

2022/23

Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS) Report Card



Comprehensive Housing Strategy 2014-2024

Status update 2022/23

Under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, municipalities, including Halton Region, are required to have a 10-year housing and homelessness plan to address local housing matters. Halton's Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS) Update: 2014 -2024 was approved by Regional Council in November 2013 and serves as the Region's 10-year housing and homelessness plan.

In 2019, Halton Region updated its CHS to reaffirm the Region's commitment to addressing housing need in Halton. It includes five strategic directions with 34 actions that are measured and publicly reported on annually.

It also reaffirmed the Region's commitment to create 550 to 900 new assisted housing opportunities by 2024 with funding support from the provincial and federal governments. This target was achieved four years ahead of schedule.

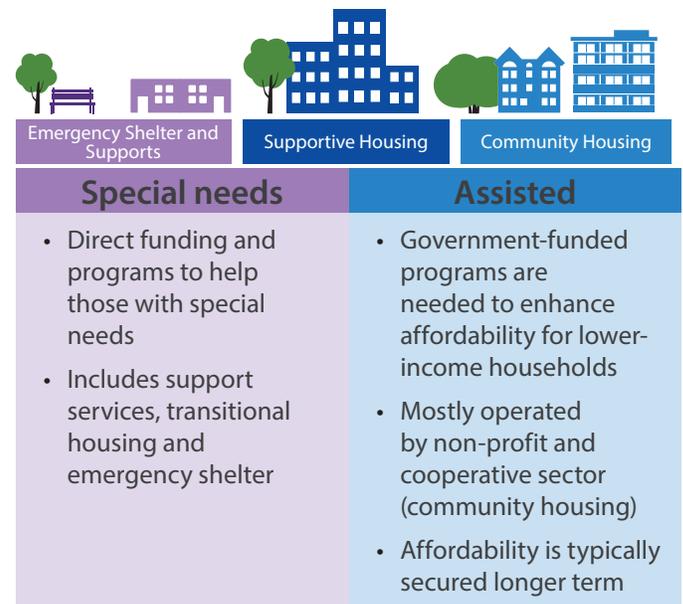
In 2021, Regional Council approved a portfolio approach for the creation of additional new assisted and supportive housing opportunities in support of the CHS. Up to 600 housing opportunities are projected by 2031.



The CHS highlights Halton Region's strong commitment to partnership, collaboration and leadership in the creation and protection of government assisted housing. Senior government funding is essential to the creation of additional assisted and supportive housing opportunities for Halton residents.

Upon proclamation of Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, the Region's direct role related to affordable and market housing policy will change. The Region will no longer have a direct role in the Non-Subsidized segment of the housing continuum. However, the Region will support the Local Municipalities to achieve housing targets and pledges mandated by the province.

Going forward, the Region's role will be primarily focused on the Government-Assisted segment of the housing continuum. This is where the Region provides funding to create assisted and supportive housing for low-income and precariously housed residents as depicted below:



The *Housing Services Act, 2011* requires Halton Region to review and update its CHS every five years. This will occur in 2024.

Early in 2025, Regional Council will receive the next CHS covering the period (2025 to 2035) for approval. This will be specific to the aspects of housing where the Region has a direct role.



Direction 1 – Promote complete and healthy communities

1.1 Outcome: Adequate mix and variety of housing to meet the needs of all residents

Action		Results
Through policy and initiatives, provide a full range of housing that meets the needs of residents throughout all stages of their lives.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided ongoing support to assist Local Municipalities to implement Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 49 and facilitate housing pledges and targets established by the Province.

1.2 Outcome: Housing and human service needs of Halton residents met

Action		Result
Work with Local Municipalities to develop, implement and promote land use policies and initiatives to meet the changing housing and human service needs of residents.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided ongoing support to Halton's Local Municipalities in development and approval of Major Transit Station Areas (including the Milton Mobility Hub and Oakville's Bronte GO Major Transit Station Area).



Direction 2 – Encourage and protect affordable housing

2.1 Outcome: Revised policies and tools to respond to changes in housing trends

Action		Result
Monitor market trends, housing cost and income thresholds, supply-demand shortfalls, and target achievements through the annual State of Housing Report, thus informing the policy framework on an ongoing basis.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2022 State of Housing Report (LPS53-23) provided to Regional Council in July 2023.

2.2 Outcome: Increased range and mix of affordable housing

Actions		Results
2.2a Ensure the Regional policy framework provides a range of affordable medium and high-density housing.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated the Region's Housing Mix Target in the Regional Official Plan to include at least 65 per cent of new housing units produced annually until 2031 to be higher density housing. The prior target of 50 per cent was achieved for the majority of the last decade.
2.2b Encourage Local Municipalities to prepare Community Improvement Plans that support increased supply of assisted, affordable or special needs housing.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continued to promote Regional Community Improvement Plans with Local Municipalities, including opportunities to support affordable housing.

2.3 Outcome: Retention of existing rental housing

Action		Result
Work with Local Municipalities to create policies and programs to retain existing rental housing.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Worked with Local Municipalities to incorporate policies in local official plans that retain existing rental housing.



Direction 3 – Encourage and protect assisted housing

3.1 Outcome: Increased assisted housing opportunities for Halton residents

Actions		Results
<p>3.1a Continue to advocate for system improvements and stable long-term funding from the provincial and federal Government.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented Halton Region’s Portfolio Approach that positioned the Region and Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) owned sites as development ready for potential capital investment from senior levels of government. • Focused discussions held with Halton MPs, MPPs, and federal/provincial senior staff to advocate for increased funding for assisted and supportive housing in Halton, including portfolio-based funding. • Successfully advocated to the federal government for \$9.3 million in funding under the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Rapid Housing Initiative.
<p>3.1b Participate in current and future federal and provincial housing programs.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received \$15.6 million in Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI) funding for the period April, 2022 to March, 2023. Funding was used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – support development of a 52-unit seniors’ building at 265 Kerr Street (formerly 263), Oakville; – repair nine existing housing provider properties; – support 150 low-income households with a portable housing benefit; and – fund a support worker to preserve at risk tenancies and prevent homelessness. • In 2023, Halton Region advanced the following new assisted and supportive housing opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1258 Rebecca Street, Oakville – \$6 million in federal and provincial funding was received towards the development of 14 seniors supportive housing units. – 363 Margaret Drive, Oakville and Allendale Campus, Milton – Pre-development activities are underway to prepare the site for potential federal and provincial investment. – Acquired 70 units at 30 Normandy Place, Oakville – The Region purchased 70 affordable rental units in Oakville. Currently advocating for federal and provincial funding towards purchase costs. – 17 Guelph Street, Georgetown – In partnership with the Town of Halton Hills, the Region approved funding of \$3.9 million to build 12 new assisted housing units on Town owned property. Currently advocating for federal and provincial funding towards development costs. • \$7 million in capital funding for HCHC was received through the CMHC National Housing Co-investment Fund – Renewal and Repair Program. Funding supports capital repairs, energy efficiency upgrades, greenhouse gas reduction and accessibility upgrades to existing HCHC buildings.



Direction 3 – Encourage and protect assisted housing

3.1 Outcome: Increased assisted housing opportunities for Halton residents (continued)

Actions		Results
3.1c Continue to create new housing opportunities for vulnerable Halton residents.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022 and 2023, 148 additional new assisted and supportive housing units have been created. This increases the total new housing opportunities created since 2014 to 1,177. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 17 Guelph Street, Halton Hills – 12 units (including five supportive housing units for low-income women-led households receiving support from Home Suite Hope) – 265 Kerr Street – 52 units, including 22 units of dedicated supportive housing for seniors experiencing homelessness with chronic health and mobility needs – 1258 Rebecca Street – 14 new supportive housing units for low-income seniors with mobility challenges that require light health supportive services – 30 Normandy Place, Oakville – 70 units
3.1d Modernize and expand existing programs that support qualified Halton residents with their rent.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided 150 Halton households with a rent supplement or portable housing benefit to support their monthly rental costs. • Prioritized Halton residents that are homeless for permanent affordable housing. In 2022 and 2023, 64 households have been housed with comprehensive supports.

3.2 Outcome: Halton’s existing assisted housing remains available and is well maintained

Actions		Results
3.2a Develop and implement a strategy to keep non-profit and cooperative housing units in Halton Region’s assisted housing system long-term.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with housing providers approaching the end of their legislated obligations to retain assisted housing for low-income Halton residents. • Continued development of a made-in-Halton approach to retain housing providers in the system. • Ongoing staff participation on provincial working groups to support long-term retention of existing assisted housing stock. • To-date, Halton has secured 89 assisted housing units by entering into Regional rent supplement agreements with three housing providers who reached the end of their legislated obligations.



Direction 3 – Encourage and protect assisted housing

3.2 Outcome: Halton’s existing assisted housing remains available and is well maintained (continued)

Actions		Results
<p>3.2b Implement a comprehensive assisted housing review process to ensure the current housing stock is well managed and suitable for the needs of Halton residents.</p> <p>This includes assessments of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial stability – Scale – Building condition – Energy efficiency – How it addresses housing need 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed housing provider compliance with legislative requirements and ensured sound financial management practices. • Building condition assessments, reserve fund studies and energy audits were completed on all housing providers, including HCHC. • Financial analysis initiated to determine long-term viability of housing providers at mortgage expiry. This work will continue in 2024.

3.3 Outcome: Halton’s assisted housing stock is improved

Actions		Results
<p>3.3a Investigate Regional opportunities to redevelop, revitalize and intensify existing non-housing assets, utilize surplus publicly owned land, and other opportunities.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed housing decision support tools to help guide regional assisted and supportive housing capital investment decisions. • Regional Council approved demolition of the Oakville Seniors Centre at 263 Kerr Street and development of a 52-unit seniors supportive housing building with a ground floor Community Wellness Hub onsite. • Regional Council approved additional funding to further advance Allendale Campus towards Site Plan Application. • Continued review of Halton Region and HCHC owned sites for potential future new assisted housing use.
<p>3.3b Develop a multi-year strategy to intensify/redevelop Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) properties, with funding plans and a timeline for implementation.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced pre-development activities to create future additional assisted housing units at HCHC’s 363 Margaret Drive, Oakville site. • Continued to investigate HCHC properties for potential development/ redevelopment potential.
<p>3.3c In collaboration with the assisted housing sector, support efforts to modernize the sector by facilitating adoption of entrepreneurial approaches to realize self-sufficiency and optimal scale that balances fiscal capabilities with social purpose.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement and capacity building with housing provider boards of directors, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – redevelopment and intensification opportunities; – sharing sector best practices and resources; and – creating networking and capacity building opportunities between housing providers, support service agencies and funding partners.



Direction 3 – Encourage and protect assisted housing

3.4 Outcome: Halton residents have improved access to housing options and supports

Actions		Results
3.4a Improve resident access to housing programs as part of continued human service integration objectives employing multi-channels and information technology.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 89 per cent of Halton Access to Community Housing (HATCH) applicants have opted for electronic communication allowing for streamlined communications. Implemented digital screens in all HCHC's multi-residential buildings to promote Regional programs and services and communicate with tenants.
3.4b Continue to improve the HATCH waitlist process.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented a streamlined HATCH file renewal process to improve communication, be more efficient and improve customer service. Implemented Income and Asset Limits for HATCH eligibility to align with new provincial regulation.

3.5 Outcome: Increased assisted housing through regional partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors

Actions		Results
3.5a Facilitate collaboration and partnerships between community housing groups and the private sector to create new assisted housing opportunities.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private sector developers are now required to have a non-profit supportive housing partnership to receive Regional assisted housing funding. Facilitated networking opportunities and partnership building opportunities between private sector developers and non-profits supportive service providers, through the Region's assisted housing concierge.
3.5b Develop and promote a procurement strategy that encourages private sector involvement in the development of new assisted housing units.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented a streamlined Negotiated Request for Expressions of Interests process for assisted and supportive housing development. Continued to provide concierge support to private sector developers creating assisted and supportive housing in Halton. This includes the 2475 Old Bronte Road, Oakville site currently in construction.



Direction 4 – Support independent living

4.1 Outcome: Increased accessible housing opportunities for Halton residents

Action		Results
Consult the Halton Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee when Regionally owned assisted housing is constructed or renovated.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulted the Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee on the design of new assisted housing on Region/HCHC owned properties. 265 Kerr Street Oakville will include full universal design and exceed Town of Oakville accessibility requirements. All 52 units will have barrier free kitchens and bathrooms. 1258 Rebecca Street, Oakville will include full universal design. Four units will be barrier free. Bathrooms in other units are designed for future adaptation to barrier free units.

4.2 Outcome: Increased housing with supports for Halton residents

Actions		Results
4.2a Collaborate with provincial ministries and support service providers to increase supportive housing opportunities across Halton Region's assisted housing sector, including HCHC.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with agencies funded by the Ministry of Health to support individuals experiencing homelessness to find and retain supportive housing through the Coordinated Access System. All 14 units at the 1258 Rebeca Street, Oakville site will be supportive housing units for seniors with mobility challenges and light health support needs. Five units at the 17 Guelph Street, Halton Hills site will be supportive housing for single parent women-led households in partnership with Home Suite Hope. Expanded the Community Wellness Hub model to HCHC's 271 Kerr Street, Oakville site. Collaborated with community partners and Ontario Health Teams to define health and social service requirements for the future ground floor Community Wellness Hub at 265 Kerr Street, Oakville.
4.2b Follow Regional Assisted Housing Design Guidelines (including accessibility and green building policies) when redeveloping housing that is Regionally owned and operated.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new assisted rental housing projects have been designed to meet or exceed the Region's Accessibility Design Guidelines. 265 Kerr Street, Oakville will be designed to achieve Passive House certification. 1258 Rebecca Street, Oakville will be designed to be Net Zero with the option to include onsite renewable energy. Halton Region's preliminary designs for new assisted housing have been developed with input from certified energy efficiency/accessibility consultants.



Direction 4 – Support independent living

4.3 Outcome: Improved access to available support services and programs

Actions		Results
<p>4.3a Continue to incrementally improve access to support programs and services, providing a coordinated approach to housing programs and services.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a supportive housing need study and made targeted capital investments to address some of this need. Advocacy to the health sector for supportive service funding forms a key element of this work. • Streamlined the transition of individuals and families from shelter to supportive housing through the creation of a HATCH Coordinated Access Priority. One in five offers of housing are now made to this population. • Continued to implement process improvements through the Community Safety and Well-Being Action Table to ensure seamless provision of support services and housing opportunities for vulnerable and at-risk households. • Continued to refine and simplify the client application process for supportive housing. • Developed a new program to support assisted housing residents and those with a history of homelessness to remain housed by providing housekeeping and life skills supports. • Diverted 1,135 vulnerable Halton residents from the shelter system into permanent housing with wrap around supports as required.
<p>4.3b Improve capacity to support independent living through co-location and partnerships with health and community service providers.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity space is investigated as part of new assisted housing developments on Region/HCHC owned lands where appropriate and feasible. • Collaborated with community partners and Ontario Health Teams to define health and social service requirements for the future ground floor Community Wellness Hub at 265 Kerr Street, Oakville. • Extended Community Wellness Hub services to seniors residing at 271 Kerr Street, Oakville, and the surrounding community. • Commenced working with new supportive housing providers (Oasis Youth Care and Support House Justice Program) to address targeted community need. • Funded critical repairs and accessibility upgrades for five homeowners in 2022 through the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative.
<p>4.3c Explore opportunities to address a broader set of client needs with program innovations and new partnerships.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated HCHC's Community Development Strategy. Entered into additional Community Partnership Agreements with community agencies to address tenant informed health and social service needs. • Continued to implement process improvements through the Community Safety and Well-Being Housing and Homelessness Action Table to ensure seamless supportive service delivery and housing opportunities for vulnerable and at-risk households. • Re-activated an Action Table under the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan to develop recommendations on how to mitigate encampments and homelessness across Halton in partnership with housing, health, social service, justice, and local municipal partners.



Direction 4 – Support independent living

4.3 Outcome: Improved access to available support services and programs (continued)

Actions		Results
4.3d Collaborate and partner with appropriate provincial and regional agencies to help residents with complex needs get and retain housing in appropriate environments.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implemented process improvements through the Community Safety and Well-Being Housing and Homelessness Action Table to ensure seamless provision of support services and housing opportunities for vulnerable and at-risk households.• 85 individuals and families at risk of homelessness were supported with a Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit and supportive services.
4.3e Ensure housing providers continue to meet Special Priority Policy (SPP) requirements and work to better coordinate support services to SPP clients.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permanently housed 68 survivors of domestic violence and their children.• Partnered with local organizations to maintain two crisis and three supportive housing units for survivors of human trafficking.
4.3f Work with local Indigenous organizations to develop and deliver culturally appropriate training as well as improved awareness of Indigenous housing issues in the region with a focus on Indigenous homelessness.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduced required training for Regional staff on Indigenous cultural competency.• Incorporated Halton Region's land acknowledgement at all external meetings.• Continued to work with Halton Region's Indigenous Relations Advisor to provide leadership/guidance and training sessions with indigenous persons.• Continued to promote culturally appropriate services through the Community Safety and Well Being Action Table on homelessness.• Continued to provide culturally appropriate training to Halton-based housing support agencies.



Direction 5 – Assist Halton residents to maintain their housing and prevent homelessness

5.1 Outcome: Halton residents avoid eviction and maintain their housing

Actions		Results
5.1a Continue to advocate for and participate in any future federal and provincial homelessness programs.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully advocated to the provincial government for an increase to Halton Region's Homelessness Prevention Program base funding. Received an increase of \$4.38 million.
5.1b Modernize policies and programs to effectively assist Halton residents to retain and regain housing.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanently expanded the amount of one-time assistance provided to Halton residents through the Housing Stability Fund while providing a greater depth of support to those who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. • Continued to offer short-term monthly housing benefits to Halton residents at risk of homelessness. • 85 per cent of Halton residents indicated their housing remained stable six months after receiving housing assistance. • Housed 19 residents from emergency shelter directly into permanent housing with supports through the Coordinated Access Priority. • In 2022, 2,127 households in Halton received financial assistance to prevent homelessness/maintain their housing. 357 individuals moved from homelessness into permanent housing. • Increased street outreach capacity to support homeless and precariously housed individuals, including new mental health and addictions supports.
5.1c Expand Halton Housing Help to meet growth related demands and assist more Halton residents with their housing and support needs.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halton Housing Help services were expanded to provide additional outreach programming for individuals reluctant to enter formal shelter services or experiencing unsheltered homelessness. • Halton Housing Help supported 1,398 residents with housing assistance. 514 of these residents received long-term intensive housing case management.



Direction 5 – Assist Halton residents to maintain their housing and prevent homelessness

5.2 Outcome: Enhance supportive housing capacity for chronically homeless residents

Actions		Results
5.2a Increase capacity of Halton's Housing First Program.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing First program continues to successfully support Halton residents experiencing chronic homelessness to find and maintain their own independent housing with wrap-around supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 36 Halton households were supported to acquire housing through the Housing First Program in 2022. – 290 Halton households have been housed through Housing First since the inception of the program in 2015. – 96 per cent of residents placed remain housed after receiving two years of intensive support through Halton Housing First. They have demonstrated improvements in physical and mental health, employment, education, and social inclusion.
5.2b Implement a centralized coordinated access approach to homelessness prevention and supportive housing agencies.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community agencies applying for homelessness/supportive housing funding through Halton Region are now required to demonstrate their alignment with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan to ensure seamless program delivery from homelessness to permanent housing. • 53 Halton households experiencing chronic homelessness were provided a structured housing intervention from Halton's By-Name List using the coordinated access approach.
5.2c Work with relevant provincial ministries to more effectively address institutional discharge into the community.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in front line working groups with Ontario Health Team-funded programs and hospital/corrections staff to more effectively address institutional discharge into the community. • Advocated to provincial ministries to reduce hospital and correction discharges directly into homelessness. • Facilitated partnerships between hospital discharge planners, Halton Housing Help and supportive housing providers to improve discharge planning procedures and placement from these institutions directly into housing.



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