



A HOME FOR ALL

Niagara's Housing and Homelessness Action Plan | Community Update

HHAP GOALS

A Home for All is the vision of the Niagara Region's 10 year Housing and Homelessness Action Plan (HHAP). The HHAP was launched in 2013 as part of a province wide effort to address the very complex issue of housing and homelessness. The strategy outlined in this plan addresses the following four goals:



GOAL 1



House people who do not have a home

GOAL 2



Help people find & retain a home

GOAL 3



Increase opportunities & options across housing continuum

GOAL 4



Build capacity & improve effectiveness of the housing system

FIVE AREAS OF FOCUS

The 'A Home for All' Taskforce and five working groups were developed in 2015. Each working group addresses a key area of work, is led by a community leader/stakeholder, and membership is comprised of a cross section of service providers and other partners. The work has continued to be directed by community leaders and stakeholders and supported by the Regional staff throughout 2016, including staff from Community Services, Planning and Development Services, Public

Health and Emergency Services, and Niagara Regional Housing (NRH).

In 2016 the work directly engaged 152 individuals representing more than 50 community partners, including individuals from 28 community agencies who actively participated in the 'A Home for All' working groups. The five key areas, their chairs, and 2016 accomplishments are listed below:



Elisabeth Zimmermann,
Executive Director,
YWCA Niagara

Housing First: Housing First is a best practice system of rapid rehousing for people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness. In 2016, this working group developed a consistent approach to service delivery across Housing First providers by adopting the Housing First Fidelity Scale. They also increased shared understanding of best practices by drafting a set of Housing First Protocols based on best practices.



Mark Carl,
Executive Director,
The Hope Centre

Service Hubs: Service Hubs provide the community with a destination, whether physical or virtual, that offers various services in one location. In 2016, this working group increased shared understanding of service hubs through the development of Housing and Homelessness Service Hub Principles.



Michael Lethby,
Executive Director,
The RAFT

Prevention: Prevention reduces homelessness by keeping at-risk youth, singles and families housed, and stopping people from experiencing a first instance of homelessness. Niagara's new Youth Homelessness strategy was introduced in 2016.



Mike Taylor,
Executive Director,
Youth Resources
Niagara

No Wrong Door: A "No Wrong Door" approach to service means that no matter where a person enters the system, he or she can access any services that are needed. In 2016, this working group increased communication between front line workers across Niagara and identified opportunities and challenges for implementing a No Wrong Door approach to service delivery by initiating a front-line worker consultation process.



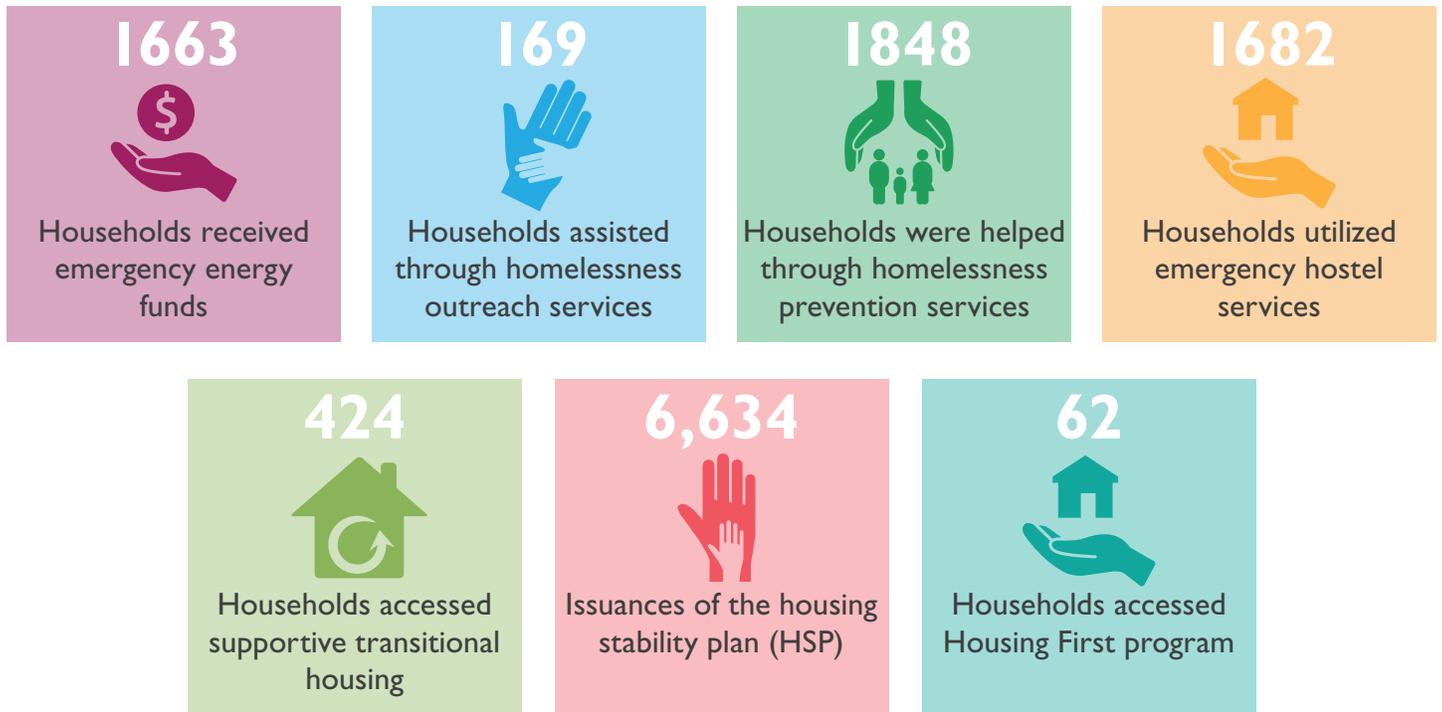
Lori Beech,
Executive Director,
Bethlehem Housing

Housing Affordability Innovation: Innovation helps increase the supply of affordable housing. In 2016, this group researched local, national and global innovations in housing affordability. They also raised awareness and stimulated the submission of a multi-agency application for the new CMHC Affordable Rental Innovation Fund through the hosting of a National Housing Day Forum on the topic of affordable housing innovation.

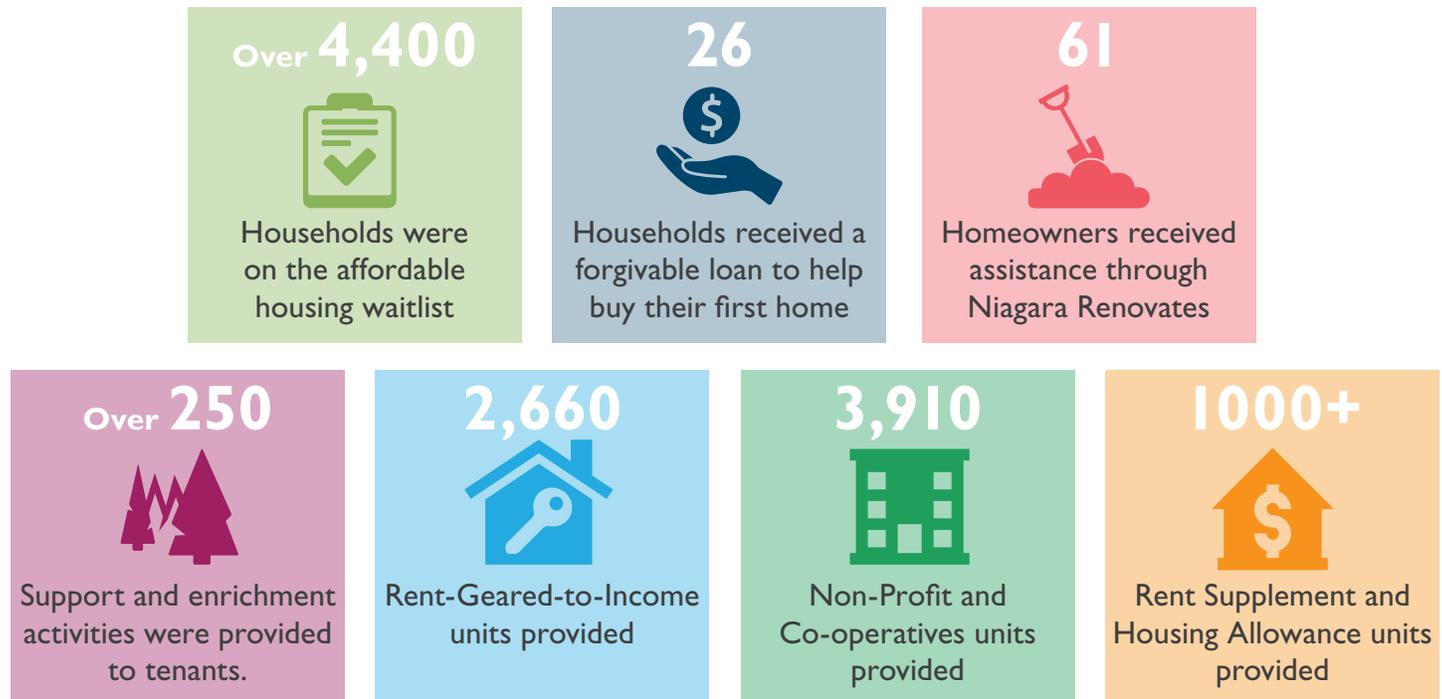


The "A Home for All" working groups are facilitated by:
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HOMELESSNESS SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS (2016)



AFFORDABLE HOUSING (2016)



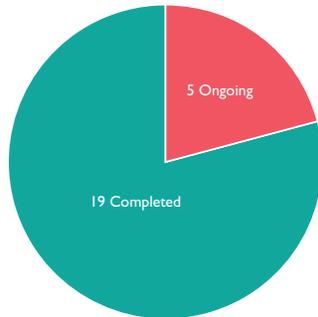
Niagara received more than \$3 million in investment in Affordable Housing-Extension (IAH-E) funds, awarded to three non-profit organizations to create 40 affordable housing (80% of market rent) units for seniors and mental health consumers in Niagara Falls. Construction on one project was completed in 2016, with the remaining two to be completed in 2017.

PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

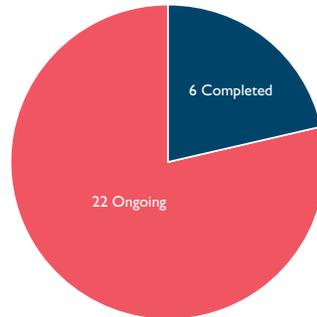
The plan outlines 80 actions that address these goals. By the end of 2016 (year 3 of the 10 year plan),

25 actions had been completed, 30 actions were ongoing, and 25 actions remained to be completed.

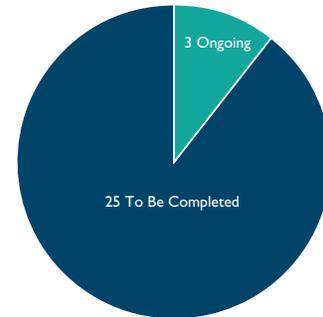
Immediate (2014) (24 Actions)



Short Term (2015-16) (28 Actions)



Mid-Long Term (2017-23) (28 Actions)



HIGHLIGHTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Creation of shelter guidelines to support consistent approach to service
- Identified training needs for agency staff, including the need for training in Housing First and Trauma-Informed Care
- Reviewed and revised the Niagara Emergency Energy Fund to better address need
- Expanded the use of Housing First and Supported Transitional Housing
- Advocated for additional funding to support homelessness initiatives
- Used case management supports such as pay direct and trusteeship to stabilize tenancies when appropriate
- Introduced Ready to Rent program across Niagara, which builds capacity for landlord engagement to help reduce evictions and increase access to available rental stock
- Worked on a social housing asset management plan to maintain levels of service, manage risk, and ensure value for money
- NRH increased energy efficiency and reduced utility costs for 4 social housing providers and targeting 76 electrically heated dwellings where tenants paid their own utility costs
- NRH obtained funding under the Social Housing Improvement Program (SHIP) for repair and energy and water retrofit of existing social housing stock, with \$1.2 million for NRH owned units and \$4,590,000 for 21 local social housing providers
- NRH was selected to participate in a two year provincial pilot to help survivors of domestic violence by providing 50 portable rent benefits
- Used the HHAP as an aligning vehicle for future housing initiatives, both regionally and in local area municipalities