

Service System Manager Responsibilities

Public Health & Social Services Committee
COM 10-2021 and COM 11-2021

May 11, 2021

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Service System Manager Responsibilities

- Provincially mandated to plan and administer the homeless system in Niagara.
- Niagara also acts as the Community Entity for planning and delivery of homeless systems under the Federal funding agreement.
- Niagara currently is receiving additional funding from both the Provincial and Federal Governments to support the response and demands of COVID.

A Built for Zero Community

- Accepted as a Built for Zero Community in 2019.
- Goal is to work toward ending chronic homelessness.
- In 2020 achieved a Quality By Name List.
- Next steps is Coordinated Access; requires standardizing a process for intake, assessment, referral and prioritization of services for homeless clients.

COVID-19 Response

- Communication and support with homeless serving agencies.
- March 2020 established an Isolation Facility – 355 intakes to Dec 31, with 56 moving to permanent housing.
- Expand shelter system, outreach services, shelter diversion, emergency assistance fund and housing stability program to low income.
- Pilot a housing focused shelter for high needs chronic homeless - 48 intakes, with 50% exiting to permanent housing.
- Vaccine clinics for clients held at the shelters.

Niagara's Assertive Street Outreach

- Centralized intake for all residents and clients to access outreach services via 211.
- Services available 7 days a week, response times during services hours generally under one hour.
- Encampment mapping tool developed.
- COVID screening and isolation support for those living rough.

Shelter Diversion Pilot Expansion

- Through the NRFP process, awarded youth diversion pilot to the RAFT.
- Early promising results, expanded to include one adult shelter and an additional youth shelter mid year.
- 2020 Results: Youth - 30% of all youth presenting at shelter diverted, Adults - 9% of all presenting at pilot shelter diverted.

Housing-Focused Shelter Pilot

- Launched June 2020, currently a 30 bed capacity.
- On average clients selected had 318 days of homeless in the past year and 639 in the past three years.
- Clients are selected from the by name list, priority population is youth, seniors and those with the longest experiences of homelessness.
- Operating as an incubator for policy development and system learnings in preparation for Bridge Housing project.

Niagara's Affordable Housing Need

- 2,136 individuals accessed shelter in 2020. Main clients profiles were 30.6% single men, 17% single women, 11.6 % seniors (55+), youth 10.6% and Indigenous 9.2%.
- Core housing need in Niagara: 23,830 households (12.8%), of which 20,002 (84%) were single person households and 3,254 (14%) were lone parent households.
- St. Catharines was trending upward in October 2020 with one bedroom prices of \$1,300 and two bedroom prices of \$1,500 per month. Ranked by Padmapper as 12th most expensive rental market in Canada.

Affordable Housing Development

- 8 Home for Good Supportive Units (Gateway Residential, Port Colborne)
- 30 net new units (Stamford Kiwanis, Niagara Falls)
- Remediation of 3 units, St. Catharines
- 6 net new units, Thorold
- 20 Bridge Housing Units/Recuperative Units, Niagara Falls (Occupancy 2021)
- 73 NRH owned units, including 10 Housing first, Niagara Falls (Occupancy 2022)
- 15 Home for Good Units (YWCA, St. Catharines, Occupancy 2021)

Bridge Housing Project

- Project will include both bridge housing units and recuperative beds.
- Project is in partnership with REACH Niagara.
- Facility will be staffed 24/7.
- Clients will be selected using the by name list.
- Support Niagara's most vulnerable on a transition to permanent living.
- Supports will include case management, mental health and addictions supports and referrals, primary health care, skills development for more independent living (example: teaching kitchen).