to MCCSS for consideration. This addendum will include updated financial information, outcome targets and updates on important service delivery priorities.

### **2021-2022 Service Plan Highlights:**

Ontario Works (OW) service planning follows a two-year planning cycle and 2021 marks the first year of a new cycle. The recently released Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal plan will guide programme delivery directions through this period. While implementation of many of the government's reform plans may extend beyond the next two-year period, with details and impacts yet to be fully understood, shorter-term programme priorities have been made clear. These priorities include centralized intake and automated delivery of financial assistance, risk-based eligibility review, and employment services transformation. This will require us to manage through significant change and transition and we will need to rely upon our core principles of delivering quality service to clients, collaboration with community partners and fostering a positive workplace for our team.

Ontario Works supports the goal of helping people move towards employment by holding our service delivery accountable to two provincially established employment outcomes: Increased employment and increased earnings. The Service Plan establishes these targets in accordance with direction from

MCCSS and articulates our plan to work toward their achievement. In addition the Service Plan includes important information about our current caseload as well as how we are structured to deliver effective, timely and integrated services to our residents.

Service planning in the current climate of a public health emergency and major system transformation is challenging and comes with a number of risks and unknowns. Supporting the members of our team as well as our clients through this period of transition and change will be a top priority. As always we will undertake our work in partnership with the community, recognizing their importance in helping us fulfill our vision of supporting individuals and families to build their capacity to improve the quality of their lives.

**Financial Implications:**

The Province continues to cap OW administrative funding at 2018 levels and this was reflected in the approved 2021 County budget.

**Attachment:** County of Wellington Ontario Works Service Plan 2021-2022. October 2021.

**Acknowledgement:**

Special thanks to Dunja Lukic, Social Planning and Policy Analyst and Troy Byrne of the Treasury Department for their work in contributing to and refining the Service Plan and annual MCCSS budget submission.

**Recommendation:**

That report OW-21-06 2021-2022 Ontario Works Service Plan be received for information.

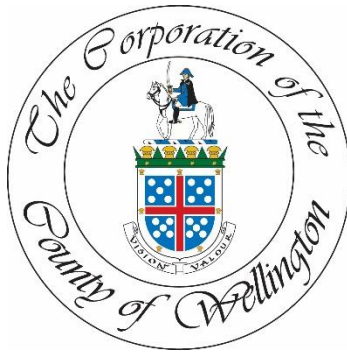
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart B', is written over the printed name.

Stuart Beumer  
Director of Ontario Works

# **County of Wellington**

## **Ontario Works**



## **Service Plan 2021-2022**

October 2021

## Introduction

The County of Wellington is one of the 47 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) in the Province of Ontario. The County manages and delivers the Ontario Works (OW) programme on behalf of the Province of Ontario to the residents of both the County of Wellington and the City of Guelph. The Ontario Works Division is joined by Children's Early Years and Housing Services to form the County of Wellington Social Services Department.

Ontario Works (OW) service planning follows a two-year planning cycle and 2021 marks the first year of a new cycle, post 2019. The recently released Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal plan will guide programme delivery directions through this period. While implementation of many of the government's reform plans may extend beyond the next two-year period, with details and impacts yet to be fully understood, shorter-term programme priorities have been made clear. These priorities include centralized intake and automated delivery of financial assistance, risk-based eligibility review, and employment services transformation. This will require us to manage through significant change and transition and we will need to rely upon our core principles of delivering quality service to clients, collaboration with community partners and fostering a positive workplace for our team.

The 2021-2022 Service Plan includes important information about our current caseload, how we are structured to deliver services to residents, and the strategies we use to achieve our annual outcome targets. The Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCSS) has also requested that the 2021-2022 Service Plan address important provincial priorities and these are included in the first section of our Service Plan.

Finally, I would like to commend the continued effort and high quality work of our team. This consistent delivery of excellent client service has endured through the many challenges of the past year and a half; this speaks to their commitment and competence. We will be working as a team to effectively respond and implement provincial programme changes while staying focused on completing established priorities in our strategic pathway. As always we will undertake this work in partnership with the community, recognizing their importance in helping us fulfill our vision of supporting individuals and families to build their capacity to improve the quality of their lives.



Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works

September 2021

# Ontario Works Vision and Mandate

## County of Wellington

The County of Wellington Ontario Works division has a vision and a service mandate that builds upon the vision and mandate for the Ontario Works programme that has been established by the Province.

### Vision

*The Social Services Department of the County of Wellington supports individuals and families to build their capacity to improve the quality of their lives.*

### Service Mandate

We strive to effectively serve people needing assistance by delivering high quality programmes and services in collaboration with our community partners and in accordance with the provincial Ontario Works programme.

## Province of Ontario

### Vision

*To create an efficient, effective and streamlined social services system that focuses on people, providing them with a range of services and supports to respond to their unique needs and address barriers to success so they can move towards employment and independence.*

### Mandate

To provide employment assistance and financial assistance, including life stabilization services and supports, to people in financial need. The Ontario Works program:

- Recognizes individual responsibility and promotes self-reliance through participation in life stabilization and employment activities;
- Provides financial assistance to those most in need while they meet obligations to become and stay employed;
- Effectively serves people needing assistance; and
- Is accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario

## Ministry Priorities

In addition to delivering on the core expectations of the OW programme, the Province has identified five Ministry priorities that they require OW delivery partners to address. While information throughout the Service Plan speaks to these priorities, some important highlights of local activities and strategies are outlined below:

### 1. Recovery and Renewal

- The safe return to in-person services will be an important priority over the 2021-2022 period. This will involve an assessment of what in-person services and supports are needed by our clients, while also looking to maintain and capitalize on alternative client service approaches and efficiencies that have been put into practice during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Supporting our clients with the technology they need to function effectively in an increasingly digital environment will continue to be an important priority for our office. This includes the continued delivery of internet hot-spot and device lending programmes and the expansion of our Get Connected client smart-phone initiative.
- The County has been an early adopter of digital delivery solutions, including the full implementation of Electronic Document Management (EDM) and the MyBenefits client app in 2020. We will continue to work with the province and support clients and staff in adopting digital service delivery solutions, including developing a digital solution to dental cards and moving away from printing and mailing monthly benefit statements.
- Continued participation in the development and delivery of centralized and automated service delivery in accordance with the province's Recovery and Renewal Vision will be an important local priority over this planning cycle. In 2021 the County began participating in the centralized intake process that includes the introduction of e-signatures and automated client ID confirmation, as well as auto-granting of some electronic applications.
- The Ontario Works office will continue to support provincial efforts and make changes to local processes in line with provincial risk-based approaches to monitoring and maintaining programme integrity. We expect to complete ongoing updates to eligibility verification and review processes based on provincial data-matching information that is further developed over this planning cycle.
- The roll-out of the next stages of Employment Services Transformation (EST) will be an important priority in 2021-2022. Actions are anticipated to support staff in beginning to administer common assessment tools, and preparing ourselves to work with the new Employment Service System Manager when they are identified by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD).
- Working closely to support our staff, clients and community partners will be critical as we plan for an implement significant reform to the Social Assistance System. Ongoing communication and engagement at all levels will be a top priority over this planning period.

## **2. Improving Employment Outcomes**

- Continued coordination efforts with local EO providers, including improving referral processes for OW clients into EO services, and coordinating service delivery to minimize duplication, including employer services and supports.
- Delivery of pre-employment life stabilization programming to assist clients in becoming employment-ready, and continuing to provide tailored one to one support for clients as they prepare to enter the job market and look for work.
- Fostering a strong relationship with the local ODSP office by supporting ongoing staff and manager level meetings between our offices, reviewing business protocols and processes to ensure continuous improvement, building on increases in the last planning cycle of ODSP client referrals to OW employment services and planning a joint OW/ODSP all staff event.
- Increasing client access to both employment placement opportunities as well as unpaid activities that support their well-being and enhance social inclusion as the local economy re-opens and recovers.
- Continued close attention by our caseworkers to outcome planning and case management practices.

## **3. Leveraging Local Economic Development**

- Ongoing collaborative work between local Economic Development offices and our Employment Team and Settlement Services Team to deliver and promote job posting and placement, newcomer employment supports and transportation solutions. We also work in partnership with economic development colleagues on the Our Food Future, Smart Cities project that includes developing solutions to address local food insecurity.
- Continued partnership with the local Workforce Planning Board (WFPBD), including, contributing to and accessing labour market information and collaborating on workforce development solutions.
- The OW Employment team continues to nurture employer relationships across the region through the annual Employer Recognition Awards (virtual event in 2020), and our SPACES employment incentive programme for public and not for profit employers.

## **4. Develop and Maintain Local Community Service Partnerships**

- The OW office is heavily involved and is a leader in supporting community collaborations that support the needs of Ontario Works clients and other vulnerable groups. The local Poverty Elimination Task Force, Built for Zero homelessness campaign and the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy are examples of initiatives that the County supports and is involved with that address issues of income security, homelessness, health equity, and substance misuse that impact many OW clients.
- The County will continue to be involved in violence against women prevention through County funding and close involvement with Women in Crisis, Victim Services and other

partners through the Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence committee, and efforts to address issues of human trafficking.

- Internally, OW staff work closely with both Housing Services and Children's Early Years staff to connect clients to appropriate supports. This includes direct referrals to Child Care Fee Subsidy and ensuring homeless clients are placed on the By-Name List and have applied to the Centralized Waiting List for social housing.
- OW is working closely with the community food project the SEED to address issues of food insecurity in the community as well as connecting our clients to social enterprise opportunities that they offer. At the onset of the pandemic and during subsequent lockdowns, our office collaborated with the SEED to provide emergency food home delivery to clients in urgent need of food supports.

#### **5. Strengthen Program Accountability**

- The OW office actively monitors the Eligibility Verification Process (EVP) and promptly investigates allegations of fraud and misrepresentation to ensure ongoing compliance with provincial expectations. In 2019 and 2020, the County has consistently met provincial expectations related to the timely completion of EVPs.
- Increased provincial expectations concerning programme outcome targets will require management and caseworkers to increase efforts related to the management of outcome plans and support to clients related to employment. The County is a historically strong performer related to exits to employment and has shared case management and case closure practices with a number of other OW offices across the Province.
- Expenditures will continue to be managed closely to ensure the OW programme is delivered efficiently and within cost-shared funding available through the existing provincial funding model and respecting the approved 2021 County Budget.
- Clear documentation requirements are followed for the very few Ontario Works benefits that are managed outside of SAMS and this information is submitted promptly as part of the monthly subsidy claim process to MCCSS.



## Section 1: Environmental Scan

### Service Delivery

County of Wellington Ontario Works saw a surge in demand for assistance in the period immediately following business closures in March and April 2020 at the outset of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Starting in May 2020, demand for financial assistance dropped significantly, due in large part to the introduction of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) in April 2020. Although provincial directives allowed most ongoing clients to remain on the caseload while in receipt of CERB for the purposes of retaining access to employment supports and extended health benefits, new applications for assistance dropped significantly below normal levels, and continue to decline. Federal recovery benefits and programmes, including expanded eligibility for federal Employment Insurance, are expected to be available until the end of October 2021, and we are anticipating a possible influx of applications for assistance as these benefit programmes wind down.

This planning cycle includes both a federal and provincial election, both of which may impact service delivery priorities and outcomes for social assistance programs over the next two years. Following the recent federal election, we are following developments on federal recovery benefits and national childcare proposals that may facilitate exits to employment for OW clients with young children in this planning cycle.

In order to minimize the risk of spread of COVID-19, Wellington County Social Services offices have been temporarily closed to in-person services since March 2020. We continued to provide services throughout the pandemic by shifting to virtual programme and service delivery in response to the rapidly evolving public health emergency, and in response to emerging client needs. During periods of lockdown and remote work, the OW division ensured that a small team of front-line staff and managers were available in-person to support the most vulnerable in our community, especially those without shelter or access to phones and digital devices. Staff have made use of online video conferencing platforms to deliver individual services and group programmes, as well as offering services through telephone appointments and through the use of the provincial MyBenefits client-facing app. The division's transition to a paperless case management platform (Electronic Document Management, or EDM) in the summer of 2020 enabled Ontario Works to seamlessly transition to remote work when required as a public health measure. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, we are well-poised to pivot as needed to meet the needs of OW clients.

The County of Wellington has joined 33 other CMSMs in undertaking initial work in the SA Recovery and Renewal plan through the Centralized Intake Pilot. County of Wellington Ontario Works is currently working with the provincial Intake and Benefits Administration Unit (IBAU) to process and grant eligible applications. Further opportunities to advance the provincial goals are expected to occur over the course of the next 2-year service plan cycle.

The achievement of our service contract outcomes in 2020 was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Monthly averages for all four performance measures in 2020 fell below targets, as our

communities adapted to the rapidly evolving public health emergency. In the category of average amount of employment earnings reported by clients on a monthly basis, we saw an increase of 2% over 2019 actuals, from \$822 to \$839, falling just below our 2020 target of \$847. The percent of caseload with employment income decreased by 33% from 2019 to 2020, falling to 9.26%. Similarly, the percent of terminations exiting to employment and the percent of caseload exiting to employment fell by 27% and 38% respectively from 2019 to 2020. Our percent of terminations exiting to employment was at 22.11% in 2020, and our percent of caseload exiting to employment fell to 1.29%. With caseloads declining province-wide as a result of the availability of federal benefits, those remaining on assistance are more likely to have complex barriers to employment and no recent employment history that would enable them to meet the low thresholds of eligibility for recovery benefits and the expanded EI programme.

Based on direction from MCCSS, our outcome targets for 2021 remain largely unchanged as we bring forward the targets established for 2020 for the current planning cycle. Over the previous planning cycle our office worked diligently to ensure that effective client service and case management approaches were adopted by staff to ensure as strong an outcome performance as was possible in an environment of a disrupted labour market and a declining caseload. We are committed to continuous improvement in these outcome areas as our communities plan for post-pandemic recovery.

## **Caseload**

Caseloads locally continue to decline and have reached a 12-year low, sitting at 1,463 cases as of August 2021. Through an analysis of our caseload pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and in the current phase of pandemic recovery, several key demographic trends have emerged. The gender gap on the OW caseload in Wellington County is widening, with the proportion of women on the caseload increasing, particularly in the 18-44 age range. Our caseload also continues to age, with clients aged 55 and older representing an increasing share of the caseload year over year. The trend of long-term reliance on OW continues, with a sharper increase from 2019 to 2020 seen in the proportion of the caseload on assistance for longer than 2 years. An in-depth analysis of our caseload, the Caseload Snapshot 2019-2021 report, is attached as an appendix.

While federal recovery benefits and an expanded EI program have enabled hundreds of individuals and families to exit assistance, our caseload is projected to increase when households have exhausted federal benefits. Provincial forecasting suggests a return to pre-pandemic caseload numbers during this planning cycle, with our caseload rising to a monthly average of 2,336 cases in early 2023.

## **Local Labour Market and Economic Development**

The unemployment rate for the Guelph CMA was 7.7% in August 2021, a considerable improvement over the August 2020 rate at 11.8%, but higher than the pre-pandemic unemployment rate of 5.8% in August of 2019. Despite pandemic-related labour market fluctuations, the Guelph CMA continues to experience lower unemployment rates and higher participation rates than the provincial average. Guelph CMA's labour force participation rate is among the highest in Canada, at 72.8% for August 2021.

Prior to the pandemic, on average, nearly a third of all Wellington CMSM OW recipients exiting assistance did so because they secured employment or because their earnings were high enough to render them ineligible for financial assistance. The economic impacts of pandemic-related business closures have shifted this trend. The average percentage of terminations exiting to employment has decreased from a high of 30.3% in 2019, down to a low of 17.7% in 2021 (January to August). While below the provincial average in 2021 (YTD), Wellington County Ontario Works has consistently exceeded the provincial average in this performance indicator. As the local economy begins to show signs of a strong recovery, terminations exiting to employment are expected to increase.

The Ontario Works division is also involved in a number of initiatives through the County Economic Development division that provide direct and indirect support to OW recipients in our service area. Our corporate Economic Development priorities include the Our Food Future project, which aims to address food waste and food insecurity issues by creating Canada's first circular food economy, reimagining how food is produced, distributed, sold and consumed. This project received \$10M in federal funding, awarded by Infrastructure Canada through the Smart Cities challenge. The County of Wellington is a member of the steering committee and the OW division is represented on the Nutritious Food Workstream, a working group dedicated to improving access to nutritious food for all members of our community.

The County of Wellington Economic Development department is also actively involved in advocating for increased connectivity and internet access in the rural areas we serve. Wellington County is one of 18 partners across southwestern Ontario in the regional SWIFT (Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology Inc.) initiative, bringing broadband to our rural communities. SWIFT's innovative approach to funding open access broadband networks will aim to connect business facilities, public buildings and residential homes in underserved areas within the project region. This expansion of broadband infrastructure will enable more residents in rural Wellington County, including OW recipients, to access reliable and affordable high-speed internet, critical for connecting to employment opportunities and life stabilization supports.

The lack of public transportation and affordable housing continue to present challenges for both employers and workers in the County. The City of Guelph continues to see industrial areas not fully serviced by public transit to match afternoon or night shifts, with transportation options further reduced as a result of pandemic-related budget constraints and ridership patterns. To address lack of transportation options in rural Wellington, the County launched RIDE WELL, a county wide, demand based, public transit service available to all residents in October of 2019. During the pandemic, RIDE WELL has been used by community organizations to support access to essential services for vulnerable residents, particularly where volunteer driver programs were put on hold or were operating with limited capacity. The inter-regional Guelph Owen Sound Transportation service is also available seven days a week, connecting the City of Guelph with three municipalities in Wellington County in addition to four stops in neighbouring Grey County.

Many retailers, restaurants and small businesses locally have been impacted by public health pandemic mitigation measures, with layoffs and business closures occurring since the onset of the pandemic in

March of 2020. Many downtown business associations in our service area bid for and won the chance to open outdoor patios for retail and dining. While this was good news for many local restaurants, some employers could not keep up with the new demand due to a labour shortage, resulting in delayed re-opening or operating with reduced hours.

According to the August 2021 Labour Market Snapshot released by the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin, occupations in greatest demand in August 2021, by number of jobs posted online in Waterloo, Wellington, and Dufferin include: Retail salespersons (1,161), Material handlers (1,148), and Other labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities (1,012). Local labour market growth is expected in the year ahead based on the following highlights:

- The Linamar Corporation continues to grow and most recently added a new facility, the Frank Hasenfratz Centre for Excellence in Manufacturing, in Guelph. Linamar continues to be Guelph's largest employer with over 30 manufacturing plants in Guelph employing over 9,000 staff.
- Polycorp Ltd of Elora continues to grow both in physical plant size and staff numbers, and is undertaking technology upgrade processes. The Ontario Works employment team is in regular contact with this employer to assist with recruitment for current openings.
- Guelph's Stone Road Mall has gone through significant changes since the closure of the Sears anchor store in 2018. The mall has expanded to add many new larger retailers that include Homesense and Marshalls (both part of the TJ Maxx chain), Mark's Work Warehouse and Toys R Us. Proposals to add corporate business space and condominiums above the mall are currently under consideration and could lead to the creation of construction jobs should they be approved.
- Nieuwland Feed & Supply is investing \$16.2 million to consolidate its production facilities and build a second feed mill on the property, doubling its manufacturing size from 10,000 to 20,000 square feet in Drayton. The company will install automation equipment to improve production capacity, productivity and manufacturing flexibility to meet the changing market demands, such as the shift to antibiotic-free and organic feed. With \$1,293,500 from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, the company is creating 15 jobs while retaining 69. The support will help the company gain the capacity to focus on large-scale agricultural operations while continuing to serve small scale farmers.
- Bold Canine, a leading producer of all natural frozen raw pet food in Erin, is investing \$6.5 million to expand and renovate its facility, purchase innovative equipment, and invest in research and development. Ontario is investing \$500,000 from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, which will allow the company to conduct R&D activities with a focus on food safety and automate manufacturing processes. The company will renovate its 21,000 square foot facility to increase production capacity. This project will help Bold Canine create 10 jobs and retain 37.
- Wellington Perforated Sheet and Plate in Fergus is investing \$3.9 million to innovate processes, develop new products, and produce more steel parts in-house. Wellington is a manufacturer and distributor of perforated metals for the agriculture, mining and construction markets. With

\$312,000 from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, the company is creating six jobs and retaining 11.

## **Community Partnerships**

At every level of the organization, OW staff continue to be involved in the community through collaborative work and meaningful partnerships. Investing in these activities strengthens our connection to the local community, region, and province, enabling us to stay informed on issues that affect the delivery of our services. These efforts also lead to client service improvements as we plan, coordinate, and integrate human services at a community level. A few of these collaborative efforts are highlighted below.

### **Housing**

The OW programme is highly integrated with the delivery of homelessness related programmes and supports, which have proven highly beneficial in helping OW and ODSP clients maintain or obtain housing. Building on the momentum of the 20,000 Homes campaign, the OW office has been an active partner in the transition of local homelessness efforts under the Built for Zero banner. OW caseworkers flag issues of housing instability as early as possible and facilitate the completion of assessments as part of the local Coordinated Entry process for those receiving intense homelessness services. In addition, the OW office directly connects OW and ODSP clients to prevention supports that prevent situations of homelessness.

### **Income**

With the understanding that many individuals and families in Guelph Wellington, including those working full time, face challenges related to inadequate income, our staff have been active in supporting broad improvements for low income individuals and families through involvement with the local Poverty Task Force. This has included initiatives such as our Family Support Team accepting referrals from Housing Services and Children's Early Years divisions as well as the local ODSP office and the YMCA Teenage Parents Program to offer support to those clients in accessing child support. Ongoing efforts locally to support clients in accessing available income supports includes income tax filing, education and training income supports and recreation and transportation subsidy programmes.

### **Food Security**

In partnership with local townships, the OW office is expanding the delivery of the Market Bucks programme, where OW and Settlement Services clients in Wellington North, Minto, Erin, Elora, Aberfoyle and Guelph-Eramosa are provided with farmers' market vouchers. This allows OW and Settlement Services clients to purchase fresh and healthy food in a manner that maintains dignity and builds community. The Market Bucks programme is now in its seventh year and continues to increase its reach, with more community agencies getting involved through the purchase of vouchers for their clients.

In addition to involvement in the Our Food Future Smart Cities initiative, the OW office also continues to increase its involvement with a local community food project, the SEED, which delivers community programmes and advocates to address the causes and effects of food insecurity. The County is involved as a member of the SEED's advisory committee and is working with the organization to involve OW clients in their social enterprise initiatives, including the Guelph Youth Farm and the new grocery delivery programme, Groceries from the SEED. These programmes are addressing food insecurity and providing OW clients with meaningful volunteer and employment opportunities.

## **Health**

The OW office is an active partner with local Ontario Health Team initiatives that are looking to improve health supports and outcomes for marginalized populations, including those on Social Assistance. These initiatives are improving access to mental health and addiction supports, and integrating issues of income and housing with mainstream health services.

The OW office is also an active partner with the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy. The Drug Strategy is a multi-stakeholder group that addresses issues related to substance misuse. In 2021 key priorities of the Drug Strategy include:

- Ongoing engagement with the medical community related to Opioid Use Disorder, including harm reductions approaches to reduce overdoses and deaths (safe use and supply initiatives, education campaigns and peer outreach services).
- Continuing to support the Community Alert Process regarding overdose and tainted street drugs
- Ongoing promotion of prevention and anti-Stigma campaigns including the Stop the Stigma campaign, and work with school boards to update curriculum materials related to substance use.
- Supporting the delivery of critical services including the expansion of Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinics across Guelph-Wellington, and an addictions worker in court and increased street outreach supports.

## **Integrated Service Planning**

The County Social Services Department supports coordinated service planning at a community level. A key initiative in this area is Toward Common Ground (TCG), a partnership of social and health service organizations that develop and facilitate a collective planning model for integrated human service planning in Guelph and Wellington. TCG launched the Data Portal in late 2017, which contains population-level data and information about health and social wellbeing in Guelph and Wellington. It has also partnered successfully with the Guelph Community Foundation on the launch of the Guelph and Wellington County Vital Signs report, helping to direct conversations related to improving community well-being. Building on the success of this report in 2018, TCG has brought together community partners to issue Vital Focus reports to provide recommendations for organizations and governments on how to prepare for and deal with the secondary effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This series of reports looks

at the effects of the pandemic on critical areas of wellbeing, including food security, mental health and employment. TCG provides leadership on moving the community forward on key priority areas. Access to data, reports, and opportunities for collaboration through TCG helps us advance our goals.

The OW office is also an active participant at additional human service and health planning tables. This includes Growing Great Generations, a planning table for children and youth, Ontario Health Team tables working to improve health service delivery, and Safe Communities working to improve community well-being.

Integration of planning and service delivery is also an important priority within the Social Services Department. Important priorities include the integration of reception, Help Centre, emergency support and housing stability services. Joint initiatives across the Department, including management meetings, training, policy development and priority coordination projects are furthering our efforts to improve and streamline our service delivery to clients and the community.

## **Section 2: Strategies and Outcomes**

### **Service Strategy**

The federal government moved quickly to offer income support to workers experiencing loss of employment or a reduction of income through a series of benefits, including the CERB, the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit, the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit, and a re-vamped Employment Insurance program (EI) that expanded eligibility for benefits to workers not previously covered under EI. The obligation to pursue available financial resources, a low threshold for CERB/EI eligibility, and the higher benefit rates available to recipients of these federal benefits have enabled many OW clients with recent employment history to exit assistance. While local caseloads are at a historic low, those who remain on assistance are those with complex barriers to employment and/or those with no recent employment history. The complex challenges faced by those on our caseload may impact our ability to achieve outcomes related to earnings and employment.

In order to best support the needs of our clients, particularly those with complex barriers to employment, we will continue to provide wrap-around supports to assist clients with life stabilization and pre-employment preparation through an engaged Employment Team and a single caseworker model working in tandem. Our ongoing clients have one point of contact to support them with their financial assistance and developing their participation agreement and outcome plans. Caseworkers are able to utilize the full range of benefits and supports to support their clients in achieving their life stabilization or employment goals. In addition, the caseworker serves as the central referral point for the client, directing them toward internal and external supports as appropriate, including one-to-one employment supports and in-house life stabilization programs.

## Link Strategies to Outcome Measures

The outcome targets for 2021 are a carry forward of our 2020 performance targets levels and this has been done in accordance with MCCSS direction in this area. 2020 outcome achievement levels fell short of our targets due to the unprecedented circumstances related to the pandemic. Outcome measures and weighting, and local caseload employment strategies take into account labour market uncertainty as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve and as employers plan for pandemic recovery. Despite the significant challenges posed by the pandemic, Guelph-Wellington remains a strong labour market and we are hopeful that this will result in improved OW outcomes over time. Our caseload is expected to increase as federal emergency supports come to an end in line with provincial forecasts and this will also serve to normalize our outcome performance to pre-pandemic levels. Overall, a small proportion of the local population is reliant on Ontario Works, and these households experience significant barriers, which makes it challenging in many circumstances to move them towards financial independence.

The County of Wellington Ontario Works team will continue to provide targeted supports to assist clients with their employment-related goals and to encourage financial independence. Clients and non-disabled ODSP adults can access focused individual supports from their caseworker as well as a dedicated employment team to assist them with preparing for employment, access relevant training opportunities, and find work. In addition to individual supports, our Employment Team delivers employment workshops and a virtual in-house programme through our employment facilitators called Make Your Way. The 2-week programme runs daily for the duration of the session, and is focused on goal setting, self-awareness and pre-employment preparation.

The weighting of our outcome measures for MCCSS performance management purposes, for 2021 focuses on percent of terminations exiting to employment and percent of caseload exiting to employment. These are two areas where we have traditionally met or exceeded provincial averages, due in large part to the work of our caseworker and employment teams in providing life stabilization supports that successfully prepare clients for employment.



We are also monitoring the cumulative impact of provincial changes to social assistance service delivery and employment services transformation with respect to their impact on the achievement of programme outcomes and caseload growth.

| Measure   | 2019 Target | 2019 Average | 2020 Average | 2020 Target | 2021 Target | Weighting |
|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1 - Average Employment Earnings                   | \$870       | \$822        | \$839        | \$847       | \$847       | 0         |
| 2 - Percent of Caseload with Employment Income    | 14.98%      | 13.77%       | 9.26%        | 14.18%      | 14.18%      | 200       |
| 3 – Percent of Terminations exiting to employment | 30.31%      | 30.33%       | 22.11%       | 31.24%      | 31.24%      | 400       |
| 4 – Percent of Caseload exiting to employment     | 2.17%       | 2.09%        | 1.29%        | 2.15%       | 2.15%       | 400       |

## Action Steps and Resources

County of Wellington Ontario Works will use a number of strategies to achieve the targets for earnings and employment outcomes for clients, leveraging both our internal programmes and our work with community partners.

As the provincial Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal plans continue to progress, the County of Wellington is well-poised to shift service delivery to a focus on life stabilization. Our Life Skills workers use an intensive case management model to support OW clients with significant mental health challenges that may be preventing them from gaining financial independence. Building on the success of this model, we are developing plans at the local level to further build the capacity of all of our teams to provide complex-capable supports to clients who need assistance navigating income supports and life stabilization services when financial assistance is fully automated and centralized.

## Internal Programmes

A listing of the specialized internal programmes we provide is outlined below:

- Employment Workshops
- Employment Placement
- Self-Employment
- Life Skills/Mental Health & Addictions
- Learning Earning and Parenting (LEAP)
- Make Your Way

A recent addition to our available supports is the Make Your Way programme, a virtual in-house programme delivered by our employment facilitators, developed to meet the needs of clients during the

COVID-19 pandemic. The 2-week programme runs daily for the duration of the session, and is focused on goal setting, self-awareness and pre-employment preparation.

## **Integrated Employment Services**

The Employment Services Team includes three Employment Facilitators and the Employment Specialist, who lead monthly workshops on employment topics, and meet with clients one on one to offer more in-depth assistance related to resumes, job searching, interview skills, and more. A preliminary OW participant workshop, Employment Services Orientation (ESO), continues to be a valuable resource to assist clients in moving forward and getting the help that may be needed to find employment.

Guided by the shared desire to further coordinate the services delivered by Ontario Works and Employment Ontario in Guelph-Wellington, we continue to collaborate with Lutherwood and 2nd Chance Employment agencies by referring eligible clients to one-hour information sessions for the Youth Job Connection programme. This programme was designed to assist youth in securing long-term employment and meaningful careers. The Youth Job Connection Programme is intended to address the gaps in youth employment programming for young people who are not in education, employment, or training, and are experiencing employment barriers.

The Employment Services team continues to coordinate workshop scheduling and delivery at the local level with EO partners and community agencies and these efforts to reduce duplication and work together prepare us well for anticipated changes related to Employment Services Transformation.

## **Employment Placement**

The Employment Specialist (ES) works with both the client and the employer to ensure the success of the placement and subsequent employment retention. The ES continues to facilitate a structured Job Search Club, tailored to meet the needs of clients in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington. This club has given the ES the opportunity to develop a rapport with motivated job seekers while advising them of current employment opportunities and offering suggestions on effective job search strategies.

We have continued to develop working relationships with local temporary employment agencies to meet the needs of employers looking for part-time and contract-based employees. We have had success working with Task Force, Express, Liberty, People Store, People Source, Pivotal Staffing, and Labour Ready. As our communities recover from the impacts of the global pandemic, we continue to foster relationships with local staffing agencies in an effort to identify more opportunities that are suitable matches for our clients.

The OW office SPACES initiative is in its fourth year, with 19 placements available in 2021 with 8 non-profit employers across Guelph and Wellington County. Nine clients are currently completing paid employment placements through this programme. The Supporting People and Communities Employment Support (SPACES) initiative provides not for profit and public sector employers with a wage subsidy incentive to hire an OW client to undertake work that will serve to benefit the community. The

programme focuses on recruiting clients with barriers to employment and offering them the opportunity to increase their employability and give them current employment experience to profile on their resume.

In our effort to maintain and create new community partnerships for 2021, the ES continues to work side by side with the County's Economic Development office. We continue to reach out to Wellington County townships to invite Wellington County Economic Development officers to our meetings to share new developments. Working closely with our Talent Attraction Initiative Officer has strengthened relationships with employers in the County, along with attracting new employers and people to the County to offer and fill available employment opportunities. The ES also works closely with Employment teams from other regions including Waterloo Region, Niagara Region, and Dufferin County to share best practices and continue to create supportive programmes that will lead to employment and business opportunities.

## Self-employment

The County of Wellington continues to partner with Business Centre Guelph-Wellington on a per client basis to provide a comprehensive self-employment programme to clients who are approved as having an appropriate business plan.

## Referrals

Service providers in Guelph-Wellington pivoted at the onset of the pandemic to deliver their programmes and services virtually, while continuing to meet the needs of community members. Ontario Works staff continue to work closely with community partners to provide warm referrals to support clients in achieving their goals. A summary of community-based programmes and services available to OW clients in Guelph-Wellington are outlined below.

| <b>Basic Education</b>                            |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Organization</b>                               | <b>Programme</b>   |
| <b>Wellington Centre for Continuing Education</b> | Grade 12<br>General Educational Development (GED)<br>Business Essentials Training                                    |
| <b>St. George's Centre for Adult ESL</b>          | English as a Second Language<br>Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC)<br>Writing Classes<br>Conversation Classes |
| <b>Conestoga College</b>                          | General Diploma<br>Academic Upgrading<br>Self-Management Strategies (currently under development)                    |
| <b>Action Read</b>                                | Literacy and Writing<br>Math<br>Computer Literacy- NorthStar program<br>GED Preparation                              |

| <b>Training and Employment Services</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Programme</b>  |
| <b>Conestoga College</b>   | OSAP-supported Post-Secondary Training<br>Personal Tools for Success<br>Basic Communication and Computer Skills |
| <b>Wellington Centre for Continuing Education</b>  | Computer Skills Training<br>Skills Upgrading<br>Personal Support Worker   |
| <b>Action Read</b>   | Computer Training<br>Cash Register Training<br>Soft Skills Training<br>Receptionist Training                    |
| <b>St Louis Adult Learning and Continuing Education</b>  | Personal Support Workers<br>Hairstyling<br>Chef Training  |
| <b>Workforce Planning Board</b>  | Labour Market Info Training   |
| <b>EO Providers:<br/>Second Chance Employment/ Lutherwood/<br/>Agilec/ Anishnabeg Outreach</b> | Youth Job Connection<br>Ways to Work<br>ACE<br>Second Career  |

## Stakeholder Linkages

In order to maximize the employment attainment potential of our clients, we have linked our services with reputable community stakeholders to connect our clients with their services. As indicated, an integration strategy for the provision of employment-related services has been undertaken collaboratively by Ontario Works and Employment Ontario, and has been a key focus of this area. This work represents our efforts to increase opportunities for employment-ready Ontario Works participants to connect seamlessly with Employment Ontario providers and programs in order to achieve the best possible employment outcomes for those we serve.

The Employment Specialist currently chairs the Employment Coordination Committee (ECC). This is a group of 21 service providers from across the region that share programs, best practices, and employment opportunities. For the past 30 years the ECC has held an annual Employer Recognition Awards Event to acknowledge employers who have helped clients with employment barriers access work placements, skills training, and competitive employment opportunities.

We continue to work closely with the Wellington Centre for Continuing Education, helping our clients access their Skills Upgrading Program. All of the upgrading programs (Literacy and Basic Skills) are contained within the Skills Upgrading Program. This programme allows clients to identify the required skills for specific employment goals and subsequently provides the client the opportunity to obtain the academic skills required to meet those goals.

Ontario Works staff members have direct links to their colleagues in the Children’s Early Years division of COW Social Services, ensuring that participants are supported in accessing a fee subsidy if they require licenced child care. Child Care Subsidy Staff and the OW Caseworker work together to support the client through this process. The OW Caseworker can also provide a client with support to cover the cost of informal childcare if this is determined to better meet their needs. The Ontario Works office also works closely with the local ODSP office to meet the needs of our common clients. These connections include supporting ODSP-destined clients through the application period, file transfers, the provision of employment services to non-disabled ODSP adults, and supporting ODSP clients with vital discretionary health and housing benefits.

We continue to participate in the two established working groups between the OW and ODSP offices. One at a front-line staff level where business processes and operational information and issues are developed and shared, and another at a manager level where issues of a more strategic or broader nature can be discussed. An OW staff member was invited to sit on the ODSP client advisory committee and has been participating regularly for the last four years. In addition to strengthening our ties with the local ODSP office, this has been a great opportunity for our staff to share updates related to discretionary benefits for ODSP clients, as requests for ODSP discretionary benefits are processed through our office. We are planning another virtual all-staff OW/ODSP session to continue to strengthen the connection between staff and improve how the OW and ODSP teams work together.

The chart below lists a number of community partners that we actively work with as part of our employment programming, as well as in supporting the life stabilization goals of clients.

| Employment Ontario Partners  | Community Partners for Life Stabilization Supports   |
|--|--|
| 2nd Chance Employment<br>Agilec<br>Anishnabeg Outreach<br>Bridging Employment Supports<br>Conestoga College<br>Links to Work<br>Lutherwood | Business Enterprise Centre Guelph Wellington<br>Canadian Mental Health Association<br>Community Care Access Centre<br>Community Resource Centre in Fergus & Mount Forest<br>Compass Family Services<br>Guelph Community Health Centre<br>Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition<br>Homewood Health<br>Self Help Alliance<br>Stonehenge Therapeutic Community<br>The People and Information Network (formerly the Volunteer Centre of Guelph-Wellington)<br>Trellis Mental Health & Development Services<br>University of Guelph Couple & Family Therapy<br>Women in Crisis |

## **Addressing Service Gaps**

In order to minimize the risk of spread of COVID-19, Wellington County Social Services offices have been temporarily closed to in-person services since March 2020. The Ontario Works division continued to provide services throughout the pandemic by shifting to virtual programme and service delivery in response to the rapidly evolving public health emergency, and in response to emerging client needs. During periods of lockdown and remote work, the OW division ensured that a small team of front-line staff and managers were available in-person to support the most vulnerable in our community, especially those without shelter or access to phones and digital devices. Staff have made use of online video conferencing platforms to deliver individual services and group programmes, as well as offering services through telephone appointments and through the use of the provincial MyBenefits client-facing app. The division's transition to a paperless case management platform (Electronic Document Management, or EDM) in the summer of 2020 enabled Ontario Works to seamlessly transition to remote work when required as a public health measure.

The shift to virtual services across all sectors during the pandemic has highlighted the existence of a digital divide in our community – the gap between those who have access to digital networks and devices, and those who do not. For those in our community who are unsheltered, living in poverty, and facing complex challenges, the pandemic closures of public spaces such as libraries have further reduced access to computers, Wi-Fi, and other digital devices critical to accessing healthcare and social supports. The Ontario Works division has undertaken a number of initiatives to address the digital divide for social services clients, in partnership with community organizations as well as the County of Wellington library network.

Ontario Works launched a device lending programme for OW and Settlement Services clients in March of 2021. Laptops and internet hotspots are available to clients on longer-term loan to support employment and education goals, to enable access to virtual programs and services, and to foster social inclusion and well-being. Increasing access for clients in the rural townships has been facilitated through collaboration with the County library network. Clients residing outside of the City of Guelph are able to pick up and return their devices at any County library branch.

Ontario Works has also partnered with the Guelph Community Health Centre, Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis, Sanguen, and Compass Family Services through a United Way grant to distribute phones and low-cost plans to clients of these agencies who need them. County of Wellington Ontario Works supports Ontario Works clients specifically through dedicated funding for phones and low-cost talk and text plans for up to two years to help them meet their employment and life stabilization goals.

## **Increased Employability Strategies**

In addition to the programmes, services and innovations referenced, Caseworkers continue to support clients who are in part-time positions while promoting the benefits of full time employment for clients who are able to work. Caseworkers will continue to promote the use of the Full-Time Employment

Benefit (FTEB), informal and formal child care benefits, Ontario Works earnings exemptions, and the Extended Employment Health Benefits (EEHB) in this effort.

## **Monitoring Service Strategies**

The Provincial update of target achievements is reviewed with all OW managers as part of bi-weekly Leadership Team meetings. Outcome results and related issues are discussed with the MCCSS Programme Supervisor as part of quarterly review meetings. As described in other areas of the Service Plan, staff are provided with a number of ongoing engagement opportunities, which include regular all-staff meetings, working groups, and feedback surveys related to various elements of the County's OW service model. At the outset of the pandemic we also conducted client and staff surveys to gauge the success of our shift to remote service delivery and to collect data about particular challenges clients were facing in order to inform our responses to emergent needs. The County of Wellington is planning on implementing a corporate survey tool in 2021 that will enable us to conduct more robust engagement and evaluation activities throughout this planning cycle.

The OW management team regularly reviews local labour market information to understand our local environment, outcome performance, and required action. This information includes local unemployment rates, Workforce Planning Board reports, reports and information from our Economic Development colleagues, and local business news.

At a local level we have also completed significant work in the SAMS system and with staff to utilize the provider management functionality of the SAMS system. This has included entry of all of our internal and community-based programme interventions into SAMS, and specific direction to our staff about how to ensure client referrals and participation in these interventions is to be tracked in the system. This approach is allowing us to track referrals and participation by provider as well as by programme. Linking this information to employment outcomes and job retention statistics is beginning to provide us with important information related to the effectiveness of various programme interventions.

In addition to SAMS, we continue to utilize our locally developed Comprehensive Assessment and Action Plan System (CAAPS) to assist in case management. The CAAPS system continues to be extremely helpful to caseworkers as it provides them with a user-friendly, single-view picture of their caseload. It is also effective at tracking when outcome plan and file reviews are required and is a major asset to staff in completing file closure processes. The CAAPS system allows our staff to more easily stay up to date and ensure appropriate follow-ups are happening with the clients they are serving.

## **Section 3: Program Management**

### **Service Delivery and Analysis of Resources**

The following section provides an overview of the staffing resource allocations within Ontario Works. Major functions are described below with attention given to identifying potential risks, priority actions, and improvements.

The total number of full-time employees dedicated to Ontario Works functions is 64.25 FTEs, with a staff to manager ratio of 8.08 including all levels of management. As of August 2021, our case to caseworker ratio was approximately 72. This calculation does not include cases or staff members assigned to specialized or intensive case management programmes and also does not include ODSP clients accessing OW employment supports.

Managers and staff continue to respond effectively to provincial policy changes through ongoing work to update and modify business processes and service delivery approaches. Currently, our Trainer and other expert staff continue to deliver SAMS training to both new and returning staff. Refresher sessions are also offered, with the goal of ensuring all staff are well equipped and comfortable working in SAMS while we continue to meet the established service standards.

The Social Services Department, comprised of Children's Early Years, Housing Services, and Ontario Works divisions continues the process of integrating client reception and help services at our 129 Wyndham Street office. The development of tools and training related to integrated client service, as well as the service integration that is underway, are significant undertakings that will take a phased approach. Consultation and communication at all levels of the organization, along with clients and the community is occurring throughout the process. Integration efforts continue in 2021, with a focus on the delivery of a new integrated Help Centre once our offices are open to the public. The County continues to implement changes to the configuration of our office spaces to bring social services staff more closely together, including the relocation of Children's Early Years staff with OW and Housing. This will help ensure that we are better equipped to assist clients in navigating services across a number of areas.

### **Key Program Management Activities**

#### **Intake**

County of Wellington continues to be actively engaged in the service modernization efforts related to centralized intake. The local OW office was part of phase four of the centralized intake roll-out and went live in June 2021. As part of the implementation of centralized intake, training was provided to all OW staff in two half-day sessions. Phone messages, website information and scripts for reception and intake staff were updated to reflect the changes and to direct individuals to contact the Intake and Benefits Administration Unit (IBAU) for intake related inquiries. The County of Wellington continues to be an active participant on the Provincial-Municipal Joint Project Team for Centralized Intake, and is



involved in provincial Value Stream Mapping to support Centralized Intake development and improvement processes.

Clients now applying for Ontario Works assistance in our area will complete the new online application for assistance, or will contact the provincial intake unit via phone. The IBAU and our intake team continue to work together to assess applications, determine eligibility and connect clients with supports to address immediate needs at the local level. The local intake team continues to monitor the appropriate work queues and connect with individuals by phone or email to schedule a Verification Interview with a caseworker. Individuals are booked in for an appointment with a caseworker as soon as applications are received to facilitate efficient delivery of assistance to those who need it most. We have implemented local processes to ensure that our office continues to meet or exceed our 4-day service delivery standard for processing new OW applications. Caseworkers continue to update files and process verification as it is received to ensure accurate delivery of benefits, as well as continuing to process applications for emergency assistance, temporary care assistance, and applications in other exceptional circumstances, including those that require the use of an interpreter.

## **Case Management**

In addition to our continued emphasis on assisting participants with employment supports, caseworkers have also focused on supporting clients with pandemic-related challenges, including food insecurity, mental health, and digital device access. Managers have increased efforts and tools to monitor case management, including ongoing and customized tracking of outcome plan and eligibility reviews. In this planning cycle, our focus will be on continued work to develop employment and life stabilization pathways, and supporting the associated training needs of caseworkers and employment staff.

Caseworkers continue to benefit from utilizing the Comprehensive Assessment and Action Plan System (CAAPS) to capture and monitor employment activities for OW clients. We also continue to update and refine our use of provider management in SAMS and this is now being used concurrently with our client outcome pathway tools by caseworkers.

Staff delivering our LEAP programme continue to work creatively with their clients and service delivery partners despite the challenges of the pandemic. Coordinated case planning with community partners and warm referrals to community supports continue to be a priority. Our Student and Youth caseworkers also continue to work closely with schools, including those offering alternative and modified programmes of study, to support LEAP clients in achieving their academic goals and intervening in situations where support is required.

## **Life Skills Programmes**

The County of Wellington recognizes the significant barriers some Ontario Works clients face in securing employment and reaching financial independence. In order to support clients in overcoming the various barriers they face, and improving employment outcomes, Life Skills-related supports will remain a priority, particularly as SA Recovery and Renewal progresses.

The Life Skills programme also utilizes an intensive case management model for clients. Referrals to the Life Skills programme are made by caseworkers when a client identifies that they are struggling with significant mental health, behavioural or substance use issues that prevent them from gaining financial independence. Clients receive assistance with appropriate referrals to community resources or for medical and psychiatric assessments that may assist the person in stabilizing their situation. Assistance is also provided to clients for completing ODSP applications where appropriate.

## **Fergus Social Services Office**

The Social Services office in Fergus has been open since April 2012, providing County residents access to a variety of social services, including OW and Settlement as a primary focus. This office location enables us to provide excellent customer service to those living in the central and northern areas of Wellington County when our office is open for in-person services.

In addition, the Fergus office is also the primary location of the Settlement Services programme. Funded through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the mandate of this programme includes assisting newcomers to Canada to access community services and adjust to life in their new communities. The federal resettlement of thousands of refugees, namely from Syria, to Canada as Permanent Residents, have greatly increased the need for Settlement Services and supports in the County of Wellington.

These refugees are entering Canada through sponsorship via the Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) programme, Private Sponsorships, or Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) programmes. Our Ontario Works programme has witnessed a slight increase of in-land claims via the United States. No active sponsorship exists in these cases, and applications have been taken for Ontario Works and Housing subsidies. The County of Wellington has also witnessed an increase in Privately Sponsored refugees over the last few years, and has worked with sponsorship groups to provide information on supports available to refugees in the County. Current conflicts in Afghanistan and eastern Africa may generate an influx of refugees to our service area over the course of this planning cycle. The County of Wellington continues to provide support and information to refugees applying for social assistance, as well as presentations to sponsorship groups on benefits and the OW process.

Settlement Services supports are available at no cost to those with Permanent Resident, Convention Refugee, or Live-In Caregiver status in the County of Wellington and City of Guelph. Experienced Settlement Workers help newcomers in the areas of accessing interpreters/translators, finding housing and affordable child care, registering children in school, enrolling in language training, finding a family physician, seeking employment, and navigating government and community services. Information sessions are provided to educate newcomers about labour laws in Canada, their rights, responsibilities, and safety in the Canadian workplace, and how to navigate the numerous options with Canadian banking institutions. Collaboration with Economic Development has also ensured the movement towards growing local rural communities by successfully integrating newcomers.

## **Cost Recovery and Discretionary Benefits**

The Cost Recovery Unit (CRU) is responsible for four primary programmes: Eligibility Review, Case Presenting, Family Support, and the Eligibility Verification Programme (EVP). The team also handles internal reviews and appeals to the Social Benefits Tribunal. The CRU team operates in a flexible and responsive manner, with staff performing a range of different duties and tasks to ensure that programme integrity and client service needs are addressed.

The Eligibility Review programme continues to operate in an efficient manner by addressing allegations and complaints early. We have a team of two Eligibility Review Officers (EROs) and one clerical support that manage complaints and referrals from various sources inside and outside of Ontario Works. EROs continue to work with intake staff, who advise of an open allegation in SAMS when scheduling a verification interview in anticipation of resolving the outstanding issue.

The Eligibility Verification Programme (EVP) team communicates with caseworkers each month when cases are being reviewed following bi-monthly download reports, as well as maintaining regular communication to ensure changes are flagged and all cases are followed up on as required.

Our Case Presenting Officer (CPO) works with members of the cost recovery team and the Director in completing internal reviews. The CPO completes and defends subsequent submissions to the Social Benefits Tribunal. There is an open communication between the local legal clinic and the CPO in an effort to resolve outstanding issues for clients. The CPO manages assignments and reviews overpayments in accordance with policy and uses system-generated reports to ensure that established overpayments are accurate.

Our Programme Integrity and Support Workers continue to assist clients in obtaining child and spousal support orders through the Ontario Court of Justice, at which time a court order for custody, access, and support is resolved or as appropriate in some cases, may assist clients in setting up private agreements if an application in court is not necessary. Although the pursuit of child support is voluntary for clients, our staff continue to attend the court to defend municipal arrears that are owed to the County of Wellington or other municipalities when a variation has been filed by the support payer residing in this jurisdiction. The team has worked with community partners, including Housing Services, Children's Early Years, the local ODSP office, and the YMCA Teenage Parents Program, to ensure they are aware that we can provide this type of support for a broader range of low-income clients.

OW clients needing to access provincially cost-shared discretionary benefits do so through their caseworker. ODSP clients in need of discretionary benefits access this service through the Cost Recovery Unit. Staff determine eligibility and provide assistance in a timely manner.

Public funeral and burial requests, as part of discretionary benefits, are also processed by the Cost Recovery Unit. Requests for this benefit continue to increase and this trend is predicted to continue. The combination of an increasing population in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington, an aging

population, and anticipated increases to social assistance caseloads will likely result in a continued increase in the number of publically funded funerals and burials for the foreseeable future.

The Municipal Discretionary Benefits Programme is exclusively funded by the municipality. This programme assists individuals and families on low and fixed incomes with various needs ranging from urgent dental care to assistive devices and medical needs. This programme also assists social assistance recipients where they have health-related and/or transportation needs that are not provincially funded through other programmes.

## **Homelessness Prevention**

The Housing Stability Team delivers homelessness prevention and support programmes. Delivered through our Housing Services Division, these programmes are closely integrated with the delivery of OW assistance and include:

- Housing with related supports for high-needs clients
- Community-based Homelessness Services and Supports
- Emergency Shelter Solutions
- Housing Stability Programme (rent, utilities, and moving costs)
- Emergency energy funds (including OESP application assistance)
- Reaching Home (Federal homelessness funding)

In relation to OW case management, the Housing Stability staff work directly with individuals and families residing in both supportive housing environments and Emergency Shelters. Staff dedicated to clients at these sites facilitate OW applications, and provide support in transitioning out of shelter and support programmes and into longer term housing solutions.

## **Overview of Learning Supports**

Our organization remains committed to facilitating professional development and lifelong learning experiences for all of its employees. The provincial training curriculum, Supportive Approaches through Innovative Learning (SAIL), continues to form the foundation upon which other experiences are built. SAIL training is provided to all new staff that join the OW division. We are actively engaged on the provincial SAIL network and will continue to deliver training to new staff during the current planning cycle.

In addition to offering SAIL modules, we take concrete action to ensure that the principles of the SAIL training are lived out by our staff throughout the organization. SAIL principles are applied through various initiatives and means including lunch and learn sessions, job shadowing, a resource library, an intranet, and staff learning events. A further support for staff is the Trainer, who is a resource regularly used by staff in an advice and guidance capacity to assist them with policy interpretation and decision-making.

Important priorities for training and development in 2021-2022 will be strengthening the cultural competency of our staff as well as offering training in areas of de-escalation and trauma-informed practice. Our Trainer and other expert staff will continue to deliver core programme delivery (legislation and work processes) and SAMS technology training to both new and returning staff, and will offer refresher or specialized sessions with the goal of ensuring all staff are well-equipped and comfortable working in SAMS while we continue to meet the established service standards. As we increasingly work with our team to develop their skills related to life stabilization, training in the areas of Mental Health First Aid, Motivational Interviewing and completion of provincially developed client assessments will be prioritized.

Staff are provided with a variety of training opportunities appropriate to their roles during the course of the year. The County's Performance Appraisal process allows staff, with the support of their manager, to identify their own learning and personal development goals. Throughout the year, the training unit provides 'refresher' sessions based on feedback received from staff and management as well as information received from the Province related to programme updates and changes. In addition, staff are supported in attending conferences and courses throughout the year through the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) and local workshops related to issues such as addictions, mental health, youth services, employment, and other inter-agency learning events.

Ontario Works managers continue to be offered a variety of learning opportunities, including a Certificate in Leadership offered through the University of Waterloo. This programme aims to build the capacity of managers by offering training in leadership skills such as coaching for success, how to lead people, team building, and managing opportunities for conflict.

We are also supporting staff in the transition to centralized and automated financial assistance through feedback and engagement sessions, regular communication and project updates and change management supports as we undertake SA Recovery and Renewal work. The County has been an early adopter of many provincial modernization projects and will continue to look for opportunities to support the development and best possible implementation of programme changes.

## **Supporting Change and Preparing for the Road Ahead**

The 2021-2022 planning cycle will take our office through transformational changes as we undertake Recovery and Renewal work in line with the provincial vision for social assistance. We are committed to supporting staff, clients and partners in the implementation of these programme changes, including through ongoing communication and engagement.

Our office has been actively involved in the development and implementation of updated business processes, including Electronic Document Management, Centralized Intake, and the pivot to alternative service delivery in response to the evolving COVID-19 public health emergency. These efforts have enabled us to prepare for further modernization anticipated over the course of this planning cycle, including the roll-out of the Employment Services Transformation and preparing staff for the use of provincial common assessment tools, as well as anticipated changes related to referral processes and

action planning. In line with our increasingly digitized local processes, we are looking forward to working with MCCSS to remove dental cards and implement paperless monthly benefit statements.

Senior management at the County of Wellington Social Services Department continues to be actively involved in provincial working groups and at the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. In addition, our front-line managers and staff participate in numerous local and regional area networks, community collaborative initiatives and other social services continuous improvement efforts. The Ontario Works division continues to involve an internal Staff Advisory Group, made up of representatives from each team and function within the division, to gather feedback and inform decision-making processes as we navigate system changes and prepare for SA Recovery and Renewal.

## **Appendix**

County of Wellington Ontario Works Caseload Snapshot 2019-2021



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**OW-21-07**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination – Host Agency Transition**

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### **Background:**

The Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination (PTF) is a community collaborative initiative that was formed following a community poverty symposium in 2009. Since that time the County has been a core partner and funder of the PTF as there is significant alignment between the mission and actions of the PTF and those of the County, in particular the Social Services Department. The County is represented on the member committee and the PTF Steering Committee by the Director of Ontario Works and the Director of Housing Services is also on the PTF member committee.

The PTF was originally hosted by United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin. In 2012 the PTF transitioned to be hosted by Guelph Wellington Dufferin Public Health (WDGPH). This hosting arrangement worked very well for both the PTF and WDGPH for many years. In the summer of 2020 WDGPH advised that they were interested in supporting the PTF in identifying a new host agency.

### **Host Agency Identification Process:**

Following the decision to transition to a new host agency, the Steering Committee of the PTF initiated a process to solicit interest and identify a new host agency. Partner agencies of the PTF were identified to submit an application outlining how they could adequately support and meet the requirements of hosting the PTF within their organization. Key considerations in this decision-making process included the following:

- Understanding, commitment and alignment with the mission and work of the PTF
- Organizational capacity and governance
- Financial management and anticipated costs
- Human resources and staffing considerations
- In-kind resources and supports available

Upon reviewing the applications received and interviewing prospective host agencies, the Steering Committee made a decision earlier in 2021 to select United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin as the new host for the PTF. This decision was subject to the successful negotiation of a new Host Agency Agreement, and this was fully completed in September of 2021.

### **Transition to the United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin:**

The PTF staff have made the transition to move office locations and become employees of the United Way. Funding for the PTF is received from a number of sources including the County, City of Guelph, and the United Way. It is also not uncommon for the PTF to receive additional one-time funding through grants or other sources to complete projects that are complementary to the goals and mission of the PTF. WDGPH finance staff have worked in cooperation with the PTF and United Way to complete a final reconciliation of PTF revenues and expenses and transfer all appropriate amounts to the United Way. Details of this reconciliation will be made available to the County as part of the annual reporting requirements under WDGPH's funding agreement with the County related to the PTF.

Through the Social Services Committee and Council, the County has approved annual funding to support the work of the PTF that began in 2009. In 2015 County Council approved a standard annual increase of 2% to select community grant agreements, including the PTF agreement. With the transition of the PTF to the United Way, staff are recommending the approval to enter into a new funding agreement with United Way to ensure that County support to the work of the PTF continues. This new agreement would align with the current funding level, and the legal and reporting expectations of the current agreement.

The current priorities of the PTF remain unchanged throughout this transition and are summarized as follows:

- Livable incomes and decent work
- Housing and homelessness
- Food insecurity
- Health inequities

### **Financial Implications:**

In 2021 the County provided \$27,415 to WDGPH to support the work of the PTF. In 2022 this amount is scheduled to increase to \$27,963 subject to approval through the 2022 County Budget process. Transitioning this funding to a new host agency would not have any implications to the 2021 approved County Budget and 10 Year Plan.

### **Recommendation:**

That the Warden and Clerk be authorized to enter into an ongoing funding agreement with United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin to support the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination community collaborative initiative, subject to the agreement satisfying the requirements of staff and the County Solicitor; and,

That reimbursements provided through this Agreement align with the previous funding provided to WDGPH to support the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination; and,

That staff take appropriate action to terminate the existing agreement with Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health related to the delivery of the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination.



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart B.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stuart Beumer  
Director of Ontario Works

# County of Wellington - Ontario Works



## 2018-21 County / City Caseload

| Monthly County of Wellington Caseload | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | Change From Previous Month Cases | Change From Previous Month % | Change From Previous Year Cases | Change From Previous Year % |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| January                               | 399   | 398   | 375   | 289   | (7)                              | -2.4%                        | (86)                            | -22.9%                      |
| February                              | 406   | 397   | 371   | 286   | (3)                              | -1.0%                        | (85)                            | -22.9%                      |
| March                                 | 387   | 402   | 383   | 291   | 5                                | 1.7%                         | (92)                            | -24.0%                      |
| April                                 | 383   | 414   | 386   | 292   | 1                                | 0.3%                         | (94)                            | -24.4%                      |
| May                                   | 384   | 411   | 370   | 290   | (2)                              | -0.7%                        | (80)                            | -21.6%                      |
| June                                  | 377   | 402   | 350   | 284   | (6)                              | -2.1%                        | (66)                            | -18.9%                      |
| July                                  | 384   | 381   | 330   | 289   | 5                                | 1.8%                         | (41)                            | -12.4%                      |
| August                                | 380   | 381   | 322   | 287   | (2)                              | -0.7%                        | (35)                            | -10.9%                      |
| September                             | 394   | 372   | 306   |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| October                               | 389   | 374   | 316   |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| November                              | 396   | 369   | 298   |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| December                              | 395   | 354   | 296   |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| Total                                 | 4,674 | 4,655 | 4,103 | 2,308 |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| Average                               | 390   | 388   | 342   | 289   |                                  |                              | (53)                            | -15.6%                      |

| Monthly City of Guelph Caseload | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021  | Change From Previous Month Cases | Change From Previous Month % | Change From Previous Year Cases | Change From Previous Year % |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| January                         | 1,653  | 1,612  | 1,680  | 1,279 | (18)                             | -1.4%                        | (401)                           | -23.9%                      |
| February                        | 1,694  | 1,600  | 1,697  | 1,241 | (38)                             | -3.0%                        | (456)                           | -26.9%                      |
| March                           | 1,662  | 1,610  | 1,712  | 1,243 | 2                                | 0.2%                         | (469)                           | -27.4%                      |
| April                           | 1,659  | 1,611  | 1,772  | 1,222 | (21)                             | -1.7%                        | (550)                           | -31.0%                      |
| May                             | 1,683  | 1,658  | 1,667  | 1,212 | (10)                             | -0.8%                        | (455)                           | -27.3%                      |
| June                            | 1,684  | 1,669  | 1,578  | 1,201 | (11)                             | -0.9%                        | (377)                           | -23.9%                      |
| July                            | 1,651  | 1,668  | 1,522  | 1,203 | 2                                | 0.2%                         | (319)                           | -21.0%                      |
| August                          | 1,670  | 1,699  | 1,482  | 1,176 | (27)                             | -2.2%                        | (306)                           | -20.6%                      |
| September                       | 1,608  | 1,672  | 1,392  |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| October                         | 1,612  | 1,647  | 1,355  |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| November                        | 1,605  | 1,640  | 1,325  |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| December                        | 1,581  | 1,651  | 1,297  |       |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| Total                           | 19,762 | 19,737 | 18,479 | 9,777 |                                  |                              |                                 |                             |
| Average                         | 1,647  | 1,645  | 1,540  | 1,222 |                                  |                              | (318)                           | -20.6%                      |

# County of Wellington - Ontario Works



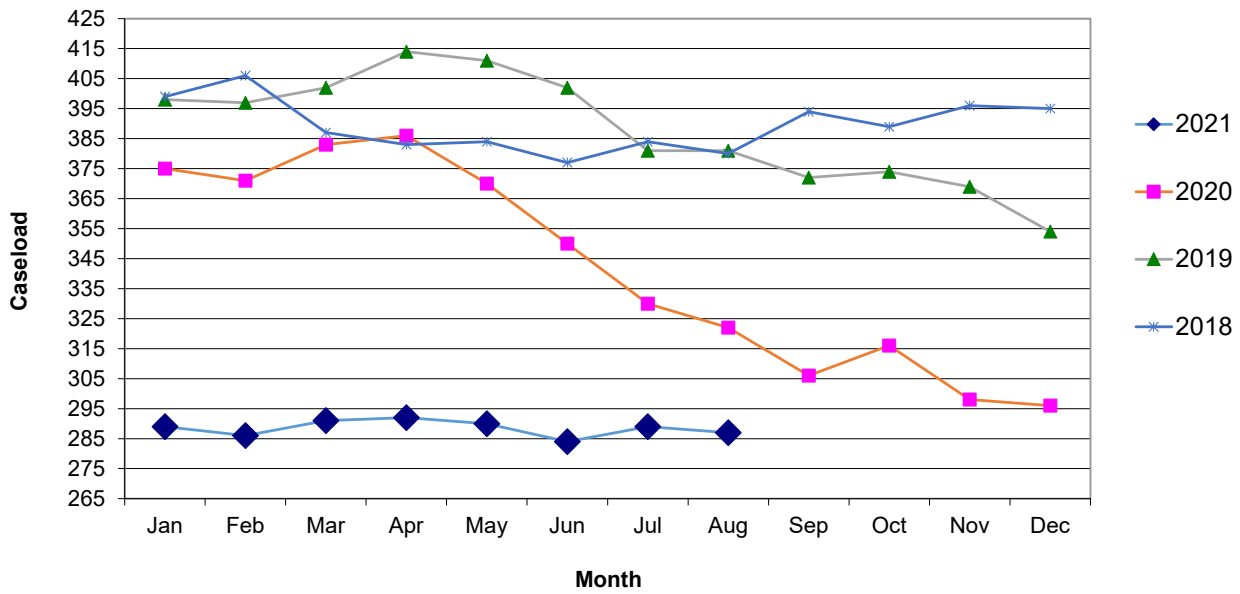
## 2018-21 County / City Caseload

| Monthly Total<br>City and<br>County<br>Combined<br>Caseload | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   | Change<br>From<br>Previous<br>Month<br>Cases | Change<br>From<br>Previous<br>Month % | Change<br>From<br>Previous<br>Year<br>Cases | Change<br>From<br>Previous<br>Year % |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| January   | 2,052  | 2,010  | 2,055  | 1,568  | (25)   | -1.6%                                 | (487)                                       | -23.7%                               |
| February  | 2,100  | 1,997  | 2,068  | 1,527  | (41)   | -2.6%                                 | (541)                                       | -26.2%                               |
| March   | 2,049  | 2,012  | 2,095  | 1,534  | 7  | 0.5%                                  | (561)                                       | -26.8%                               |
| April   | 2,042  | 2,025  | 2,158  | 1,514  | (20)   | -1.3%                                 | (644)                                       | -29.8%                               |
| May   | 2,067  | 2,069  | 2,037  | 1,502  | (12)   | -0.8%                                 | (535)                                       | -26.3%                               |
| June  | 2,061  | 2,071  | 1,928  | 1,485  | (17)   | -1.1%                                 | (443)                                       | -23.0%                               |
| July  | 2,035  | 2,049  | 1,852  | 1,492  | 7  | 0.5%                                  | (360)                                       | -19.4%                               |
| August  | 2,050  | 2,080  | 1,804  | 1,463  | (29)   | -1.9%                                 | (341)                                       | -18.9%                               |
| September   | 2,002  | 2,044  | 1,698  |        |  |                                       |   |                                      |
| October   | 2,001  | 2,021  | 1,671  |        |  |                                       |   |                                      |
| November  | 2,001  | 2,009  | 1,623  |        |  |                                       |   |                                      |
| December  | 1,976  | 2,005  | 1,593  |        |  |                                       |   |                                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | 24,436 | 24,392 | 22,582 | 12,085 |  |                                       |   |                                      |
| <b>Average</b>  | 2,036  | 2,033  | 1,882  | 1,511  |  |                                       | (371)                                       | -19.7%                               |

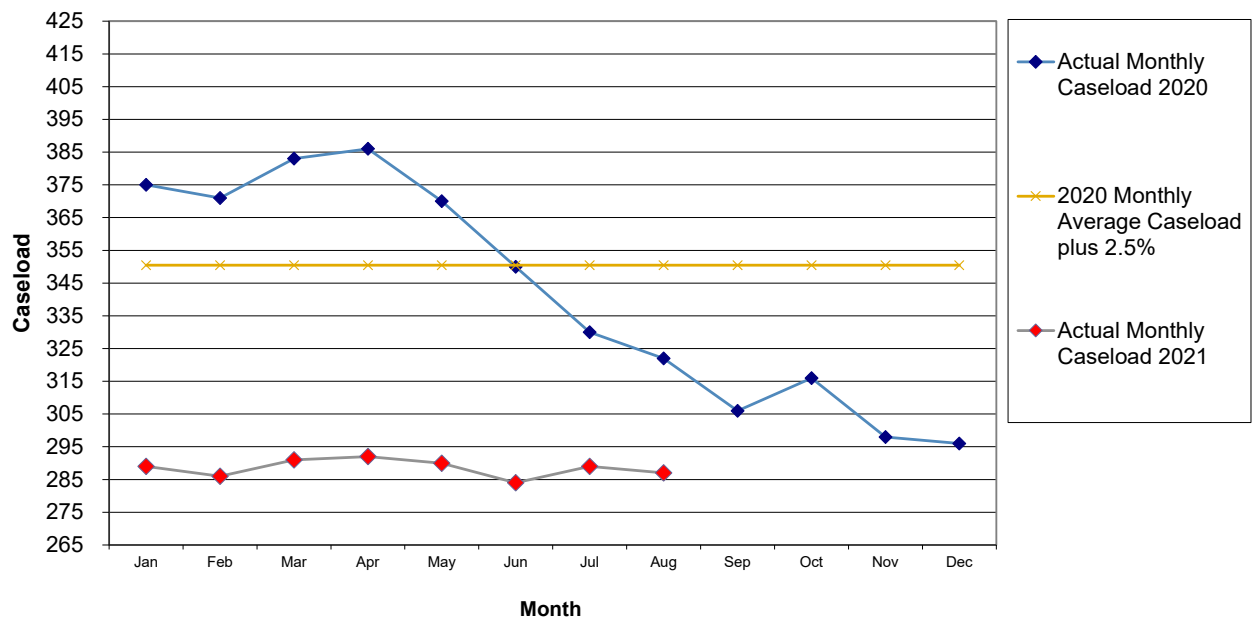
| Monthly<br>City/County %<br>Share of<br>Caseload | City 2018 | County<br>2018 | City 2019 | County<br>2019 | City 2020 | County<br>2020 | City 2021 | County<br>2021 |
|--|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| January  | 80.6%     | 19.4%          | 80.2%     | 19.8%          | 81.8%     | 18.2%          | 81.6%     | 18.4%          |
| February   | 80.7%     | 19.3%          | 80.1%     | 19.9%          | 82.1%     | 17.9%          | 81.3%     | 18.7%          |
| March  | 81.1%     | 18.9%          | 80.0%     | 20.0%          | 81.7%     | 18.3%          | 81.0%     | 19.0%          |
| April  | 81.2%     | 18.8%          | 79.6%     | 20.4%          | 82.1%     | 17.9%          | 80.7%     | 19.3%          |
| May  | 81.4%     | 18.6%          | 80.1%     | 19.9%          | 81.8%     | 18.2%          | 80.7%     | 19.3%          |
| June   | 81.7%     | 18.3%          | 80.6%     | 19.4%          | 81.8%     | 18.2%          | 80.9%     | 19.1%          |
| July   | 81.1%     | 18.9%          | 81.4%     | 18.6%          | 82.2%     | 17.8%          | 80.6%     | 19.4%          |
| August   | 81.5%     | 18.5%          | 81.7%     | 18.3%          | 82.2%     | 17.8%          | 80.4%     | 19.6%          |
| September  | 80.3%     | 19.7%          | 81.8%     | 18.2%          | 82.0%     | 18.0%          |           |                |
| October  | 80.6%     | 19.4%          | 81.5%     | 18.5%          | 81.1%     | 18.9%          |           |                |
| November   | 80.2%     | 19.8%          | 81.6%     | 18.4%          | 81.6%     | 18.4%          |           |                |
| December   | 80.0%     | 20.0%          | 82.3%     | 17.7%          | 81.4%     | 18.6%          |           |                |
| <b>Average</b>                                   | 80.9%     | 19.1%          | 80.9%     | 19.1%          | 81.8%     | 18.2%          | 80.9%     | 19.1%          |

Note: City/County splits are based on % municipal breakdown caseload report as a % of the Official Stats on the Operational Report

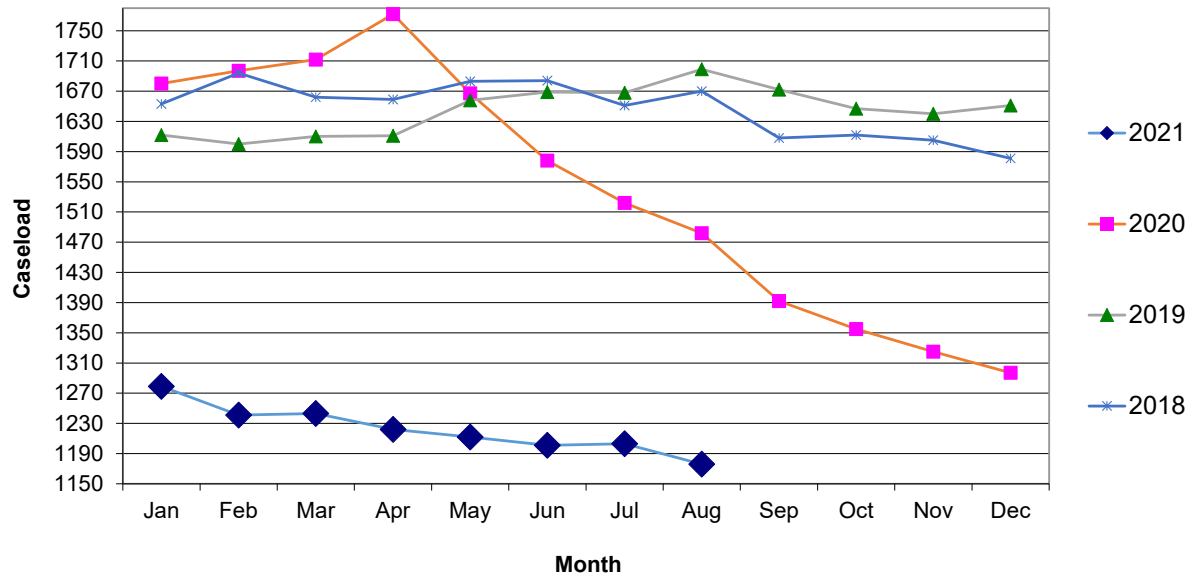
County of Wellington Ontario Works Caseload - January 2018 to August 2021



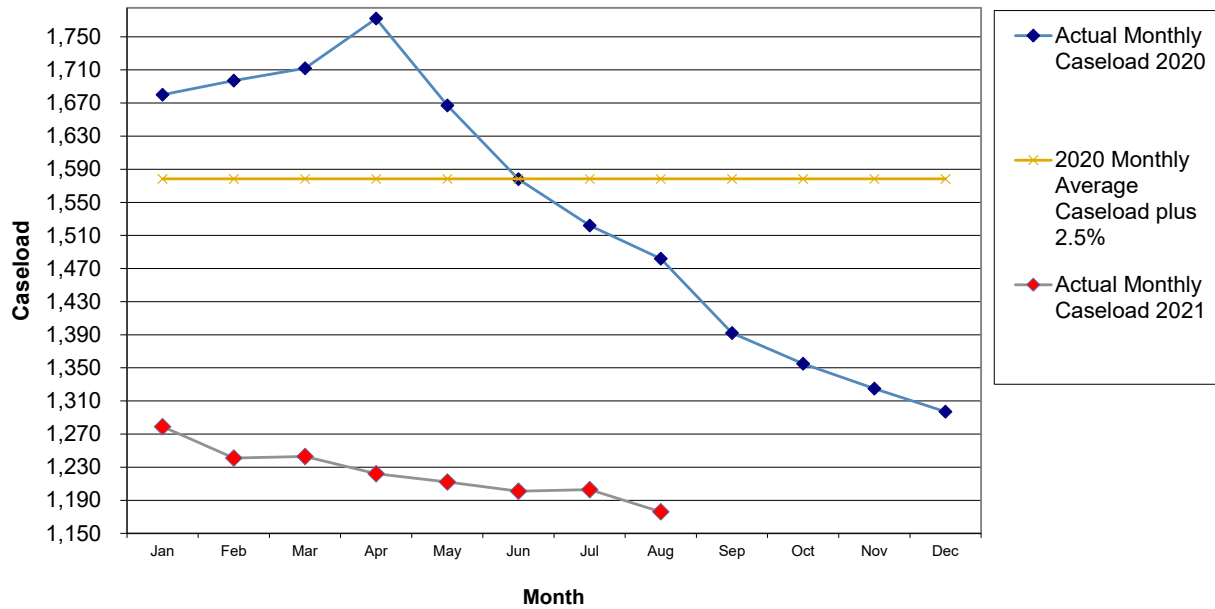
County of Wellington Ontario Works Caseload Budget/Actual Comparison



**City of Guelph Ontario Works Caseload - January 2018 to August 2021**



**City of Guelph Ontario Works Caseload Budget/Actual Comparison**





# County of Wellington Housing Services

Status and Activity Report – 2021 Q1&Q2 (January 1, 2021-June 30, 2021)

## Households Assisted - County of Wellington (CMSM) Housing Portfolio (as of June 30, 2021)



Rent-Geared-to-  
Income (RGI)  
2,524 Units



Affordable  
Housing 315  
Units

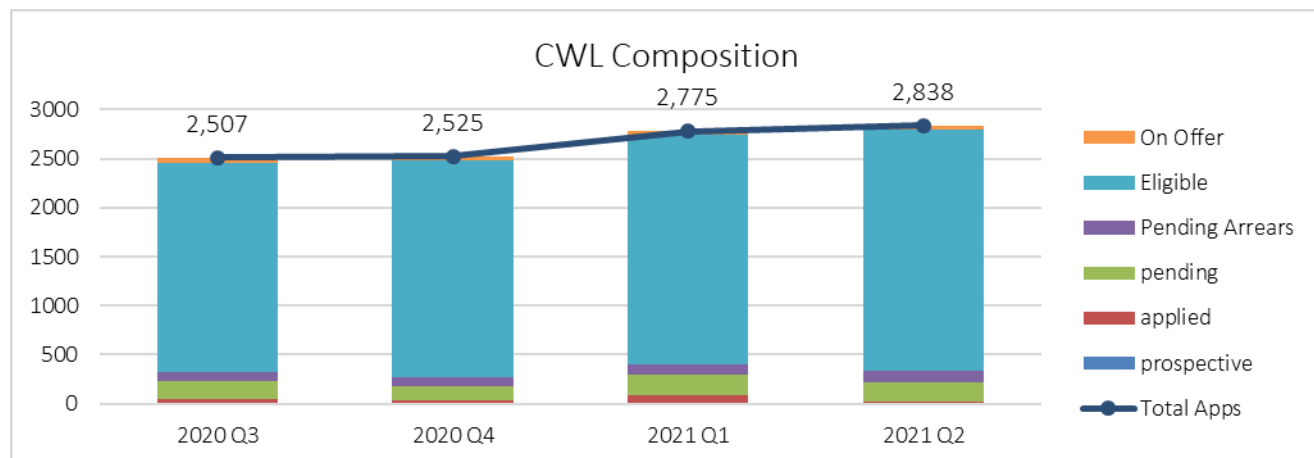


Rent Supports  
(HAP, CAD &  
CASU) 135 Units



Rent Supports  
(COHB)  
81 Units

## Centralized Wait List (CWL) Composition

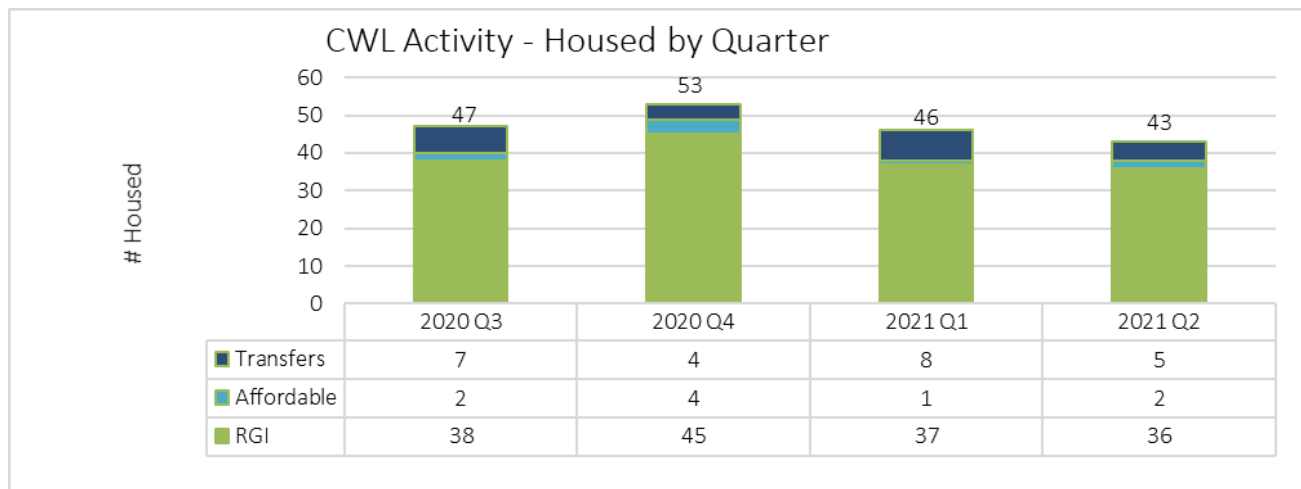


This data shows how many households are waiting for rent-geared-to-income (RGI). As of June 30, 2021 there were 2,838 households on the CWL. The number of households on the CWL increased in 2021 Q1 & Q2. In previous two quarters (2020 Q3 & Q4) there was a small decline in number of households on the CWL following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Since 2015, the total number of households on the CWL waiting for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) continues to trend upwards.

## Centralized Wait List (CWL) Housed Data

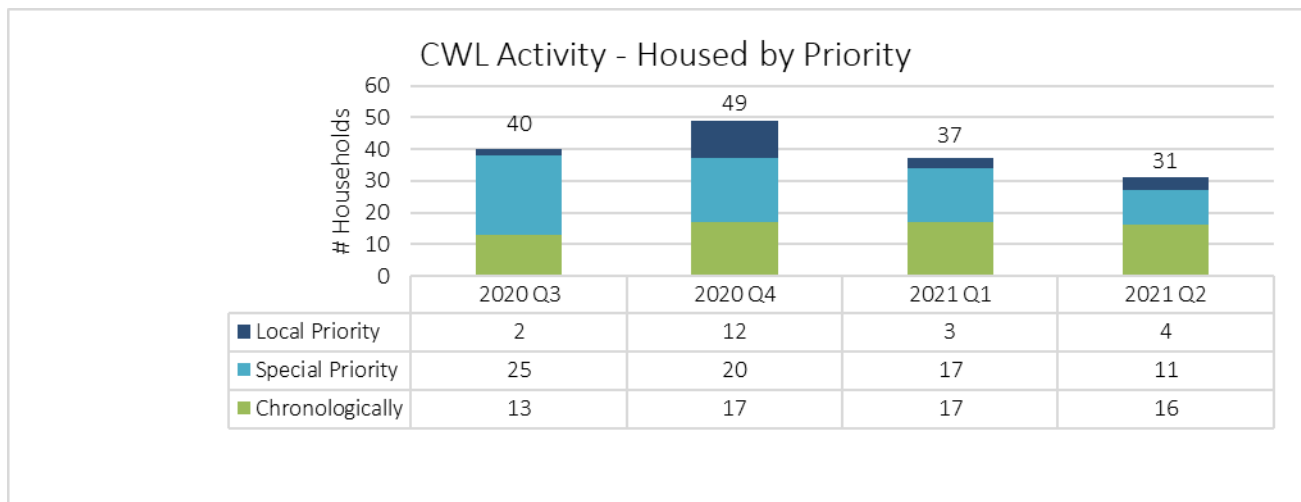
Restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic remain in place to protect the health of staff and the public. Housing placements in 2021 Q1 & Q2 are slightly lower than the pre-pandemic average of 60 placements per quarter in 2019. While housing offers are being made and operations are returning to normal, these data suggest the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact housing operations.





### Centralized Wait List (CWL) Housed by Priority Data (transfers not included)

Housed by priority data identifies the number of households housed chronologically compared to the number of households housed through the provincially legislated Special Provincial Priority (SPP) category, and through the County of Wellington's Local Priority category. SPP households include survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. Households housed through priority categories are accommodated in RGI and Affordable Housing units. The 2021 Q1 & Q2 data shows a continued return to placing households chronologically as well as placing SPP or Local Priority households. Previously in 2020 Q2 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, only SPP and Local Priority households were housed.



### Homelessness Serving System

All three emergency shelters, closed in mid-March 2020 to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission, remained closed in 2021 Q1 & Q2. Emergency shelter services were temporarily located in hotels with expanded services so that clients were not longer required to leave premises during the daytime hours. As of November 23rd 2020 clients requiring emergency shelter are served at Loyola House where there are accommodations suited to COVID-19 health and safety requirements as well as expanded support services on site.

## Housing Stability Programme – Emergency Shelter Usage (Loyola House Pilot, Youth, motel overflow)

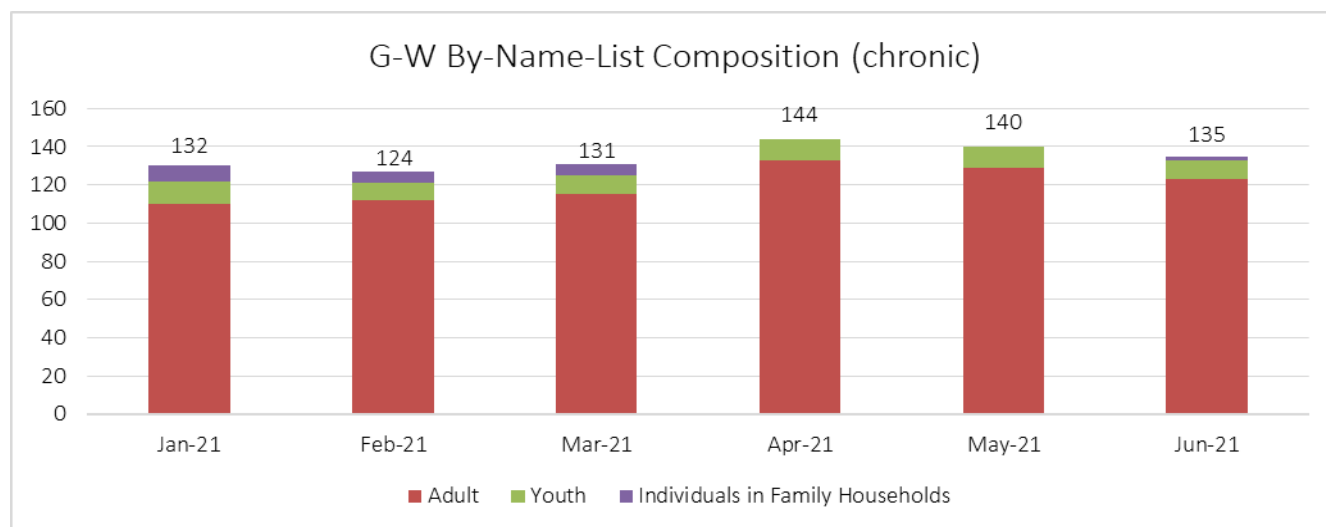
| Emergency Shelter Use                            | 2021 Q1    | 2021 Q2    |
|--|------------|------------|
| <b>TOTAL number of unique individuals served</b> | <b>134</b> | <b>126</b> |
| Number of singles                                | 111        | 109        |
| Number of individuals in family households       | 23         | 17         |

In addition to the numbers shown in the above table, additional emergency shelter beds have been made available at the Warming Centre in Guelph as well as dedicated rooms at Loyola House location where individuals experiencing homelessness who test positive for COVID-19 can self-isolate in a supportive environment.

### Guelph-Wellington's By-Name-List (BNL) – Transforming the way we respond to homelessness

A By-Name-List (BNL) is a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in Guelph-Wellington. The BNL helps service providers prioritize need, track the status change as individuals and families move in and out of (chronic) homelessness and inform action as we move towards ending chronic homelessness in our community.

On average, between January and June 2021, there were 134 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness per month on the Guelph-Wellington BNL. The graph below shows how the individuals experiencing chronic homelessness on the BNL shifts continually over time.

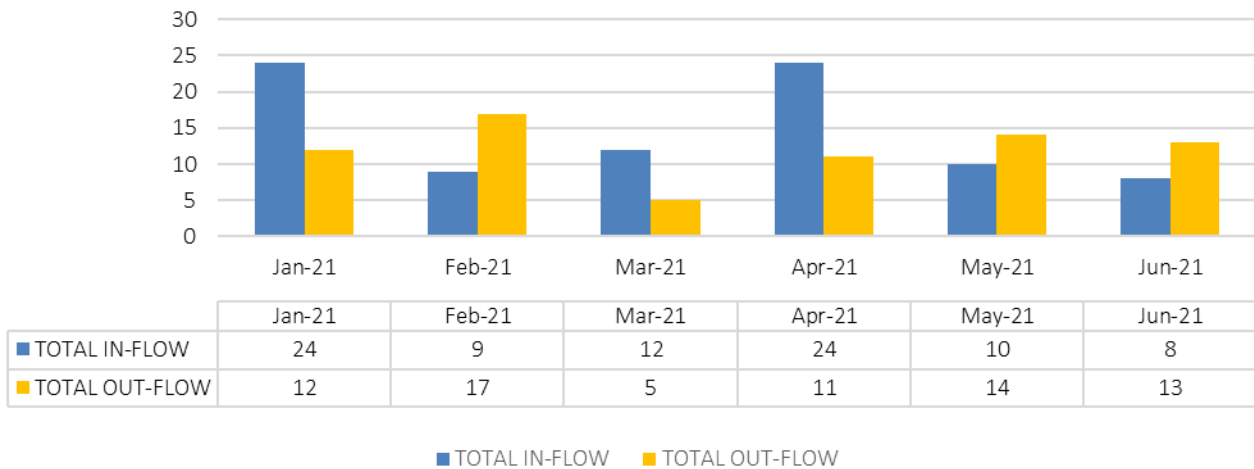


Information gathered through the BNL helps us understand who is coming into the homelessness system (inflow) and who is being housed/leaving the system (outflow). Tracking inflow/outflow and actively homeless in our community helps us measure progress towards ending chronic homelessness.



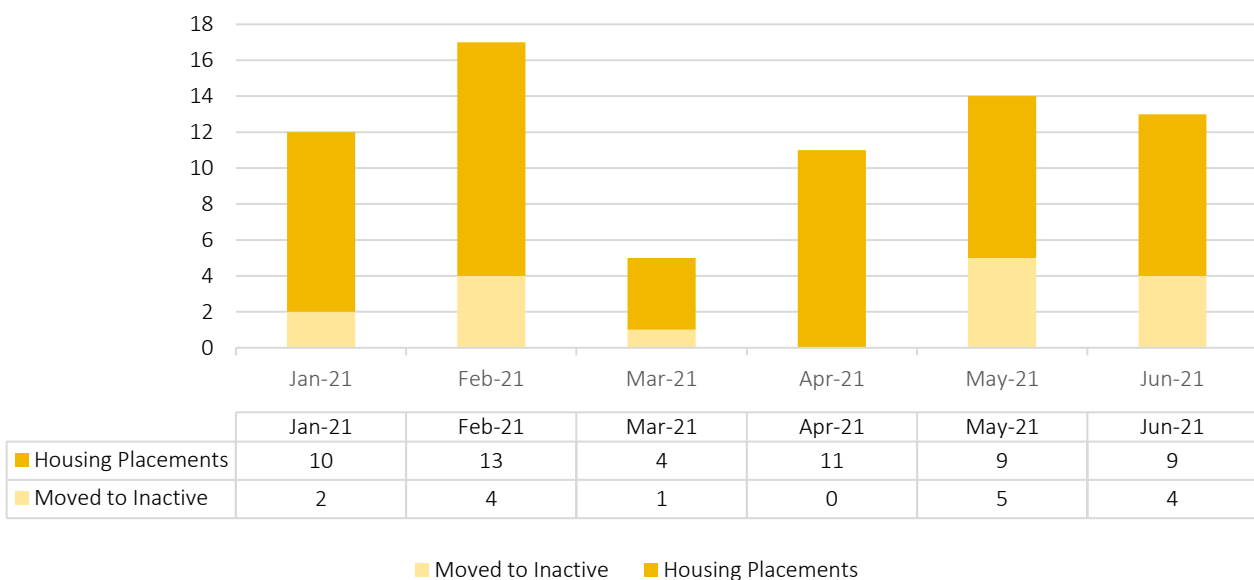


In-flow and Out-flow of the G-W By-Name-List (chronic)



The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter started with 120 individuals on the BNL, 87 were added (inflow), and 72 were removed (outflow), ending the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter with 135 people on the BNL. The inflow into the BNL over this period was higher than the outflow. In order to continue driving reductions in the BNL the inflow needs to be reduced and the outflow increased. The number of housing placements varies each month and, between January and June 2021 there were a total of 56 housing placements of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness from the BNL.

G-W By-Name-List Total Out-flow and Housing Placements (chronic)



Once an individual has been added to the BNL they are prioritized for housing supports when programme spaces become available. Programme matches are determined by the eligibility criteria for an agency. The individual with the highest prioritization that meets the programmes eligibility criteria will be matched. The data shows that housing placements account for the majority of out-flow from the BNL.



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**HS-21-27**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Mark Poste, Director of Housing  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **Housing Services Tenant Support Partnerships**

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### **Background:**

The County of Wellington partners with community organizations who deliver inclusive programmes and services that promote the health and well-being of Housing Services tenants in Wellington County and the City of Guelph. The County of Wellington collaborates with these community agencies in a number of ways to support their work, either through providing space to deliver services or through direct funding grants. This report provides a summary of these partnerships.

### **Senior Supports:**

The County of Wellington has a longstanding partnership with Guelph Independent Living (GIL) to deliver Senior Support Worker services at two County-owned Seniors buildings in the City of Guelph. GIL is provided with office space as well as common room time for group programming to reduce isolation and improve independent living for seniors and adults with physical disabilities. Building on the successful partnership with GIL, Housing Services partnered with the Victoria Order of Nurses (VON) in 2014 to bring Senior Support Worker services to County-owned buildings in the County of Wellington. This partnership has steadily grown over the years, and today the VON provides transportation services and various day programmes such as exercise classes, games and crafts for seniors and adults living with a disability or with Alzheimer's Disease, dementia or cognitive impairment. VON services are available at 6 building in the City and the County. VON has also expanded its portfolio to include non-profit Housing Providers and affordable housing partners throughout our service area. Both of these partnerships improve the quality of life for residents through the delivery of recreational, healthy lifestyle services and supports to allow for tenants to continue to live in their own homes and communities.

### **Neighbourhood Supports:**

To support the unique needs of the Brant and Onward Willow neighbourhood, Housing Services provides a County-owned family unit (i.e., townhouse) for use as a local office to both the Brant Avenue and Onward Willow Neighbourhood Groups, which are part of the Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition network. In the Brant and Onward Willow neighbourhoods, where the County owns over 230 family units, these groups are able to tailor services and supports to meet community needs. Supports and services may vary, but generally aim to promote food security (pantry and food delivery, meal and snack programmes), recreation and social development (yoga, festivals, homework club, tax clinics and coffee time) and family wellness (parent outreach worker, winter clothing drive, backpack project). The Neighbourhood groups are strong partners that contribute to improving affordability and social inclusion for low income families in Brant and Onward Willow.

## **Health and Crisis Supports:**

Over the past number of years, the County has partnered with the Guelph Paramedic Service to deliver the Community Paramedicine Programme to residents at County-owned senior buildings in Guelph and Wellington County. Community Paramedicine is an innovative and responsive model of community-based health care in which paramedics operate in an expanded role to support access to coordinated care/resources and reduce dependency on 911 and potential transports to the emergency department. While the pandemic has interfered with this programme, it has operated at three locations in Guelph and plans to expand this year to buildings in Fergus, Mount Forest and Harriston as COVID restrictions allow.

The Acute Intervention Programme(AIP) is a partnership with Stonehenge Therapeutic Community and operates throughout our social housing portfolio in Guelph and Wellington. The AIP programme provides intensive case management crisis support to households struggling with problems related to mental illness and/or addictions and are experiencing housing instability that could lead to an eviction. The programme started in 2020 and takes referrals from any social housing provider in our community. This programme is proving to be extremely important in keeping vulnerable households housed and helping to prevent individuals and families from entering the homelessness system.

## **Annual Housing Services Social Recreation Grant Programme:**

Through the Housing Services Social and Recreation Grant Programme, the County is able to support important work which contributes to the health and well-being of our tenants, particularly seniors and youth. In 2021, Housing Services allocated grants to the Guelph Wellington Seniors Association (GWSA), the Sheldale Family Gateway, the Brant Avenue Neighbourhood Group and the Town of Minto to support social and recreational programming.

Housing Services partnered with the Guelph Wellington Seniors Association (GWSA) to pilot a food security programme whereby Community Food Markets were set up at seven senior and adult life style buildings. In partnership with The SEED, GWSA delivered produce, pantry items and frozen meals to seniors on a weekly basis. In total, 17 Community Food Markets took place that distributed an impressive 3,732 pounds of produce and was well attended by 527 visitors. GWSA Community Food Markets aimed to improve wellness outcomes by providing easy access to healthy food in a predictable, regularly scheduled market-style format that increases dignity and reduces stigma for those experiencing food insecurity. GWSA is currently looking at opportunities to continue this programme into the fall and find additional funding sources to make the pilot a long term programme.

Moreover, Housing Services partnered with Sheldale Family Gateway and the Brant Ave Neighbourhood Group to deliver summer camps to close to 300 children residing in these two neighbourhoods. The camps followed COVID protocols, ran for 8 weeks over July and August, providing recreational programming and leadership development to neighbourhood children and youth.

Finally, Housing Services worked with The Town of Minto to provide free swim passes to tenants in our Palmerston family units, in an effort to increase recreational opportunities for residents during the summer months. In total, 12 Palmerston families participated in this programme in 2021.

## **Recommendation:**

That report HS-21-27 Housing Services Tenant Support Partnerships be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mark Poste". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Mark Poste

Director of Housing



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**HS-21-28**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Mark Poste, Director of Housing  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **Warming Centre Extension**

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### **Background:**

In January of 2020, Housing Services brought forward committee report 2020-02 for the Warming Centre Pilot run through the Welcome In Drop In Centre. At that time, we were looking to pilot a warming centre out of the Welcome In Drop In Centre's 23 Gordon St site in Guelph. This site ran from December 18, 2019 until it was collapsed with the rest of the shelter system due to COVID concerns on March 26, 2020.

In October 2020, Housing Services brought forward committee report HS-20-18 for the Warming Centre Pilot run through the Welcome In Drop In Centre. This report requested the extension of the warming centre pilot from November 2020 to April 2021. During the pandemic, Staff worked with the Welcome In Drop In Centre and Public Health to make this a safe, low barrier temporary shelter solution for the community.

In March 2021, staff have worked with the Welcome In Drop In Centre to extend the warming centre pilot through the remainder of the 2021-2022 fiscal year, with this commitment being brought forward to Committee and Council in May 2021 in report HS-21-19. This investment was supported by the investments made by the federal and provincial governments under the Reaching Home COVID and Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 2 programme. The cost of the programme extension over the 12-month period was \$352,800. The commitment was made under the delegated authority provided under COVID related Homelessness funding.

### **Warming Centre Extension:**

The warming centre continues to provide our homeless services an excellent opportunity to connect with new individuals that our system had not previously connected with and work to build a relationship with them. Although the warming centre does not look the same way it did when we first created it due to pandemic restrictions, it continues to provide our community's most vulnerable with a low barrier emergency housing solution for the hours between 8pm and 8am. Of the 159 unique individuals, 29 new individuals were identified, added to our community's By-Name List and we were able to make connections to start to develop individual housing plans.

Over the past 6 months, the warming centre saw 159 unique individuals accessing the centre with an average nightly usage of 11 individuals per night. Of the 159 unique individuals that accessed the site from March 2021 to August 2021, we saw the following breakdown across age groups:

| Warming Centre Use                  | Mar-Aug-21 |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Average individuals per night       | 11         |
| Number of stays in reporting period | 2320       |
| Number of Individuals               | 159        |
| Adults (25-64)                      | 152        |
| Youth (18-24)                       | 0          |
| Children (under 18)                 | 0          |
| Seniors (65+)                       | 7          |
| Indigenous                          | 15         |

Staff are recommending that the Warming Centre be extended for the next fiscal year using existing Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) Phase 3 programme. The cost of this programme over the 12-month extension is estimated at \$352,800. With the successes that we experienced since the first iteration of the warming centre pilot, we are looking to use COVID related funding to support an extension of this important service. The reality is that not everyone that experiences homelessness in our community will try to access shelter services, either through mistrust of government services or for other personal reasons. The warming centre gives these individuals a chance to come in out of the cold, get warm, and if comfortable, connect with services that may be able to support them towards a permanent housing solution.

### **Financial Implications:**

The total cost to support the extension of the warming centre from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023 is estimated to be \$352,800. This cost will be funded entirely through the use of the provincial Social Services Relief Fund programme and will have no impact on the municipal tax levy. This provincial funding allocation was provided to support operating costs only, and aligns well with the intent of the warming centre extension.

### **Recommendation:**

That report HS-21-28 Warming Centre Extension be received for information, and

That staff be permitted to commit funding to support the 12 month extension of the warming centre programme in partnership with the Welcome In Drop In Centre, and

That staff be permitted to draft all the necessary agreements required to carry out this funding, to the satisfaction of staff and the County Solicitor

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Poste

Director of Housing



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**HS-21-29**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Mark Poste, Director of Housing  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **2022-23 Federal Provincial Housing and Homelessness Funding**

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### **Background:**

On August 23, 2021, the County received a letter from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Steve Clark, regarding 2022/23 Fiscal Year Planned Funding Allocations for a number of programmes delivered by the Housing Services Division. This report provides an update to committee on this letter (attached) and the impacted funding programmes. The funding allocations provided are for planning purposes and some programmes will be confirmed once federal and provincial bilateral agreements have been signed.

### **Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)**

The 2022-23 planning allocation for the COCHI programme is \$631,676. This funding programme was created through bilateral housing agreements established between the federal and provincial governments, where federal savings from declining support provided locally under the "Service Manager Federal Funding for Social Housing" annual allocations are reinvested into the housing system. Previous allocations under this programme are \$774,558 in 2021-22, \$477,074 in 2020-21 and \$190,338 (2019-20). Over the years, this funding has been used by the Housing Services Division to invest into the capital asset needs of our community's non-profit social housing provider stock. The intent for future funding allocations of the COCHI programme, would be to continue investing these funds into the capital needs of our community's social housing stock.

It should also be noted, that the County of Wellington was also allocated \$1,200,000 and \$467,845 in one-time funding under this funding programme in the 2020-21 funding year, to invest in the Wyndham House Youth Supportive Housing project and the St. Joseph's Silver Maples seniors affordable housing project for the capital funding needs.

### **Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)**

The 2022-23 planning allocation for the OPHI programme is \$1,117,200. This funding programme is created through agreements established between the federal and provincial governments, and is the successor programme to previous funding programmes delivered through the County of Wellington in its role as Service Manager such as Affordable Housing Programme (AHP), Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH), and the Social Infrastructure Fund (SIF). This programme allows for some flexibility in how the funds can be invested locally, but the main investment options are direct capital investment for the creation of affordable rental housing, supporting our local homeownership down payment assistance programme, supporting accessibility and major capital upgrade grants for homeowners, and providing rent supports in the community. Previous allocations under this programme were \$693,245 in 2021-22 \$1,319,355 in 2020-21 and \$1,519,400 (2019-20). Over the years, this funding has been our community's main source of capital funding for new affordable housing development.

### **Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)**

The 2022-23 planning allocation for the COHB programme is \$616,900. This funding programme is the successor programme to previously provincially funded Survivor of Domestic Violence- Portable Housing Benefit (SDV\_PHB) programme delivered through the County of Wellington. The COHB programme began in April of 2020 with a 2020-21 budget of \$379,371, and the budget increased by \$117,718 in 2021-22. The 2022 planning allocation would represent a substantial increase in funding. We hope to be able to support the rental affordability of between 70-80 households on an ongoing basis with this additional funding. Similar to the COCHI programme, the COHB programme is created through bilateral housing agreements established between the federal and provincial governments, where federal savings from declining support provided locally under the “Service Manager Federal Funding for Social Housing” annual allocations are reinvested into the housing system.

### **Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)**

The 2022-23 planning allocation for the CHPI programme is \$4,002,383. This funding programme represents the majority of our community’s annual budget for our homeless serving system. Unfortunately, this planning allocation provides a zero % increase over 2021. The Provincial government has attributed this hold at a zero percent increase to the Provinces ongoing review of the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Programme.

### **Strong Communities Rent Supplement Programme (SCRSP)**

The 2022-23 planning allocation for the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Programme is \$582,166. This rent supplement programme has existed since 2005 and continued with its funding unchanged since that time. Initially the programme was able to support 98 households to live affordably within our community’s private market rental units. Today, Housing Services is able to support 77 households with this programme. This funding is set to expire on March 31, 2023, and the province has not yet provided details of a programme extension or replacement.

### **Service Manager Federal Funding for Social Housing**

The 2022-23 planning allocation for the Service Manager Federal Funding for Social Housing is \$2,341,781. This federal funding is provided by the Province to the County as the Service Manager and is the legacy payments of the devolution of housing from the upper levels of government to the County in 2001. This funding was originally meant to help support a portion of the mortgage costs within the portfolio of the County’s directly owned stock, as well as the federal, municipal and provincially reformed non-profit housing providers. Today, the majority of the mortgage debt associated with our community’s social housing stock is paid for through local tax levy in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington. As the mortgages associated with these annual payments start to come to an end, the funding has traditionally reduced by an equivalent amount, with all federal funding coming to an end in 2030. With the creation of the National Housing Strategy and the signing of bilateral agreements on housing in recent years, the provincial and federal governments have begun to reinvest these savings back into the housing system in the form of programmes like the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB).



## **Attachments**

Letter from Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Re: 2022-23 Planned Funding Allocations for Provincially-Delivered Housing and Homelessness Prevention Programmes

## **Recommendation:**

That report HS-21-29 2022-23 Federal and Provincial Homelessness Funding be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Poste". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Poste".

Mark Poste

Director of Housing

**Ministry of  
Municipal Affairs  
and Housing**

Office of the Minister  
777 Bay Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto ON M7A 2J3  
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Affaires municipales  
et du Logement**

Bureau du ministre  
777, rue Bay, 17<sup>e</sup> étage  
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Tél. : 416 585-7000



August 23, 2021

Kelly Linton  
Warden, County of Wellington  
74 Woolwich Street  
Guelph ON N1H 3T9

Dear Kelly Linton:

**Re: 2022-23 Planned Funding Allocations for Provincially-Delivered Housing and Homelessness Prevention Programs**

I am pleased to be writing to you today with important details regarding your 2022-23 planned funding allocations for your housing and homelessness prevention programs.

As you know, our government understands the importance of housing that is affordable, adequate and accessible, and that meets the needs of Ontario's diverse communities and populations.

As part of our government's investment in housing and response to COVID-19, we are projecting to invest over \$3 billion in 2020-21 and 2021-22, which will help sustain, repair and grow community housing, and address homelessness across Ontario. This includes the province's Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF), which to date has invested over \$1 billion to protect vulnerable populations, deliver critical services, and create longer-term housing solutions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional funding under the SSRF for 2021-22 was announced on August 16, 2021. This builds off of several other investments the Ontario government has made for vulnerable populations.

We also continue to work closely with the federal government to advocate for the needs of Ontarians, and to ensure that our residents receive their fair share of federal funding. Currently, Ontario receives its federal allocations for the National Housing Strategy (NHS) based on population, even though we have just over 44 percent of national population living in core housing need. As we begin to negotiate the amendments to the NHS Bilateral Agreement and the second NHS Action Plan, we will continue to advocate for a funding allocation based on need with the federal government.

As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, we look forward to continuing our vital work together to provide affordable housing options in our local communities.

To assist with planning, we are now pleased to provide **your specific planned funding allocations for the 2022-23 fiscal year.**

Please note that all funding amounts included below are for planning purposes only and are subject to confirmation through the province's annual budget planning process. Allocations for the National Housing Strategy (NHS) programs – COCHI; OPHI; COHB – are subject to agreement with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on NHS Bilateral Agreement amendments.

### **2022-23 Fiscal Year Planned Funding Allocations – County of Wellington**

| <b>Program</b>  | <b>Allocation Amount</b> |
|---|--------------------------|
| Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)   | \$631,676                |
| Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)          | \$1,117,200              |
| Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)                 | \$616,900                |
| Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)*  | \$4,002,383              |
| Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program (SCRSP)**  | \$582,166                |
| Service Manager Federal Funding for Social Housing*** | \$2,341,781              |

**Notes:**

\* The funding allocations for CHPI and HFG are at the same level as the 2021-22 allocations. Given the ongoing program review, allocations and programs guidelines may be subject to change.

\*\* Please note that the Ministry continues to evaluate SCRSP. As this work continues, Ministry staff will communicate updates to Service Managers as they become available.

\*\*\* As previously communicated in the October 28, 2017 issue of The Ontario Gazette, this represents Federal Social Housing Agreement planning allocations, in total value, converted into fiscal year. Payments will be adjusted and paid in accordance with the *Housing Services Act, 2011*.

For more information on the programs listed above, please see the enclosed Appendix. Again, we sincerely appreciate your efforts to assist vulnerable residents and to keep people safe as we move forward with recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. I look forward to continuing our vital work together to provide affordable housing options in our local communities.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Clark" clearly distinguishable.

The Honourable Steve Clark  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Enclosures

- c. Scott Wilson, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mark Poste, Director of Housing, Housing Services  
Cindy Couillard, Team Lead, Municipal Services Office

## **Appendix – Program Descriptions**

### **Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)**

To support Ontario's *Community Housing Renewal Strategy*, COCHI was launched in fiscal 2019-20. COCHI funding is provided under the National Housing Strategy and represents a reinvestment of federal funding that has been declining under the *Canada-Ontario Social Housing Agreement*.

COCHI provides an opportunity for Service Managers and housing providers to address the challenges associated with social housing projects reaching the end of their operating agreements and/or mortgage maturity. This initiative provides flexible funding for social housing affordability support, repair and/or new supply.

### **Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)**

In addition to launching COCHI under the *Community Housing Renewal Strategy*, the Ministry also launched OPHI in fiscal 2019-20. OPHI is modelled on similar, previous affordable housing programs and funding is provided under the National Housing Strategy.

OPHI provides significant flexibility to address local priorities in the areas of housing supply and affordability, including new affordable rental construction, community housing repair, rental assistance, tenant supports and affordable homeownership.

### **Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)**

Launched in April 2020, the COHB is a joint federal/provincial housing allowance program under the National Housing Strategy.

The purpose of the COHB is to increase the affordability of rental housing by providing an income-tested, portable housing benefit payment directly to eligible households in housing need that are on, or are eligible to be on, a social housing waiting list, and to households in housing need living in community housing. To date, over 8,300 households across Ontario have been approved for assistance through this program.

### **Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)**

CHPI is a 100 per cent provincially funded outcomes-based program that aims to prevent and end homelessness by improving access to adequate, suitable, and affordable housing and homelessness services for people experiencing homelessness and for people at-risk of homelessness. Service Managers are provided with funding and are given the flexibility to design programs to address their local needs and priorities.

## **Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program (SCRSP)**

The SCRSP provides long-term funding to Service Managers to assist clients who are on, or eligible to be on, social housing waiting lists with rent supplement assistance. This provincially funded and delivered program runs until March 31, 2023, with an annual budget of approximately \$50 million.

## **Service Manager Federal Funding for Social Housing**

As stated in the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, the Ministry is required to publish a notice in *The Ontario Gazette* of the annual amount of federal funding payable to each Service Manager. The annual allocations for 2021 to 2032 for each Service Manager were published in the October 28, 2017 issue of *The Ontario Gazette*. This was done to facilitate effective budget planning to the end of the social housing operating agreements and to help Service Managers understand the implications of federal funding declining to zero.



# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

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## COMMITTEE REPORT

**HS-21-30**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee  
**From:** Mark Poste, Director of Housing  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021  
**Subject:** **Health Care Support Services Update**

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### **Background:**

In February 2021, staff brought forward report HS-21-06 Health Care Support Services, where Committee approved the commitment of \$89,000 towards a homeless serving system focused nurse hosted out of the Guelph Community Health Centre. That commitment was made possible through one-time Mental Health and Addictions funding we received through a partnership between the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Health.

This position has been incredibly valuable to the homeless serving system and its patients that benefit from its treatments. Unfortunately, the County has not received a similar source of funding in 2021, and we will be unable to support an extension of this position. The funding source that the County uses toward supporting the needs of those in our community at risk of or experiencing homelessness, is the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). This funding is fairly flexible, however, it is made very clear in our funding agreements that nursing and medical staffing is not an eligible expense.

Staff will be working with our partners at the Guelph Community Health Centre to advocate to the Ministry of Health for additional Mental Health and Addictions funding locally to support positions like this in our Homeless Serving System. Our community is working to build a stronger connection between health and housing. As we work to develop housing focused programming in the homeless serving system that helps to address housing as a social determinant of health, the health system is also needed to address the various health care needs of our community's most vulnerable. Staff will continue to advocate for a more intentional and direct relationship with the health services and supports, as we work to transform our community's approach to ending chronic homelessness.

### **Recommendation:**

That report HS-21-30 Health Care Support Services Update be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Poste'.

Mark Poste  
Director of Housing