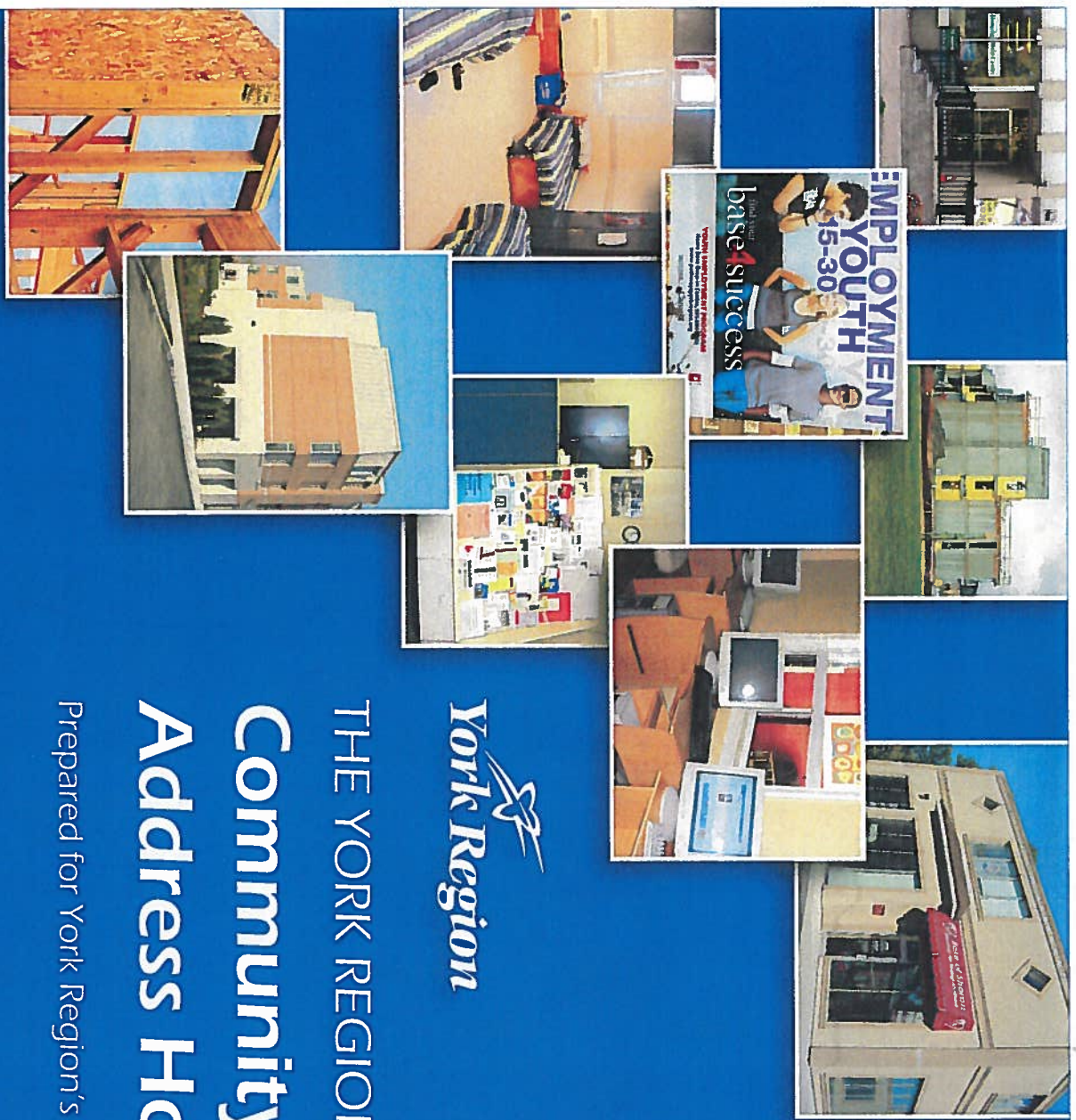


2ND UPDATE

March 2008



THE YORK REGION
**Community Plan to
Address Homelessness**

Prepared for York Region's Community Planning Group

The Regional Municipality of York, Community and Health Services Department
In Partnership with Human Resources Development Canada and the Community Planning Group
Prepared by SHS Inc.

Executive Summary

The Community Plan to Address Homelessness provides an update to the original Community Plan that was prepared for York Region in 2001 and first updated in 2003.

The report was prepared for the purpose of updating the community's priorities in addressing homelessness and giving community service organizations a framework within which to work together to achieve common goals, as well as assisting the community to make the best possible use of scarce resources by reducing overlap and duplication. It was also prepared to develop a common vision for identifying fund matching for the new federal government initiative, Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), which replaces the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI).

The process for updating the Community Plan began with the development of a work plan to which homelessness agencies, the York Region Alliance to End Homelessness (Alliance), and other community members provided input. Next, a community planning working group was formed with members of the community. The Community Planning Group guided the development of the Plan and participated in working sessions to review the work plan, developed key objectives and principles of the Plan, reviewed and confirmed identified assets and areas for improvement, established priorities, target areas, and funding priorities, and reviewed and commented on the draft Update. In addition, stakeholders across York Region, including the Alliance, had opportunities to participate in identifying priority issues and activities to address the priorities and review the draft Update.

To determine what services and supports are available in the community, a survey of agencies serving the homeless and at-risk population was conducted. This information was used to identify where additional resources might be required.

One of the key elements of the Community Plan was to identify priority issues or areas of greatest need for homeless people in York Region. The priorities identified through the update process are shown in the table to the right. Proposed activities, targets and potential partners were then determined based on the identified priorities. These activities provide the framework for joint community action towards addressing homelessness in York Region.

Community Plan Priorities

Priority Area: Continuum of Housing and Supports

#1	There is a serious shortage in the affordable housing supply in York Region, including supportive housing.
#2	Poverty is one of the root causes of homelessness.
#3	Supports and services for homeless individuals and families, and those who are at risk of becoming homeless, are limited, and don't meet the needs of York Region residents.
#4	Individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless have difficulty accessing health services.
#5	The services available to some homeless and at risk populations, as may be defined by their age, ethnicity/ability, and/or gender, in particular youth and women, are not sufficient to meet their needs.
#6	Homeless youth, families, women, and individuals with mental illness or substance abuse issues have limited access to emergency shelters and transitional housing because shelters are operating at capacity or no appropriate shelters or transitional housing exists for the population.
#7	Risk of homelessness is increased with mental health or substance abuse problems and the availability of services is not sufficient to meet the needs of this population group.
Priority Area: Knowledge and Communication	
#1	There is a need for improved knowledge, and increased utilization of knowledge, as well as public education, and advocacy on homelessness in York Region.
Priority Area: Community Capacity	
#1	There is a need for community development activities to further the community's ability to reduce homelessness.

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1.0 Introduction

In 2001, a Community Plan to Address Homelessness was prepared for The Regional Municipality of York. It was updated in 2003. Now, this second update is presented.

This report was developed to update the community's priorities in addressing homelessness and to respond to the new federal government initiative, Homelessness Partnership Strategy (HPS), which replaces the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI).

This report provides:

- An inventory of the existing supports and services for individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.
- An overview of the accomplishments and lessons learned in addressing homelessness since the last update.
- Updated community priorities along with specific activities, targets and potential partners in addressing the priorities.
- The time frame for this Community Plan. The time frame for the Plan is three years and the time frame for the HPS component of the plan is until March 31, 2009.

1.1 Purpose of the Community Plan

The Community Plan Update is intended to provide a focal point for joint community action and to achieve the following objectives:

- To give community service organizations a framework within which to work together to achieve common goals;
- To assist the community to make the best possible use of scarce resources by reducing overlap and duplication;
- To enable the community to evaluate its progress in reaching its shared objectives; and
- To set a common vision for the identification of matching funding for HPS funds.

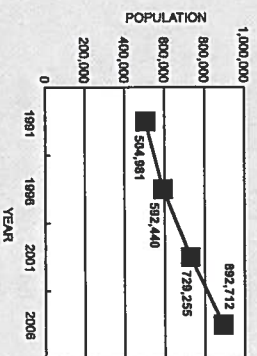
Collaboration among all the key community partners is necessary to plan a broad based community vision, and to achieve greater clarity and focus on homelessness.

“COMMUNITY”

Talking about “community” in York Region is a challenge. We are a rapidly growing, increasingly diverse region, with nine municipalities and many neighbourhoods within communities. When it comes to homelessness – this complex and largely invisible issue connects all of us as individuals because having a home, having a place to belong, is a fundamental human need. Access to safe, adequate affordable housing is a critical building block of healthy communities.

In communities with a shortage of affordable housing, many people who have low incomes are only one event (e.g., job loss, marital breakdown or a disagreement with their landlord) away from being homeless”.

YORK REGION POPULATION GROWTH



SOURCE: Statistics Canada Census

1.2 Context of Homelessness in York Region

What is Homelessness

Homelessness includes those living on the street, staying overnight in temporary shelters, staying in places not meant for human habitation, or moving continuously among temporary housing arrangements (“couch surfing”).

Who is at Risk of Homelessness?

Individuals and families can become homeless for a variety of reasons. These reasons include when they have incomes too low to access and retain adequate and suitable housing, become unemployed, have a critical illness, experience discrimination by a landlord or neighbours, or have difficulties with neighbours or a landlord. Other reasons may be that they do not know or understand their housing rights, experience abuse or violence, suffer from physical or mental health conditions, face challenges with substance use problems, or have conditions such as a physical or developmental disability or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

General Contributors to Homelessness in York Region

Besides poverty and a lack of affordable housing (which are discussed further on pages 11 and 13), there are other general factors that contribute to homelessness in York Region such as high population growth rates, and a significant number of newcomers to York Region – who are economically vulnerable during the first several years after their arrival.

York Region is experiencing very high growth rates. The population of York Region increased by 300,272 persons between 1996 and 2006, an increase of 50.7% over the ten year periodⁱ. This growth places pressure on the need to develop and offer a range of housing and support services.

In 2001, almost one quarter of York Region’s population had moved to the region within the previous five years (182,765 individuals)ⁱⁱ. Almost three quarters of this group in-migrated from other areas of the province, while another 5% were from other provinces, and 21% immigrated from outside of Canadaⁱⁱⁱ. Newcomers to Canada made up 5.3% of York Region’s population in 2001 (38,715 individuals)^{iv}. Newcomers to York Region often do not have a strong local support network that they can draw upon in the event of housing insecurity. Many new immigrants are hindered by language barriers and discrimination, causing additional barriers to maintaining secure housing and sharing in the prosperity of the rest of York Region. The high number of recent immigrants points to the need for culturally diverse services.

2.0 Background

2.1 Developing the Community Plan

The Community Planning Group provided overall guidance in developing the Community Plan Update, and stakeholders across York Region had opportunities to participate in identifying priority issues and activities to address the priorities.

The following outlines the process undertaken to update the Community Plan.

- a) Development of a work plan with input from homelessness agencies, the York Region Alliance to End Homelessness (Alliance), and other community members.
- b) Establishment of the Community Planning Working Group
York Region, in consultation with community members, identified community members to form the Community Planning Group. The members of the Community Planning Group are shown in the table in the right hand column.
- c) Working Sessions
The Community Planning Group met six times to review the work plan, develop key objectives and principles of the Plan, review and confirm identified assets and areas for improvement, establish priorities, target areas, and funding priorities, and review and comment on the draft Update.
- d) Development of Key Objectives and Principles of the Plan
The objectives and principles from the first Community Plan Update were reviewed and revised by the Community Planning Group.
- e) Update Accomplishments and Areas for Improvement
The update of accomplishments and areas for improvement involved the review of existing York Region data, a survey of primary agencies serving the homeless, consultations with persons who are homeless or at-risk, and a review of the accomplishments and areas for improvement with the Community Planning Group.

COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP MEMBERS		
Sector	Individual	Organization/Title
Shelters	Rochelle Saunders	Sutton Youth Shelter
Food Security	Elizabeth Brims, replaced by Joan Stonehocker	York Region Food Network
Public Health	Ethel Achampong	York Region, Public Health
Mental Health & Addictions	Tanya Shute	Krasman Centre
Women	Joanne Preston	Women's Centre of York Region
Youth	Jim Thomson	Pathways for Children, Youth and Families of York Region
Faith Groups	Pamela Roth	Markham Interchurch Committee for Affordable Housing
Public Education	Jane Wedlock	Alliance to End Homelessness, Public Education Coordinator
Ethnocultural Communities	Rehana Sumar	Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold
Legal	Dennis Bailey	Community Legal Clinic of York Region
Community Services and Housing	Sylvia Patterson	York Region, Community and Health Services Department
Community Services and Housing	Valerie Gillingham	York Region, Community and Health Services Department, Homelessness Programs

- f) Establish Priorities, Activities, Targets and Potential Partners
Once the accomplishments and areas for improvement were identified, the Community Planning Group identified priority issues, activities and target areas, and potential partners.
- g) Preparation of the Draft Community Plan Update
The draft Community Plan Update was prepared based on information gathered from the activities above.
- h) Review of the Draft Update with the Community Planning Group and Alliance and Finalize the Community Plan Update.
- i) The Update was finalized based on comments from all parties and presented to York Region Council for adoption.

2.2 Community Assets

An update of the inventory of the existing supports and services was needed to determine what assets the York Region community has, and where additional resources might be required.

Appendix 1 summarizes what services and supports currently exist in York Region. An attempt was made to categorize the information by municipality, where the information was available. However, agencies were not asked where each of their housing and supports were located, but rather where ANY of their services were located. The information on the services and supports available in the community was gathered through a survey of agencies serving the homeless and at-risk population groups.

3.0 Principles, Objectives and Lens of the Community Plan

The Community Planning Group established a set of principles and objectives of the original Community Plan and has once again reviewed and made revisions to them based on the community's experience addressing homelessness during the last four years. The Community Planning Group has also developed a "lens" through which to plan a strategic and integrated response to the issue of homelessness and risk of homelessness in York Region with a primary focus on prevention.

3.1 Principles

Overriding Principle

It is recognized that HPS funding is limited, one-time funding available to the community and that to use these limited funds in the most effective manner, activities funded should leave a legacy of strength in the sector. The legacy does not need to be bricks and mortar. The legacy could be lessons learned or new knowledge which could be shared amongst community agencies in York Region.

Initiatives funded under HPS and the York Region Community Development Investment Fund (CDIF) should address as many of the following principles as possible:

1. Prevent homelessness and address the conditions that put people at risk of homelessness.
2. Mitigate the impact of poverty by initiatives aimed at increasing access to adequate income.
3. Ensure integration of new with existing programs and services and minimize duplication through a systems planning approach.
4. Provide a continuum of supports approach.
5. Provide appropriate, adequate support services to emergency shelter beds, transitional or supportive housing.
6. Incorporate partnerships (existing or new) between public/private sector, community agencies, all levels of government and funders.
7. Provide more comprehensive, consistent provision of services and supports to homeless and at-risk individuals (i.e. 24/7).
8. Meet the basic needs for homeless and at-risk individuals (food, shelter, clothing, safety, health care, physical access to services).
9. Include a communication strategy to ensure all homeless and at-risk individuals (including different cultural communities) are aware of available services and supports.
10. Include the voices of people who have experienced homelessness or are at risk of homelessness as an integral part of the development of services and supports.
11. Respond to the ethno-cultural diversity of those who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness.

3.2 Objectives

Short-term objectives:

- To alleviate the hardship of those who are absolutely homeless by increasing, for example, the number of beds available in shelters (either indirectly, by providing alternative housing for current long-term shelter residents, or directly by providing additional shelter space) and supports.
- To promote a “continuum of supports” approach to reducing homelessness.
- To strengthen the capacity of the community to serve homeless people and those who are at risk of homelessness.
- To reduce homelessness by bringing community service providers together to develop plans that address all the needs that are common to homeless people.
- To address the issue of homelessness at the community level by promoting the development of collaborative processes and broad-based partnerships among all stakeholders, e.g. private, non-profit and voluntary sectors, labour organizations and all levels of government.
- To develop a base of knowledge and expertise about homelessness and share it among all concerned parties and the general public.

Long-term objectives:

- To ensure that no individuals are involuntarily on the streets by providing sufficient shelters and adequate supports.
- To significantly reduce the number of individuals requiring emergency shelter and transitional and supportive housing by providing, for example, sufficient health services, low-cost housing, discharge planning, early intervention and prevention strategies.
- To help individuals move from homelessness to self-sufficiency.
- To help communities strengthen their capacity to address the needs of their homeless population.
- To improve the health, social and economic wellbeing of people who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

3.3 Lens

The Community Planning Group has developed the following lens through which to plan a strategic and integrated response to the issue of homelessness and risk of homelessness in York Region, with a primary focus on prevention. When undertaking activities to address priorities, community members should use a people-centred approach, and consider geographic location of supports and services, as well as the “continuum of supports” which recognizes the range of housing situations of individuals and families who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness.

LENS OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

GEOGRAPHY MATTERS	PEOPLE CENTRED APPROACH		CONTINUUM OF SUPPORTS				
	COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE SECTORS	AT RISK	HIDDEN HOMELESS	ON THE STREET	SHORT TERM/CRISIS SHELTERED	PERMANENT OR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING	
To individuals – awareness of physical and economic access to services, having basic needs met, social support and sense of belonging, opportunities to participate in strategies/initiatives that improve circumstances To service providers – ability of significantly underfunded agencies to provide services and supports across a vast region To region/municipalities – service costs, service distribution, fragile service infrastructure, transportation	Families with children	Prevention - Partners and Individual Supports	Outreach	Street Involved/ Outreach	Emergency Shelter and Supports	Transitional/ Supportive Housing	RGI Housing/ Private Market Housing and Supports
	Youth - male, female, LGBT						
	Women - VAW						
	Women - non VAW						
	Men						
	People with Mental Illness						
	Newcomers/Diverse Communities						
Aboriginal Peoples							
Seniors							

Each of the 10 priorities from the 2003 Community Plan Update were at least partially addressed over the past four years.

4.0 Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

This section highlights the community's accomplishments in addressing homelessness and lessons learned over the past four years.

4.1 Accomplishments

Since 2003, when the last Community Plan to Address Homelessness was created, the community has achieved a number of accomplishments toward addressing the priority areas. Briefly, the accomplishments include:

- The creation of some permanent affordable housing.
- An increase in supports and services for homeless people and families, and for those who are at risk of becoming homeless.
- An increase in the number of shelter beds.
- An improvement in the community's understanding of the needs of homeless people.
- An increase in services to persons with mental health issues.
- The creation of additional facilities for women victims of domestic violence.
- The establishment of a number of additional services for youth.
- An increase in health services for homeless people and those who are at risk of becoming homeless.
- An increase in public awareness and education.
- Some progress in mitigating the impacts of poverty.

Details on the accomplishments in each of these areas are provided in Appendix 2.

4.2 Lessons Learned

Several lessons have been learned by the community in its efforts to address homelessness, including the following:

- Prevention programs are becoming increasingly imperative as the lack of affordable housing in the community and the higher cost of rent and housing expenses are continuing to put a strain on low- and moderate-income households.
- It is more important than ever to reach out to the diverse cultural communities in York Region as the immigrant population is increasing, and recent immigrants are economically vulnerable during the first several years after their arrival.
- Funding to support the public education/coordination function has proved very valuable in broadening the understanding of homelessness and those at risk of homelessness in York Region. The invisibility of the issue makes this an ongoing challenge in a vast region.
- The input from community agencies in the planning process is critical and should be continued.
- There is a need to broaden community awareness and engagement in the implementation of the Community Plan so that there is broader buy-in and ownership of the issues, and willingness to find solutions.
- Collaborations among various agencies and sectors is essential to ensure everyone is working towards the same goals.
- It is difficult for agencies to act strategically when a significant amount of the funding available to community agencies for homelessness initiatives is provided on a time limited basis for one year.
- The Homelessness Prevention Program is having a significant impact on the ability of at-risk families and individuals served to retain their housing. Prevention strategies are cheaper and avoid crises.
- Assistance obtaining identification is being very successful in allowing clients to receive appropriate medical, financial and housing services.

**Learning
from
Experience**

5.0 Community Plan Priorities and Strategies

One of the key elements of the Community Plan is to identify priority issues or areas of greatest need for homeless people in the York Region community based on the community's objectives and the analysis of the accomplishments and areas for improvement.

The following are the priorities, a rationale for each priority, as well as the corresponding proposed activities, targets and potential partners. The Community Planning Group identified the priorities and activities which could be eligible to receive HPS funding. Sources of funding for the other activities could include York Region Community Development Investment Fund (CDIF), Ontario Trillium Foundation, Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN), United Way of York Region, provincial funding from various ministries including Community and Social Services, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Health and Long-Term Care, local municipalities, community agencies, private sector, and so on.

The priorities are divided into three sections:

- » **Continuum of Housing and Supports** These priority areas relate to the supports and services that would be needed to assist a homeless person or someone at risk of becoming homeless in achieving housing and income stability.
- » **Knowledge and Communication** These priority areas relate to the community's efforts to build knowledge and understanding of homelessness and the issues contributing to homelessness.
- » **Community Development** These priorities relate to the community's capacity to prevent homelessness and move individuals and families to greater housing stability.

The Community Planning Group identified the following six activities to be eligible to receive HPS funding. Efforts were made to include activities which addressed each of the priorities.

Programs, Services or Activities	PRIORITIES							Knowledge and Communication #1	Community Development #1
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7		
Maintain and improve the supply of affordable and supportive housing	◆						◆		
Based on the results of Hidden From Sight, (Women's shelter needs assessment) and Anybody's Couch (paper on homeless youth), explore opportunities and pilot a multi-service centre to expand access to services to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless. (youth and women), possibly in Vaughan, Richmond Hill or Markham		◆	◆		◆				
Improve transportation to and from the various facilities across the region offering services to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness			◆		◆				
Conduct a feasibility study for a women's shelter (non-victims of domestic violence)						◆	◆		
Hold a forum within which agencies providing services to homeless and at-risk individuals would inform the LHIN and any other interested community agencies and community members of the health service needs of homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless, and identify gaps and determine ways to improve their access to medication and other health services				◆			◆		
Develop a model for capacity building of agencies serving the homeless and at-risk and undertake capacity building activities								◆	

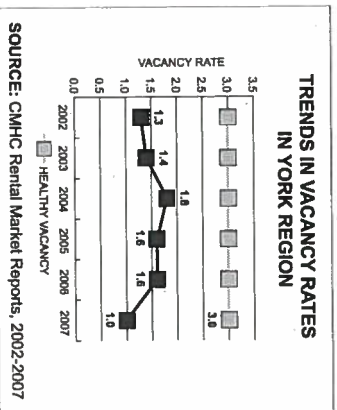
5. 1 Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #1: There is a serious shortage in the affordable housing supply in York Region, including supportive housing.

Objective: To maintain and improve the supply of affordable housing, including supportive housing.

Rationale:

- Finding affordable, suitable and adequate housing is becoming increasingly difficult for York Region residents and newcomers to the area:
 - 9,715 households are living in dwellings in need of major repairs (3.5% of households) ^{vi}.
 - 12,665 households are living in unsuitable dwellings (5.9% of households) ^{vii}.
 - 11.9% of households (25,465 households) are unable to afford shelter that meets adequacy, suitability, and affordability norms (i.e. are in core housing need) ^{viii}.
- The supply of affordable housing, and development of new affordable housing continues to be very limited in York Region.
- York Region's low vacancy rates for the past several years indicate that there is likely an inadequate supply of rental housing to meet the demand.



- At the same time, average market rents in the community have continued to increase.
- The table in the right hand column compares average market rents in York Region to what is affordable by selected occupations. It shows that a number of occupations can't even afford a bachelor unit at average rents.

21.6% of households are experiencing affordability issues (46,225 households) ^{ix}.

5,273

The number of households on the Waiting List for social housing in York Region. This is 455 more households than five years prior ^x.

COMPARISON OF AVERAGE RENTS TO AFFORDABLE RENTS

Occupation	Hourly Income	Affordable Rent/ Average Market Rent
Single Recipient of Ontario Works	N/A	\$342
Minimum Wage	\$8.00	\$416
ODSP		\$436
Cashiers	\$9.70	\$504
Hair Stylists & Barbers	\$11.35	\$590
Supervisors	\$11.75	\$611
Cooks	\$12.05	\$627
Estheticians	\$12.10	\$629
Data Entry Clerk	\$13.50	\$702
Shippers & Receivers	\$13.65	\$710
Early Childhood Educators & Assistants	\$15.90	\$827
Customer Service Rep.- Financial Services	\$16.30	\$848
Truck Drivers	\$19.05	\$991
Secretaries	\$20.35	\$1,058
Type of Unit	Hourly Income	Affordable Rent/ Average Market Rent
Bachelor	N/A	\$705
One Bedroom	N/A	\$886
Two Bedroom	N/A	\$1,041
Three + Bedroom	N/A	\$1,258

Sources: CMHC Rental Market Report, 2006, and Service Canada Wage Report, 2006

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #1: There is a serious shortage in the affordable housing supply in York Region, including supportive housing.
(Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Maintain and improve the supply of affordable and supportive housing</p> <p>Funding Source: HPS- 65 – 73% of HPS funding* *only for supportive housing</p>	<p>10 units of supportive housing beds/units renovated or improved by March 31, 2009</p> <p>5 to 10 new landlords willing to rent to the marginalized population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive housing providers • Other support service providers • Municipal, regional, provincial and federal governments
<p>Work with landlords to encourage them to rent to York Region's marginalized populations and to encourage them to enter into rent supplement agreements with community agencies providing support services, and concurrently increase eviction supports to tenants</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Private landlords • York Region
<p>Support York Region's process to develop and update an Affordable Housing Supply Strategy</p>	<p>Complete a housing supply strategy by 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region • Local municipalities • Provincial and federal governments • Other stakeholders such as housing providers

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #2: Poverty is one of the root causes of homelessness.

Objective: To develop a coordinated community poverty reduction strategy.

Rationale:

Although issues such as substance abuse and mental illness may lead to homelessness, they are often not the primary cause. One of the root causes of homelessness is poverty and the critical lack of low-cost housing.

Incomes in York Region are improving, but some are being left behind:

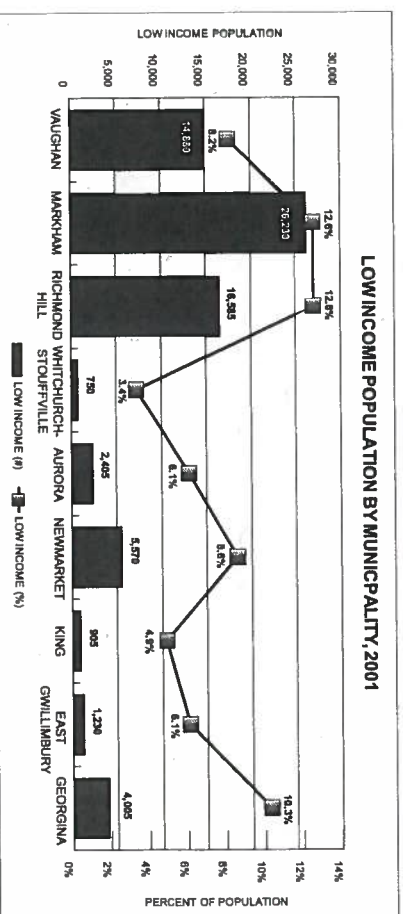
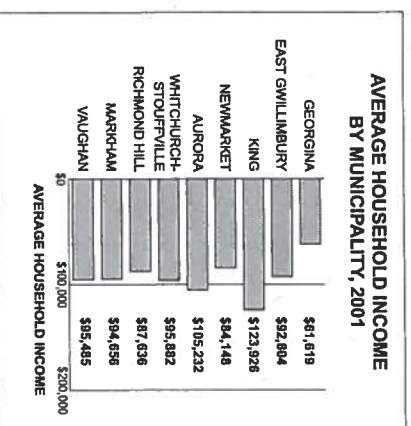
- Average incomes have increased by 20.2% between 1996 and 2001, while unemployment has dropped from 9.8% in 1996 to 5.0% in 2007 ^{xi}. Average household incomes in each of the municipalities in York Region range between \$61,000 and \$123,000 (as shown in the figure to the right), suggesting economic prosperity.

However, the economic situation isn't improving for some:

- 8,708 individuals were receiving Ontario Works social assistance payments in 2006 ^{xii}.
- 17,790 households, or 8% of all households in York Region, had household incomes of less than \$20,000 in 2000 ^{xiii}.

The income gap between owners and renters is significant, and it's increasing, particularly for those most in need:

- Average incomes of renter households were only 56% of the incomes of owners ^{xiv}.
- While the average income of renters and owners in general increased by 20.2%, the average income of renters in core housing need increased by only 13.9% ^{xv}.



72,565 people live in poverty in York Region. The good news is that this is 3,500 fewer people than in 1996 ^{xvi}.

1 in 10

The proportion of residents living in low income households ^{xvii}.

33%

of York Region's food bank users are employed, which may indicate the high cost of living in the area due to a large proportion of their income going toward mortgage, rent and utilities ^{xviii}.

Approximately **15%** of food bank users in York Region indicated that they have gone hungry at least once a week and 6% of their children have gone hungry at least once a week ^{xix}.

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #2: Poverty is one of the root causes of homelessness. (Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Develop a coordinated poverty reduction strategy that both meets immediate needs and addresses systemic factors</p>	<p>Establish committed leadership in one or more communities in York Region Define the issues and identify key priorities to be addressed through poverty reduction strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region Networks • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities • Community leaders
<p>Mitigate the impact of homelessness by :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing financial support to homeless people or those at risk of becoming homeless • Increased access to basic needs for homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless 	<p>Homelessness Prevention Program - increase the number served by 1.6% each year from 158 in 2006 Rent Bank - increase the number served by 1.6% each year from 99 in 2006 Energy Bank - increase the number served by 1.6% each year from 84 in 2006 Move People from OW to ODSP - York Region OW has centralized its caseload for ODSP related cases to assist clients with the application process and enhance communications with ODSP offices Emergency Community Supports - Work with emergency shelters to enhance services and supports to residents Employment Support Targets - Ontario Works assisted 1,374 participants in finding employment and exiting Ontario Works in 2007 Collaborative agreements in place in one or more communities to respond to basic needs of homeless/at-risk individuals and implementation of a co-ordinated response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial and federal governments • York Region • Homelessness agencies, and specifically the Community Legal Clinic of York Region • Networks • Mainstream agencies • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #3: Supports and services for homeless individuals and families, and those who are at-risk of becoming homeless, are limited and don't meet the needs of York Region residents.

Objective: To improve the service capacity of the sector serving the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness.

Rationale:

During the Community Plan Assessment process in the first Quarter of 2007, agencies serving the homeless and at risk populations were surveyed about the needs of their clients. The agencies reported that the characteristics of their clientele are changing, which is impacting the need for additional supports and services for particular needs. These agencies indicated that:

- There has been an increase in the number of female clients and younger clients (18+).
- The number of individuals with mental health issues and addictions has increased considerably in the past few years.

Community agencies have indicated that services are limited in the following areas:

- Services to support homeless and transient youth.
- Services for persons with mental illness.
- Housing stabilization support services.
- Transportation services, especially in the more northern municipalities.
- Outreach services, as there is a lack of awareness of some services available in the community.
- Services to meet immediate needs and to address needs that put people at risk of future homelessness.
- A comprehensive approach to outreach services.

"We need to meet immediate needs and address needs that put people at risk of future homelessness."

~ Jean Ashley,
Community Bread -
St. John Chrysostom Church

SNAPSHOT OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES IN YORK REGION

Number of Agencies Providing Services	2006
Mobile services and community outreach	18
Drop-in centres/day programs	10
Help-lines	14
Meal programs	18
Clothing/furniture banks	15
Food banks and food support	27
Financial support	10
Eviction/legal services and support	7
Access to housing and services	15
Life skills services	16
Employment development services	14
Community mental health services	17
Addiction services	6
Health and treatment services	9
Homelessness prevention services	11

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #3: Supports and services for homeless individuals and families, and those who are at risk of becoming homeless, are limited and don't meet the needs of York Region residents. (Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
Develop community based comprehensive homelessness prevention strategies	Establish a community wide strategy and goals for each "at risk" population Create feedback mechanisms and data systems Examine the implications of policies in increasing the risk of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region • Networks • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities
Increase and maintain existing services and expand access to services directed to the prevention of homelessness	9 new services offered Maintenance of all existing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service clubs • Academia • Hospitals • Faith groups
Develop and provide a more extensive and coordinated approach to outreach services for homeless people and those who are at risk of becoming homeless by population group across York Region (e.g. youth, women, men, aboriginals)	3 collaborative strategies for outreach services for different population groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region • Networks • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses • Faith communities • Service clubs
Improve transportation to and from the various facilities across York Region offering services to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness Funding Source: 7% of HPS funding	A new alternative transportation service such as a van, to (a) facility(ies) serving the homeless and those at risk of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments
Explore bringing a John Howard Society and Elizabeth Fry or equivalent organization to York Region	Needs assessment for services for people leaving correctional facilities 2 new services for people leaving correctional centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • John Howard Society of Ontario • Mainstream agencies • York Region Health Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal, provincial and federal governments
Establish harm reduction services in emergency shelters and transitional housing for individuals who are addicted and actively using substances	A shelter or transitional housing facility with harm reductions services Collaborative strategy for harm reduction services in emergency and transitional housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies, and specifically Addiction Services of York Region • Regional, provincial and federal governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region Public Health
Based on the results of Hidden From Sight, (Women's shelter needs assessment) and Anybody's Couch (paper on homeless youth), explore opportunities and pilot a multi-service centre to expand access to services to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless, (youth and women), possibly in Vaughan, Richmond Hill or Markham Funding Source: 10-18% of HPS funding	Activity such as a research project (i.e. research, feasibility study, business case) on a multi-service centre Multi-service centre created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • York Region • Service clubs • Businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith communities • Academia

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #4: Individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless have difficulty accessing health services.

Objective: To improve access to health services by homeless people and those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Rationale:

Research has shown that there is a clear link between poor physical health and homelessness or poor housing^{xx}.

- The rate of accidents, injuries, and physical and sexual assault is much higher among the homeless than the general population^{xxi}.
- Living conditions and poverty of homeless and those at risk of homelessness affect their ability to cope with health problems^{xxii}.
- Homelessness also creates high levels of stress, and stress is linked to a wide range of health problems^{xxiii}.
- Sleeping in areas not meant for human habitation, in particular, exposes people to severe weather, poor nutrition and limited access to hygiene facilities^{xxiv}.

Homeless people also experience difficulties in accessing health services.

- Agencies serving homeless and at-risk individuals in York Region are finding that their clients are not accessing the health services that they need.
- Homeless people tend to make less use of preventive health services and more use of emergency health services than the general population^{xxv}.
- Structural barriers reported by homeless persons include the inability to obtain medical treatment without a health card, and the inability to pay for items not covered by provincial medical insurance^{xxvi}.

There is a strong need to implement strategies to better co-ordinate and improve access by the homeless to health care services.



"Health care supports are a key priority for marginalized and transient youth. Many do not have the opportunity to or are in a position to access any health care services due to their current reality. Health care, when compared to other issues and needs such as shelter, food, clothing and earning some money is often left behind as these issues take precedence. Coupled with trust issues and a mistrust of adults, you have as they say a recipe for disaster."

~ Jim Thomson
Executive Director
Pathways for Children, Youth
& Families of York Region

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #4: Individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless have difficulty accessing health services.
(Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Hold a forum within which agencies providing services to homeless and at-risk individuals would inform the LHIN and any other interested community agencies and community members of the health service needs of homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless, and identify gaps and determine ways to improve their access to medication and other health services</p> <p>Funding Source: HPS- 10% between up to three activities</p>	<p>Forum on the health service needs of homeless and at-risk individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Alliance/ networks • LHIN
<p>Identify the health service needs of particular population groups and increase access to health services for these groups</p>	<p>Published document identifying a specific need for health services of a particular population group</p> <p>Collaborative strategy that responds to the health service needs of a particular population group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Alliance/ networks • Academia

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #5: The services available to some homeless and at-risk populations, as may be defined by their age, ethnicity, ability, and/or gender, in particular youth and women, are not sufficient to meet their needs.

11.4% of the low income population in York Region are youth.

SNAPSHOT OF YOUTH SERVED IN 2006	
Service	Youth
Received short-term shelter from the Salvation Army Youth Shelter	210
Received housing search/stabilization services from Pathways	23
Received addiction treatment services from Addiction Services of York Region	410
Active clients of the AIDS Committee of York Region	18
Received community outreach services from Pathways	1,205
Used the Pathways drop-in centre	937
Received housing intervention and prevention services from Pathways	10
Provided with breakfast by the Richmond Hill United Church school breakfast club program	120
Received employment services from Job skills	3,800
Received employment services from Pathways	400

Source: Survey of Agencies, 2007

Objective: To address the unique needs of specific homeless and at-risk populations, in particular, women and youth.

Rationale:

Youth:

- There are a lot of services available for those 12 and under, but very few services for youth 14-18 ^{xxvii}.

Women:

- In York Region, women facing barriers to housing stability do not have access to supports which will help them stay housed or regain access to housing quickly ^{xxviii}.
- Homeless and at-risk women are disconnected from information, resources and available services that would help them obtain or maintain housing. The disconnection is a function of an overall scarcity of support services for homeless and at-risk women, combined with a lack of access to transportation ^{xxix}.
- Women's homelessness in York Region is largely invisible. Women at risk of losing their housing will attempt to stay housed by "couch surfing", doubling up, and trading sex for shelter ^{xxx}.

Over half of the women consulted for the Hidden from Sight report indicated that they were homeless for more than one year ^{xxxi}.

882 single women between 16 and 64 were reported to be receiving benefits from Ontario Works (OW) as of January 31, 2006 ^{xxxii}. The maximum allowance for a single person on OW is \$560.

SNAPSHOT OF WOMEN SERVED IN 2006	
Service	Women
Received financial assistance through the homelessness prevention program (single women with and without children)	159
Overnight stays in the Out of the Cold program	160
Received services from the Street Outreach Van	375
Received outreach services from the Women's Centre of York Region	288
Received food security services from the Women's Centre of York Region (per month)	167
Received life skills services from the Women's Centre	72
Received housing search/stabilization services from the Women's Centre	108
Visits to the clothing/furniture bank at the Women's Centre (per month)	298
Received outreach services from Yellow Brick House	3,500
Used the York Brick House help-line	3,000
Received crisis shelter from Sandgate Women's Shelter	315
Received second stage housing from Sandgate	8
Received outreach services from the Canadian Mental Health Association	75
Received services from Addiction Services of York Region	300

Source: Survey of Agencies, 2007

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #5: The services available to some homeless and at-risk populations, as may be defined by their age, ethnicity, ability, and/or gender, in particular youth and women, are not sufficient to meet their needs. (Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Youth: Provide innovative programs to address the specific needs of youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and, in particular, to provide access to services for youth on a more continuous and stable basis throughout York Region</p>	<p>Collaborative strategy that addresses the needs of youth 342 more youth receiving services over 3 years 52 young parents, 16-21 years old, participated in the Ontario Works Learning Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program in 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments
<p>Provide non-traditional pre-employment (i.e. life skills) and employment services to youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless</p>	<p>An annual increase of 1.6% in the number of youth receiving nontraditional pre-employment and employment services (3,800 and 400 youth received employment services from Job Skills and Pathways respectively in 2006) New initiative for pre-employment & employment services for youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • York South Simcoe Training & Adjustment Board • Regional, provincial and federal governments
<p>Women: Increase services to enhance the safety and security of women and children who have left or are leaving a violent situation</p>	<p>An increase in the number of programs available to women and children fleeing domestic violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Mainstream agencies
<p>Aboriginal: Support and respond to an Aboriginal-led needs assessment aimed at determining the unique needs of Aboriginal individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in York Region</p>	<p>Activity completed or undertaken in response to an Aboriginal-led needs assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #6: Homeless youth, families, women, and individuals with mental illness or substance abuse issues have limited access to emergency shelters and transitional housing because shelters are operating at capacity or no appropriate shelter or transitional housing exists for the population.

Objective: To improve access of homeless youth, families, and women to temporary housing and housing and supports that would assist in improving their housing stability.

Rationale:

Shelters and transitional housing facilities in York Region are often full to capacity and have to turn away those in need of their services:

- In 2006, the Sutton Youth Shelter turned away six youth males and four youth females due to capacity constraints ^{xxxviii}.
- Leeder Place turned away 150 families in 2006 due to capacity constraints ^{xxxix}.
- There are approximately six applications every time that Sandgate Women's Shelter has a vacancy ^{xxxv}.
- For the majority of 2006, shelters for women fleeing abuse were full to capacity, as was their transitional housing ^{xxxvi}.
- In 2006, Yellow Brick House turned away 38 single adult females and 12 females with children ^{xxxvii}.
- Shelters may not have the capacity to serve persons with mental health issues or substance abuse issues.
- In some cases, no appropriate shelters or transitional housing exists for the population group. There are also no emergency shelter facilities for single women who are not experiencing violence.
- In addition to capacity constraints, individuals and families in need of emergency and transitional housing facilities may not have sufficient access to these because of geographic location and transportation limitations.

1,892

The number of different individuals and families who stayed in short-term or emergency shelters in York Region in 2006. Of the total, 399 were families and 1,493 were individuals ^{xxxviii}.

272 more individuals and families stayed in emergency shelters in 2006 than in 2004 ^{xxxix}.

EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING IN YORK REGION

Form of Accommodation	Population Served	Number of Beds/Units		Municipality
Shelters	Victims of Domestic Violence	30		Georgina
		21		Aurora
	Families	4		East Gwillimbury
		29		East Gwillimbury
	Men	10 (Males)		Newmarket
		16		Sutton
	Youth	4		Newmarket
		30 (Seasonal)		Newmarket
	Mixed	30 (Seasonal)		Southern York Region
		8		Aurora
Transitional Housing	Victims of Domestic Violence	13		Markham
		10		Sutton
	Youth	18		East Gwillimbury

Source: Survey of Agencies, 2007

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #6: Homeless youth, families, women, and individuals with mental illness or substance abuse issues have limited access to emergency shelters and transitional housing because shelters are operating at capacity or no appropriate shelters or transitional housing exists for the population. (Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
Protect existing programs/beds	Maintain the current number of emergency shelter beds (71 permanent beds and 60 seasonal beds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Homelessness agencies, including volunteer run emergency winter programs
Create new emergency and transitional housing for youth	1 or more emergency shelters created for youth 1 or more transitional housing facilities created for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities
Create new emergency housing for families	1 or more emergency shelters created for families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities
Establish emergency shelter and support services for single women in a housing crisis	1 or more emergency shelters for women with a minimum of 5 to 10 beds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities
Increase the number of transitional and supportive housing units for individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse problems	42 new housing units targeting individuals with mental health support needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments
Continue to communicate to the provincial and federal governments that the provincial funding model continues to be inadequate for shelters	Communication activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region • Homelessness agencies

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #7: Risk of homelessness is increased with mental health or substance abuse problems and the availability of services is not sufficient to meet the needs of this population group.

Objective: To improve the service capacity, including housing, and support services, for persons with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

Rationale:

- As mentioned previously, agencies serving the homeless and at-risk population groups have noticed an increase in mental health issues and addictions.
- People suffering from a severe mental illness are highly vulnerable to housing problems and homelessness. Their mental illness makes it difficult for them to find and maintain housing. Even when they are housed, their situation is usually insecure. Many live in group situations, which can be threatened by behaviour problems related to their mental illness. They are often likely to experience crises in their housing.
- It is difficult to determine what proportion of people with a mental illness is struggling with homelessness. In 2005, the Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) ID Clinic assisted 1,100 people including 366 women. Two hundred and seventy-nine of those women identified as being at risk of becoming homeless, 89 identified as homeless. Sixteen percent of these women self-identified as having either substance use problems or mental illness ^{xi}.
- Seventeen agencies provide community mental health services in York Region. The geographic distribution of their services is shown below ^{xii}.
- Six agencies provide substance use services in York Region. Their locations are shown in the table on the right ^{xiii}.

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS	
Municipality	Number of Service Providers
Town of Georgina	4
Town of Markham	2
Town of Newmarket	9
Town of Richmond Hill	5
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	1
Town of East Gwillimbury	1

Source: Survey of Agencies, 2007

SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES	
Municipality	Number of Service Providers
Town of Georgina	3
Town of Markham	1
Town of Newmarket	5
Town of Richmond Hill	3
City of Vaughan	1

Source: Survey of Agencies, 2007

411 individuals and families, including 199 adult men, 75 adult women, 27 youth, and 110 families received outreach services from the Canadian Mental Health Association in 2006 ^{xiii}.

1,320 individuals, including 410 youth, 525 adult males, 300 women and 85 seniors received services from Addiction Services of York Region in 2006 ^{xiv}.

Continuum of Housing and Supports

Priority #7: Risk of homelessness is increased with mental health or substance abuse problems and the availability of services is not sufficient to meet the needs of this population group. *(Continued)*

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Increase the availability of non-traditional addiction services for homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless, including harm reduction (needle exchange)</p>	<p>A program proposal for non-traditional addiction services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies, (including Addictions Services of York Region) • Mainstream agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • York Region Public Health
<p>Increase the availability of non-traditional employment strategies and programs (that are flexible and creative) for homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless</p>	<p>A new non-traditional employment program, or existing program with additional hours or locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Businesses • Regional, provincial and federal governments
<p>Create one pre and post treatment centre for addictions, one detox centre, and one second stage housing project for individuals leaving detox centres</p>	<p>Pre treatment centre for addictions Post treatment centres for addictions Detox centre Second stage housing project for individuals leaving detox centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Regional, provincial and federal governments • Service clubs • Businesses • Faith communities

5. 2 Knowledge and Communication

Priority #1: There is a need for improved knowledge, and increased utilization of knowledge, as well as public education, and advocacy on homelessness in York Region.

Objective: To improve the community's knowledge and understanding of homelessness in York Region.

Rationale:

While some significant strides have been made to increase public awareness and education, our community has identified a number of current limitations in the community's knowledge and understanding of homelessness.

Public education:

- Research on homelessness in York Region has found that single women, foreign born individuals and visible minorities are often not aware of the homelessness services available to them. There is a need to increase the awareness amongst these population groups of homelessness services.
- Mainstream community organizations such as police, housing providers, hospitals, schools, and faith communities are also not always aware of the homelessness services available in the community. There is a need to increase the awareness of homelessness services amongst community organizations.
- The invisibility of homelessness in York Region makes it an ongoing challenge to broaden the understanding of homelessness and those at risk of homelessness in York Region. There is a need to develop public education strategies and engage in public education activities to increase awareness of homelessness issues of the general public as well as the business community and policy/decision makers.

Advocacy:

- There is a need for improved funding, policies, and services, etc. for homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless. Advocacy at the municipal, regional, provincial and federal levels is needed to encourage improvements.

Research:

- Research is needed to document evidence to support strategies, planning, and communications of the issues of homelessness in York Region, and the needs of particular population groups.

"Homelessness is a disturbing, complex and largely invisible reality in York Region. Ongoing public education is an essential component of a comprehensive response to these issues in our rapidly growing communities."

~Jane Wedlock,
Public Education
Coordinator, York
Region Alliance to End
Homelessness

Knowledge and Communication

Priority #1: There is a need for improved knowledge, and increased utilization of knowledge, as well as public education, and advocacy on homelessness in York Region. (Continued)

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Public Education: Develop public education strategies and engage in public education activities that cover the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of homelessness services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Single women (including their awareness of their legal rights) ◦ Foreign born individuals and visible minorities ◦ Community organizations (e.g. police, housing providers, hospitals, schools, faith communities) • Increase awareness of homelessness issues, especially the following target groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Business community ◦ Policy/decision makers • Provide support to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community groups in the creation of new affordable housing • York Region in its continued delivery of affordable housing through Housing York Inc. and other municipal resources 	<p>Public education strategy related to each area York Region wide event Event in each municipality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance/ networks • Homelessness agencies • Faith communities
<p>Advocacy: Advocate for improved funding, policies, and services, etc. for homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • core funding for all homelessness and at risk of homelessness servicing agencies • sustainable human services funding • adequate and sustainable funding for shelters and second stage housing • an increase to minimum wage and income supports (i.e. OW, ODSP) • a national housing strategy, supported by the provincial government, to provide a sustainable source of funding to meet the affordable housing needs of communities 	<p>Community based collaborative strategy for advocacy activities Advocacy activities reaching every target audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance/ networks • Homelessness agencies

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Continue to encourage local municipalities to broaden their regulations to permit second suites in more areas throughout York Region</p> <p>Research:</p> <p>Develop a research agenda, and with a target of undertaking the following research activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategy to identify partners in prevention and research the potential impacts of other sectors on prevention • Develop community profiles of each community in York Region that indicate homelessness/risk of homelessness and associated challenges facing local communities • Research the diverse needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness and the impact of what government and the community is doing to address homelessness service, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The needs of marginalized youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (for reasons such as isolation, criminalization, learning disabilities or mental health issues) o The aging female population and the needs of diverse populations of women • Conduct a feasibility study for a women's shelter (non-VAW) based on the results of Hidden From Sight (the Women's shelter needs assessment) <p>Funding Source: HPS- 10% between up to three activities</p>	<p>An expansion in the number of municipalities over time permitting second suites</p> <p>Based on the lens, develop a research agenda on the diverse needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness and the impacts of actions, that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study for a women's shelter • Research project regarding the service needs of marginalized youth • Research activity on the needs of the aging population • Research strategy to identify partners in prevention • Research project on the community profiles of each community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region • Homelessness agencies • Alliance/ networks • Community members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Alliance/ networks • Local and regional municipalities
<p>Hold a forum within which agencies providing services to homeless and at-risk individuals would inform the LHIN and any other interested community agencies and community members of the health service needs of homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless, and perhaps identify gaps and determine ways to improve their access to medication and other health services</p> <p>Funding Source: HPS- 10% between up to three activities</p>	<p>Forum on the health service needs of homeless individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Mainstream agencies • Alliance/ networks

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INVOLVES:

Best Practice Sharing
Activities Amongst
the Homelessness
Serving Sector



Capacity Building Activities
for the Homelessness
Serving Sector



Development of
Partnerships &
Collaborations Amongst
the Homelessness
Serving Sector and with
Other Sectors

5.3 Community Capacity

Priority #1: There is a need for community development activities to further the community's ability to reduce homelessness.

Objective: To improve the community's capacity to reduce homelessness.

Rationale:

Conduct activities related to best practices

- There is a need to share effective practices of agencies within York Region and in other communities to help strengthen the capacity of agencies serving the homeless and at-risk populations.

Conduct activities related to capacity building

- There is a need for capacity building activities, such as training activities, for homelessness agencies to improve agencies' ability to serve the homeless and at-risk populations.

Develop partnerships and collaborations

- There is also a need to undertake the following collaborative activities to further the community's ability to reduce homelessness:
 - Develop partnerships and stronger alliances among agencies within the homelessness serving sector to help ensure initiatives are driven by an alliance of agencies and to make sure all service providers are working towards the same goals.
 - Improve the coordination of services among agencies to ensure a client centred approach.
 - Expand the circle of people involved in homelessness and housing issues beyond mainly social service agencies to other sectors.
 - In other words, establish a more systems planning approach by involving other sectors, including employment, education, faith based, child welfare, health and corrections.

Community Capacity

Priority #1: There is a need for community development activities to further the community's ability to reduce homelessness. *(Continued)*

Proposed Activities, Targets and Partners

ACTIVITY	TARGET	PARTNERS INVOLVED
<p>Conduct activities related to best practices in project development, management and sustainability</p> <p>Establish a process for sharing best practices on an ongoing basis (i.e. monthly Alliance meetings)</p>	<p>Workshop each year where best practices are shared</p> <p>An established process for sharing best practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance/networks • Homelessness agencies
<p>Conduct activities related to capacity building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building activities for the Alliance to expand membership to related sectors • Develop a model for capacity building of agencies serving the homeless and at-risk populations and undertake capacity building activities <p>Funding Source: HPS - 10% between up to three activities</p>	<p>1 or more activities related to expanding membership of the Alliance</p> <p>6 training activities for agencies servicing the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness (HPS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness agencies • Academia • York Region • United Way of York Region

6.0 Implementing and Communicating the Community Plan

6.1 Community Plan Implementation Process

The Community Plan Update will be endorsed by the Alliance to End Homelessness in York Region and by The Regional Municipality of York. Implementation of the Update will involve a variety of community partners. Staff from the Community and Health Services Department will be responsible for preparing and administering the request for proposal process to allocate HPS and CDIF funds, coordinating the activities of the Community Advisory Board, undertaking the communication strategy, monitoring the execution of the HPS activities throughout the funding period, evaluating the results of the HPS funds which have been spent, and overall administration and management of HPS and CDIF within York Region.

It is anticipated that the Community Plan Update will be a catalyst for action by a range of community partners including agencies serving homeless and at-risk individuals and families, mainstream agencies, funders, and government, etc. It is also important for the community to advance its way of thinking about homelessness. All community partners are encouraged to review the activities identified in the update and find ways to participate in the activities.

6.2 Communicating the Community Plan

A co-ordinated and effective communications strategy for the Community Plan Update development and implementation process is an important element in the success and the sustainability of the community's efforts on homelessness. The following outlines the objectives of the community's communication plan, and the corresponding target groups and activities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS	CORRESPONDING ACTIVITIES	TARGET GROUP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain the purpose of the Plan, and how the Plan will be used in the future To develop awareness and a common understanding of homelessness trends and issues To encourage the development of partnerships in response to key homelessness issues and gaps To promote community participation in the implementation of homelessness strategies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communication plan to support the release of the Update, which will include media coverage Develop communication materials including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Summary Fact sheets FAQs Presentations Post Update, media release, and other communication materials on www.york.ca and Alliance website Present the Community Plan Update at a Community Services and Housing Committee meeting Hold a release event for the Update 	<p>Appropriate matter would be used for each of the following target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The homeless and at-risk populations Homeless agency sectors The homelessness agency sectors The mainstream agency sectors, including the United Way The private sector The public Elected officials York Region Funders Forum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform service providers how HPS funding will be distributed in the community, when and how much funding is available 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Email any RFP announcement via the York Alliance to End Homelessness email system, the Funders Alliance and the Human Services Planning Coalition Place RFP advertisements and/or announcements in Metroland newspapers and applicable websites, specifically, www.york.ca and www.bidnavigator.com Have fact sheets available at the Information Kiosk and the Community and Health Services Department reception desk Hold an information session on the RFP and its requirements 	<p>Homelessness agency sectors</p>

Appendix 1: Community Assets

Housing Facilities

AGENCY	NUMBER OF BEDS/UNITS	MUNICIPALITY**
Temporary Shelter Facilities		
Sandgate Women's Shelter	30 beds	Georgina
Yellow Brick House	21 beds	Aurora, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services (Includes Porter Place Men's Hostel, Leader Place Family Shelter, York Region Youth Shelter)	43 units, including 29 single adult men, 10 youth male, 4 family units	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, family units) Newmarket (youth)
Mosaic Interfaith (Out of the Cold)	30 beds (seasonal)	Thornhill
York Support Services Network (up to 3 day stays for stabilization for individuals experiencing mental health issues)	4 beds	Newmarket
Salvation Army, Sutton Youth Shelter	16 beds	Georgina
Inn from the Cold	30 beds (seasonal)	Newmarket
Transitional Housing		
Yellow Brick House Reta's Place - Second Stage Housing For Women and Children	8 units	Aurora, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan
Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	13 units	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitechurch-Stouffville
Sandgate Women's Shelter	4 units	Georgina
Salvation Army, Sutton Youth Shelter	10 units	Georgina
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services	18 units	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, family units) Newmarket (youth)
Long-term Supportive Housing		
Crosslinks Housing & Support Services	94 units	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill
Canadian Mental Health Association	30 beds Serve 343 clients in supportive housing	N/A
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	20 group homes with 354 beds (homes for special care)	Newmarket, Holland Landing, Keswick, Jackson's Point
Domiciliary Hostels	249	Throughout York Region
Homes for Special Care	423 (including CAMH above)	Throughout York Region
Affordable Housing		
Habitat For Humanity	2007- 2 homes Note: A total of 8 homes built since 2002 including 2007	N/A
Social Housing Units (excluding rent supplement)	2001 - 5,860 units 2006 - 5,978 units	Throughout York Region
Canada/Ontario Affordable Housing Program	128 units	N/A

*Municipality indicates the location of any of the housing or services of the agency, not necessarily the location of that particular housing facility

Support Facilities and Services

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Support Facilities

Mobile Services and Community Outreach

Crosslinks Housing and Support Services/OFT Community Services and York Region Public Health - Mobile Street Outreach Health Services Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
Canadian Mental Health Association - Youth Wellness Program	Aurora, Georgina, Markham, Newmarket	Salvation Army, Sutton Youth Shelter	Georgina
Kinark Child & Family Services	Aurora	Treasures and Circle of Warmth	Richmond Hill
York Support Services Network	Newmarket	TDSB Career Solutions	N/A
Krasman Centre	Richmond Hill	Women's Support Network of York Region	Newmarket
The Markham Stouffville Family Life Centre	Whitchurch-Stouffville	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
Teen Anger Management	Newmarket	Women's Centre of York Region	Aurora, Georgina, Markham, Richmond Hill
Yellow Brick House - Counselling & Legal Support Services, Transitional Support Program, Child Witness Program	King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan	Canadian Mental Health Association	Newmarket, N/A
Transitional & Supportive Housing Services of York Region: Outreach Program/Drop Zone	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, family units) Newmarket (youth)	Sandgate Women's Shelter	Georgina
Drop-in Centres/Day Programs			
Ontario Early Years-School Readiness Programs and other family and children programs	Newmarket	Youth Relief Partnership -- York Region Neighbourhood	Richmond Hill
Southlake Regional Health Centre	Newmarket	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina	Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region: Outreach Program/Drop Zone	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, family units) Newmarket (youth)

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Krasman Centre	Richmond Hill	St. Paul's Anglican Church	N/A
Newmarket Youth & Recreation Centre (NYRC)	Newmarket		
Help-lines			
Southlake Regional Health Centre	Newmarket	Kids Helpline	Toronto
Community Crisis Response Service 310-COPE	Newmarket	Parents Helpline	Toronto
Krasman Warm line – non crisis support line	Newmarket	YorkLink	N/A
Sandgate 24/7 Crisis Line	Georgina	York Region Health Services- Sexual Health Hotline	N/A
Yellow Brick House Crisis Line	King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan	Catholic Community Services of York Region	Richmond Hill
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)	Women's Support Network of York Region	Newmarket
Crosslinks Housing and Support Services/OFT Community Services and York Region Public Health	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill		
Core Services			
Meal Programs			
Out of the Cold Program	Thornhill	The Gathering Place - Cornerstone Pentecostal Church	Markham
Richmond Hill United Church	Richmond Hill	Lunch with Grace	Markham
Aurora United Church	Aurora	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers, ABC All Babies Count	Newmarket
Newmarket Youth Centre - Stone Soup Supper Club	Newmarket	Transit Georgina	Georgina
Crossland Community Dinner (Soup Kitchen)	Newmarket	York Region Transit	Throughout York Region
Kinsmen Club	Newmarket	Krasman Centre	Richmond Hill
LAMP - Trinity United Church	Newmarket	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
Community Bread - St. John Chrysostom Church	Newmarket	York Region Food Network	N/A
St. Mary's Anglican Church	Richmond Hill	The Salvation Army, Georgina Family Services	Georgina

AGENCY	MUNICIPALITY*	AGENCY	MUNICIPALITY*
Clothing/Furniture Banks			
Crosslinks Housing & Support/OFT Community Services and York Region Public Health Outreach Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Women's Centre of York Region	Aurora, Georgina, Markham, Richmond Hill
Yellow Brick House	King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan	Unionville Alliance Church	Whitchurch-Stouffville
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)	The Helping Hand (Trinity United Church)	Aurora
Newmarket Youth & Recreation Centre (NYRC) Youth ages 12-24	Newmarket	Treasures and Circle of Warmth	Richmond Hill
Coats for Kids	N/A	Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold	Thornhill
Newmarket Clothing Centre	Newmarket	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
Salvation Army Family Services - Resource Centre	Markham	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
Sandgate Women's Shelter	Georgina		
Food Banks and Food Support			
Aurora Food Pantry	Aurora	Salvation Army Family Services - Resource Centre	Markham
Georgina Community Food Pantry	Georgina	Women's Centre of York Region	Aurora
Markham Community Foodbank	Markham	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
Newmarket Food Pantry	Newmarket	School Nutrition Programs - York Region Food for Learning	N/A
Richmond Hill Community Foodbank	Richmond Hill	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
Whitchurch-Stouffville Foodbank	Whitchurch-Stouffville	Gleaning - Fresh Food Partners Program	Newmarket
Vaughan Food Bank	Vaughan	Welcome Table (community dinner program)	Aurora
Unionville Alliance Church	Whitchurch-Stouffville	Welcoming Arms (coalition of churches in Aurora, joined together to provide cohesive poverty relief services in Aurora)	Aurora

AGENCY	MUNICIPALITY*	AGENCY	MUNICIPALITY*
Bread of Life Food Bank - Cedarview Community Church	Newmarket	Crossland Community Dinner (Soup Kitchen)	Newmarket
Community Gardens - York Region Food Network Community Gardens	N/A	Women's Centre of York Region	Aurora
Newmarket Youth and Recreation Centre - Food Room Program	Newmarket	AIDS Committee of York Region	N/A
Crosslinks Housing & Support/LOFT Community Services	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Georgina Mobility Transit Inc. (Transit Georgina)	Georgina
York Region Public Health Outreach Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)
St. John's/Community Bread/St. Vincent de Paul	Newmarket		
Assistance Services			
Financial Support			
Salvation Army Newmarket - Homelessness Prevention Program	Newmarket	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
Salvation Army Newmarket - Rent Bank	Newmarket	Richmond Hill United Church	Richmond Hill
Salvation Army Newmarket - Energy Fund	Newmarket	The Salvation Army, Georgina - Family Services (Rent and Heat assistance)	Georgina
Canadian Mental Health Association with Newmarket Youth Centre (ID clinic)	Newmarket	Unionville Alliance Church (Rent Assistance)	Whitchurch-Stouffville
Share The Warmth	N/A	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
Eviction/Legal Services and Support			
Yellow Brick House	King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan	Community Legal Clinic of York Region	Richmond Hill, Newmarket
Canadian Mental Health Association	N/A	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
Southlake Regional Health Centre- Eviction/Legal Services	Newmarket		
Access to Housing & Services			
Housing Help Centre	Richmond Hill	Catholic Community Services	Richmond Hill
Pathways, Home Base Drop-in Centre	Richmond Hill	Southlake Regional Health Centre	Newmarket
Crosslinks Housing & Support/LOFT Community Services	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Salvation Army, Sutton Youth Shelter	Georgina
York Region Public Health Outreach Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	The Salvation Army, Georgina Family Services	Georgina

AGENCY	MUNICIPALITY*	AGENCY	MUNICIPALITY*
Canadian Mental Health Association	N/A	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
York Support Services Network (YSSN)	Newmarket	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket
York Region Co-ordinated Access	N/A	Women's Centre of York Region	Aurora
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)		
Life Skills Services			
Family Life Education Group Programs	Newmarket	York Region Food Network	N/A
York Support Services Network (YSSN)	Newmarket	Markham Stouffville Hospital	Whitchurch-Stouffville
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region: Outreach Program	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)	Ontario Early Years – Parenting Skills Program	Newmarket
Canadian Mental Health Association	N/A	Ontario Early Years – Literacy Workshops	Newmarket
Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina	Southlake Regional Health Centre	Newmarket
Krasman Centre	Richmond Hill	Salvation Army, Sutton Youth Shelter	Georgina
Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers	Newmarket	Women's Support Network of York Region	Newmarket
Crosslinks Housing & Support Services	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Women's Centre of York Region	Aurora, Georgina, Markham, Richmond Hill
Employment Development Services			
The Career Foundation	Richmond Hill	Neighbourhood Employment Resource Centre	Newmarket
Centre for Information and Community Services	Markham	Newmarket Youth & Recreation Centre (NYRC) Youth ages 12-24	Newmarket
COST-I-IAS Concord	Vaughan	HRDC Employment Assistance Service - Youth Employment Access Help Program (EAS)	N/A
COST-I-IAS Markham Employment Resource Centre	Markham	HRDC Youth Outreach North/South at Region	N/A
COST-I-IAS Richmond Hill	Richmond Hill	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina

AGENCY		MUNICIPALITY*		AGENCY		MUNICIPALITY*	
Job Skills	Newmarket		Richmond Hill	Treasures and Circle of Warmth			
TDSB Career Solutions	Newmarket		East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)	Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region			
Health and Treatment Services Community Mental Health Agencies							
Canadian Mental Health Association	Aurora, Markham, Georgina		Whitchurch-Stouffville	Markham Stouffville Hospital			
York Support Services Network	Newmarket		Thornhill, Aurora	Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold			
Newmarket Youth & Recreation Centre (NYRC) Youth ages 12-24	Newmarket		Newmarket	Southlake Regional Health Centre			
Family Life Centres	Newmarket		Richmond Hill	York Central Hospital, Child and Family Services			
Crosslinks Housing & Support/LOFT Community Services	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill		Newmarket	TDSB Career Solutions			
York Region Public Health Outreach Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill		Newmarket	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers			
Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)		Richmond Hill	Krasman Centre			
Pathways for Children, Youth and Families	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina						
Addiction Treatment Services							
Addiction Services for York Region	Aurora, Georgina, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill		Newmarket	Newmarket Ontario Addictions Treatment Centre (NOATC)			
York Region Health Services - Crosslinks Housing & Support/LOFT Community Services Needle Exchange Sites	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill		Vaughan	Vianova Foundation			
York Region Public Health Outreach Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill		East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)	Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region			
Health and Treatment Services							
Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold	Thornhill		N/A	Canadian Mental Health Association			
Southlake Regional Health Centre	Newmarket		Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Crosslinks Housing & Support/LOFT Community Services			
York Central Hospital, Child and Family Services	Richmond Hill		Newmarket	Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers			
The Salvation Army, Georgina Family Services	Georgina		East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)	Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region			
Women's Support Network of York Region	Newmarket						

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Homelessness Prevention Services

LOFT Community Services Crosslinks Housing & Support Services	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Southlake Regional Health Centre	Newmarket
Habitat For Humanity	2007- 2 homes Note: A total of 8 homes built since 2002 including 2007	Salvation Army, Sutton Youth Shelter	Georgina
Crosslinks/York Region Public Health Outreach Van	Georgina, Newmarket, Richmond Hill	Pathways For Children, Youth & Families of York Region	Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Whichurch-Stouffville, Aurora, Georgina
Public Health Harm Reduction Program	N/A	Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region	East Gwillimbury (single adult men, families) Newmarket (youth)
Newmarket Youth & Recreation Centre (NVRRC) Youth ages 12-24	Newmarket	Canadian Mental Health Association	N/A
Richmond Hill United Church	Richmond Hill		

Skills/Research/Communication Networks

York Region Alliance to End Homelessness	N/A	Newmarket Youth Task Force	Newmarket
Welcoming Arms	Aurora	LGBT Advisory Group	N/A
York Region Violence Against Women Committee	N/A	York Region Harm Reduction Coalition	N/A
Street Kids International/Streejibe – linking youth poverty solutions (Year 1 of 3 year project)	Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Markham		

Appendix 2: Accomplishments

The following is a summary of many of the community's accomplishments in addressing its priorities. The accomplishments provided below are by no means a complete summary of all accomplishments. Most are project-based initiatives mainly funded through SCPI (Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative) and CDIF (Community Development Investment Funding).

The creation of some permanent affordable housing

- 128 of the affordable rental units have been completed through the early phases of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing (as of March 2007).
- Habitat for Humanity York Region has built eight new homes since 2002.

An increase in supports and services for homeless people and families, and for those who are at risk of becoming homeless

- There has been an increase in the core services provided to homeless and at-risk individuals and families:
 - A room was created where donations of clothing, food and baby supplies and equipment can be stored, and a community kitchen has been created as part of a drop-in centre for young mothers at Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers.
 - A Community Teaching Kitchen was put in place that teaches at-risk individuals new skills and knowledge in cooking, budgeting and nutrition (Trinity United Church).
 - A project by the York Region Food Network promoted diversity among community gardeners and expanded the backyard gardening program and the back to school backpack program.
 - A project of the Women's Centre of York Region developed the sustainability of existing poverty relief supports offered to low-income women and their families in York Region.
 - The Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers has been able to help young mothers secure housing and provide supports such as food, clothing and baby supplies.
- Several support service projects were undertaken such as outreach, drop-in centres, and help-lines:
 - Loft/Crosslinks Community Services/York Region Community and Health Services Department, Public Health Branch was able to provide mobile outreach including support, crisis intervention and therapeutic counselling, basic necessities (such as food, blankets and clothing) and access to information and referral to other community services to homeless individuals in York Region.

**An increase in supports and services for homeless people and families, and for those who are at risk of becoming homeless
(continued)**

- Pathways Home Base was able to operate a drop-in centre for youth, where homeless and at-risk youth received hot meals, counselling, employment skills training and assistance to reconnect with their families and society.
- A number of assistance services were established:
 - York Region hired a Social Assistance Case Co-ordinator who supports individuals that are being discharged from shelters or are at risk of loosing their housing, and assists these people in their successful integration to, and attainment of housing, employment and schooling.
 - A project operated by Transit Georgina Association/Georgina Mobility Transit provided emergency funding for one year to support transportation services for low income residents of Georgina. It enabled them to access services such as the Ontario Works office, Children's Aid Society, food banks, medical appointments and others.
 - Various community service agencies in York Region were able to provide emergency winter clothing and services to homeless people through the Region's Winter Needs program.
- One project was undertaken that aimed at improved access to services:
 - An Aboriginal Resource Committee, "Nin-os-kom-tin", was established which acts to link non-reserve aboriginals to resources, services and supports in York Region.

An increase in the number of shelter beds

- An emergency shelter for youth was established, providing 16 new shelter beds (Sutton Multi-Service Centre for Youth).
- Thirty new temporary shelter beds during winter months were created (Inn from the Cold).
- York Support Services Network began providing four short-term housing beds in 2005 for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as part of a mental health crisis response.
- A study that developed and presented options for the construction and operation of an affordable housing and emergency shelter for homeless youth (Pathways for Children, Youth, and Families).

An improvement in the community's understanding of the needs of homeless people

- One such project is the installation of HIFIS in four emergency shelters, and the installation of SDMT (Service Delivery Model Technology) in the shelters and in two transitional homes.

An increase in services to persons with mental health issues

- A toll-free number was established for the Warm Line (The Krasman Centre) to assist persons with mental health and other crisis to access supports and services.
- York Support Services Network began providing four short-term housing beds in 2005 for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as part of a mental health crisis response.
- The Canadian Mental Health Association York Region provides a variety of services to persons with mental health issues, and has greatly expanded its capacity during this Phase:
 - In 2003, CMHA provided mobile services and community outreach to 334 clients, while in 2006, 411 clients received mobile and community outreach services.
 - CMHA increased its number of supportive housing beds to approximately 30 beds, up from five beds in 2003 (two townhouses in Mullock village and 24 beds in Bradford and Alliston (outside York Region)).

The creation of additional facilities for women victims of domestic violence

- A four unit second stage project for women victims of violence was established in 2004 (Sandgate).

The establishment of a number of additional services for youth

- Pre-construction activities were undertaken that are anticipated to lead to the construction of an eight bed transitional housing project and a 16 bed emergency shelter for youth, as well as a permanent home for Home Base, Pathways' youth drop in facility. Progress has been made, and they are currently in the process of finding a suitable site for the drop in facility.
- The Rose of Sharon Services for Young Mothers has created a room where donations of clothing, food and baby supplies and equipment can be stored. They have also created a community kitchen facility that is equipped and designed for group food preparation. The area is used by prenatal teens and young mothers with their children to increase their food security, and by other service providers in York Region.
- The York Region Youth Shelter (Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region) has enhanced its programming and activities on Wednesdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for clients of the shelter.
- The Region has developed a community youth program serving homeless or at-risk youth in ethnically diverse communities in southern York Region. The program emphasizes community capacity building by connecting at-risk and homeless youth to community services and programs including the Housing York Inc. social worker, youth shelters, and housing and mental health workers. Youth outreach programs and activities were initiated as a means of contact with the youth.
- A van was purchased to provide transportation to youth residing at the Sutton Multi-Service Centre for Youth.
- Yellow Brick House has undertaken a research project on the factors that put youth at risk of poverty, homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse and violence.

An increase in health services for homeless people and those who are at risk of becoming homeless

- Yellow Brick House has engaged youth in the research and process of changing societal perceptions and understandings that marginalize youth.
- The Canadian Mental Health Association of York Region initiate an identification clinic for homeless and at-risk individuals. One of the main pieces of ID secured is the Ontario Health Card. The project also provides referrals to other support services, allowing clients to receive appropriate medical, financial and housing services.
- Nursing services have increased at the Out of the Cold program and the Krasman Centre.
- Services provided by York Region Public Health to the shelters have increased.

An increase in public awareness and education

- The York Region Food Network built a comprehensive communications plan.
 - The York Region Alliance to End Homelessness facilitated public education activities about homelessness and social isolation:
 - The York Region Alliance to End Homelessness' public education activities included eight articles in local newspapers and three television appearances.
 - The Alliance was involved in 14 presentations, education events, and community dialogues, attended by approximately 500 people. Approximately 450 public education materials were circulated across York Region, 270 to churches, 30 to newly elected municipal politicians, and some to other community organizations.
- There have been five research technical reports produced in the community during the past few years.

Some progress in mitigating the impacts of poverty

- One project that has mitigated the impacts of poverty is the Winter Needs program, which provides small amounts of funding to agencies that purchase items such as winter clothing and supplies and distribute to their clients. In 2005/2006, \$99,599 was allocated to the Winter Needs program, and in 2006/2007, \$240,000 was allocated.
- A number of financial assistance services have been created or maintained for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. Since 2001, York Region has provided funding to the Salvation Army in Newmarket to operate the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP). The Homelessness Prevention Program provides one-time assistance to people who are at risk of losing their home and to people who are homeless or residing in a temporary shelter. In addition to rental arrears and emergency energy costs, a household can apply to HPP for other types of financial assistance such as first and last month's rent or emergency medical expenses. In 2006, 158 households were provided with assistance, 135 were assisted in 2005, and 236 households were assisted in 2004.
- Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients can also access financial supports for extraordinary expenses such as rent arrears, over and above their basic needs, through the provision of discretionary benefits.

**Some progress
in mitigating the
impacts of poverty
(continued)**

- The Provincial Rent Bank Program, which began in 2004, provides financial assistance to low-income people who have short-term rent arrears. In 2004, York Region received funding of \$639,133 from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. This was topped up by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) in 2006, with an additional allocation of \$237,434. In 2005 and 2006, 125 and 99 households, respectively, were assisted through the Rent Bank Program.
- The emergency energy fund, part of the HPP program, is also administered by the Salvation Army in Newmarket, assists households with emergency energy arrears funding. In 2006, 84 households were assisted, 66 were assisted in 2005, and 48 were assisted in 2004.
- Minimum wages and Ontario Works income supports were increased during this Phase, primarily as a result of advocacy to the province by municipalities, community-based organizations and others.

Appendix 3: Endnotes and Sources Cited

- i. Source: Statistics Canada, 1996, 2006 Census
- ii. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- iii. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- iv. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- v. Source: Preventing Homelessness in York Region, 2003
- vi. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- vii. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- viii. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- ix. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- x. Source: York Region, Community Services and Housing Department, Housing Branch
- xi. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census and An Economic Profile of York Region, 2007
- xii. Source: York Region, Community Services and Housing Department, Housing Branch
- xiii. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- xiv. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- xv. Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- xvi. Source: Preventing Homelessness in York Region, 2003
- xvii. Calculated based on information from the Statistics Canada, 2001 Census
- xviii. Source: York Region Food Network, Report on Hunger Survey, 2007
- xix. Source: York Region Food Network, Report on Hunger Survey, 2007
- xx. Source: <http://www.homelesspages.org.uk>
- xxi. Source: Ontario Medical Review, May 1996
- xxii. Source: Ontario Medical Review, May 1996
Source: <http://www.homelesspages.org.uk>
- xxiii. Source: Addressing the Health Needs of Rough Sleepers, Griffiths, Sian, December 2002
- xxiv. Source: Ontario Medical Review, May 1996
- xxv. Source: Ontario Medical Review, May 1996
- xxvi. Source: Anybody's Couch, 2006
- xxvii. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxviii. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxix. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxx. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxxi. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxxii. Source: Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007
- xxxiii. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxxiv. Source: Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007
- xxxv. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xxxvi. Source: Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007
- xxxvii. Source: York Region, Community Services and Housing Department, Housing Branch
- xxxviii. Source: York Region, Community Services and Housing Department, Housing Branch
- xxxix. Source: Hidden from Sight, April 2007
- xl. Includes only those who responded to the Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007
- xli. Includes those who responded to the Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007 as well as NOATC Newmarket Ontario Addictions Treatment Centre and Vianova Foundation
- xlii. Source: Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007
- xliiii. Source: Survey of Agencies Serving the Homeless and At-Risk Populations, 2007

