



2023 Housing Update Report

This report was prepared in fall 2023 in consultation with County of Huron Social & Property Services, Planning & Development, and Economic Development departments.



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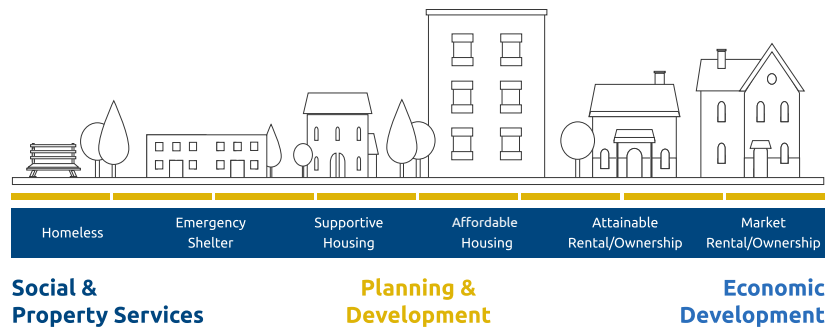
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Introduction

The County of Huron’s **Social & Property Services, Planning & Development, and Economic Development** departments are working alongside many community partners to address housing needs across the entire housing continuum. It is important to ensure that housing is available at all points on the housing continuum so that everyone in Huron County has access to safe and affordable housing.

While this effort is being undertaken with the careful coordination of all three departments, each department primarily focuses on their specific area of expertise within the Housing Continuum, as illustrated below:



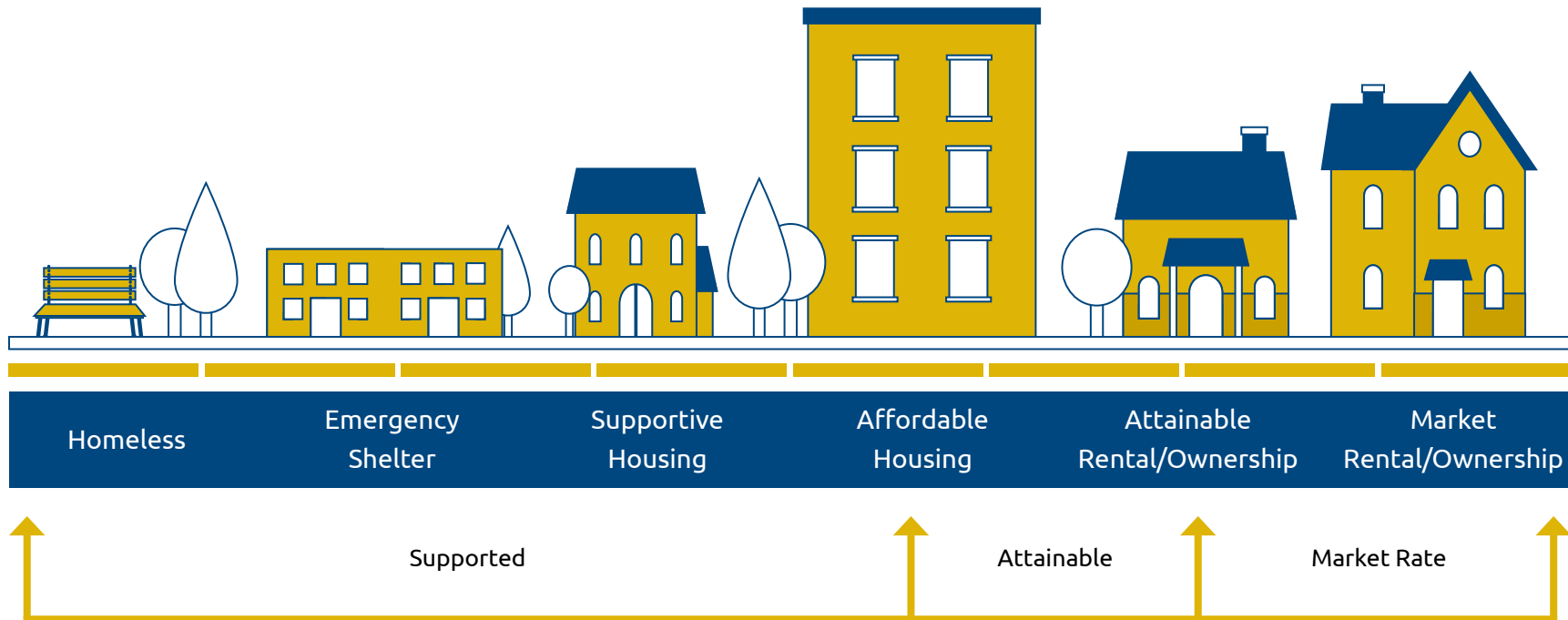
The types of housing needed to support a diverse housing continuum may include:

- Single Family Dwellings
- Duplexes and Triplexes
- Row Homes
- Multi-Unit Apartment Buildings

A variety of housing types are needed to address a variety of housing needs, including:

- Families
- Seniors
- Workforce
- Newcomers
- Students and young adults
- Individuals with lower incomes
- Individuals experiencing homelessness

What is the Housing Continuum?



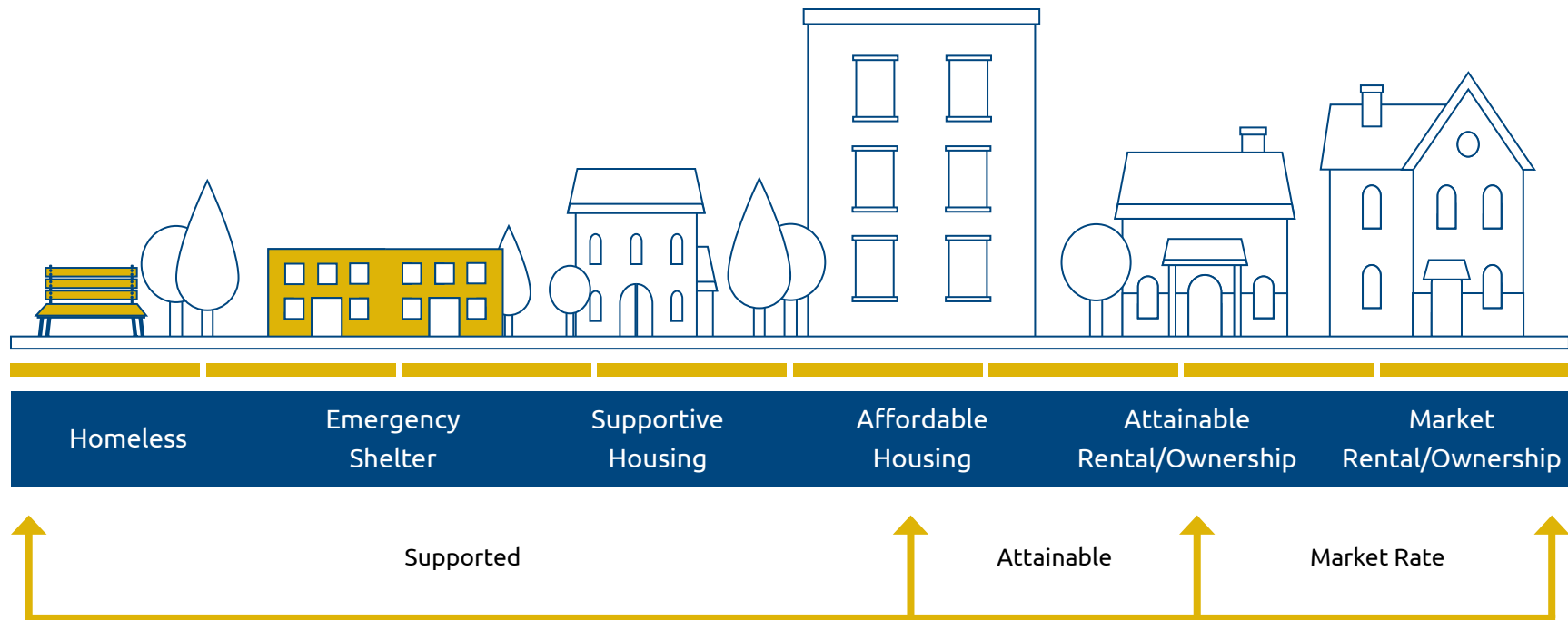
The Housing Continuum represents the range of housing types available in a community. Healthy communities have a wide variety of adequate housing choices available that reflect the unique needs of the community.

Addressing Huron's housing shortage requires careful consideration of the entire housing continuum. The more missing pieces there are within the continuum, the more unstable the housing ecosystem becomes.

The County of Huron is currently working to improve access to housing primarily through three separate service areas:

- Social & Property Services
- Planning & Development
- Economic Development

Homelessness



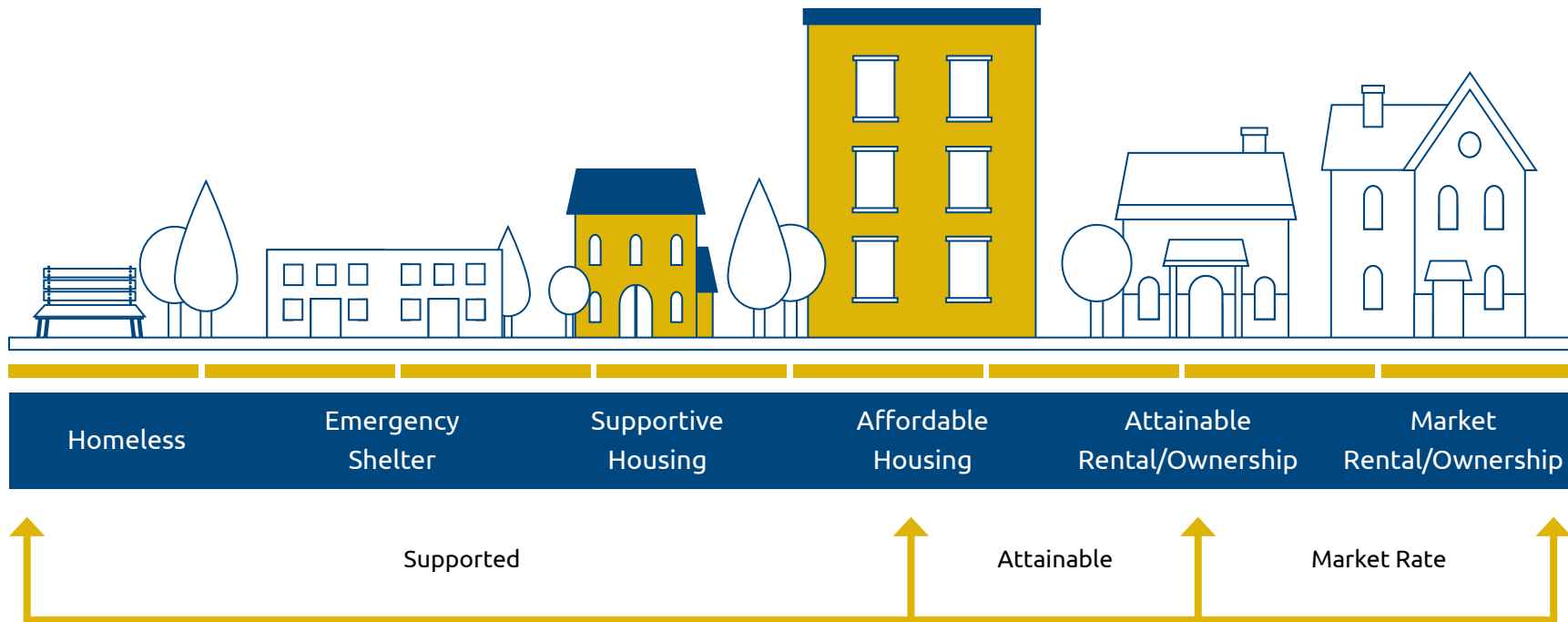
Homeless refers to individuals who are sleeping rough, couch surfing, accessing emergency shelter, or utilizing transitional housing.

Social & Property Services staff have undertaken a variety of initiatives, involving multiple community partners, designed to prevent and address homelessness in Huron.

County of Huron actions that address homelessness

1. Homelessness Enumeration
2. Huron Stability Team
3. Emergency Shelter
4. By-Name List
5. Coordinated Access System

Supportive and Affordable Housing



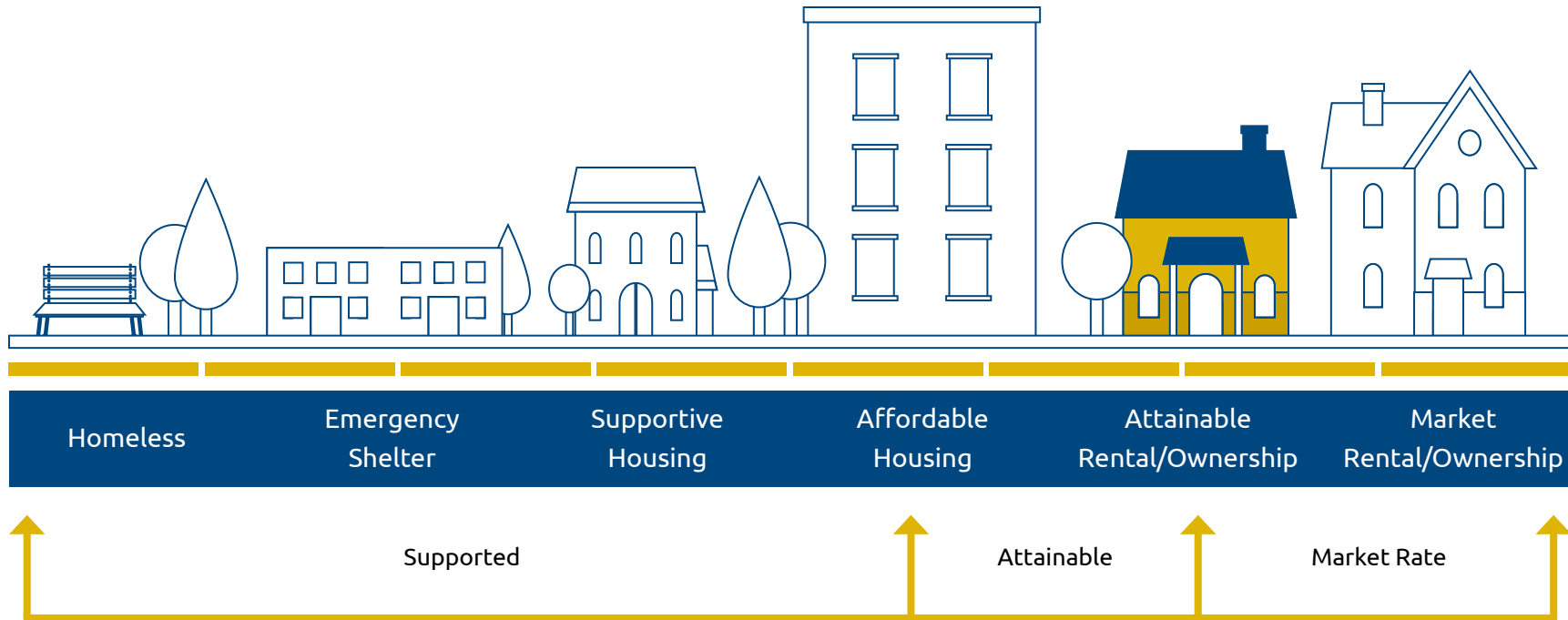
Supportive housing is housing that includes wrap-around supports such as meals, health services, mental health and addiction supports, life skills, and more. According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), housing is **Affordable** when a household spends less than 30% of its pre-tax income on adequate shelter.

Social & Property Services and **Planning & Development** staff are working to increase the total number of available supportive and affordable housing units in Huron.

County of Huron actions that address affordable housing

- 6. Housing with Supports
- 7. Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing
- 8. Homelessness Prevention Programs
- 9. Housing Developments

Attainable Housing



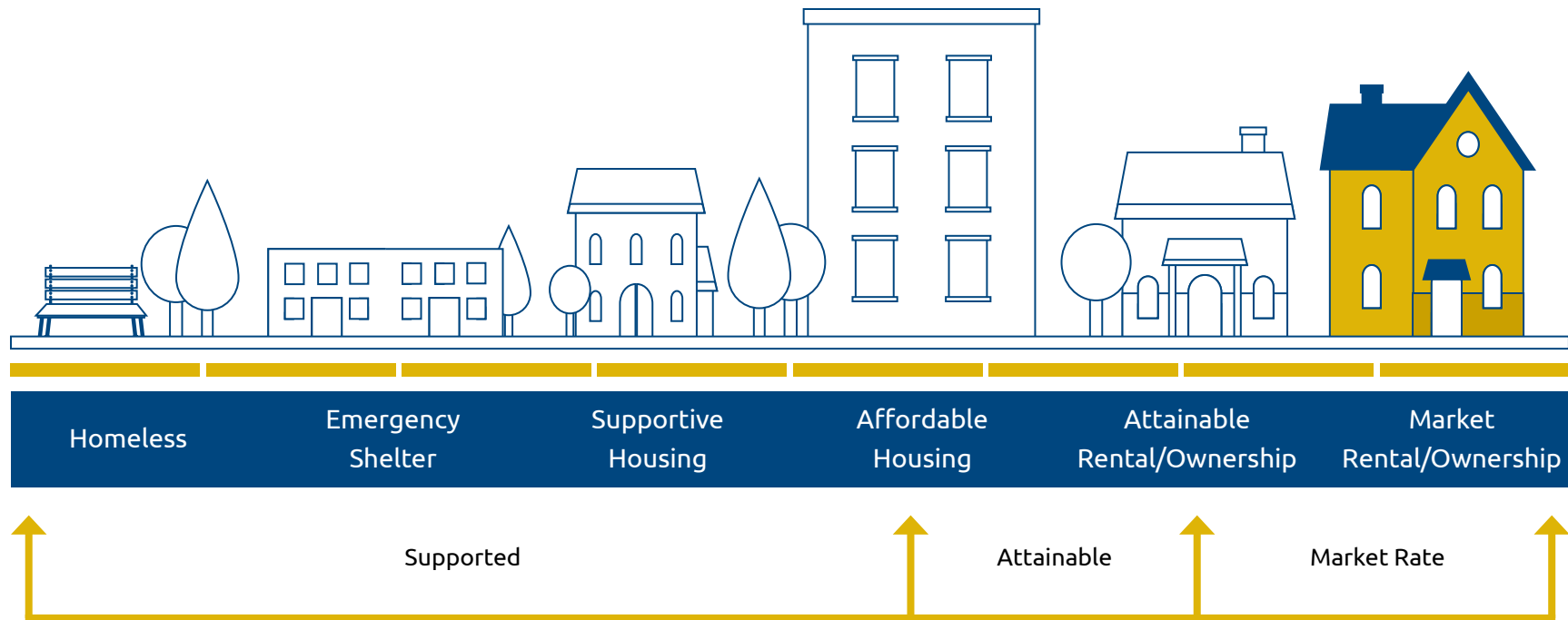
Attainable housing is adequate housing that can be afforded by people earning around the Area Median Income (AMI). Statistics Canada reported the median annual income in Huron County was \$39,200 in 2019.

Planning & Development and **Economic Development** staff have undertaken multiple initiatives designed to support the development of more attainable housing stock in Huron.

County of Huron actions that help increase housing stock

10. Residential Intensification Guidelines (RIGs)
11. Housing Friendly Review
12. Draft Plan Approved Development

Market Housing



Market housing is housing available for rent or purchase at price determined by the market. In 2022, the average rental rate in Huron County is \$1,450-1,650 per month, for a two-bedroom, and in May 2023, the average home purchase cost was \$557,000.

Planning & Development and **Economic Development** staff carefully monitor the housing market, collect data, watch for trends to identify and fill potential gaps.

County of Huron actions that identify trends and fill gaps

- 13. Funding & Research
- 14. Facilitating Improved Collaboration
- 15. Communications

1. Homelessness Enumeration

The County of Huron’s Social and Property Services department has participated in Homelessness Enumeration Projects. The Enumeration Project is a point-in-time count of the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community. All information collected through this process is completely confidential.

The *2021 Enumeration*, concluded that Huron County had 169 individuals experiencing homelessness at that time. This number represents the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness.

2. Huron Stability Team

The Huron Stability Team is operated through a partnership between Social and Property Services and Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth – Mental Health and Addictions Services. These specially trained staff are focused on preventing and addressing homelessness in Huron County. They work to connect people to community, local organizations, and resources that can help a person access long-term housing.



3. Emergency Shelter

The County of Huron partners with multiple organizations including, Canadian Mental Health Association Huron Perth – Mental Health and Addictions Services, to provide emergency cold weather shelter and supports to those in crisis.

The Stability Team provides additional services and supports to those accessing shelter.

4. By-Name List (BNL)

The County’s Social and Property Service department maintains the County’s By-Name List. A By-Name List is a real time, up-to-date list of all consenting people known to be experiencing homelessness in a community.

Individuals and families are listed using unique identifiers, and additional information such as name, current state of housing, presenting risks and vulnerabilities is also collected.

As individuals are added to the By-Name List, they will be prioritized, matched, and referred to appropriate housing intervention or community supports dedicated to resolving homelessness.



5. Coordinated Access System

A Coordinated Access System is a community wide strategy to help prevent homelessness and eliminate chronic homelessness. The objective of the Huron County Coordinated Access System is to match individuals and families experiencing homelessness to the appropriate housing and support resources, using a Housing First approach.

Housing First is a recovery-oriented best practice to ending homelessness that centres on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing, and then providing additional resources and services as needed to support housing stability.

Housing First has five core principles which the Huron County Coordinated Access System and participating agencies have adopted:

1. Immediate Access to Permanent Housing with No Housing Readiness Requirements
2. Client Choice and Self-Determination
3. Recovery-Oriented Approach
4. Individualized and Client-Driven Supports
5. Social and Community Integration

6. Housing with Supports

The County of Huron is committed to building community capacity through collaboration with social service partners and the support of the Provincial Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) funding.

Huron Turning Point

Huron Turning Point offers a 6-bed transitional housing program for men. The supportive housing that Huron Turning Point provides not only offers safe housing and food, but it also provides a sense of community to its residents.

Addiction Supportive Housing (ASH)

The Addiction Supportive Housing (ASH) Program is an intensive therapeutic program with a supportive housing component. ASH is designed for those accessing addiction treatment and are experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed. ASH provides a safe and stable environment where clients are able to enhance and complement their addiction treatment plan for substance or behavioural concerns.



7. Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing

Homelessness diversion and prevention is the County of Huron’s primary goal. The County currently maintains 415 rent-geared-to-income units, including 15 apartment buildings and 84 family units. The County also offers a variety of tenant and landlord programs designed to help keep individuals facing housing instability in their current homes.

8. Homelessness Prevention Programs

Pathways to Self-Sufficiency

Pathways to Self-Sufficiency is an emergency program that helps low-income households in Huron County remain housed. The Program provides rental and utility arrears funding to households experiencing potential eviction and/or utility disconnection.

Safe Homes for Youth

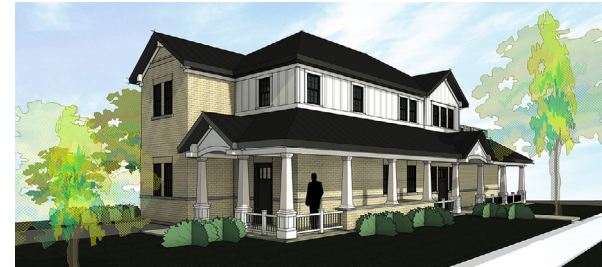
The County of Huron provides funding to Safe Homes for Youth to assist with supports and shelter for youth at risk of or facing homelessness.



9. New Housing Developments

Bennett Street, Goderich

Two new triplexes have been developed on Bennett Street in Goderich. These triplexes were developed on an existing County housing site utilizing funds from the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative, Social Services Relief Fund, and the County of Huron.



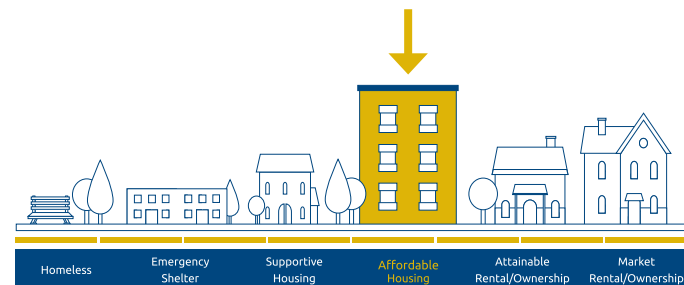
Sanders Street, Exeter

A 20-unit apartment building is currently under construction on Sanders Street in Exeter. This apartment building is being constructed on an existing County housing site utilizing funds from the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative. It is anticipated to be complete by Summer 2024. Additional funding continues to be sourced to support this project.



Gibbons Street, Goderich

A 40-unit apartment building is in the tendering stage for Gibbons Street in Goderich. Construction on this project is anticipated to begin in 2024. This apartment building will be constructed on a site that was sold to the County of Huron from the Town of Goderich for \$1. Funding continues to be sourced to support this project.



10. Housing Friendly Review

The Planning and Development Department undertook a multi-year implementation of the County's *Housing Friendly Review*. The goal of this process was to streamline the development of more housing units, but also different types of housing units. Through this process, local Official Plans and Zoning Bylaws were reviewed and updated to create increased flexibility for housing developments, leading to more 'as of right' options. For example, prior to the Housing Friendly Reviews, most low density residential (R1) zones in Huron County permitted a single detached or a semi-detached dwelling (1-2 units per lot); after the review, low density zones permit a wider range of unit types including triplexes, quadplexes, and detached Additional Residential Units (4 units per lot). Similar changes were made in medium and high density zones to permit denser forms of housing without a planning application.

This project has been incredibly successful and streamlines the housing units our community needs now, and into the future.

11. Residential Intensification Guidelines

The *Residential Intensification Guidelines* (RIGS) is a comprehensive document that was developed as a tool for guiding the design of residential intensification projects in the County. The document applies to all residential intensification projects in the County with an emphasis on multi-unit forms of development. The guidelines also address residential conversions and Additional Residential Units (ARUs). The goal of this document is to help address concerns and compatibility in a comprehensive manner, ensuring that developers understand the goals and expectations of the community and that the community can benefit from increased housing choices.



12. Draft Plan Approved Development

The County of Huron experienced a surge of planning applications between 2019 and 2022 including Plans of Subdivision for new housing developments, Zoning Bylaw Amendments for large apartments, and some very innovative housing projects geared to meet demand for Huron’s agricultural workforce. During this time, approximately 1,500 units received Draft Plan Approval and several previously approved Draft Plans were registered.

The rate of development has been significantly different than the experience in past years when draft plan approved developments would be extended multiple times with no timeline for construction. Recently approved developments are registered and built in a short period of time.

To illustrate this shift, below is the timeline for a recent Plan of Subdivision in Seaforth:

- 2019:** Application & Draft Plan Approval
- 2020:** Phase 1 Registration
- 2020/21** Building permits issued on all lots in Phase 1
- 2022:** Phase 2 Registration
- Present day:** All lots built on except for one

The Department estimates that there are a further 1,500 units which are approved but pending construction and another 1,000 units subject to current planning applications.

In terms of residential construction activity, between 2016 and 2021, the number of dwellings in the County increased by 1,100 units (28,369 to 29,455). In 2022, a total of 440 building permits were issued for new dwelling units (this does not include renovations or replacement dwellings).



13. Research & Funding

Huron County Housing Survey

The Planning & Development and Economic Development departments regularly track local, provincial, and national housing trends and collect data that enable good decision making. In 2021, Economic Development conducted a *Huron County Housing Survey* to better understand the impacts housing shortages were having on Huron County residents. The results of this survey can be found online: [Huron County Housing Demand Survey - Final Report](#)

Funding the Housing Renewal Plan

The Economic Development department funded the *Housing Renewal Plan*. This plan, prepared by Tim Welch Consulting Inc., ensures the County has shovel-ready properties ready for affordable housing investment when opportunities arise; opportunities such as federal grants, provincial funding, local partnerships and/or other financing that support the development of affordable housing units.

14. Facilitating Improved Collaboration

Housing Steering Committee

The Housing Steering Committee, has representation from County of Huron Housing & Social Services, Planning & Development, Economic Development, Finance, and the CAO.

Affordable Housing and Homelessness Committee

The Affordable Housing and Homelessness Committee has representation from County Council, staff, and multiple community organizations and stakeholders.

Developer Roundtables

Through Developer Roundtables and other forms of engagement, the Economic Development department works to encourage increased market housing development within the County and work to address any industry challenges.



15. Communication

The County of Huron Communications Team works with Social & Property Services, Planning & Development, and Economic Development to keep the community informed on the various actions happening at all points across the housing continuum.

Examples of some of these communication efforts include:

- Website maintenance including *Housing* and *Homelessness* pages.
- *Be Part of the Solution* awareness and education campaign.
- *Developing More Affordable Housing in Huron* Huron County Connects page.
- Assisting with the development of the *Housing and Homelessness Annual Report* and other County departmental communications, such as the enumeration report: *Everyone Counts*, and various *infographics*.
- Regular *media updates* on housing and homelessness topics.
- Regular *social media* updates on housing and homelessness topics.





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