



City of Kingston
Information Report to Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee
Report Number HHC-24-007

To:	Chair and Members of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee
From:	Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff:	Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Housing & Social Services
Date of Meeting:	April 11, 2024
Subject:	Standing Update – April 2024

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 1. Support Housing Affordability

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

The Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee is provided with an update report on the housing and homelessness system in the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac at least quarterly throughout the year. The report includes updates regarding homelessness services, social housing programs, affordable housing projects and initiatives, and other updates as applicable.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Major Projects & Strategic Initiatives	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Transportation & Emergency Services	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

The report is organized in three sections providing updates on homelessness services, social housing programs and affordable housing projects and initiatives.

1. Homelessness Services

By Name List (BNL) and Coordinated Access

As per previous reports, people on the BNL may be precariously housed or unhoused, ranging from but not limited to living in shelters, motels, with family, incarcerated, in hospital or living rough. Coordinated Access is a community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and support services within a coordinated system. Movement continues to occur between individuals being newly identified as homeless, returning from inactive and moving to inactive as shelter, program, and outreach staff connect with individuals unhoused and precariously housed. During the last two months, 44 people became housed. Table 1, below, highlights that the BNL data for Kingston from the last eight months has remained steady:

Table 1: Kingston By Name List Data, July 2023 – February 2024

Month	Number of People
July 2023	524
August 2023	533
September 2023	531
October 2023	537
November 2023	540
December 2023	523
January 2024	536
February 2024	531

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A review of 2023 data shows that demographics for this group have also remained steady:

- 68% of individuals on the BNL are chronically homeless. This means individuals have been homeless for over six months of the last twelve months or have recurring homelessness totaling 18 months over the last three years.
- 57% of the individuals on the BNL identify as male, 40% identify as female and 3% identify as non-binary, transgender, two-spirit, other or prefer not to share.
- 22% of individuals on the BNL identify as Indigenous.
- Age groups of individuals accessing shelter services include:
 - 8% that are 15 years and younger, accessing services as part of a family
 - 11% that are aged 16-24 and may be part of a family or unattached
 - 42% aged 25-44
 - 22% aged 45-54
 - 18% over the age of 55

Shelters/Overnight Drop-in Centre Updates

City, shelter and homelessness program staff came together in February to learn more about Built for Zero (BFZ), a Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness system. It is a national change effort helping communities across the country to end chronic and veteran homelessness in Canada. The groups reviewed the system's guiding principles and agreed to use data to identify system-level strengths and opportunities. A collective impact lens will be used to identify areas for improvement to drive reductions in local chronic homelessness.

A BFZ advisor is working with City staff to review data, create benchmarks for local statistics, and suggest goals and strategies for homelessness services as directed. City staff will use this work for evidence-informed decision making with respect to homelessness services and program funding. A more detailed briefing will be provided on the BNL and homelessness data at a future committee meeting.

2. Social Housing Programs

Rent Geared to Income Assistance (RGI)

Under the *Housing Services Act 2011* (HSA), the City of Kingston, as Service Manager for housing and homelessness programs, is responsible for maintaining a target of 2,003 RGI units in the Kingston and Frontenac service area. The Housing & Social Services Department oversees the social housing system which includes fifteen non-profit housing providers that currently manage and directly operate 1,518 RGI units which follow eligibility rules set out in Part V of the HSA. The remainder of RGI units are secured through rent supplement agreements with private and non-profit housing providers, and recipients of the local Portable Housing Benefit (PHB).

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Additionally, there are 61 municipally funded supportive housing units with tenants paying no more than 30% of their adjusted family net income or, if on social assistance, rent is no more than maximum shelter allowance which count towards the City of Kingston’s service levels. There are another 30 non-mandated RGI units funded by Federal and Urban Native programs. Social housing units and PHB benefits are accessed by way of the centralized waiting list (CWL) which is maintained by the Social Housing Registry. Information and updates regarding the CWL and RGI units are shared through Tables 2-6 below.

Centralized Wait List Data

Table 2: Number of Active Households as of February 29, 2024

Household Type	Special Priority	Chronological	Total
No Dependents (single or couple)	12	783	795
With Dependents 2 bedrooms	5	151	156
With Dependents 3 bedrooms	4	133	137
With Dependents 4 bedrooms	3	80	83
With Dependents 5 bedrooms	1	58	59
Senior (65+)	1	220	221
Total	26	1,425	1,451
Already in receipt of RGI, awaiting a transfer			206

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Table 3: History of Number of Active Households – January 1, 2020, to February 2024

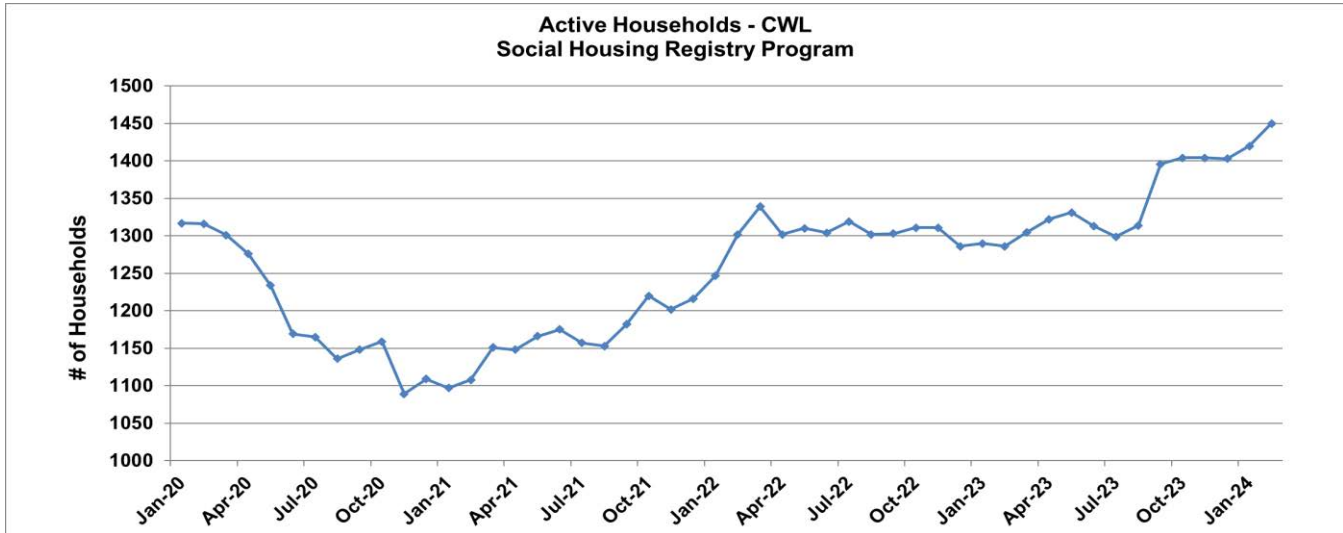


Table 4: Total Number of RGI Applications Received January 2024 – February 29, 2024

Household Type	No Dependants (single or couple)	With Dependents	Seniors (65+)	Total
# of Applications	84	53	22	159
# of Eligible Households				
- Chronological	70	36	12	123
- Special Priority	3	1	1	

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Table 5: Income Distribution of Eligible Households Who Applied Jan 2024-Feb 29, 2024

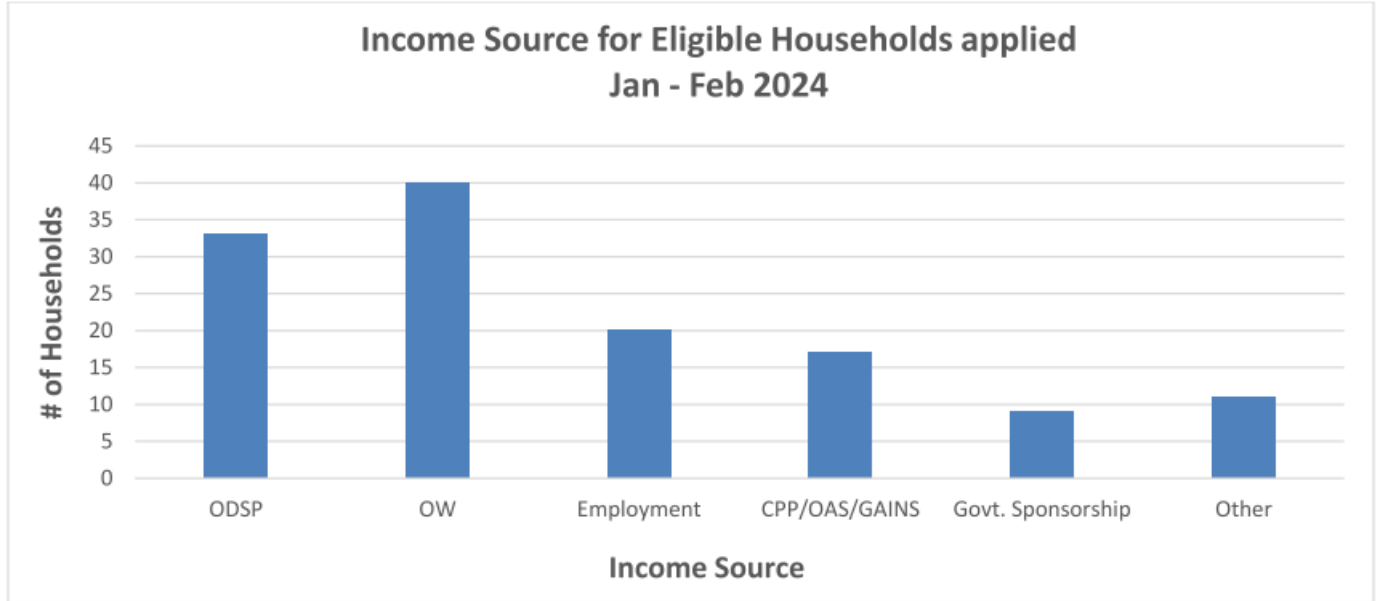


Table 6: Total Number of Households Housed January 2024 – February 29, 2024

Household Type	Number Housed
Chronological (non-seniors) - RGI Unit	12
Special Priority - RGI Unit	5
Chronological (non-seniors) PHB	0
Special Priority – PHB	1
Chronological Seniors (65+) - RGI Unit	1
Chronological Seniors (65+) – PHB	0
Total	19

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Local Portable Housing Benefit (PHB)

A PHB is a monthly subsidy provided to a low-income household to assist with housing costs. Unlike other forms of housing assistance, the benefit is tied to the household and not a physical housing unit, allowing the benefit to move with the household to any rental unit within the City of Kingston or County of Frontenac. As a result, recipients have more flexibility to choose where they live to be closer to family, social support networks, schools and employment opportunities.

There are 138 PHB benefits available for eligible residents. As of February 29, 2024, 124 households are receiving a PHB.

Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)

Under the 2017 National Housing Strategy, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) entered into a bilateral agreement with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Canada establishing COCHI which provides funding to Service Managers to protect affordability for households in social housing by supporting the repair and renewal of existing social housing supply.

The City of Kingston received an allocation of \$1,895,800 for 2024-2025. Similar to years' past, the funds will be put towards vital capital repairs/improvements to support the City's aging social housing stock. Staff are also working with the Ministry to secure a portion of the funds to be put towards updating Building Condition Assessments (BCA) for the City's social housing portfolios which were last completed in 2017.

3. Affordable Housing Projects and Initiatives

Since inception, the affordable rental housing capital funding programs have provided financial assistance from municipal, provincial and federal sources to create over 510 units. These units include deeply affordable transitional and long-term supportive housing units for social assistance recipients as well as supporting affordability for moderate-income working households that may struggle to afford market rent. The capital funding assistance is provided in exchange for long-term rents at below-market levels. These units are in addition to the service area's 2,003 rent-geared-to-income units. Table 7 outlines ongoing affordable housing projects that have received capital funding commitments and are in development or under construction. Of note, staff are currently working with a variety of non-profit and private sector housing providers and upper levels of government to plan and initiate new affordable housing projects. These projects are not included in Table 7 but will be discussed in subsequent reports when project commitment is achieved.

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Table 7: Ongoing Affordable Housing Projects

Address	Proponent	Affordable Units	Description	Status
1316 Princess Street	Kingston & Frontenac Housing Corporation	52 units	Affordable and Rent-Geared-to-Income Housing	Construction started summer 2022; completion summer 2024
1336 Princess Street	Kingston Co-Operative Homes Inc.	38 units	Affordable Housing	Construction started summer 2022; completion summer 2024
484 Albert Street	Kingston Home Base Housing	48 units	Supportive/ Transitional Youth Housing	Zoning By-Law Amendment approval obtained in summer 2021
1752 Bath Road	ARM Construction Company	28 units	Affordable Housing	Foundation permit obtained fall 2023; construction start spring 2024
805 Ridley Drive (West Wing)	City of Kingston and Dawn House for Women	17 beds	Transitional housing for vulnerable women	Renovation start spring 2024
111 MacCauley Street	Habitat for Humanity	8 units	Tiny House Pilot Project	Construction ongoing, completion spring 2024

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206 Concession Street	City of Kingston and Addiction and Mental Health Services	18 beds	Addiction and mental health housing stabilization program	Construction start winter 2024; completion November 2024
255 Yonge Street	City of Kingston	3 units	Indigenous Housing	Construction to start April 2024; completion November 2024
44-62 Barbara Avenue	HJK1 Holdings Ltd.	5 units	Affordable Housing	Construction underway; completion winter 2024
752 King Street W	Homes for Heroes	20 units	Transitional Housing for Veterans	Occupancy permit provided; first clients moved in March 2024

Other Affordable Housing Programs

Second Residential Unit Affordable Housing Grant Program

Second residential units, also known as secondary suites or granny flats, are private, self-contained units within an existing dwelling (i.e. basement apartment) or in a detached, accessory structure such as a backyard coach house or converted detached garage. Second residential units provide additional housing diversity and support housing options for singles and smaller households, live-in caregivers, and downsizing seniors, amongst other smaller household types. Second residential units also provide additional income which can be used to support low to moderate-income households achieve home ownership. In 2023, building permits were issued for 119 second residential units.

The City’s implementation plan for the Housing Accelerator Fund includes direction to enhance the grant program by providing streamlined approvals, increased financial incentives and pre-developed designs to make it easier for property owners to develop additional residential units on their property (see [Report Number 23-172](#)). The details of the enhanced program will be the subject of a future report to Council.

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Kingston-Frontenac Renovates Program

The Kingston-Frontenac Renovates Program provides funding assistance to eligible homeowners to make their homes more accessible or to complete urgent or emergency repairs. Examples of eligible projects include accessibility ramps, stair lifts, handrails, roof replacement, foundation work, furnace replacement and window replacement. Projects are eligible for up to \$15,000 which is provided in the form of a forgivable loan that is forgiven at an equal rate over the ten-year term. For accessibility projects, \$5,000 is provided in the form of a non-repayable grant. The 2024 program is now available and accepting applications. The program is funded annually with \$200,000 which is available from a shared provincial/federal funding program. Repayments received from participants that sell their home within the ten-year term are returned to the program's revolving fund which supports additional households. In 2023, 17 households benefited from this program.

Home Ownership Program

The Home Ownership Program provides down payment assistance to low-to-moderate-income renter households. The purpose of the program is to support households that could afford the monthly costs of homeownership but are unable to fund the down payment requirements. Eligible households must be currently renting a home in the City of Kingston or County of Frontenac and meet specified income criteria. Funding is provided in the form of a 10% down payment which is forgiven after the 20-year affordability term. If the home is sold during the 20-year term, the principal amount and 10% of any capital appreciation is repayable to the program's revolving loan fund. While the unprecedented price escalation in recent years has impacted the number of successful purchases, for 2023, the asset limit has been raised from \$20,000 to \$50,000 to enable prospective participants to maximize down payment availability. In 2022, City Council approved program funding to also support non-profit organizations to purchase residential properties to house clients. In 2023, two households benefited from this program in addition to one non-profit housing provider.

Homes for Heroes

Homes for Heroes Foundation (Homes for Heroes) is a Canadian charitable organization that was established in response to the challenges military veterans can experience when returning to civilian life, which can include homelessness. Homes for Heroes has previously developed two tiny home projects in Alberta and are currently putting the finishing touches on a 20-unit project in Kingston, located at 730 King Street West. The project provides 20 self-contained tiny home units each complete with an independent sleeping area, living space, kitchen and bathroom facility. The tiny home units are approximately 300 square feet in size and veteran residents are expected to reside at the project for one year. Residents will be supported by case management services offered by Homes for Heroes and will be provided connections to support services to facilitate recovery and self-sufficiency.

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The Homes for Heroes project welcomed its first group of residents in late February. The program has received referrals from local and regional social service organizations. A screening component is implemented during the intake process to determine clients' suitability. This ensures that they are an appropriate fit for the program in terms of their ability to participate in programming and their compatibility with village residents' expectations. The program does not offer substance use treatment, and therefore, program participants must be stable, prepared and eager to engage in recovery programming. Veterans and caseworkers may contact Homes for Heroes directly for more information about the program.

Contacts:

Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Housing & Social Services, 613-546-4291 extension 4916

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Amy Gibson, Manager, Housing & Homelessness

Mitchell Grange, Policy Manager, Housing & Social Services

John Henderson, Housing Programs Administrator

Nicola Reid, Housing Programs Administrator

Lori Kidd Velkova, Housing Programs Administrator