

District of Parry Sound Housing and Homelessness Plan Report 2019-2020



Housing Services

Housing Programs

Parry Sound District Housing
Corporation

Homelessness & Integrated Services

Esprit Place Women's Shelter

www.psdssab.org

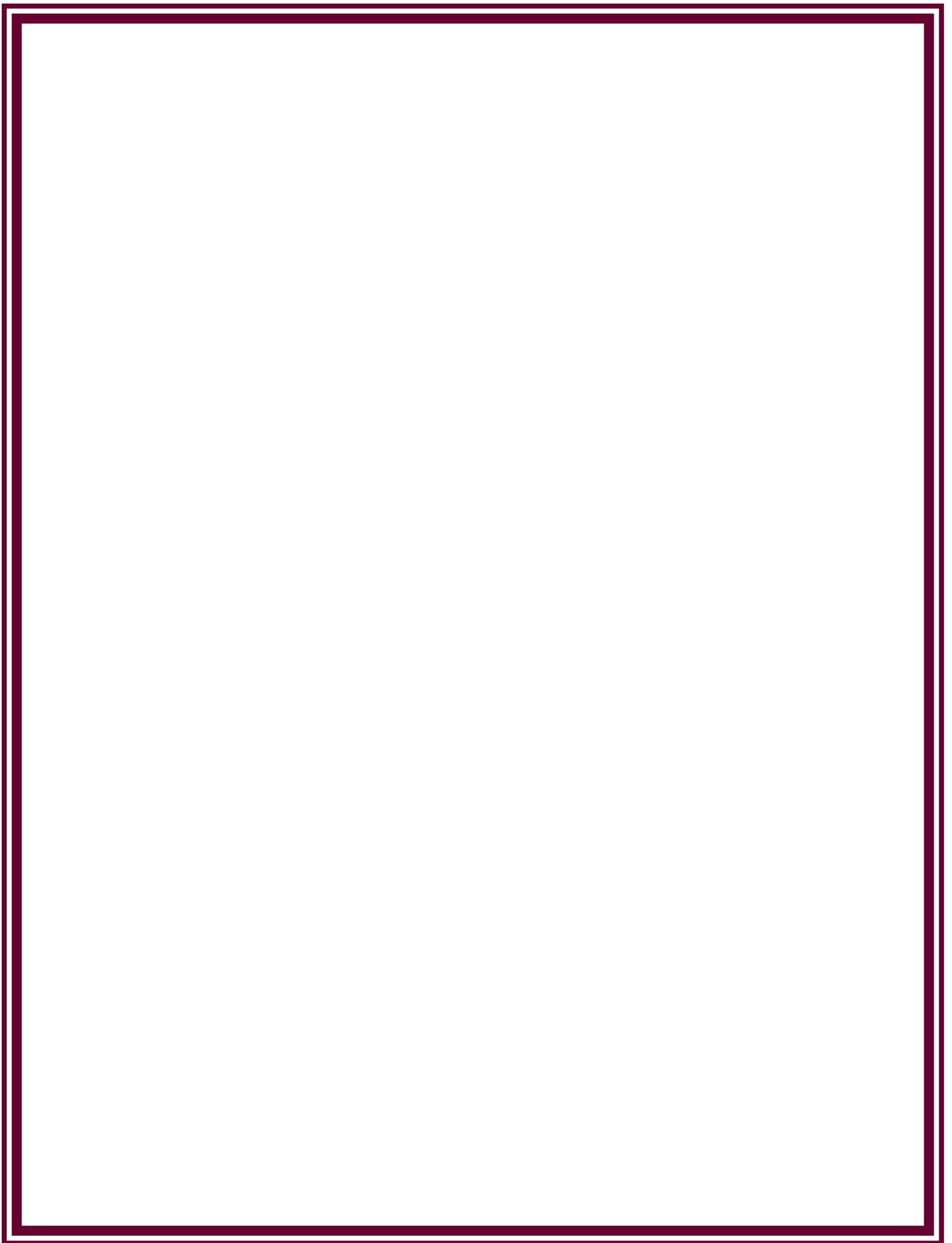




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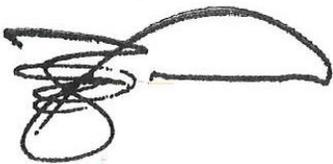
District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board Housing & Homelessness Plan Annual Report

On behalf of the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board, I am very pleased to present our 2019-2020 Housing and Homelessness Annual Report.

Throughout the 2019/20 year, we have achieved several accomplishments towards the goal of ending homelessness. Our 5 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan update was submitted and approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and we implemented changes introduced by the Housing Services Act. Together, with our community partners and Municipalities we will continue to work toward providing sustainable, affordable and safe housing for our community.

As we continue with this important work, I wish to thank and commend staff, the H.O.M.E network and community members who have actively contributed to working on housing and homelessness issues to help the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Sincerely,

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

Mr. Rick Zanussi,
Board Chair

2019 Achievements

- ✓ Development of a detailed plan to complete our 2020 “Let’s Make It Count” Homelessness Enumeration.
- ✓ Building tenant relationships through workshops including food budgeting and cooking.
- ✓ Affordable Housing Completion – 6 units added in Burk’s Falls.
- ✓ Completion of one multi-unit Ontario Renovates project.
- ✓ Reviewed and implementing new changes to the Housing Services Act, 2011.
- ✓ Approved three renovation projects under Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative to support ongoing viability of community housing units.
- ✓ Successful relocation of 18 tenants of a rooming house following a house fire.
- ✓ Hosted two National Housing Day events showcasing support services available to clients.
- ✓ Added four Rent Geared to Income units to our housing portfolio.
- ✓ Assisted in the planning and attended the West Parry Sound Housing Summit.

2020 Achievements

- ✓ Released a Request for Proposals for additional Affordable Housing units within the District of Parry Sound.
- ✓ Received Ministerial approval on our 2019 Housing and Homelessness Plan Update.
- ✓ Engagement with non-profit housing providers about changes to legislation.
- ✓ Development of a community partners resource for services available within the District of Parry Sound.
- ✓ Completed the installation of a sprinkler system in our 50-unit seniors Community Housing building.

Ongoing Plans

- ✓ H.O.M.E Network development.
- ✓ Continue engagement with the School Board & First Nations to gain knowledge of target groups.
- ✓ Working toward the construction of new affordable housing units.
- ✓ Continue engagement with housing providers, municipalities & community partners.

H.O.M.E Network Update

2019/20

- ✓ Three H.O.M.E Network meetings hosted in the District;
- ✓ Continue to expand the membership list to engage more stakeholders, community groups and municipalities;
- ✓ Results sharing from the West Parry Sound Housing Summit;
- ✓ Providing updates on the draft writing of the Housing and Homelessness Plan 5-year update.
- ✓ Sharing plans and intentions on how to move forward with Enumeration 2020.



Homelessness
Objectives
Maximizing
Efforts



Year by year, our H.O.M.E Network meetings continue to offer new community partnerships. This year, these connections came through the planning of our 2020 Homelessness Enumeration. We have developed new and stronger connections with community partners while developing the plans to move forward with Enumeration. We were able to diversify our survey to provide detailed answers to questions provided by our community service providers. Unfortunately, due to challenges presented by COVID-19, we were unable to complete Enumeration 2020 as planned.

Housing Programs 2019 Calendar Year

Social Housing Waitlist



Housing Assistance Programs

Rent Supplement

18 households receive a rental supplement. Paying rent geared to income rents in a private or non-profit market rental.

Housing Allowance

28 households receive a housing allowance of \$225 monthly through this Affordable Housing program.

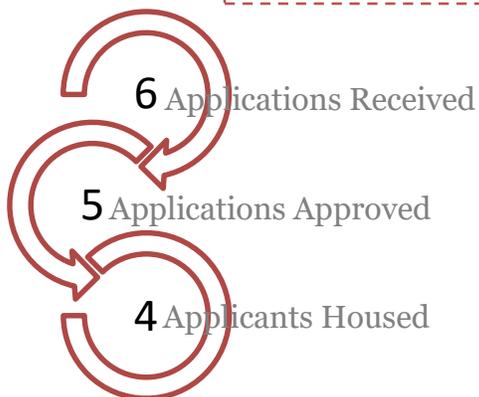
Home Ownership

15 households have maintained their Homeownership agreement. 1 has been discharged in the 2019 year.

Ontario Renovates

93 households have maintained their Ontario Renovates agreement. 2 have been discharged in the 2019 year.

Special Priority Program (SPP)



SPP applications are available for people fleeing domestic violence situations and victims & survivors of human trafficking.

Applications may not be approved due to program guidelines or missing information.

Housing Programs Cont'd Housing Services Act Changes

2019 was a year of change for Housing Programs. Regulatory changes were passed to update the Housing Services Act, 2011. Implementation of these changes is to take place between September 2019-July 2021. This timeline provides a brief overview of the changes and important dates for our clients and tenants.

- September 2019** ● **Community Safety**
Community Safety regulation came into effect. This gives Property Managers the right to not offer a unit to an applicant who has previously been evicted from Community Housing under an N6 – for criminal activity. The non-profits in the District of Parry Sound are working on updating their policies to include this new regulation.
- January 2020** ● **Offers & Refusals**
Applicants on the Housing Centralized Waitlist (CWL) are now entitled to one offer of housing; this includes Special Priority (SPP) applicants. This is a reduction from the previous three refusal of offers. If an applicant refuses an offer, they will be removed from the CWL. Should they choose to re-apply, they will be placed back on the CWL with a new chronological date of application. No new paperwork will be required unless the applicant re-applies outside the specified timeframes for regular and SPP applicants.
- April 30, 2020** ● **Annual Tax Return**
Applicants and tenants are required to file their taxes annually by April 30. Applicants and tenants are encouraged to keep a copy of their returns and Notice of Assessments. All future calculations will be based solely on the Notice of Assessment as per regulatory changes.
- July 2020** ● **R.G.I (Rent-Geared-to-Income) Calculation changes**
R.G.I calculations will be simplified as of July 1, 2020. Housing Programs will be moving forward and updating files once per year using line 23600 from the most recent Notice of Assessment. Applicants and tenants will be required to file their taxes annually by April 30 or risk jeopardizing their subsidy.

Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

The release of COHB has provided an additional option to people waiting to access Community Housing. COHB funding is a monthly subsidy paid to the client to assist with housing costs in the private market. COHB is based on the difference between 30% of the family net income and 80% of the average market rent in the area.

Clients who choose to access COHB will be removed from the RGI wait list.

Who is eligible to apply:

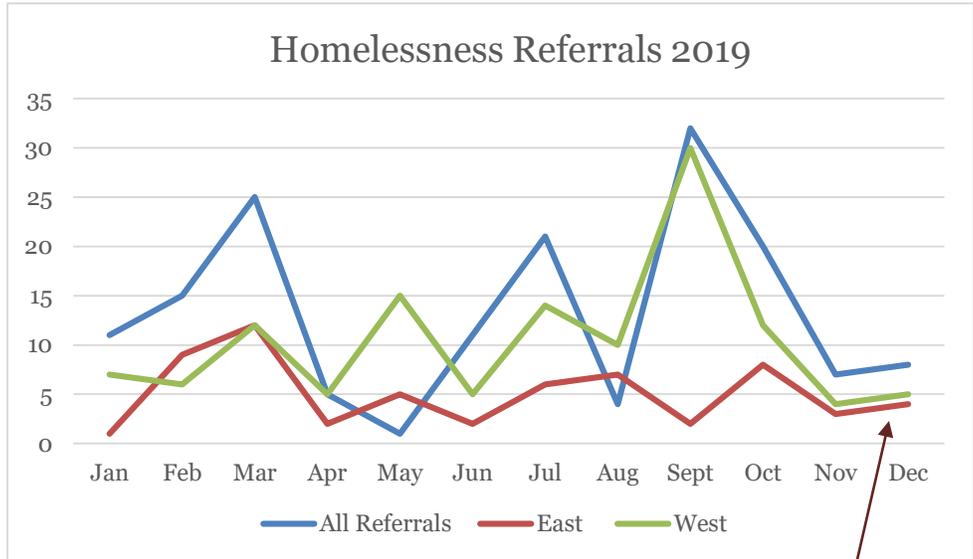
- Survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking;
- Persons at risk or experiencing homelessness;
- Indigenous persons;
- Seniors;
- People with disabilities;
- Households living in Community Housing.

Homelessness Prevention Program 2019 (HPP)

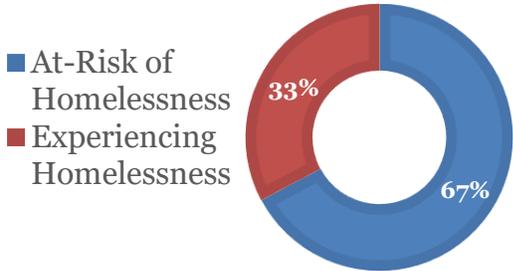
Referrals:
180 Households

Did You Know:

Our Homelessness Prevention Program sees a spike in access to services in the fall months. Many of our residents are seasonally employed, or able to camp outside through the summer months. As the weather cools and seasonal work closes, caseloads increase.



Our HPP team usually experiences a drop or plateau in referrals over the holidays as family members often extend support through housing assistance.



In 2019, our HPP team faced a difficult challenge. A local rooming house experienced a fire, leaving 22 of our most vulnerable residents in a situation of homelessness. Our HPP team responded immediately ensuring that the tenants were provided with food and shelter.

Our team called on local partnerships to ensure that the necessary supports were available in a time of crisis. The fire, initially, looked to displace residents for a short period of time. Unfortunately, in the weeks that followed, we learned that this short term homelessness crisis would be our new normal for many months to come. Our Homelessness Prevention Program put their heads together and began intense case management with every tenant they could find. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our team, we can say that of the 22 tenants, 18 accessed our services and found safe and sustainable housing.

Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative 2019 **(CHPI)**

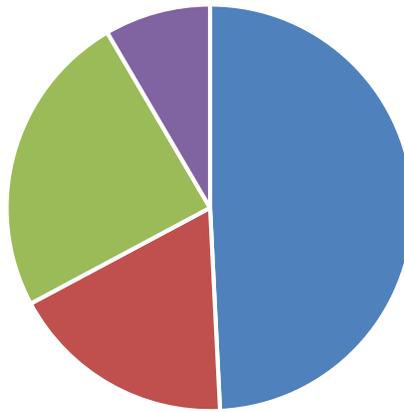
(Numbers below reflect the combined, unduplicated issuance from the Homelessness Prevention Program and Ontario Works)

The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative provides funding to support low income people, and people on fixed incomes. CHPI funding can be used to assist with heating/hydro arrears, housing arrears and shelter deposits. This fund is used to lift clients out of homelessness or risk of homelessness.

People Experiencing Homelessness
Total Households Assisted: 78

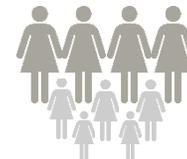
People At-Risk of Homelessness
Total Households Assisted: 394

Top 4 Reasons for Issuance



■ Other ■ Heating & Hydro ■ Shelter Deposits & Shelter Arrears ■ Moving Expenses

Esprit Place 2019



View from the Inside:

At the start of 2019 our Esprit Team completed an admission of a single, expecting mother and her children. Throughout the year, the family received supports from front line staff, counsellors, the child witness program and transitional housing. 2019 delivered many ups and downs, struggles and triumphs on the family's path to recovery. The Esprit staff were able to assist in enrolling the children into summer camps, registering for school, and locating equipment to allow the children to participate in desired activities. When the mother was ready and had found employment, staff assisted in moving the family into suitable housing along with safety planning and ongoing transitional support.

This success story was made possible by teamwork among the staff involved, access to shelter programming and continued coordination between community partners.

Affordable Housing Program 2019

Investments in Affordable Housing-Extension & Social Infrastructure Fund



New Rental Project:

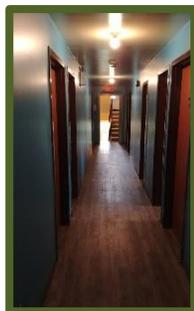
Almaguin Manor

- 32-unit senior's apartment building in the Village of Burk's Falls.
- 6 affordable one bedroom units, receiving Investments in Affordable Housing-Extension and Social Infrastructure Funding.
- Occupancy in fall 2019

Before...



After...



Multi-Unit Ontario Renovates:

River Street

- Renovation of a 22-unit rooming house.
- Renovations included replacement of: exterior & interior fire doors, electrical heaters, siding and house wrap, flooring, electrical and plumbing.
- Project completed through Investments in Affordable Housing-Extension.
- Repairs completed September 2019.

Parry Sound District Housing Corporation 2019

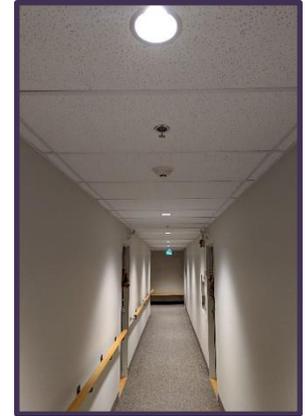
Georgian Sunset Court Upgrade



Georgian Sunset Court is home to 50 senior's units in the Town of Parry Sound.

The building is 6 storeys with two elevators and houses many tenants with physical impairments. The Parry Sound District Housing Corporation, owned and operated by the DSSAB, moved forward with the largest capital project to date. A

new sprinkler system was installed throughout the building with an upgraded fire monitoring system including alerts for hearing impaired tenants.



COVID Implications 2020

For the safety of our staff, clients and community, the DSSAB closed our doors to public in late March due to the COVID19 pandemic. Our staff were resilient, and immediately began to adapt to the changing times, connecting with clients/tenants by phone, text and email whenever possible. In addition to our usual services, we are continuing to support our food security programs through this challenging time. Many of our local food banks are experiencing an increase in access to services. These foodbank's, often volunteer driven, have continued to provide services to vulnerable populations. Our foodbanks have been innovative and caring, developing delivery systems and reaching out to clients directly to ensure that all are aware our foodbanks are open and operational, through physical distancing measures.

We are anticipating our 'new normal' and making adjustments to our current practices ensuring that our staff, clients and community members are able to access our services in a safe and appropriate manner in the future.



“We are committed to the provision and promotion of services that assist individuals in attaining an optimum quality of life and that contribute to the well-being of the community”

