

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 13, 2023
To: Social Services Sub-committee
From: Kehlar Hillyer, Housing Stability Policy & Program Coordinator
Grant Martin, Housing Stability Policy & Program Coordinator
John Ritz, Homelessness and Housing Stability Supervisor
Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Report #: SOC23-016
Attachments: Letter from Marie Morrison, Director of Built for Zero Canada

Title: Chronic Homelessness Reduction Efforts

Objective: To inform Mayor and Council on the community's continued progress in reducing chronic homelessness in Stratford-Perth County-St. Marys as a participating community in the Built for Zero-Canada movement.

Background: As outlined in a previous report (**SOC19-001**), this community has been a part of a national movement to end chronic homelessness since 2017. Originally known as the 20,000 Homes Campaign, this movement met one of its goals – to house 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable homeless people by July 1, 2020 – in March 2019. In June 2019, the movement relaunched as Built for Zero-Canada and refocused its efforts on supporting a core group of communities (currently 44) end chronic homelessness and veteran homelessness through a structured, supportive, and data-driven approach.

The City of Stratford's By-Name-List is the tracking system used by Social Services to maintain a current and malleable database of those experiencing homelessness, at risk of experiencing homelessness, and recently housed. The By-Name-List was established in 2019 and is critical to provide reliable, real-time data that informs Built for Zero and other initiatives.

The City of Stratford Social Services Department also implemented the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan focused on the following objectives in 2013:

- Ending Homelessness
- Creating Attainable Housing Options
- Sustaining Community Housing
- Addressing a Diversity of Needs

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan was initiated in 2022 and focuses on housing as Priority Area #2 of its goals. Unlike the Housing and Homelessness Plan, Community Safety & Well-Being targets a broader portfolio of housing needs but highlights the importance of safe and attainable housing under the Housing First Principle.

On April 6, 2023, the City of Stratford Social Services Department received a letter of recognition of efforts from Marie Morrison, Director of Built for Zero Canada. Stratford-Perth-St. Marys successfully reduced the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness by 10% below its baseline for three consecutive months.

Analysis: As a result of joint efforts by the City of Stratford Social Services Department government organizations, non-profits, and community groups within the service area, we have made significant progress towards the priority of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

In November 2021, Stratford-Perth-St. Marys established a baseline of 145 people experiencing chronic homelessness in the service area. Between the months of December 2022 and February 2023, this number was reduced by 10% below the baseline and the number reported in February 2023 was 115 people experiencing chronic homelessness. This is a reduction of 30 people, or 21%, between November 2019 and February 2023.

The inflow/outflow activity from December 2022 to February 2023 have the following key points:

Outflow (total outflow 50)

- 27 households experiencing chronic homelessness moved into new housing (higher than median)
- 23 moves to inactive (While that is not what we would see as 'positive' outflow, this still shows that more outflow was as a result of people getting housed as opposed to lost contact. In the past, that was not the case. It used to be more due to lost contact. Each month that passes we are getting better overall at decreasing lost contact.)

Inflow (total inflow 34)

- Newly identified: 16
- Aged in: 4 (homeless for 6 months or more)
- Return from inactive 16 (while this does impact our reduction, it is still a good thing because it means we have regained contact with those lost)
- Return from housing 0 (this means nobody lost their housing during this time which is considered a big driver for sustaining the reduction)

Net Change over 3 months = -16

We are the seventh community that is part of Built for Zero-Canada to accomplish this statistic and it provides encouragement for us as well as our partner organizations to continue our efforts while optimizing resources and opportunities within the service area.

Financial Implications:

Due to the fact this is an informational report only, there are no financial implications to be reported because of this report.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Local, regional, and national partnerships were instrumental in our community's progress related to ending homelessness; local community agencies dedicated staff resources to the processes required to implement key improvement projects, and the Built for Zero team and other BFZ participating communities provided guidance, support, and input throughout the terms.

This work also aligns with and strengthens the:

- updated *Housing & Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys* which identifies ending homelessness and addressing a diversity of needs as two of its four strategic objectives

Community Safety and Well-being Plan which identifies the priority of Adequate, Affordable and Attainable Housing

Other: This letter of recognition identifies the efforts made by the City of Stratford Social Services Department and its community partners to reduce chronic homelessness within the service area.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Equity and Local Economy

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Health and Happiness

Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the letter titled, "Recognition of a Chronic Homelessness Reduction in the Built for Zero Canada Campaign," be received for information;

AND THAT the report titled, "Chronic Homelessness Reduction Efforts" (SOC23-016), be received for information.

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Recommended by:

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