



The Corporation of the City of Stratford
Finance and Labour Relations Committee
Open Session
AGENDA

Date: Monday, July 14, 2025

Time: 7:05 P.M.

Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Committee Present: Councillor Hunter - Chair Presiding, Councillor McCabe - Vice Chair, Mayor Ritsma, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Briscoe, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Sebben, Councillor Wordofa

Staff Present: Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Adam Betteridge - Interim Chief Administrative Officer, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services and Interim Director of Human Resources, Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure Services, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Victoria Trotter - Council Committee Coordinator

To watch the Committee meeting live, please click the following link:

<https://video.isilive.ca/stratford/live.html>

A video recording of the meeting will also be available through a link on the City's website

<https://calendar.stratford.ca/meetings> following the meeting.

Pages

1. Call to Order

The Chair to call the Meeting to Order.

Councillor Burbach has provided regrets for this meeting.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence

from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------|
| 3. | Sub-committee Minutes | 5 - 11 |
| | Sub-committee minutes are attached for background regarding the discussion held at the June 17, 2025 Sub-committee meeting. | |
| 4. | Delegations | |
| | None scheduled. | |
| 5. | Report of the Director of Corporate Services | |
| 5.1 | SEEDCo./investStratford Update to March 31 2025 (FIN25-018) | 12 - 86 |
| | <p>Staff Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.</p> <p>Motion by</p> <p>Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.</p> | |
| 5.2 | Festival Hydro Inc. and Festival Hydro Services Inc. 2024 Audited Financial Statements and Dividend Declaration (FIN25-019) | 87 - 101 |
| | <p>This item will also be considered at the July 14, 2025, Council reconvene meeting.</p> <p>Staff Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;</p> <p>THAT the Festival Hydro Services Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;</p> <p>AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.</p> <p>Motion by</p> <p>Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received</p> | |

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THAT the Festival Hydro Services Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

6. Report of the Director of Community Services

6.1 Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet (FIN25-015) 102 - 103

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received;

AND THAT direction be provided regarding the facility rental fee waiver request in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025.

Motion by

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received;

AND THAT the facility rental fee waiver request in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025 be approved.

7. Report of the Council Committee Coordinator

7.1 Communities in Bloom Request for Reallocation of 2025 Budget Funds (FIN25-022) 104 - 106

This item will also be considered at the July 14, 2025, Council reconvene meeting.

Motion by

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Committee provide direction on the request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee to reallocate \$5,000.00 from the Special Project budget line to the CiB Symposium Expenses line in the 2025 budget.

8. For the Information of Committee

8.1 Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

There are no Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes to be provided to Committee.

9. Adjournment

Meeting Start Time:

Meeting End Time:

Motion by

Committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting adjourn.



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee

MINUTES

Date: June 17, 2025
 Time: 4:30 P.M.
 Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Hunter - Chair Presiding, Councillor McCabe - Vice Chair, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Nijjar

Staff Present: Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary

Also present: Joani Gerber – Chief Executive Officer of investStratford, Rino Bortolin - Strategic Advisor, Centre for Cities, University of Windsor

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to Order.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Respectful Conduct Statement

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence

from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made by a Member at the June 17, 2025 Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting.

3. **Delegations**

None scheduled.

4. **Report of the Director of Corporate Services**

4.1 **SEEDCo./investStratford Update to March 31 2025 (FIN25-018)**

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

THAT the Housing Needs Assessment Summary Design provided by SEEDCo./investStratford dated June 2025 be received.

Carried

Sub-committee Discussion: Joani Gerber, Chief Executive Officer, SEEDCo./investStratford and Rino Bortolin, Strategic Advisor, Centre for Cities, University of Windsor, presented the report and summary. Highlights of the discussion included:

- the support of Rino Bortolin in the authorship of the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) having been requested;

Councillor Beatty and Councillor Burbach present at the meeting at 4:34 p.m.

- the HNA being important in decision making and a requirement for Federal and Provincial funding projects, programs and applications;

- regarding the investStratford update:
 - investStratford being within budget and doing well;
 - the Annual Members Meeting having been held the week of June 9, 2025;
 - the Summer Company Entrepreneurship Networking Event coming up; and
 - the Provincial and the Federal government having aligned in a commitment to infrastructure and defense with this being an opportunity in Stratford;
- the presentation of the HNA being a high level summary;
- figures for the average numbers of homeless households having increased since 2020 and levelled over the last two years;
- income levels to support housing indicating \$388 being affordable monthly rent for 3% of the population and \$969 being affordable for 20% of the population and highlighting the need for affordable housing options across the community;
- the sharpest increase in rents being in 1 and 2 bedroom units with a 45-50% increase from 2020 to 2023;
- rental properties seeing an increase similar to homes for sale and putting pressure on renters;
- there being 970 households with a core housing need with 760 being single people and the majority being male and 145 households being two people;
- approximately 905 of the 970 households experiencing core housing needs for single or two people and not larger families;
- the typology indicating roughly 60% of current housing stock being 3 bedroom or more with 41% 3 bedroom and 19% 4 bedroom;
- projections to 2031 indicating household by size to be 11,548 people or 66% and being one or two bedroom households;

- the typology of homes required to be added being important and not only the number of homes to be added to housing stock;
- by 2035 a third of the population to be 65 years or older with many currently living in 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes; and
- in the HNA the housing needs typology being the story.

Members of the Sub-committee and Rino Bortolin discussed the summary:

- the first step being delivery of choice with new units that are smaller, spread out and mixed into neighborhoods to allow seniors to integrate in the downtown;
- the type of mix could include 4, 6 and 8-plex's embedded in neighborhoods with quality units;
- it was noted 200 new single units could accommodate seniors currently living in 2 and 3 bedroom homes and with the average family size in Stratford being 2.3 those homes to then accommodate 460 people;
- a combination of short-term rental or employment housing being accommodated by these units and natural market forces to fill the homes quickly;
- Stratford being attractive to people wanting to move here and also a need within the community as people age, downsize or young adults move out and this not being possible with rental increases;
- the immediate need being affordable rents under \$1,000 per month noting affordable housing being 30% of take home pay;
- current market rents for a bachelor being \$1,300 with take home required to be \$4,000 per month and in the medium or moderate income scale; and
- with the build of more units the market to cool and correct itself and expectation that existing units on the market to come down in value.

4.2 Festival Hydro Inc. and Festival Hydro Services Inc. 2024 Audited Financial Statements and Dividend Declaration (FIN25-019)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

THAT the Festival Hydro Services Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

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AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

Carried

5. Report of the Director of Community Services

5.1 Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet (FIN25-015)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received;

AND THAT direction be provided regarding the facility rental fee waiver request in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025.

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Burbach

THAT the facility rental fee waiver request from To Stratford With Love Banquet in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025 be approved.

Carried

6. Report of the Council Committee Coordinator

6.1 Take-out Container Levy (FIN25-017)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee provide direction on the request from the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee to research a take-out container levy program.

Sub-committee Discussion: A member noted the take-out container levy was discussed by the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee which is progressive and interesting. Support was expressed for having the Committee undertake the required research.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee are directed to undertake research to determine if an Ontario municipality has adopted a take-out container levy and what the programs include and report back to the Council Committee Coordinator.

Carried

7. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

No Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes were provided to Sub-committee.

8. Next Sub-committee Meeting

The next Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting is July 22, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 4:49 P.M.



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 17, 2025
To: Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee
From: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Report Number: FIN25-018
Attachments: 1) SEEDCo. Update to March 31 2025
 2) Housing Needs Assessment, March 2025

Title: SEEDCo./investStratford Update to March 31 2025

Objective: To receive an update on SEEDCo.'s activities for the period March 31 2025.

Background: SEEDCo. gives regular updates to Council through the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee.

Analysis: Joanie Gerber from SEEDCo. has been invited to attend to present the attached update. Kendra Fry, Housing Specialist with investStratford, will also be present to provide an executive summary of the Housing Needs Assessment for Stratford.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

SEEDCo. receives financial contributions from the City as approved through the annual budget process. The 2025 contribution is \$650,069 for general operations, \$132,439 for Small Business Enterprise Centre, plus an additional amount to fund the hiring of Grand Trunk Project Coordinator and Specialists totalling \$200,000, funded from reserve.

Beyond this, there are no additional direct financial implications to the City's operating budget for current or future years.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Enhance our Infrastructure

This report and the activities of SEEDCo./investStratford align with the City's strategic priorities by focusing on infrastructure, housing, economic development and cooperation with various organizations within the community and beyond.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Equity and Local Economy

This report and the activities of SEEDCo./investStratford align with creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation (SEEDCo./investStratford) Update to March 31, 2025, be received for information.

Prepared by:	Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Recommended by:	Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

May 30, 2025

Title: Report to Finance & Labour Relations Sub-Committee

Councillor Hunter, Chair & Sub-Committee Members

CC: Karmen Krueger, Director of Corporate Services & Adam Betteridge, Interim CAO

Activities of the Stratford Economic Enterprise Development Corporation

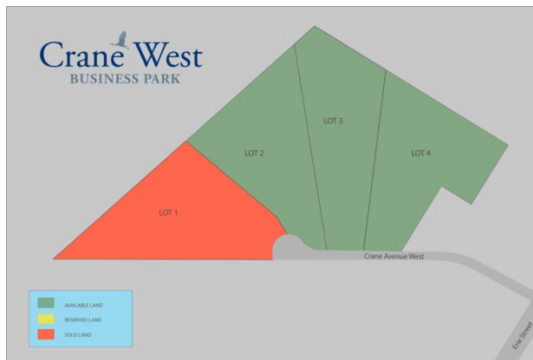
Aligning to the strategic priority of Council, **Widening our Economic Opportunities**, the following projects and activities are ongoing and underway.

Key Metrics (April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025):

- Staff worked with 119 ongoing investment opportunities for both City-owned and privately held industrial and commercial properties and responded to 53 inquiries.
- Staff are working with 10 existing companies supporting their retention and expansion plans.
- The Small Business Centre held 190+ consultations including 37 businesses started and 50 businesses expanded.
- 143 Jobs were created by businesses supported by the Small Business Centre.
- The Starter Company Plus program had an 18-participant cohort this winter, helping 18 new businesses to prepare to launch or expand.
- In the fall of 2024, the SBEC began a partnership with the Stratford Public Library to offer some of our online workshops for free with a library card.
- In January, the SBEC launched a new podcast called Evolving Entrepreneurship featuring local entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- investStratford partnered with the Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce to present 2 Women in Leadership events with over 150 attendees.
- Staff participated in many Workforce Development activities (e.g., Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Employment Service System Manager (SMM) and Attainable Market Housing Project).
- With our SOMA Partners, Stratford participated and/or was represented at more than 10 international lead generation events and trade shows, providing more than 200 leads in sectors including automotive manufacturing, food processing, agri-tech and mobility.

City-Owned Industrial Land Activity (April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025):

- All lots in the Wright Business Park are sold, apart from one 4.7-acre parcel for future development and a 12-acre parcel sale set to close in August 2025.
- One of the four lots in the Crane West Business Park are sold and the remaining three 5.5. acre lots are available for sale. There continues to be on-going interest in City-owned industrial lots for new investments and local company expansions.



Attainable Market Housing Project April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025:

- The Housing Consortium at investStratford made significant progress in advancing affordable housing through strategic initiatives in culture change, policy development, project execution, and funding acquisition.
- In collaboration with the City's Planning and Corporate Services departments, the Housing Consortium advanced a Community Improvement Plan, securing \$150,000 in budget allocations for the current fiscal year. This work was complemented by a Housing Needs Assessment, conducted in partnership with the Centre for Cities at the University of Windsor, which provides a data-driven foundation for future planning.
- In partnership with the Stratford Public Library, the Provocations Ideas Festival, CBC Ideas, and other local stakeholders, the Consortium facilitated three major public engagement events.
 - The Fall Housing Symposium convened provincial experts to discuss policy tools and strategies to accelerate affordable housing development.
 - A CBC Ideas/ Provocations Festival event in collaboration with investStratford, Shaping Tomorrow's Cities, explored urban innovation and community design.
 - A third event, co-hosted with the Library, focused on local planning challenges and opportunities. All three events reached full capacity, underscoring the community's engagement and appetite for constructive dialogue on housing issues.

Budget Variance Analysis (Jan 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025) Attached.

- Note 1 – first installment of Provincial Funding not yet received, City contributions to be posted
- Note 2 – all housing, lead generation and special project consultants
- Note 3 – majority of all annual memberships are paid in January (first quarter).
- Note 4 – all SBEC related expenses are reported on a fiscal year end (April-March).

Looking Ahead to Q1 (April-June 2025)

- The Summer Company program, grant-support and educational programming for student entrepreneurs, will run from May through August. Staff will work with 10 students to help launch their own businesses and explore entrepreneurship.
- Planning season 2 of the Evolving Entrepreneurship podcast.
- Staff continue to support current and planned expansions for existing companies and respond to on-going investment inquiries. Available lots in the Crane West Business Park will also be included on the Invest Ontario portal.
- investStratford is working with our local companies and partners at the Provincial and Federal governments to plan for the impacts of U.S. Tariffs and a potential trade war. A Task Force comprised of key stakeholders and business leaders has been formed to keep the lines of communication open and disseminate information as it becomes available.
- As part of the Southwestern Ontario Marketing Alliance, investStratford will also continue its efforts to lead foreign direct investment (FDI) missions to not only nurture our relationships with our Japanese and German companies, but also to explore and open new markets and opportunities. This is in addition to implementing strategies to support our many home-grown and Canadian-based businesses here in Stratford, such as new domestic and inter-provincial markets.
- Progress was achieved on several key housing projects, including: 246 Railway Avenue, two-bedroom affordable unit has completed the RFP and proponent selection phase. Construction is on schedule for completion in October 2025; 161 East Gore; and 38 Coriano: The RFEOI process is at the selection stage, with development expected to begin in early 2026 and completion anticipated by summer 2027. These initiatives reflect a collaborative effort across municipal departments including Planning, Building, Engineering, and Social Services.
- The Consortium successfully obtained Last Mile Funding to support the demolition of 398 Erie Street, enabling the future development of a supportive housing project. In addition, funding proposals to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) are ongoing to further leverage investment in new housing projects.

Respectfully Submitted,



Joani Gerber
CEO, investStratford
jgerber@investstratford.com

Attachments: 2025 budget to actual variance report; Housing Needs Assessment, 2025

2025 Budget to Actual for SEED Co.**OPERATIONS**

as of March 31, 2025

	Budget	(unadjusted)	
	2025	Year to Date	
	2025	2025	
REVENUE			
City of Stratford - InvestStratford	610,069	-	1
City of Stratford - SBEC	132,439	-	
City of Stratford - Housing Special Project	40,000	-	
City of Stratford - Grand Trunk Project	200,000	-	
Province Funding- SBEC	264,506	-	
Recoverable Expenses and Charges	8,250	326	
Events and User Fees			
	\$ 1,255,264	\$ 326	
EXPENSES			
Salaries, Benefits and Contract Labour	829,623	152,522	
Training and Professional Development	7,500	1,344	
Insurance and Custodial	6,400	-	
Equipment, Capital and Software	5,000	1,809	
Support Services and Fees	30,000	11,803	
Office Supplies and Operations	59,902	6,042	
Consultants and Mentorship	65,000	47,535	2
Legal and Audit	5,000	-	
Meals and Meetings	7,553	625	
Contingency/Reserve Transfer	10,000	-	
Conferences, Trade Shows, Travel and Mileage	50,000	35,331	
Promotion, Marketing, and Materials	30,000	11,803	
Memberships	40,000	34,815	3
Rent and common area maintenance	22,286	1,912	4
Events	10,000	-	
Grants	109,000	4,500	
	\$ 1,287,264	\$ 310,041	
Projected Ending Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (32,000)	\$ (309,715)	
Contribution from SEEDCo. Reserve/Carryforward	32,000	32,000	
	\$ -	\$ (277,715)	

Projected Ending Surplus (Deficit) from all Sources

1 Contract Year End, March 31, 2026 payment deposit not yet received; City payments to be posted

2 All housing, lead generation and special projects

3 Majority of annual memberships paid in quarter 1

4 All SBEC related expenses recorded on fiscal, March 31 year end

NB: City operations are a calendar year end, December 31, 2025, SBEC operations are reported on a March 31, 2026 fiscal

Housing Needs Assessment

Stratford, Ontario

March 2025

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Executive Summary

Key Takeaways

Stratford, Ontario is a small city experiencing a population shift marked by increasing numbers of one family households and steady population growth. These factors are further exacerbated by the lack of suitable available land for residential builds and an aging population seeking smaller and more accessible units of housing. Despite ongoing economic growth, a mismatch between available housing stock and community needs has created barriers to homeownership and rental accessibility that is impacting our ability to attract and retain talent to our employment sectors. Furthermore, the lack of suitable housing stock has resulted in a significant increase in housing prices as well as rental rates creating further divides between what the population can afford and what is available on the open housing market.

Trends to Watch

- **Rising Home Prices & Rental Costs:** Home prices have increased over five times the rate of income growth since 2016, making homeownership less attainable. Rental costs have also risen, substantially outpacing income growth.
- **Population Growth & Demographic Shift:** Stratford's population is aging, with an increasing proportion of seniors and smaller households, yet much of the housing stock remains larger single-family homes. 60% of Stratford's housing stock has more than 3 bedrooms, while only 40% of our households are made up of 3 or more people.
- **Demand for Smaller, Affordable Units:** There is an increasing need for one and two-bedroom units to accommodate seniors, young professionals, and low-income residents. Population growth over the next ten years is projected to be 2.7 times more one person households than family units of two or more.
- **Manufacturing, Education & Tourism Growth:** Employment sectors are expanding, resulting in workers struggling to find affordable housing within city limits while the expanded University and College student bodies have increased our student populations quite suddenly. The seasonality of the Stratford Festival Theatres' season creates additional demand pressures through the late spring, summer and fall each year.

Assessed Needs

- **Affordable Housing Deficit:** There is a significant shortfall in affordable rental and ownership options, particularly for low and very low-income residents.
- **Housing for Priority Populations:** Seniors, young adults and single parents face the highest housing need.
- **Increased Demand for Rental Housing:** Stratford has a low vacancy rate, leading to heightened rental competition and affordability concerns.

- **High Acuity Male Homelessness-** the number of homeless male individuals who require fully supportive housing has increased, while the services and housing that they need has not.

Future Actions

1. **Incentivize Affordable Housing Development:** Support policies that encourage the construction of smaller, affordable rental and ownership units.
2. **Promote Infill & Density Increases:** Streamline zoning processes and adapt zoning regulations to allow for more multi-unit housing and secondary suites.
3. **Expand Non-Market Housing Options:** Invest in supportive housing solutions to reduce homelessness and provide stable options for vulnerable populations. Work with not-for-profits and higher-level government to expand non-market housing options in the city.
4. **Encourage Employer & Institutional Collaboration:** Work with local businesses and post-secondary institutions to create workforce and student housing solutions.
5. **Monitor Housing Market Trends & Policy Impact:** Use data-driven approaches to ensure housing initiatives align with the evolving needs of Stratford's residents.

By taking proactive steps, Stratford can build a more inclusive and affordable housing market that meets the needs of all residents.

Introduction/Overview

This report provides an analysis of the current market situation as well as projections of future population housing needs for the City of Stratford. By combining existing reports, HART data, Townfolio data, surveys and interviews we have created a snapshot of the community's needs.

Utilizing the cohort-component method to estimate future populations and the household projections methodology via headship rates, we can project future population demographics. Housing demand is projected based on household tenure, dwelling type, and affordability considerations. We have also taken into consideration density targets, development patterns, and gaps in tenure once certain outcomes are achieved.

1.0 Methodology

The following section outlines the methodology used to collect data and complete this Housing Needs Assessment.

1.1 Overview of Methodology and Assumptions

The following Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) prepared for the City of Stratford was completed under the template framework provided by the Housing Infrastructure and Community Canada (HICC) secretariat via the Director of Corporate Services for the City of Stratford.

Using a mixed method, both qualitative and secondary quantitative data with descriptive analysis was used to provide a more fulsome perspective on housing needs in Stratford.

The template provided included partially pre-populated data tables. While the source of the prepopulated data was not directly cited, it appears to have been drawn substantively from the Statistics Canada 2021 Census, and Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Additionally, data was drawn from the Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART) Stratford Housing Needs Assessment Tool report. HART is an award-winning Canadian project led by the University of British Columbia and a team of researchers with the goal to develop standardized, replicable and equity-focused tools to improve the quality of housing supply decision making at all levels of government. HART provides a comprehensive data-driven analysis of housing needs at a granular level and draws heavily on census data.

It should be noted that the variances between the data as well as within the same data sets were evident, but not to an extent that would significantly alter the findings.

It should also be noted that the age of the foundational data used is from 2021 recognizing significant changes may have occurred since 2021.

Additional local quantitative data was drawn from the data aggregator Townfolio, which pulls from hundreds of data sources from open providers ranging from the national to municipal level.

Targeted collection of locally generated quantitative data was drawn from the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), and the Municipal Building and Planning department which uses the software platform Citywide to compile and track relevant data. Destination Stratford, the local tourism marketing authority also compiles relevant local accommodation data. The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) compiles relevant information with localized data reports being collated by OnePoint, the regional association of realtors.

Qualitative data was collected from stakeholders to provide local context and augment the quantitative data; the associated methodology is further outlined below.

Data was analyzed and projected based on context from National, Provincial, and comparable municipal examples (municipalities with similar population and growth trajectories). Projections were weighted to recognize employment needs, growth trends tied to immigration, post-secondary intake, interprovincial migration, housing market trends, and historic demographic data from Stratford. Population density was taken into consideration as Municipal growth in the context of the regional realities will demand a focus on denser development and housing patterns.

1.2 Stakeholder Engagement Methodology and Assumptions

Additional quantitative and qualitative data was sought from local stakeholders. A purposeful sampling strategy was used by compiling a list of known stakeholders' representative of their

sectors. Stakeholders were outlined under the categories of Municipal, Real Estate, Business & Industry, Not-for-Profit Organizations, Housing Cooperatives/Community Housing, Long Term Care, Academic, and Private Sector housing developers and providers. A list was compiled of over 70 stakeholders plus two organizations that shared our request with their full membership.

An email was sent to the above noted stakeholders requesting their input through a short online survey (via Survey Monkey), that was designed specifically for each sector with questions aligned to the HNA. Quantitative and/or qualitative information was solicited through the lens of their area of expertise and sector and community knowledge. The survey was designed to allow for questions to be left unanswered if they were not applicable. Stakeholders were given a response timeline of seven days, and if there was a lack of response from a specific sector, an additional email follow up was prompted. Given the short timelines and depth of information sought, the response rate did not reach a level that would be considered statistically valid. Thus, the survey data is included as a snapshot or commentary, not as a fulsome description of housing needs in Stratford. Response data was anonymized with themes identified and illustrative quotes and numbers included in the following HNA.

Targeted semi structured interviews were also conducted with six key municipal staff stakeholders to provide additional context, understanding, and to identify additional relevant data.

Quantitative data was presented with qualitative context and themes rounding out the understanding of the housing need and impacts in the City of Stratford.

1.3 Priority Group Engagement Methodology and Assumptions

Priority populations for affordable homes are groups who face a proportionally far greater housing need than the general population. Of the 13 priority populations identified in Section 4 of this HNA report, organizations representing and supporting each of these local populations were included in the above noted stakeholder engagement methodology. Their input and perspectives were sought and included in this HNA report.

It should be noted that many public facing data sets do not break information down to the level identifying priority groups, so quantitative data was presented as available or as provided through the stakeholder engagement process.

2.0 Community Profile and Trends

2.1 Municipal Policy & Regulatory Context

The following reports, plans and bylaws inform the context of housing in Stratford.

- - The City of [Stratford Strategic Plan 2-24-2027](#), with one of the four [strategic priorities to build housing stability](#)
 - The [investStratford Attainable Housing Initiatives](#) [The Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan](#) (2021-2024)
 - [Housing and Homelessness Plan \(2020-2024\)](#)
 - [The Grand Trunk Master Plan, 2018](#)

Stratford's Bylaws (section 3.0, Definitions) currently define affordability as follows:

- i. in the case of ownership housing, the least expensive of: housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs which do not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate-income households; or
- ii. housing for which the purchase price is at least 10 per cent below the average purchase price of a resale unit in the regional market area;
- iii. in the case of rental housing, the least expensive of: a unit for which the rent does not exceed 30 per cent of gross annual household income for low and moderate-income households; or
- iv. a unit for which the rent is at or below the average rent of a unit in the regional market area.

While the above is the current Bylaw definition, Stratford's Official Plan (OP) is in the process of being updated which may influence the use of terminology.

For the purpose of this HNA, 30% of a household's gross income is used to define affordability.

2.2 Community Profile

Stratford Ontario is located along the Avon River in southwest Ontario, roughly halfway between the cities of London and Kitchener, and approximately a two-hour drive from Toronto to the east and the Ontario / Michigan border to the west. Stratford was settled in 1832 and

incorporated in 1858 and still maintains its historic downtown charm. Stratford is the largest population centre in Perth County, and has become an employment, service, and healthcare hub in the region.

Stratford's unique qualities have long attracted business to this world-renowned city. Stratford has attracted, established, and grown a wide range of industries which includes the internationally renowned theatre, smart technologies, world leading educational institutions and global manufacturers. Home to the Stratford Festival and the University of Waterloo's School of Interaction Design and Business, Stratford is also located within Ontario's largest Information Technology cluster and North America's largest automotive cluster.

Stratford earned its place in the *Top 7 Intelligent Community of the Year* rankings for 2011, 2012 and 2013 by the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF). Communities that have been designated by ICF have demonstrated a progressive vision incorporating broadband connectivity, knowledge workforce, digital inclusion, innovation, marketing and advocacy.

The City of Stratford Social Services Department is the provincially designated Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for the region, responsible for administering social services in the City of Stratford, Perth County, and the Town of St. Marys. This department helps those who need assistance with accessing income, housing and homelessness services childcare supports.

The Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance is centred out of Stratford and is the largest of the four participating hospitals across Huron and Perth County.

There are 11 elementary and 2 secondary schools within Stratford along with 3 private schools, of which one has an international draw. At the post-secondary level, there is one college campus, a university campus, and a chef school.

The City of Stratford provides public transit bus service, has a municipal airport, and local access to passenger and freight rail service. Scaled regional bus service providing access to larger centres is also available.

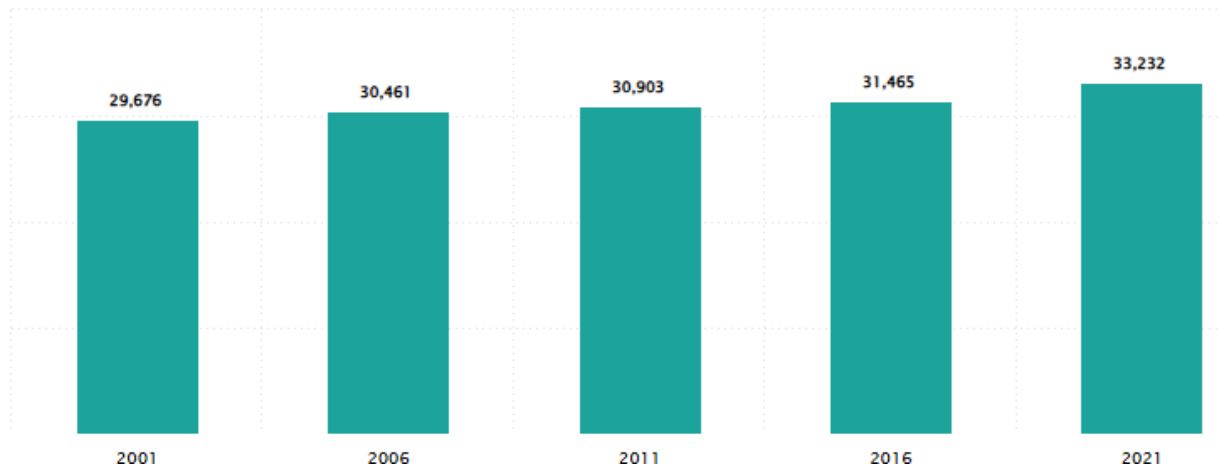
Demographics

With a 2021 population of 33,232 and a geographic land area of 30.02 km² the population density of Stratford is 1,107 people/ km² which is lower than the comparator of St. Thomas yet higher than that of Woodstock and Owen Sound. The municipality of Stratford is surrounded by prime agricultural production land.

Demographics of Stratford demonstrate a 5.6% population increase between 2016-2021. In 2021, the median age of Stratford's population was 46 years old, 14% of the population was 14 years old or younger, 62% were between 15-64 years old, and 24% were over 65 years old.

2.2.1 Population

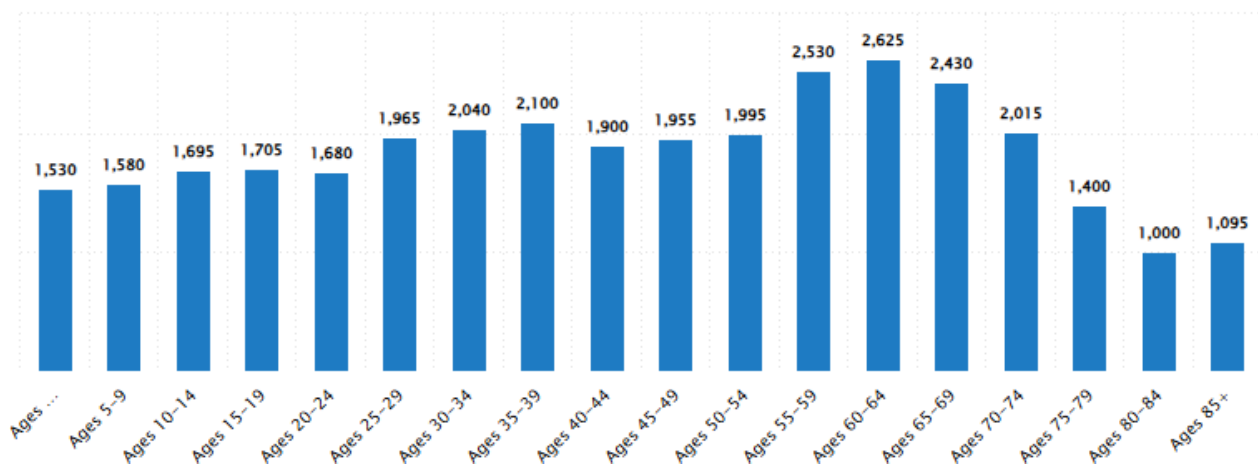
Population



source: Townfolio/Census

2.2.2 Population by Age Distribution

Ages



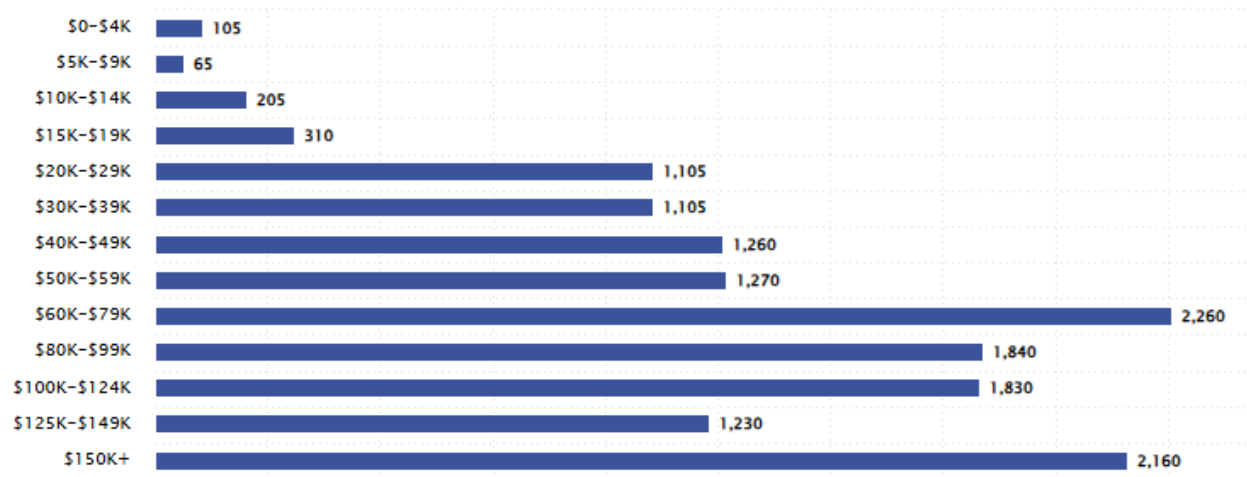
source: Townfolio/Census

In 2021, immigrants comprised 11% of Stratford's population and those identifying as Indigenous were 1.7%.

The below graph outlining household income levels (2021) for the City of Stratford demonstrates that 37% of households earn less than \$60,000, 40% earn between \$60 - \$124,000, and 23% earn over \$125,000.

2.2.3 Population by Household Income

Household Income



source: Townfolio/Census

From the 2021 census, the people of Stratford live in 14,743 dwellings, of which 52% are single-detached units.

Stratford has long been an attractive place for urban citizens to retire, which may also be indicative of the percentage of people over 65 years old being six points higher than the provincial average. However, with the housing and affordability crisis, working age metropolitan citizens have been moving further afield until they can afford a place to live, colloquially known as “drive until you qualify”, which has also become a gentrification movement.

Figure 2.2.4 Population Data³⁰

2.2.4 Population		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Total Population (Number)	2016	31,470
	2021	33,232
Population Growth (Number)	Total	1,762
	Percentage	5.6
Age (Years)	Average	44.8
	Median	46
Age Distribution	0 - 14 years	4,800
	15 - 64 years	20,495
	65+ years	7,940
Mobility	Non-movers	28,765
	Non-migrants	1,420
	Migrants	1,960

Figure 2.2.5 Demographic Information

2.2.5 Demographic Information		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Immigrants	Total	3,555
Non-Immigrants	Total	28,625
Recent Immigrants (2016-2021)	Total	415
Interprovincial migrants (2016-2021)	Total	355
Indigenous Identity	Total	565

Below, data from Table 2.2.5 was used to calculate Stratford's demographic distribution percentages as well as offering comparators to Provincial values. The significant proportion of seniors is highlighted.

Figure 2.2.6

Age Distribution (years old)	Stratford (total #) (%)		Ontario (%)
0-14	4,800	14%	16%
15-64	20,495	62%	66%
65+	7,940	24%	18%

2.3 Population Change Impacts on Local Housing Market

Stratford has been a consistently growing centre, requiring different and additional services, supports, infrastructure, and housing to meet the needs of its citizens and potential citizens. The wealth divide, affordability challenges relating to shelter, food, and transportation, and low levels of purpose built affordable rental stock, in combination with population growth has impacted the local housing market.

Stratford grew by 5.6% in population between 2016-2021 and has felt a continued growth since then. By comparison between 2016-2021 the following community populations grew by: St. Thomas 10.1%, Woodstock 13.6%, Owen Sound 1.3%, and Orangeville, 4.4%.

Other factors influencing Stratford's housing market, in this post-pandemic era, are the return of post-secondary students to campuses, the resumption of arts and culture activities, and patrons returning to service sector establishments.

Stratford's manufacturing employment sector continues to grow, requiring additional employees, many of which are not able to find available or affordable local housing stock.

The growth in Stratford's population along with a growing employment sector, and the resurgence in its tourist industry has resulted in the demand for affordable housing outpacing the available supply. This is the case across the housing spectrum for both home ownership and rentals. Consequently, the price to purchase a house or rent an apartment, in Stratford, has increased significantly over the past five years.

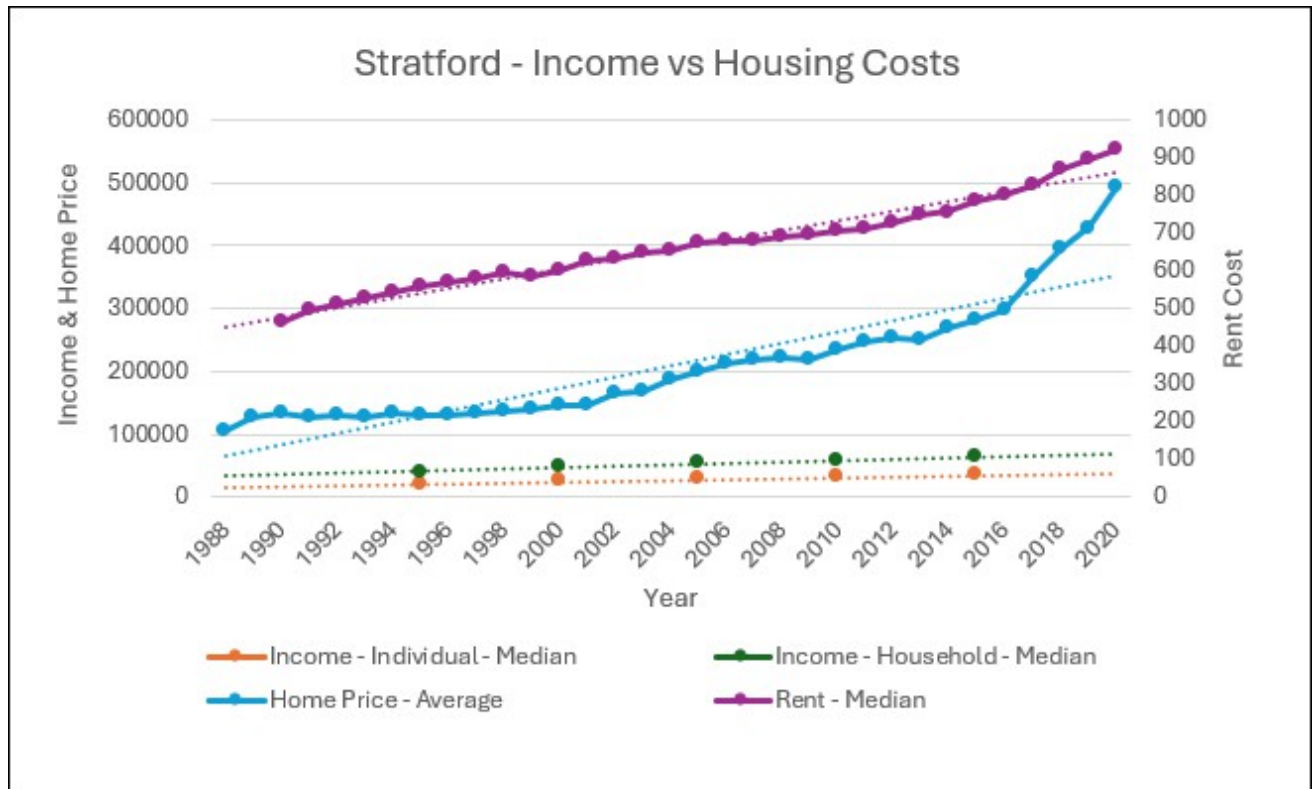
3.0 Household Profiles and Economic Characteristics

From the following graph it can be seen that housing costs and incomes in Stratford are a divergent trend. Between 1995-2015 individual incomes increased 64.2% or an average of 3.2% per annum. Household incomes provided a similar trend of 60.7% and 3.0%. Similar to the steady increase of incomes, rent costs during the same timeframe of 1995-2015 increased 40.5% or an average of 2.0% per year. Average annual home sale prices between 1995-2015 increased 117.9% or an annual average of 5.9%.

Looking at the full spectrum of data, from 1990-2020 rent in Stratford has increased 97.8% or an average of 3.2% per year. Home sale prices however have increased 372.8% over the 32-year timeframe of 1988-2020, or an average of 11.6% per year. The steepest incline in home sale prices has occurred between 2016 and 2020 which showed an increase of 66.1% or an average annual jump of 16.5%. If you were to remove these four years from the calculation from 1988-2016 the average annual home sale price increased 6.5% per year. Rent costs have increased an average of 3.9% per year between 2016-2020.

In summary, rental costs have increased at a similar pace to incomes although creeping further ahead in the more recent years, however home sale prices have increased at least twice as fast, and in the past four years if we project a similar historic trend of income growth, average home sale prices have increased over five times the rate of incomes in Stratford.

Figure 3.0.1 Income Vs. Housing Costs 1988 to 2020



Secondary source data plotted includes:

Statistics Canada Median Individual Income for the years 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015;

Statistics Canada Median Household Income for the years 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015;

Huron Perth Association of Realtors Average Annual Home Sale Price from 1988-2020; and

CMHC Rental Market Survey Median Rent (Bedroom Type Row/Apartment Total) October annual data from 1990-2020.

It should be noted that terminology may vary year to year in the Statistics Canada database however efforts were made to ensure best alignment.

3.1 Household Profiles

The following table highlights the discrepancy between owner and tenant household incomes, that approximately 66% of households are owner households and 34% are tenant households, and that 19% of households are in the low and very low-income range.

Figure 3.1.1 Household income and Profile

3.1.1 Household Income and Profile		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Total number of households	2016	13,849
	2021	14,743
Household income (Canadian dollars per year)	Average	92,700
	Median	77,000
Tenant Household Income (Canadian dollars per year, only available at CMA or CA Level) - Data from Stratford (CA), Ont.	Average	59,050
	Median	50,400
Owner household income (Canadian dollars per year, only available at CMA or CA Level) - Data from Stratford (CA), Ont.	Average	110,100
	Median	95,000
Average household size (Number of members)	Total	2.2
Breakdown of household by size (Number of households)	Total	14,745
	1 person	4,920 (total) or 33%
	2 persons	5,465 (total) or 37%
	3 persons	1,960 (total) or 14%

Figure 3.1.1 Continued, Household Income and Profile

3.1.1 Household Income and Profile		
Characteristic	Data	Value
	4 persons	1,605 (total) or 11%
	5 or more persons	795 (total) or 5%
Tenant households (Number of households)	Total	5,040
	Percentage	34.2%
Owner households (Number of households)	Total	9,705
	Percentage	65.8%
Percentage of tenant households in subsidized housing	Percentage	17.4%
Households within 800m of a higher-order/high frequency transit stop or station (#)	Total	0
Number of one-parent families	Total	1,670
	Percentage	17.6%
Number of one-parent families in which the parent is a woman	Total	1,305
	Percentage	13.8%
Number of one-parent families in which the parent is a man	Total	365
	Percentage	3.8%
	Very Low (up to 20% below Area	440 (total) or 3%

Figure 3.1.1 Continues, Household Income and Profile

3.1.1 Household Income and Profile		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Number of households by Income Category	Median Household Income (AMHI)	
	Low (21% – 50% AMHI)	2,365 (total) or 16%
	Moderate (51 – 80% AMHI)	2,925 (total) or 20%
	Median (81% - 120% AMHI)	3,260 (total) or 22%
	High (>120% AMHI)	5,715 (total) or 39%

The following table uses the Stratford HART data to illustrate the number of households, the percentage of each income bracket, and the amount that households would have available to contribute to shelter costs to remain out of core housing need.

3.1.2 Household Affordable Shelter Cost by Income Category

	# of Households ¹	%	Annual HH Income ²	Affordable Shelter Cost (monthly) ^{2*}
Very Low Income	440	3.0%	≤ \$15,000	≤\$388
Low Income	2,365	16.1%	\$15,500 - \$38,750	\$388 - \$969
Moderate Income	3,260	22.2%	\$38,750 - \$62,000	\$969 - \$1,550
Median Income	2,925	19.9%	\$62,000 - \$93,000	\$1,550 - 2,325
High Income	5,715	38.9%	≥ \$93,000	≥\$2,325
Total	14,705	100%		

source : ¹ Table 3.3.1; ²HART Stratford Report

**Affordable Shelter Cost equates to approximately 30% of before tax household income on a monthly basis, in turn what households would have available to pay for shelter costs to be considered affordable*

3.2 Household Profile Data - Municipal Context

The divide between owner and tenant household income is clearly shown by drawing on the data from Table 3.1.1 and summarized below:

3.2.1 Income by Tenancy Type

	Average Income	Median Income
Owner Households	\$110,100	\$95,000
Tenant Households	\$59,050	\$50,400
Difference	\$50,950	\$44,600
% Difference	53.6%	53.1%

The number of one-parent families, in Stratford, is approximately 17% of all families. This percentage is slightly lower than both Ontario and Canada, which is approximately 19%. In this regard, Stratford reflects the norms of societal family dynamics.

3.3 Suppression of Household Formation and Housing Demand

While our survey data did not indicate an awareness of suppression of household formation within Stratford, we do see evidence in the industrial and business surveys that a significant number of individuals work in Stratford and would like to live within the city but are forced to commute from other communities due to the lack of housing.

Of the 1,592 employees listed by the 9 respondent manufacturing industries, 233 of these employees had indicated a desire to move to Stratford but been unsuccessful. This represents 14.6% of the employees reported. Furthermore, 66.6% of the manufacturing respondents indicated that the availability of housing was negatively impacting their business.

Of the not-for-profit agency respondents who are serving 734 individuals, it was reported that 39 individuals requested housing and were unable to be assisted by these not-for-profit organizations. Of these 39 individuals, 28 required fully supportive housing.

Within Stratford's post-secondary institutions, one institution responded, reporting 700 students, of whom 100 sought housing in Stratford and were unable to find it, representing 14.2%.

3.4 Economic Conditions

The City of Stratford has a consistently growing economic base. The municipal supply of industrial land is sought after and efforts are ongoing to manage the demand.

The seasonal nature of the arts, tourism, and related service industry create the need for affordable and flexible housing options. Seasonal housing needs are also influenced by the success of the University of Waterloo Stratford campus.

In their 'Written Submission for the Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming Federal Budget from July 31, 2024', the Stratford Festival reported an annual operating budget of \$75M and attendance of almost 500,000 people. The Stratford Festival generates \$277M in economic activity, supports 1,466 jobs, generates \$46.2M in taxes, and serves as the catalyst for hundreds of small businesses.

The below table (prepopulated) highlights that the largest employment sector is manufacturing (21%) and that the majority of the labour force in Stratford is employed on a permanent basis (~75%) however there is 22% of the labour force that is employed precariously through temporary, seasonal, or contract positions. Commuters are largely dependent on personal vehicles.

Figure 3.4.1 Economy and Labour Force

3.4.1 Economy and Labour Force			
Characteristic	Data	Value	%
Number of workers in the Labour Force	Total	17,330	
Number of workers by industry (Top 10 only)	Manufacturing	3,570	21%
	Health care and social assistance	2,280	13%
	Retail trade	2,005	12%
	Construction	1,250	7%
	Educational services	1,150	7%
	Professional, scientific and technical services	1,020	6%
	Accommodation and food services	975	6%
	Arts, entertainment and recreation	690	4%
	Finance and insurance	650	4%
	Other services (except public administration)	610	3.5%
	Unemployment rate	10.8	

Figure 3.4.1 Continued, Economy and Labour Force

3.4.1 Economy and Labour Force			
Characteristic	Data	Value	%
Unemployment rate and participation rate (Percent)	Participation rate	62.5	
All classes of workers (Number)	Total	17,085	
Employees (Number)	Total	14,790	
Permanent position (Number)	Total	12,915	74.5%
Temporary position (Number)	Total	1,870	11%
Fixed term (1 year or more, Number)	Total	530	3%
Casual, seasonal or short-term position (less than 1 year, Number)	Total	1,340	8%
Self-employed (Number)	Total	2,300	13%
Number of commuters by commuting destination	Within census subdivision	8,235	
	To different census subdivision	790	
	To different census division	1,865	
	To another province/territory	25	
Number of commuters by main mode of commuting for the employed labour force with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address	Car, truck or van	10,800	
	Public transit	225	
	Walked	890	
	Bicycle	250	
	Other method	255	

The seasonal impact of the Stratford Festival according to survey data, includes some 300 arts workers whom they are housing in 80 housing units utilized between 50 and 90% of the year. This has a major impact on the housing stock of the city and represents an important economic driver.

3.5 Households in Core Housing Need

A household is considered to be in core housing need if it meets two criteria:

1. A household is below one or more of the national adequacy, suitability and affordability standards; and,
2. The household would have to spend 30% or more of its before-tax household income to access local housing that meets all three standards.

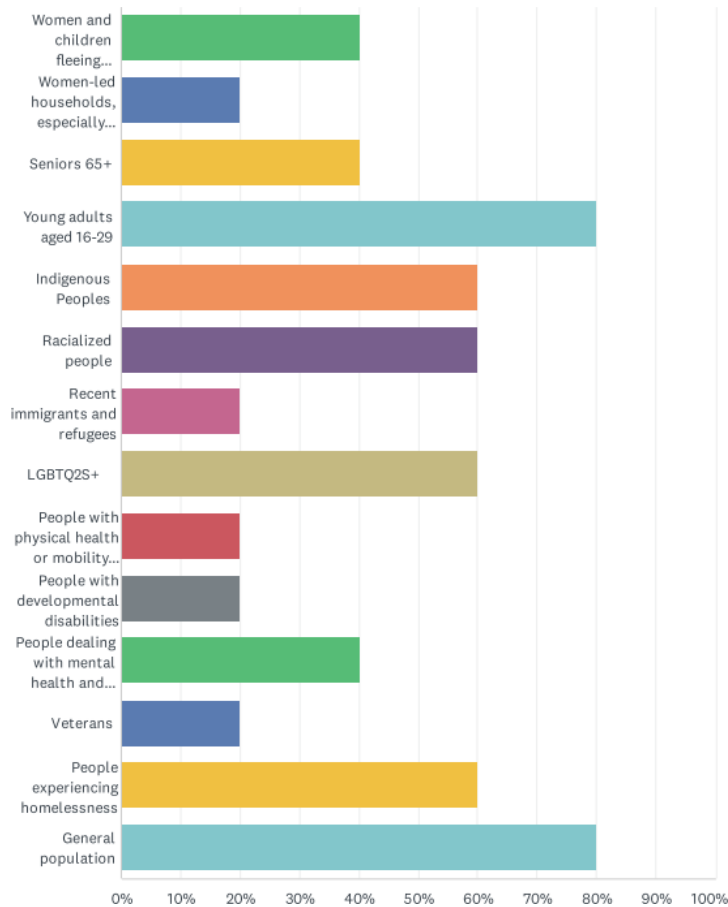
Housing is considered to be **affordable** when housing costs less than 30% of before-tax household income. Housing is considered to be **suitable** when there are enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the household. Housing is considered to be **adequate** when it is not in need of major repairs. Determining the percentage of core housing need would facilitate comparison with forecasts of population growth and household formation, in turn enabling more accurate projection of anticipated housing needs broken down by different factors such as income, household size and priority population, as explained below. It is important to note that official measures of those in core housing need exclude key groups, including those experiencing homelessness, students living independently of their guardians, people living in congregate housing, and migrant farm workers. This means that core housing need figures may underestimate overall housing need. Therefore, to provide a more comprehensive picture of who is affected by core housing need, local information was gathered in an effort to encompass the needs of and impact to the priority groups.

Stratford has a robust Coordinated Access System (CAS) and is a long-time active participant in the Built for Zero community coordinated by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. Stratford, as the CMSM and as part of the CAS maintains the By-Name-List (BNL) for the region. The average number of households experiencing homelessness in 2024 was 155. It is estimated that approximately 90% of the homeless on the BNL are located in Stratford.

Service providers in Stratford were given the opportunity to complete a survey regarding the priority groups they support. Themes and illustrative information gathered from the survey responses has been provided below.

Respondents served the following priority groups:

Figure 3.5.1 Not for Profits Surveyed: Communities Served



The five not -for- profit organization survey respondents served 734 individuals in 2024, providing housing to 356 individuals, none of whom could have afforded housing without this assistance.

As mentioned above in the Community Profile section of this report (Section 2), Stratford has two post-secondary educational institutions and an international private school, which all have students that live in the community. While only one educational institution provided survey data, they are welcoming 700 students to their campus and are not providing housing to any of these students. They estimate that 14% of their students would like to be housed in Stratford but are unable to find housing and strongly report that this impacts their ability to attract students.

3.5.1 Income Categories and Affordable Shelter Costs

The following data from the Stratford HART report, reaffirms and highlights that those in the very low-income bracket could only afford to pay a maximum of \$388/month for shelter and those in the low income \$388-\$969/month to remain out of core housing need.

Figure 3.5.2 Affordable Shelter Costs by Income Categories

Income Categories and Affordable Shelter Costs, 2021

Income categories are determined by their relationship with each geography's [Area Median Household Income \(AMHI\)](#). The following table shows the range of household incomes and affordable housing costs that make up each income category, in 2020 dollar values. It also shows what the portion of total households that fall within each category.

EXPORT

Stratford CY (CSD, ON)			
Income Category	% of Total HHs	Annual HH Income	Affordable Shelter Cost (2020 CAD\$)
Area Median Household Income		\$77,500	\$1,938
Very Low Income (20% or under of AMHI)	2.14%	<= \$15,500	<= \$388
Low Income (21% to 50% of AMHI)	15.89%	\$15,500 - \$38,750	\$388 - \$969
Moderate Income (51% to 80% of AMHI)	20.1%	\$38,750 - \$62,000	\$969 - \$1,550
Median Income (81% to 120% of AMHI)	22.48%	\$62,000 - \$93,000	\$1,550 - \$2,325
High Income (121% and more of AMHI)	39.4%	>= \$93,001	>= \$2,326

source: HART Stratford Report

Using data from Table 3.5.2 the total number of owner and tenant households in Stratford in core housing need based on affordability is 980 or 6.8%. Of the total households in core housing need due to affordability, 74% of them are tenants. Drawing on data from Section 3.1 and 3.2 where it is highlighted that owner household incomes are more than 50% greater than tenant household incomes, and that tenant households are more than five times likely to be in core housing need than ownership households. If consideration is also given to adequacy and suitability, there are a total of 1,055 households in core housing need in Stratford.

Figure 3.5.3 Households in Core Housing Need

3.5.3 Households in Core Housing Need		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Affordability – Owner and tenant households spending 30% or more on shelter costs (# and %)	Total	980
	Percentage	6.8%
Affordability – Tenant households spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs (# and %)	Total	725
	Percentage	5% (of total households) 74% (of those in core housing need)
Affordability – Owner households spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs (# and %)	Total	260
	Percentage	1.8% (of total households) 26% (of those in core housing need)
Adequacy – Households in dwellings requiring major repair (# and %)	Total	835
	Percentage	5.8%
Adequacy – Tenant households in dwellings requiring major repairs (# and %)	Total	395
	Percentage	2.7%
Adequacy – Owner households in dwellings requiring major repairs (# and %)	Total	440
	Percentage	3%
Suitability – Households in unsuitable dwellings (# and %)	Total	475
	Percentage	3.3%
Suitability – Tenant households in unsuitable dwellings (# and %)	Total	265
	Percentage	1.8%

Figure 3.5.3 Continued, Households in Core Housing Need

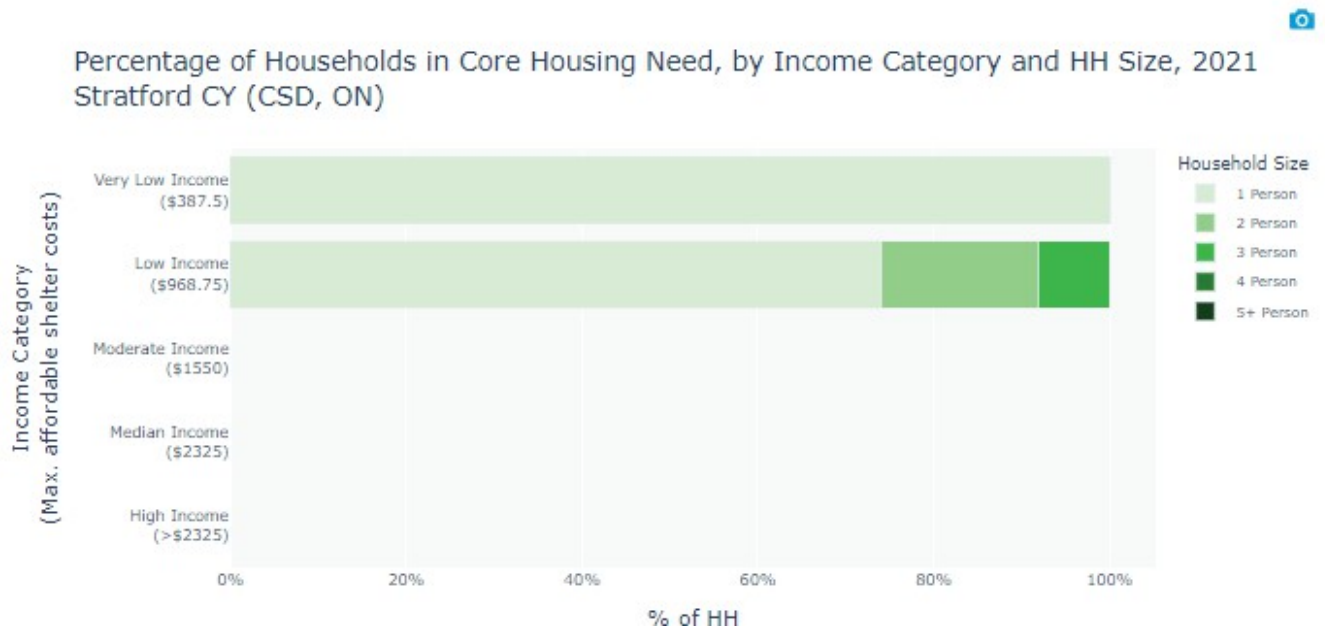
3.5.1 Households in Core Housing Need		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Affordability – Owner and tenant households spending 30% or more on shelter costs (# and %)	Total	980
	Percentage	6.8%
Affordability – Tenant households spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs (# and %)	Total	725
	Percentage	5% (of total households) 74% (of those in core housing need)
Suitability – Owner households in unsuitable dwellings (# and %)	Total	210
	Percentage	1.4%
Total households in core housing need	Total	1,055
Percentage of tenant households in core housing need	Percentage	16%
Percentage of owner households in core housing need	Percentage	2.9%

3.5.4 Percentage of Households in Core Housing Need, by Income Category and Household Size

The chart below shows that in Stratford all those in core housing need are in the very low- and low-income categories, and that one person households comprise 100% of the very low income need, and 74% of the low income need. This provides strong evidence that the greatest need for deeply affordable housing units is for one person households. The need for deeply affordable housing for two and three person households also exists at a smaller scale. The following Section on Stratford's affordable housing deficit provides further data to support this supposition.

Percentage of Households in Core Housing Need, by Income Category and HH Size, 2021

The following chart examines those households in [CHN](#) and shows their relative distribution by household size (i.e. the number of individuals in a given household for each household income category). When there is no bar for an income category, it means that either there are no households in [CHN](#) within an income category, or that there are [too few households to report](#).



source: HART Stratford Report

3.5.5 2021 Affordable Housing Deficit

The below Stratford HART data confirms that the greatest need for deeply affordable housing units is for one-person households, demonstrating a deficit of 760-835 one-person affordable units. The need for deeply affordable housing for two and three person households also exists but at a much lesser scale with a deficit of 60-145 two person units, and 50-65 three person units.

2021 Affordable Housing Deficit

The following table shows the total number of households in [CHN](#) by household size and income category, which may be considered as the existing deficit of housing options in the community.

EXPORT

Stratford CY (CSD, ON)						
Income Category (Max. affordable shelter cost)	1 Person HH	2 Person HH	3 Person HH	4 Person HH	5+ Person HH	Total
Very Low Income (\$387)	160	0	0	0	0	160
Low Income (\$968)	600	145	65	0	0	810
Moderate Income (\$1550)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median Income (\$2325)	0	0	0	0	0	0
High Income (>\$2325)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	760	145	65	0	0	970

source: HART Stratford Report

The following table converts the above figures into the total number of homes by number of bedrooms and maximum cost required to satisfy the existing deficit. To learn more about how we converted household size to number of bedrooms, view our [unit mix methodology](#). Due to rounding and data suppression, the [CHN](#) totals may not match up with the above table.

EXPORT

Stratford CY (CSD, ON)						
Max. affordable cost	1 Bedroom Homes	2 Bedroom Homes	3 Bedroom Homes	4 Bedroom Homes	5 Bedroom Homes	Total
\$387	160	0	0	0	0	160
\$968	675	60	50	0	0	785
\$1550	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$2325	0	0	0	0	0	0
>\$2325	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	835	60	50	0	0	945

source: HART Stratford Report

Another way of assessing the affordable housing deficit is via the waitlist for affordable housing. The following tables provide two perspectives (by unit size and demographic) that summarize the number of households on the Centralized Waitlist (RGI) who are applying from

Stratford (current address in Stratford) as of December 31, 2024. The waitlist demonstrates an immediate need for 255 affordable housing units and supports the findings in other sections of this Housing Needs Assessment that show the greatest need is for one-bedroom units.

Figure 3.5.6 Waitlist by Household Formation and Unit Size

Size of Unit	Number on Waitlist (as of December 31, 2024)
1 bedroom	174
2 bedroom	32
3 bedroom	26
4+ bedroom	23
Total	255

Demographic	Number on Waitlist (as of December 31, 2024)
Single/Couple	155
Senior	27
Single/Couple with Dependents	73
Total	255

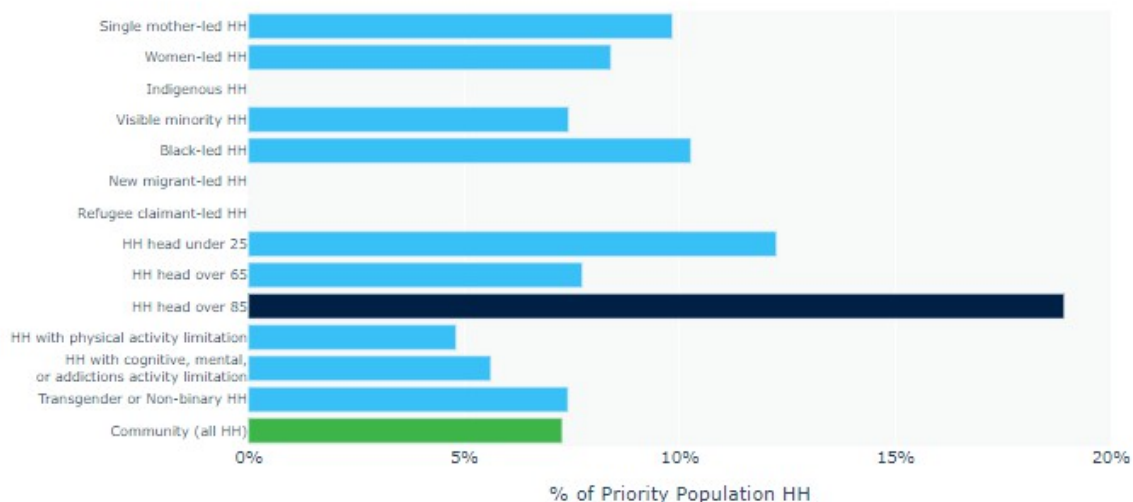
3.5.7 Percentage of Households in Core Housing Need by Priority Population, 2021

As highlighted by the below HART data, of the identified priority populations in core housing need in Stratford, over 26% are seniors with the majority (19%) of those with a head of household over 85 years old. Those under 25 years of age are in the next greatest need at approximately 12%. Single mothers are approximately 10%, Black-led households are approximately 10% of the priority populations in core housing need.

Percentage of Households in Core Housing Need by Priority Population, 2021

The following chart compares the rates of [CHN](#) across populations that are at [high risk of experiencing housing need](#). The "Community (all HH)" bar represents the rate of [CHN](#) for all households in the selected community to act as a point of reference. The population with the greatest rate of [CHN](#) is highlighted in dark blue. When there is no bar for a priority population, it means that either there are no households in [CHN](#) within that priority population, or that there are [too few households to report](#).

Percentage of Households in Core Housing Need by Priority Population, 2021
Stratford CY (CSD, ON)



source: HART Stratford Report

3.6 Core Housing Need - Municipal Context

The need for the smaller housing units i.e. one and two bedroom is far exceeded by the supply, and the development of rental units and higher density housing has not kept up with the affordability demand. The CMSM has been the most significant affordable housing provider in the municipality; no other large non-profit providers are present at this time.

The CMSM has plans to add an additional 30 units of affordable housing to their portfolio in the next five years. Meanwhile, future plans from the United Way and citizen led Cooperatives such as Home Suite Home, indicate a growing interest in providing affordable housing outside of the CMSM's purview. These providers anticipate adding up to 100 additional units of affordable housing.

Housing Needs Assessment – Stratford ON

housing in the next ten years. However, this is highly dependent on funding and the affordability of materials.

With the unsettled financial and political framework of society, the risk of increased core housing need may expand further into owner households.

4.0 Priority Groups

There are 12 groups that CMHC defines as priority populations for affordable homes: groups who face a proportionally far greater housing need than the general population. There is also a 13th group, women-led households and specifically single mothers, implied in the National Housing Strategy which targets 33% (with a minimum of 25%) of funding going to housing for women-led households. Census data does not disaggregate core housing need data by all priority populations, including veterans, individuals who identify as LGBTQ2S+, survivors of domestic violence, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Many households may have members in multiple priority categories which may also not be represented in the data. The below sections provide further context to these local priority populations.

4.1 Priority Populations - Housing Context

The HART data presented in Section 3.5.4 highlights the percentage of households in core housing need by priority population in 2021. The data shows that seniors form the largest need, followed by young adults, single mothers, and black led households.

Waitlists for subsidized housing are not segregated between priority population groups, however the By Name List identifies priority population homelessness across the CMSM region. It should be noted that although the below data is not specific to Stratford only, Stratford is the largest population centre and the location of most support services in the region so the majority of homelessness populations can be assumed to be located there.

The following data was provided through the CMSM and represents the proportion of the 138 total households experiencing homelessness from the BNL as of December 31, 2024 for priority populations (note: it is possible for an individual on the BNL to identify in more than one priority group):

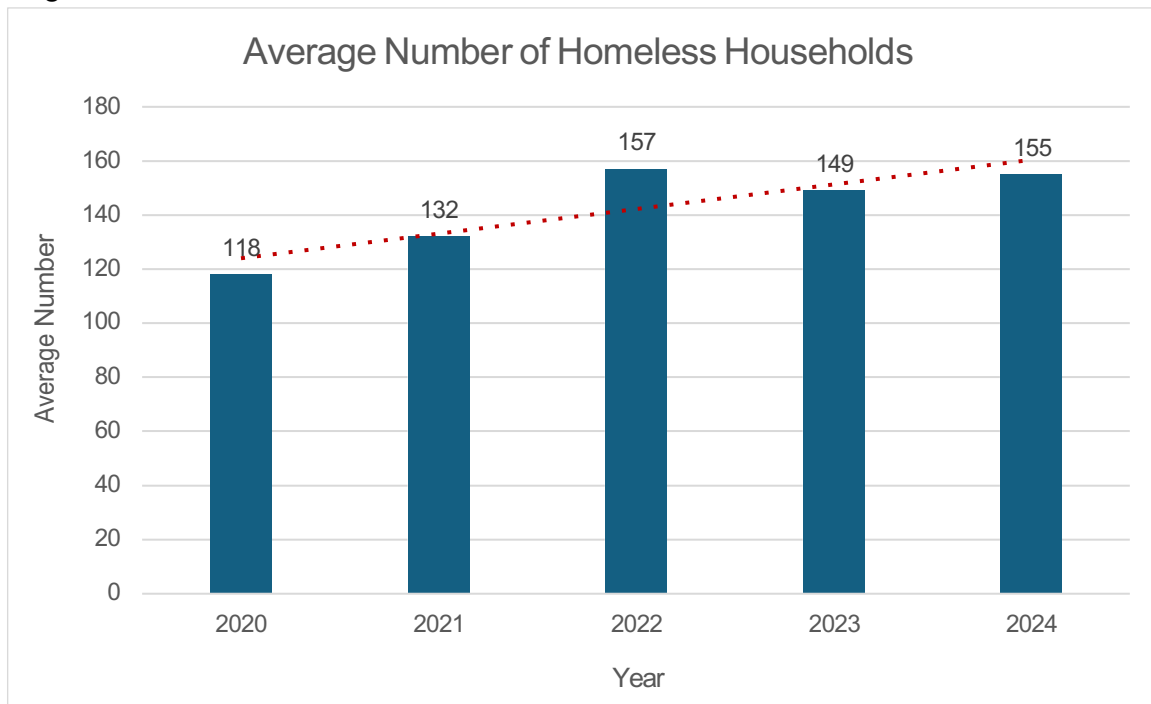
- Women led households experiencing homelessness: 54 (39%)
- Young Adults (18-29) experiencing homelessness: 25 (18%)
- Indigenous People experiencing homelessness: 22 (16%)
- Racialized People: 6 (4%) LGBTQ2S+: 17 (12%)
- Veterans experiencing homelessness: 4 (3%)

- Seniors experiencing homelessness: 2 (1%)
- Newcomer / Recent Immigrants: 0

4.2 Homelessness – Current Status

The number of households experiencing homelessness within the CMSM region (Stratford, Perth County, St. Marys) has increased over the past five years. The average number of households experiencing homelessness was 118 in 2020 compared to 155 in 2024.

Figure 4.2.1 Homeless Households, 2020 to 2024



source: CMSM

Homelessness is defined within the CMSM region as those who are unsheltered (sleeping outdoors, in public spaces, makeshift shelters, tents, vehicles, and other places not intended for human habitation), emergency sheltered (staying overnight in homeless shelters such as motels, youth shelters, and domestic violence shelters), and provisionally accommodated (temporary accommodation that lacks security of tenure such as couch surfing, Provincial institutions, and transitional housing).

The following information and data was provided through the CMSM.

The number of households experiencing homelessness within Stratford, St. Marys and Perth County as of December 2024 was 138. Household numbers for the City of Stratford are not available because of the transient nature of those experiencing homelessness, however most of

Housing Needs Assessment – Stratford ON

the homelessness services and supports are in Stratford, and 90% of all VI-SPDATs (the pre-screening tool used to add someone to the BNL) are completed within Stratford. Of these 138 households, 122 (88%) were experiencing chronic homelessness. This is an indication that when a household is experiencing homelessness within the region, they are not solving that episode of homelessness quickly. Additionally, there were 22 (16%) of households identified as having Indigenous Status on the BNL from December 2024. This is a large over-representation of that demographic when compared to the percentage of households reporting Indigenous Status on the 2021 Census.

The current demographics and descriptive factors of those experiencing homelessness within the CMSM region (from December 2024) is shown in the below Tables 1 through 4. The majority of households, 78, are provisionally accommodated, which includes instances of couch surfing, living in transitional housing, or a provincial institution such as jail or hospital. Twenty-eight (28) households are unsheltered, that is living anywhere that is unfit for human habitation such as outdoors, in a car, tent etc. Twenty-three (23) households are experiencing homelessness but have not indicated which type. Nine (9) households are emergency sheltered, either within the motel system or the VAW shelter.

The household head within the BNL is primarily male, as shown in Table 2, with 82 households identifying as male.

Single adults make up the most households with 106, followed by 11 youth (16-24) and 21 families. (Table 3)

As shown in Table 4, most households (64) within the CMSM region experience high acuity, meaning that they would benefit most from a Housing First or Supportive Housing model to solve their episode of homelessness. Fifty-seven (57) households are identified as mid acuity, meaning they would benefit from a Rapid Housing model and financial support, and 17 households are low acuity. These households usually are able to solve their own homelessness with one-time financial support such as first and last month's rent, moving costs, or furnishings.

Figure 4.2.2 Homelessness by Duration and Type

Type of Homelessness	Number of Households
Emergency Sheltered	9
Provisional	78
Unknown	23
Unsheltered	28
Total	138

Table 2: Gender (Dec 2024)

Gender	Number of Households
Blank	2
Female	54
Male	82
Total	138

Table 3: Household Type (Dec 2024)

Household Type	Number of Households
Family	21
Single	106
Unaccompanied Youth	11
Total	138

Table 4: Acuity Level (Dec 2024)

Acuity Level	Number of Households
Low Acuity	17
Mid Acuity	57
High Acuity	64
Total	138

It should be noted that while Stratford has a youth shelter and women's shelter, men experiencing homelessness are currently housed through the provision of beds in local motels coordinated by the CSM.

4.3 Homelessness – Contributing Factors

Feedback from stakeholders indicate that it is not just the change in population numbers and the deficit in housing that is contributing to homelessness. It is also the overall increase in shelter cost, rising food prices, and increased transportation costs that have significant impact.

Increasing rates of mental health and addiction, elevated levels of complex needs, and financial and capacity limitations of support service organizations also contributes to the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Not for profit organization surveys indicate that in 2024 28 individuals were identified as requiring fully supportive housing and being unable to access it. There is an urgent need for supportive housing with wrap-around services to address the complex cases on the BNL. Funding from senior levels of government has been oversubscribed and difficult to obtain.

4.4 Homelessness – Resources

A total of 117 available shelter beds are identified across the CMSM region as tracked through the Coordinated Access Housing Inventory – Stratford, Perth County, St. Marys – City of Stratford, Social Services Department.

The CMSM has access to 58 short term shelter beds provided through local motels and facilities. For those that have reached out to the CMSM for emergency shelter on an average annual basis 5% have been declined, often due to complicating addiction factors, however the number of required beds continues to increase. The organization that provides shelter for homeless youth provides 15 beds. There are 13 VAW shelter beds, and 20 transitional beds for women and their children, however, stay lengths have increased due to lack of affordable housing.

Figure 4.4.1 Homeless Resource Shelters

Type of Bed	Number of Beds
Temporary Motel Shelter beds*	58
Youth Shelter beds	15
VAW Shelter beds	13
Transitional	31
Total	117

source: CMSM, Coordinated Access Housing Inventory

** note the temporary motel shelter beds indicate the theoretical maximum if every motel bed had someone in shelter and no one else staying at the motel.*

In addition to the above noted beds and need for additional capacity, there are other support services and resources available for vulnerable individuals and those experiencing homelessness in Stratford. As part of the CMSM's coordinated response with local partners they provide outreach workers, along with local police, Perth County's community paramedic program and the Canadian Mental Health Association, that help to support those sleeping rough. Other available resources include a centrally located connection centre operated by CMHA Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Services with the collaboration of several other non-profit organizations. This centre has designated hours, provides a place of warmth, gathering, and support services, but does not offer overnight accommodations.

5.0 Housing Profile

5.1 Key Trends in Housing Stock

While the shift has been slow, current site plans and permits indicate a strong preponderance of stacked town houses, semis, multi-unit semis and small infill apartment buildings, with a higher number of one and two bedrooms set to come online in the next three years.

As seniors vacate their large three bedroom and more homes in the next ten years, it will be interesting to see how and if this housing stock is adapted to today's smaller families through renovations, joins our large number of tourism-oriented units or remains the housing of choice for younger seniors moving to the region. An opportunity exists for the planning and building department to plan for this excess of multi-unit homes and the ability to adapt them to current needs.

Since 2019, the City of Stratford has built an additional 62 housing units to add to the CMSM portfolio.

The second largest non-profit housing provider (130 units), which is a regional municipal collaborative with housing units located in Stratford, has not constructed any new units since 2009.

The below graph provides an overview of the general housing development trends in Stratford over time.

Figure 5.1.1 New Housing Construction

New Housing Construction

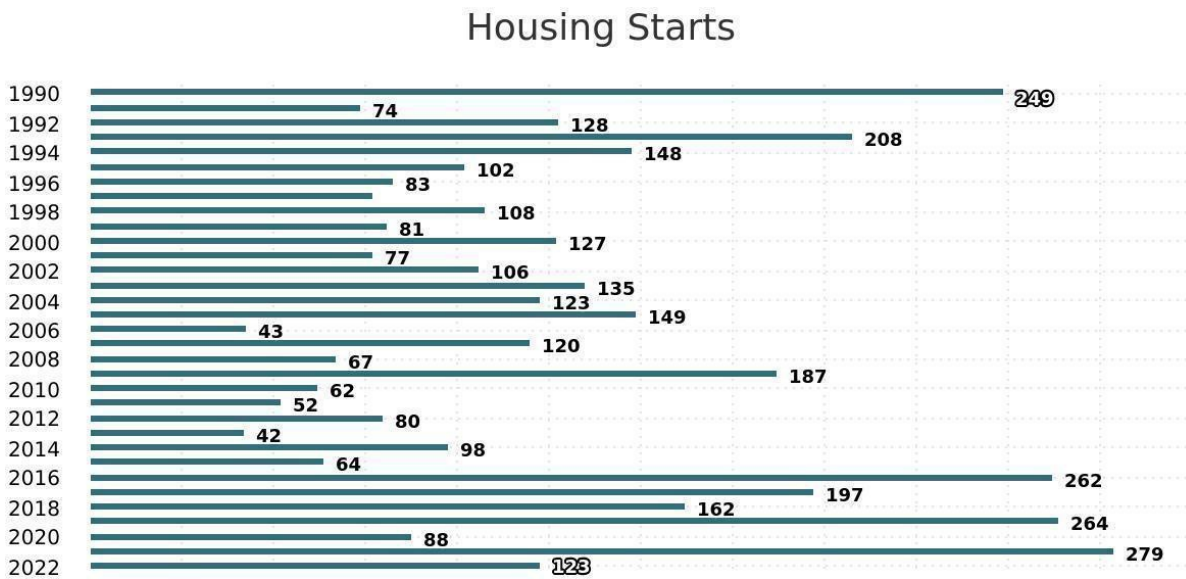
Source: CMHC

Last Updated: February 2025



Source: Townfolio/CMHC

Figure 5.1.2 New Housing Starts 1990 to 2022



The survey conducted as part of this HNA in February of 2025, indicates that of those developers responding, (6 respondents), they are reporting the following units under development:

- 107 total units of new housing are anticipated to be completed in 2025 with 112 in 2026 from the reporting developers
- of these 32 will be one bedroom or studio units

Next Five Years

- In the next five years, 375 units of rental housing are anticipated to be completed of which 196 units are anticipated to be affordable. This number is as reported by the developer survey respondents, so is subject to market forces and changing financial dynamics.
- In the next ten years, a total of 778 units of housing are anticipated to be completed, affordable and market rate combined (including the 375 above)

5.2 Local Housing History

Stratford has continually evolved its economic base building a strong manufacturing and tourism sector, while also being surrounded by rich agricultural production. The growing attraction of industry has led to a need for employees, of which many positions go vacant or require commuting. While StatsCan data groups Stratford with the counties of Grey, Bruce, Perth and Huron, this region consistently reports one of the lowest rates of unemployment in the province. This matches the experience of investStratford, who reports that manufacturing, agriculture and hospitality often experience difficulties in filling positions with qualified individuals. The significant draw of seasonal tourists, theatre staff and actors, and associated seasonal staff to support the tourism sector creates an added layer to housing needs. The following table provides an overview of Stratford housing characteristics. All but the last two data points were prepopulated.

5.2.1 Housing Units: Currently Occupied/Available			
Characteristic	Data	Value	%
Total private dwellings	Total	14,745	
	Single-detached	7,800	53%

Figure 5.2.1 Housing Units, Occupied and Available

5.2.1 Housing Units: Currently Occupied/Available			
Characteristic	Data	Value	%
Breakdown by structural types of units (number of units)	Semi-detached	1,530	10%
	Row house	935	6%
	Apartment/flat in a duplex	670	4.5%
	Apartment in a building that has fewer than 5 storeys	2,950	20%
	Apartment in a building that has 5 or more storeys	815	5.5%
	Other single attached	30	0.2%
	Movable dwelling	5	0.03%
Breakdown by size (number of units)	Total	14,745	
	No bedrooms	70	0.5%
	1 bedroom	1,955	13%
	2 bedrooms	3,830	26%
	3 bedrooms	6,040	41%
	4 or more bedrooms	2,850	19%
Breakdown by date built (number of units)	Total	14,745	
	1960 or before	5,590	
	1961 to 1980	3,920	

Figure 5.2.1 Continues, Housing Units Occupied and Available

5.2.1 Housing Units: Currently Occupied/Available			
Characteristic	Data	Value	%
	1981 to 1990	1,220	
	1991 to 2000	1,325	
	2001 to 2005	665	
	2006 to 2010	555	
	2011 to 2015	515	
	2016 to 2021	960	
Rental vacancy rate (Percent)	Total	1.5	
	Bachelor	0	
	1 bedroom	1.7	
	2 bedrooms	0.9	
	3 bedrooms+	5.3	
Number of primary and secondary rental units	Primary	2,162	
	Secondary*	48	
Number of short-term rental units	Total**	113	

** the number of secondary suites created between 2020 (when municipal tracking through CityWide began) and 2024 and includes detached accessory residential units. It is also assumed that the 23 private suites identified (below) by Destination Stratford are included in the 48 units identified by the municipality. As of December 31, 2024, permits have been issued for an additional 17 new secondary suites which are not included in the 48 above, as they have yet to be completed.*

*** The number of short-term rental (STR) units is compiled by Destination Stratford and is assumed to include the 66 municipally licensed STR's in 2024. The number used is the number of STR accommodators during peak tourism season.*

It is also assumed that rooms in hotels, inns and motels are not available for short-term apartment rental, they are exclusive for tourist accommodation and are not counted in the above Table 5.2.1

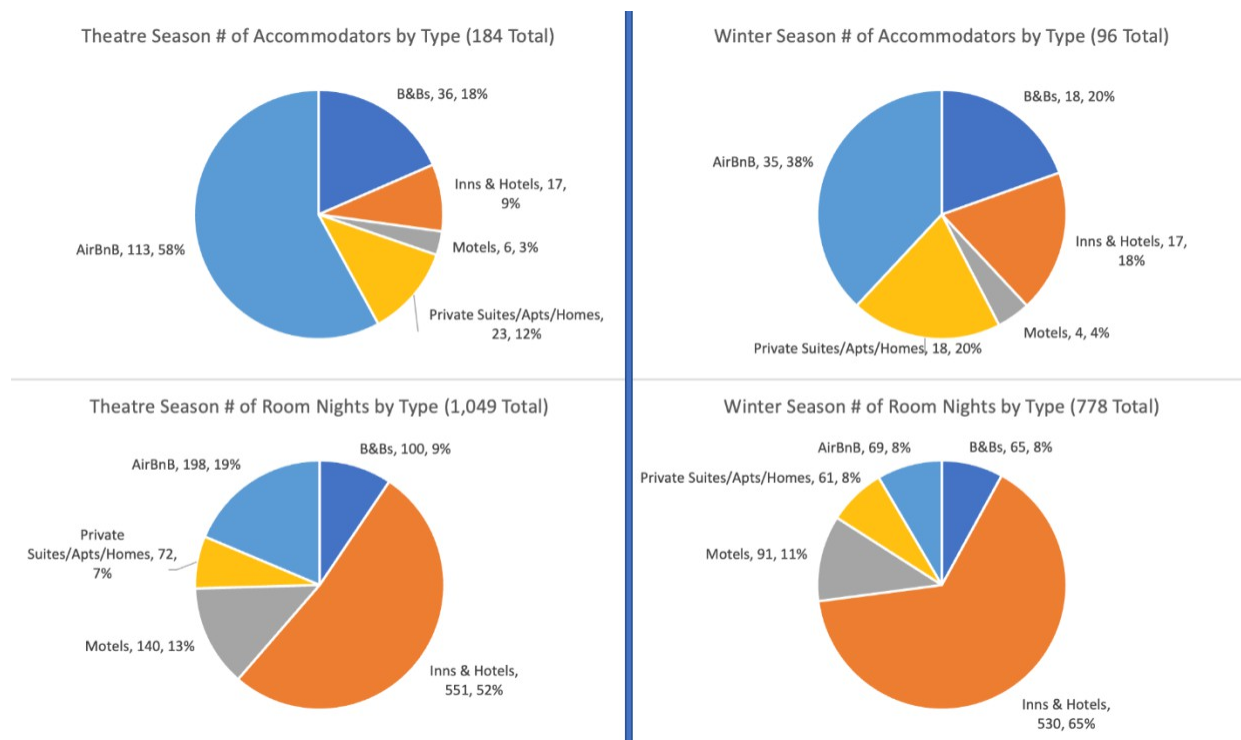
Drawing on the data from the above Table 5.2.1 it can be noted that the largest number of units are provided by single detached dwellings (53%) followed by units in apartment buildings that have fewer than 5 storeys (20%).

The data from Table 5.2.1 also demonstrates that one-bedroom units comprise only 13% of the units offered. This aligns with the data in Section 3.6.3 2021 Affordable Housing Deficit that highlights the greatest need is for one person households with a deficit of 760-835 units. It can also be noted that with the number of three- and four-bedroom homes making up 60% of Stratford's housing stock demonstrating the disconnect between current need of one- and two-bedroom units and existing housing stock. As well with those aged 65+ making up 24% of Stratford's population, there may be a potential link that many seniors in Stratford are over housed.

The rental vacancy rates in Stratford especially for bachelor, one bedroom and two-bedroom units are extremely low, adding to the demonstrated need.

Stratford Tourism Alliance, which operates as Destination Stratford, is Stratford's official destination marketing organization. One of the services provided is an [online accommodations map](#) which is updated seasonally. The below graphs represent accommodators and rooms from mid-2024.

Figure 5.2.2 Accommodation Bookings by Season and Type



source: Destination Stratford

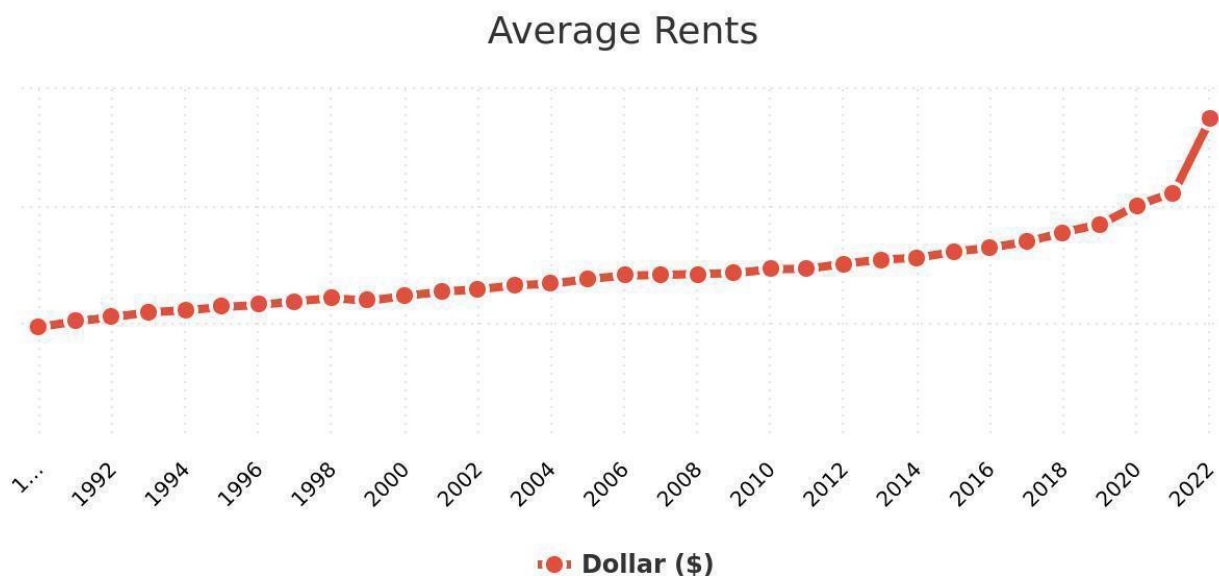
The Stratford Festival maintains an additional 80 units of seasonal worker housing, which would typically not appear in the above data as it is not available on the open market.

5.3 Rental Rates

Drawing on Townfolio's aggregated CMHC data, the graphs below demonstrate the recent steep upward trajectory of average rental rates.

In 2016, the average monthly rent was \$822 and 2022 it was \$1373 – an increase of 67%. According to the 2024 CMHC 2024 rental market report, the average monthly rent in Stratford was \$1538 as of October 2024 representing an 87% increase since 2016, and a 12% increase since 2022.

Figure 5.3.1 Rental Rates, 1992 to 2022



Source: Townfolio/CMHC

The City of Stratford Social Services Department also completes an annual rental market scan to provide more localized accuracy. The rental market scan is completed each year over a period of 10 to 12 weeks. Unique ads are recorded for bachelor, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, and 3+ bedroom units within the City of Stratford. The rental market scan is conducted using rental housing advertisements posted online. Sources for the scan include Kijij.ca; Point2homes.com; Realtor.ca; Rentolas.ca; and Rentboard.ca

Only the unique advertisements are recorded. To avoid possible duplicate ads, each ad is checked to ensure they do not match various criteria of past recorded advertisements including

price, square footage, and posting date. An electronic version of each ad is saved to ensure each ad can be audited for uniqueness. Any ad that is found to be a duplicate is removed from the analysis.

The below tables reflect the past 5 years of survey data, which highlights an increase of 36% in rental rates for both a bachelor and one bedroom unit between 2019-20

Figure 5.3.2 Rental Rates by Unit Type

Unit size	2019	2020	2021	2022	2024
Bachelor	\$963	\$1,358	\$1,088	\$847	\$1,315
1 Bedroom	\$1,049	\$1,266	\$1,264	\$1,423	\$1,658
2 Bedroom	\$1,486	\$1,477	\$1,556	\$1,774	\$2,057
3+ Bedroom	\$1,838	\$1,883	\$1,955	\$2,409	\$2,585

Source: CMSM rental scan

5.4 Vacancy Rates

Drawing on Townfolio's aggregated CMHC data, the graph below demonstrates the low average vacancy rates, which since 2016 have remained below 2.3% which is considered too low for a balanced rental market.

Figure 5.4.1 Vacancy Rates 1990 to 2022



Source: Townfolio/CMHC

Note: The vacancy rates are vacancy rates in the primary rental market which consists of units in privately initiated, purpose-built rental structures of three units or more

5.5 Non-Market Housing

The following data was compiled from the City of Stratford Social Services Department (CMSM) Perth County Service Inventory. Only units in Stratford were included.

Figure 5.5.1 Current non Market Housing Units

5.5.1 Current Non-Market Housing Units		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Number of housing units that are subsidized	Total	617
Number of housing units that are below market rent in the private market (can either be rent or income-based definition)	Total	41
Number of co-operative housing units	Total	132
Number of other non-market housing units (permanent supportive, transitional, etc.)	Total	141

source: CMSM

Shelter beds/units are not tabulated for Table 5.5.1 as they are not considered permanent or transitional housing units, rather emergency beds/units.

Developer and operator self-report surveys indicate a further 615 units of below market rental housing in operation in Stratford. It should be noted that the number of housing units that are below market rent in the private sector is not fulsome as there is no means to ensure complete awareness of these units. Many of these units are below market due to length of tenure of tenants and the rise in rental rates in the past 10 years. Annual allowed rent increases have not kept pace with the market, ensuring long term affordability. These affordable units are at risk as ownership changes hands and/or units are rented by new tenants.

5.6 Need & Gap Considerations

The CMSM provides Housing Allowances for Intensive Case Management (ICM) Scattered Site, with 60 total subsidies available across the CMSM region.

The CMSM also provides financial support through the following programs: COHB, OPHI, and Rent supplements totaling 262 total subsidies (at last time of surveying, February 2025) which are available across the CMSM region.

The large numbers of those with high acuity on the BNL is indicative of the need for local supportive housing units with wrap-around supports.

The ICM Program is a housing first intensive case management for those with high acuity off the BNL. Stratford is in need of more supported and supportive housing programs to deal with the high number of those identified as high acuity on the BNL. Stratford is also in need of more case management spaces to assist those with rapid re-housing and to stabilize those in RGI housing who are mid and high acuity. In addition, Stratford is in need of more affordable housing options for those with supports to move into.

5.7 Housing Trends

While the city of Stratford is known for its' yellow and red brick 3 plus bedroom Victorian homes, the increasing number of students, seniors and one person households are causing a shift in building patterns. While there are still single-family homes being built, the last year has seen an increase in new townhouse developments. Additionally, infill accessory residential units and small to mid-level apartments are being added to the city's housing stock.

Simultaneously, developers are requesting smaller lot sizes and citizens are severing large lots to create opportunities for new development. Much of this trend is currently hidden as the units are in site plan or permitting processes so it is unknown how many of these new units will be completed and when.

5.7.1 Housing Sale Prices

The following prepopulated table has been augmented with data provided by the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) – One Point. For information that is not available as requested in Table 5.9.1, relevant, available data is outlined below the table.

Figure 5.7.1 Housing Values

5.7.1 Housing Values		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Median monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings (Canadian dollars)	Median	1,080
Purpose-built rental prices by unit size (Average, Canadian dollars)	Total	1,058
	Bachelor	752
	1 bedroom	947
	2 bedrooms	1,139
	3 bedrooms+	1,222
Purpose-built rental prices by unit size (Median, Canadian dollars per month)	Total	998
	Bachelor	705
	1 bedroom	875
	2 bedrooms	1,050
	3 bedrooms+	1,165
Sale prices (Canadian dollars)	Average	\$652,676
	Median	\$605,000

Data provided by the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) – One Point provides context to Stratford specific 2024 real estate values:

Figure 5.7.2 Market Sales Figures November 2024

Characteristic	Data	Value (year to date November 2024)
Single Family Market Activity	Average	\$679,411
	Median	\$625,000
Apartment Market Activity	Average	\$442,667
	Median	\$463,000
Residential Market Activity	Average	\$653,275
	Median	\$610,000

Characteristic	Benchmark Price (November 2024)
Composite	\$595,200
Single Family	\$607,200
One Storey	\$653,500
Two Storey	\$585,900
Apartment Unit	\$493,500

Source: *The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) – One Point*

- *Stratford MLS Residential Market Activity – Year-to-date November 2024*
- *Stratford MLS Single Family Market Activity – Year-to-date November 2024*
- *Stratford MLS Apartment Market Activity – Year-to-date November 2024*
- *Stratford MLS Home Price Index Benchmark Price – November 2024*

5.7.2 Change in Housing Stock

The following prepopulated table has been augmented with data provided by the Municipality, tracked through CityWide:

Figure 5.7.2 Change in Housing Stock 2024

5.7.2 Housing Units: Change in Housing Stock		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Demolished – breakdown by tenure	Tenant	5 total in 2024
	Owner	
Completed – Overall and breakdown by structural type (annual, number of structures)	Total	157
	Single	96
	Semi-detached	0
	Row	61
	Apartment	0
Completed – Breakdown by tenure (annual, number of structures)	Tenant	0
	Owner	124
	Condo	33
	Coop	0
Housing starts by structural type and tenure (permits issued for new construction in 2024)	Total (201)	Single Family – 29 Semi-detached – 14 ¹ Townhouse – 114 ² Apartment – 27 ³ Secondary Suites - 17

Source: City of Stratford, CityWide

¹Seven permits for two units each = 14 units

²The number of permits issued was 23 = 114 units

³Includes triplex, quadplex and larger = 27 units

6.0 Projected Housing Needs

6.1 Projection Methodology Guidelines

Housing Needs Assessment Methodology: HART Approach

The federal government recommends using the Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART) methodology as a reference point for housing needs assessments, with additional considerations and data points to enhance its validity. Developed by the University of British Columbia in collaboration with Statistics Canada, HART is a census-based tool designed to measure core housing need and affordable shelter costs by income category, household size, and priority populations. This methodology enables governments to establish effective housing targets aimed at reducing chronic housing need and homelessness.

HART household projections estimate increases or decreases in the total number of households using a line-of-best-fit methodology. This approach assumes that historical trends observed in the 2006, 2016, and 2021 census periods will continue, without accounting for changes in policy or significant demographic shifts. Additionally, this method does not incorporate potential disruptions, such as economic downturns or unprecedented events like the COVID-19 pandemic, which can substantially alter housing demand.

While HART projections provide a valuable reference for understanding potential growth or decline in Stratford's housing needs, they are not definitive assessments on which to base precise housing targets. Instead, they should be used in conjunction with other data sources and policy considerations to develop a comprehensive housing strategy that reflects Stratford's unique economic, demographic, and policy landscape.

The following table, provided by HART, outlines the projected number of households by size and income category for Stratford by 2031.

Figure 6.1.1 Household Size by Income Category

2031 Projected Households by Household Size and Income Category

The following table shows the projected total number of households in 2031 by household size and income category.

EXPORT

Stratford CY (CSD, ON)						
HH Income Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5+ Person	Total
Very Low Income	431	1	0	0	0	432
Low Income	2,094	336	106	4	0	2,540
Moderate Income	1,513	1,306	285	111	31	3,246
Median Income	949	1,811	536	173	87	3,556
High Income	516	2,591	1,114	1,159	644	6,024
Total	5,503	6,045	2,041	1,447	762	15,798

Figure 6.1.2 Project Household Gain/Loss 2021 to 2031

2031 Projected Household Gain/Loss (2021 to 2031)

The following table shows the projected gain or loss of households by household size and income. These values represent projections of total households for the period between 2021 and 2031. Please note that gains and losses represent both increases or decreases in population, as well as mobility between income categories and household sizes. For this reason, growth and decline in the lower incomes may be especially [impacted by CERB](#).

EXPORT

Stratford CY (CSD, ON)						
HH Income Category	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5+ Person	Total
Very Low Income	41	-34	0	0	0	7
Low Income	209	-14	1	-16	0	180
Moderate Income	133	151	40	11	-9	326
Median Income	89	171	106	-67	-13	286
High Income	116	331	-46	-81	-11	309
Total	588	605	101	-153	-33	1,108

6.2 Projection Methodology

Synopsis of the Housing Projection Methodology

Overview - HART and Beyond

The Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART) methodology provides a framework for projecting population, household formation, and housing demand to estimate a community's future housing needs. The methodology follows a step-by-step approach: Population Projection, Household Projection, and Housing Demand Projection. While HART is a valuable reference, it does not account for the tenure status of underserved individuals or what happens to vacated units when they move, potentially underestimating the total housing need. This methodology refines HART projections by integrating additional economic, demographic, and supply-side factors.

Step 1: Population Projection

Population projections follow the Cohort-Component Method, estimating future population based on survival rates, births, and migration trends. Key considerations include:

- **Updated Post-Census Estimates:** Using 2022 Statistics Canada data to correct census undercounts/overcounts.
- **Net Migration Trends:** Disaggregating interprovincial, intraprovincial, and international migration, incorporating federal immigration targets.
- **Economic Considerations:** Accounting for employment-driven migration and post-secondary student intake.
- **Growth Scenarios:** Creating high-growth projections for larger communities to avoid underestimating demand.
- **Smaller Communities:** Where Statistics Canada projections are unavailable, historical high-growth trends serve as a basis for alternative projections.

Step 2: Household Projection

Household projections are determined by applying headship rates to population projections. The methodology includes:

- **Headship Rate Application:** Estimating household formation rates by age group, considering trends in family vs. non-family households.
- **Household Composition:** Projecting proportions of household types (e.g., couples, lone parents, multi-family households, and one-person households).
- **Household Size Projection:** Using historical proportions to estimate household sizes by age and family type.
- **Adjustments for Economic Trends:** Addressing recent declines in headship rates due to affordability issues to avoid underestimation.
- **Young Adults (18-34):** Considering economic modeling for household formation, particularly in smaller communities.

Step 3: Housing Demand Projection

Housing demand is projected based on household tenure, dwelling type, and affordability considerations. This step includes:

- **Ownership and Rental Projections:** Applying historical and trending ownership rates to estimate tenure split.
- **Dwelling Type Projection:** Determining future demand for housing types (single, semi-detached, row housing, and apartments) based on historical propensities and economic trends.
- **Income-Based Housing Need:** Aligning housing demand projections with income categories to estimate affordability gaps.
- **Vacancy & Turnover Adjustments:** Addressing existing gaps by considering tenure shifts and the fate of vacated units when households move.

Additional Considerations

1. **Economic Data Integration**
 - Economic conditions, unemployment rates, and housing market trends influence household formation.
 - Incorporating CMHC headship rate projections, particularly for young adults in high-demand markets.
2. **Supply Capacity & Gaps**
 - Evaluating available serviced lots and projected housing stock to identify supply shortfalls.
 - Factoring in demolitions, conversions, and vacant units to refine housing need estimates.
3. **Regional & Comparative Analysis**

- Benchmarking projections against comparable municipalities with similar growth patterns.
- Considering population density trends to inform planning for higher-density developments.

Conclusion

This methodology builds on the HART framework while addressing key gaps in tenure shifts and existing housing supply turnover. By integrating economic, demographic, and supply-side factors, this refined approach provides a more comprehensive estimation of housing need, ensuring communities are equipped to plan effectively for future growth.

Figure 6.2.1 Projected Households by Size and Income

6.2.1 Projected Households by Household Size and Income Category 2031						
HH Income Category	1 person	2 person	3 person	4 person	5+ person	Total
Very Low Income	431	1	0	0	0	432
Low Income	2,094	336	106	4	0	2,540
Moderate Income	1,513	1,306	285	111	31	3,246
Median Income	949	1,811	536	173	87	3,556
High Income	516	2,591	1,114	1,159	644	6,024
Total	5,503	6,045	2,041	1,447	762	15

Figure 6.2.1 Continued, Projections

6.2.1 Projections		
Characteristic	Data/Formula	Value
Women by age distribution (# and %)	0-14	2,100 - 10.1%
	15-19	826 - 4%
	20-24	946 - 4.6%
	25-64	9,604 - 46.4%
	65-84	6,082 - 29.4%
	85+	1,148 - 5.5%
Male Births	Births x Estimated Proportion of Male Births	N/A
Female Births	Total births – Male Births	N/A
Survival Rate	0-14	2,100 - 10.1%
Net Migrations	15-19	N/A
Projected Family Households	Age-group population x projected age-specific family headship rate	10,556
Projected Non-family Households	Age-group population x projected age-specific non-family headship rate	7,293

Figure 6.2.1 Continued, Projections

6.2.1 Projections		
Characteristic	Data/Formula	Value
Total Projected Headship Rate	Family headship rates + non-family headship rates	Family - 59% Non-Family - 41%
Projected Net Household Formation	Projected households by type (family and non-family) (Year 2) – Projected households by type (family and non-family) (Year 1)	Net New Family - 835 Net New Non-Fam - 2269
Projected Owner Households	Projected households by type, year and age group x Projected ownership rate by type, year and age group	12,316
Projected Renter Households	Projected households by type, year and age group – projected owner households by type, year and age group	5,533
Projected Dwelling Choice	Projected households by type, tenure and age group x projected dwelling choice propensities by type, tenure and age group	Single Detached Apartment Unit

6.3 Population and Households Projections

6.3.1 Demographic Trends and Housing Demand

An analysis of Stratford's current demographic data indicates a pronounced trend toward an aging population, driven in part by migration from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) for retirement purposes. This trend is expected to result in an increase in both the average and median ages of the population. As the demographic profile shifts, there will be a growing demand for smaller housing units, as older adults typically seek more manageable and accessible living arrangements.

Currently, over 60% of Stratford's housing stock consists of three-bedroom or larger homes, despite 70% of households comprising only two people or fewer. This misalignment between the housing stock and household composition has resulted in an oversupply of single-family homes. The market impact of this imbalance is evident in rental pricing trends, where rents for three-bedroom homes have not increased as sharply as those for smaller units, indicating a relative surplus of larger homes. Conversely, Stratford's overall rental prices remain above the national average due to the limited availability of appropriately sized rental housing.

Projections using the HART methodology further reinforce these findings. Households with four or more members are expected to decline in the coming decade, while the growth of three-person households is projected to slow. In contrast, the number of one- and two-person households is expected to increase significantly. This shift underscores the necessity of rebalancing Stratford's housing supply to align with the evolving demographic and household composition, particularly by increasing the availability of smaller, more affordable housing options.

6.3.2 Housing Development and Market Adjustments

Recent housing development trends indicate a shift away from the dominance of single-family homes toward increased construction of apartment units. In 2024, of the 157 housing completions, 96 were single-family homes, with no apartment units built. However, building permit data suggest a notable shift, with apartments accounting for approximately 13% (27 out of 201) of total units permitted, while single-family homes represent only 14% (29 out of 201). This adjustment suggests that developers and the market are beginning to recognize the growing need for smaller housing options, aligning development patterns with current and projected housing demand.

This transition in housing supply is essential to address years of underdevelopment in apartment-style and smaller-unit housing, including townhomes, semi-detached homes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). As the population continues to age, there will be an acute need for these housing types, both to support older residents looking to downsize and to provide affordable housing options for the local workforce.

6.3.3 Projected Housing Stock Adjustments

The projections outlined in this assessment do not align with Stratford's Development Charges (DC) Study, which primarily extrapolates historical development patterns over the long term. However, market trends indicate that while single-family homes will continue to be built, they will represent a decreasing proportion of overall housing production. The composition of Stratford's housing stock should shift as follows:

- One-bedroom or smaller units will increase from 13% to over 16% of total housing stock.
- Two-bedroom units will increase from 26% to nearly 29% of the total.
- Three-bedroom units will decline from 41% to approximately 38% of the total stock.
- Four-bedroom and larger units will decrease from 19% to approximately 17% of the overall housing stock.

This rebalancing of the housing market is necessary to align with Stratford's aging population, workforce housing requirements, and affordability challenges. As median and average incomes are expected to stagnate over the next decade, the supply of smaller, more affordable units will play a critical role in ensuring that Stratford residents have access to appropriate and attainable housing options.

While migration trends, particularly from the Greater Toronto Area, contribute to Stratford's aging demographic, statistical analysis indicates that the primary driver of this shift is the natural aging of the existing population. As residents grow older, household sizes tend to decrease while the total number of households increases. For example, a family of five may transition into four separate households as children move out and parents become a single or two-person household. This demographic trend underscores the increasing demand for smaller housing units.

Despite this shift, there remains a strong preference within the development industry for constructing larger, single-detached homes rather than smaller townhomes or apartment units. This misalignment between market demand and development patterns highlights the need for a broader cultural shift within Stratford. The municipality and community must actively support the development of housing types that align with current and future housing needs, rather than solely prioritizing the traditional preferences of the development sector.

Municipal planning policies and directives over the next decade will play a critical role in shaping this transition. A strategic push towards the creation of more small-scale, multi-unit housing—including apartments, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units—will not only address affordability concerns but also strengthen the municipality’s fiscal health. Increased density and a more diverse housing stock will enhance Stratford’s long-term sustainability, economic resilience, and overall community well-being.

Figure 6.3.4 Anticipated Population by 2035

6.3.4 Anticipated Population by 2035		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Anticipated population	Total in 2025	35,100
Anticipated population growth	Total anticipated by 2035	39,141
	Additional population by 2035	4,041
Anticipated age	Percentage	11.5%
	Average	48.51
	Median	51
Anticipated age distribution (# and % of population)	0-14	4,377 - 11.18%
	15-19	1,706 - 4.36%
	20-24	1,962 - 5.01%
	25-64	18,770 - 47.95%
	65-84	10,682 - 27.29%
	85+	1,644 - 4.2%

6.3.4 Anticipated Households by 2035		
Characteristic	Data	Value
Current number of households	Total	14,745
Anticipated number of households	Total 2035	17,849
Anticipated Households by Tenure	Renter	39%
	Owner	61%
Anticipated Units by Type	Total	17,849
	Single	8,803
	Semi-detached	1,785
	Row	1,091
	Apartment	6,170
Anticipated Units by Number of Bedrooms	1 bedroom	2,930
	2 bedroom	5,167
	3 bedroom	6,790
	4 bedroom	2,962
	5 bedroom	N/A
Anticipated Households by Income	Average	
	Median	4,018
	Very Low	486
	Low	2,870

6.3.4 Anticipated Households by 2035		
Characteristic	Data	Value
	Moderate	3,668
	High	6,807
Anticipated average household size	Total	2.2

7.0 Housing Needs Assessment – Next Steps

The housing needs assessment will be shared with the team who are updating Stratford's official plan, as well as with the Grand Trunk Committee and staff team.

During the official plan review process the HNA will be provided as a source document to provide context to plans.

7.1 Long Term Planning & Actions

The Housing Needs Assessment has provided clarity to the disconnect in typologies and demographics. Smaller units, rental units and affordable units must be built in the next 5 years to meet the needs of our changing population, including young people moving out on their own and seniors seeking to downscale. Meanwhile developers still show a preference for larger single-family homes, although the data suggest that we are in the midst of a seed shift in this regard.

The municipality must seek to incentivize affordable housing development while simultaneously creating fertile ground for the development of smaller units. This can include the encouragement of infill development, adoption of pre-approved plans for Accessory Dwelling Units, streamlining of processes in the development of rental housing, including zoning changes, minimum parking reductions and variance approvals, all with the goal of creating infill opportunities.

7.1.1 Community Improvement Plan

In the 2025 budget the city of Stratford approved the initiation of a fund for a community improvement plan to be brought before council in spring 2025. The community improvement plan could incentivize new one-bedroom units and affordable units via any of the following methodologies

- Provide incremental tax incentive grants for purpose built affordable rental units ensuring new stock added
- Provide small grants to homeowners building infill units such as accessory dwelling units or basement suites
- Provide tax incentive grants for purchasers of affordable housing who commit to maintaining a level of affordability over time
- Provide incentives for alterations to large homes that are being divided into smaller units

7.1.2 Official Plan Opportunities

The current review of the official plan provides the opportunity to revisit density and parking requirements in light of the identified needs of the HNA.

7.1.3 Future Proofing

The analysis of the disconnect in housing stock, provides the planning and building departments the opportunity to consider retrofits of existing large homes (3 bedroom plus) to meet the needs of future citizens.

The Housing Needs Assessment provides analysis of future citizens' needs to inform the development of the 18-acre Grand Trunk site which the municipality has completed site plans for. The city is now in the process of assessing housing opportunities and needs as well as considering expanded recreational facilities.

7.1.4 Infrastructure

While the transit infrastructure has ample capacity to meet the needs of a larger community, the Housing Needs Assessment provides information to inform decision making on future infrastructure development. Combined with the Official Plan Review, it will be utilized by the Municipality to plan for the population needs of 2035.

Annex A: Relevant Housing Needs Assessment and Data Links & References

Data and Analysis

[Housing Statistics - Statistics Canada](#)

[Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

[Population estimates, July 1, by census metropolitan \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

[Population and demography statistics \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

[Population Projections for Canada \(2021 to 2068\), Provinces and Territories \(2021 to 2043\) \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

[Housing Market Information Portal](#)

[UrbanSim – Scenario Modeling](#)

Reports & Publications

Housing Markets Insight - [CMHC's household projections for 8 of Canada's major urban centres until 2042](#)

CMHC - [Housing Shortages in Canada Report](#)

University of British Columbia - [Housing Assessment Resource Tools \(HART\)](#)

University of London - [Affordability targets: Implications for Housing Supply](#)

[Nova Scotia Housing Needs Assessment Report Methodology](#)

[Ontario Land Needs Assessment Methodology](#)

[British Columbia Affordable Housing Need Assessment Methodology](#)

Housing Assessment Resource Tools (HART). [Housing Needs Assessment Tool](#).

investStratford. [Community Profile](#).

[Statistics Canada. 2023. \(table\). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023.](#)

[Townfolio](#). Stratford, Ontario.

[World Population Review](#). Stratford.

Appendix A: Community Stakeholders & Surveys

The below listed individuals and organizations were either sent surveys or interviews were requested with them. Additionally, organizations may have responded to the surveys through shared links shared by investStratford, Perth Huron Builders Association or other unrecorded shares. Respondents had the opportunity to respond fully anonymously.

Municipal
Director of Building & Planning, City of Stratford
Deputy Chief Building Officer
Director of Social Services
Housing Manager, Social Services
Research and Program Analyst, Social Services
Managing Director, investStratford
Chief Executive Officer, investStratford
Manager of Planning
Intermediate Planner
Small Business Advisor, investStratford
Local Real estate Data
EO Huron Perth Association of Realtors
Business/Workforce Organizations
General Manager, Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce
Executive Director, Destination Stratford
Accommodations Supervisor, Stratford Festival
Aisin Canada
VisTech Manufacturing
TGMinto
Hendrickson
GreenSeal Cannabis Company Ltd
Not-for-Profit Organizations
United Way Perth Huron
Optimism Place
Emily Murphy Centre
L'Arche Community Housing
Community Living

Special Olympics
Shelterlink Youth Housing
Connections Centre
Stratford District Legion
John Howard Society
Huron Perth Public Health
Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance
Perth Huron Builders Association
Housing Cooperatives / Community Housing
Banbury Cross Housing Co-operative Inc.
Bard of Avon Housing Co-operative Inc.
Festival City Housing Co-operative Homes
Spruce Lodge Seniors Home
Vineyard Village Non-Profit Housing
Windmill Gardens Community Inc.
Long Term Care
Cedarcroft Place
Chartwell Anne Hathaway
Greenwood Court
McCarthy Place
River Gardens
Spruce Lodge
Academic – Students
University of Waterloo Stratford Campus
Nancy Campbell International School
Conestoga College
Private Sector
Pol Quality Homes
BMI Developers
Campbell Court Apartments
Greenwood Drive Apartments
Park Property Management
Avon Place
315 William St. Apartments
Hip Developments

MEI Developments
Reid Heritage Homes
Cachet Developments

Appendix B: Glossary

Affordable Housing: A dwelling unit where the cost of shelter, including rent and utilities, is a maximum of 30% of before-tax household income.

Area Median Household Income: The median income of all households in a given area.

Cooperative Housing: A type of residential housing option whereby the owners do not own their units outright. This would include non-profit housing cooperatives, as stand-alone co-operatives or in partnership with another non-profit, including student housing co-ops, as well as Indigenous co-ops, including those in partnership with Indigenous governments and organizations. This does not, however, include homeownership co-ops or equity co-ops that require an investment, which along with any profit earned, is returned to co-op investors.

Core Housing Need: Refers to whether a private household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (attains all three housing indicator thresholds).

- *Adequate* – Does not require any major repairs, according to residents. Major repairs include those to defective plumbing or electrical wiring, or structural repairs to walls, floors or ceilings.
- *Suitable* – Has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to guidelines outlined in National Occupancy Standard (NOS).
- *Affordable* – All shelter costs total less than 30% of a household's before-tax income.

Household: A person or a group of persons (other than foreign residents) who occupy a private dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada.

Household Formation: The net change in the number of households.

Supportive Housing: Prioritizes people experiencing chronic homelessness and other vulnerable people who have the highest support needs. It provides long-term affordable housing and a diversity of customized support services.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Prioritizes people experiencing chronic homelessness and other vulnerable people who have the highest support needs. It provides long-term affordable housing and a diversity of customized support services.

Purpose-Built Rental: Also known as the primary rental market or secure rentals; multi-unit buildings (three or more units) which are built specifically for the purpose of providing long-term rental accommodations.

Short-Term Rentals: All or part of a dwelling unit rented out for less than 28 consecutive days in exchange for payment. This includes bed and breakfasts (B&Bs) but excludes hotels and motels. It also excludes other accommodations where there is no payment.

Suppressed Household Formation: New households that would have been formed but are not due to a lack of attainable options. The persons who would have formed these households include, but are not limited to, many adults living with family members or roommates and individuals wishing to leave unsafe or unstable environments but cannot due to a lack of places to go.

Missing Middle Housing: Housing that fits the gap between low-rise, primarily single-family homes and mid-rise apartment buildings, typically including secondary and garden suites, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, rowhouses and townhouses, courtyard housing, and low-rise apartment buildings of 4 storeys or less. These housing types provide a variety of housing options that add housing stock and meet the growing demand for walkability. The missing middle also refers to the lack of available and affordable housing for middle-income households to rent or own.



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 17, 2025
To: Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee
From: Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Report Number: FIN25-019
Attachments: 1. FHI Preliminary Commentary
 2. FHSI Preliminary Commentary
 3. Top-Up Dividend Motion

Title: Festival Hydro Inc. and Festival Hydro Services Inc. 2024 Audited Financial Statements and Dividend Declaration

Objective: To receive the audited financial statements for 2024 for both Festival Hydro Inc. (FHI) and Festival Hydro Services Inc. (FHSI) and authorize the dividend declaration.

Background: City Council is updated regularly on the financial and operating activities of Festival Hydro.

Analysis: Attachments for the 2024 audited financial statements of Festival Hydro Inc. and Festival Hydro Services Inc. for the year ended December 31, 2024, do not meet accessibility standards; therefore, please contact Festival Hydro by email at customerservice@festivalhydro.com or by telephone at 519-271-4700 to request to view a copy of the audited statements.

The attachments entitled Preliminary Commentary, while prepared before the statements were finalized, provide some additional context and should be read in conjunction with the audited statements.

Festival Hydro Inc.

Audited results are as expected. Based on the performance, the Board is recommending a Top-Up Common Share dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy. It is seeking a Council resolution for this dividend which will be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

Festival Hydro Services Inc.

Audited results are as expected.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current and future year operating budgets:

The reports are being provided for the previous year and the dividend is attributed back to the City's 2024 year-end so there are no financial impacts to note for current or future operating budgets.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Not applicable: This report does not align with specific Strategic Priorities as it is provided for information only.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Not applicable: This report does not align with specific One Planet Principles as it is provided for information only.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Festival Hydro Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

THAT the Festival Hydro Services Inc. audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2024, be received for information;

AND THAT Council, as the sole shareholder, declare a Top-Up Common Share Dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in the second quarter of 2025.

Prepared by:	Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Recommended by:	Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

April 29, 2025

City of Stratford
P.O. Box 818
1 Wellington Street
Stratford, ON N5A 6W1

Dear City of Stratford Representative:

The following motion was made by the Festival Hydro Inc. Board of Directors at the April 24, 2025 Board Meeting:

MOTION - It was moved by S. Nickle and seconded by J. Tapics THAT the Board recommend to the City of Stratford to declare a top-up Common Share dividend in the amount of \$147,478 for the year 2024, calculated in accordance with Festival Hydro's Dividend Policy, to be paid in Q2 of 2025.

CARRIED

If you have any questions or require any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



Jeff Graham, P. Eng
President & Chief Executive Officer
Festival Hydro Inc.

cc: Alyson Conrad, Chief Financial Officer

JG/cf

To: Mark Hunter and the Finance and Labour Relations Committee
From: Alyson Conrad, CFO
Re: Preliminary FHI Financial Statement Commentary for the year ended December 31, 2024

BALANCE SHEET COMMENTARY

Accounts Receivable: The accounts receivable balance is \$636K lower than it was in 2023. This variance is as described below.

Electric/Water/Sewage receivables – Electric receivables are \$178K lower than prior year while Water and Sewer receivables are \$59K higher than the prior year. All arrears balances (30/60/90 days) are all lower than in prior years. This is a positive trend as FHI moves into the current Winter Moratorium.

A/R Recoverable Work and Miscellaneous AR – A/R recoverable work is down by \$251K from prior year. This is due to payments received from the City for streetlighting construction, maintenance and rent prior to yearend where last year this was in a receivable position.

The remain differences related to the Ontario Energy Rebate and a Reclassification of HST.

Due to Festival Hydro Services (FHSI): The balance due to FHSI is \$94K as compared to the prior year receivable balance of \$29K. Throughout 2024, the balance was in a large payable position due to lower-than-expected capital additions in FHSI however this balance has decreased by \$62K since the end of Q3.

Unbilled revenue: Unbilled revenue is currently \$251K above prior year. There was a moderate increase in the cost of power estimate used for December billings compared to prior year.

Regulatory Asset/(Liability): The regulatory asset balance has decreased by \$1M since December 2023. The majority of the difference from last year is due to lower variances in Wholesale Market Service (WMS) charges (\$1.4M). This is trending downward because the OEB adjusted all WMS rates in order to clear variance accounts faster. These variances have been offset by balances in Network and Connection accounts which are cleared through the Cost of Service and annual IRM processes.

Bank Indebtedness: The bank indebtedness is \$1.1M more than the prior year. This is increasing at the end of the year due to larger than typical capital spend particularly related to the completion of the building renovations. We have seen overall bank indebtedness decrease through the year as demonstrated on the cash flow statement as the full SWAP loan was drawn on in 2024.

Accounts Payable: The balance is \$222K higher than 2023. Previous CDM programs have been reconciled and an expected repayment was made to the IESO in Q4 which cleared several old balances. Overall A/P is up due to trade payables, with a large portion related to the completion of the administration building renovations.

Deposits: Total deposits on hand (both short term and long term) have increased by \$330K compared to prior year. The majority relates to two large construction deposits totaling \$490K.

To: Mark Hunter and the Finance and Labour Relations Committee
From: Alyson Conrad, CFO
Re: Preliminary FHI Financial Statement Commentary for the year ended December 31, 2024 – cont'd

Net income for the year is \$1.91M before the gain on the swap and the OCI, which is \$100K ahead of budget.

INCOME STATEMENT COMMENTARY

Gross Margin on Service Revenue (Distribution Revenue) – The gross margin on service revenue (or Distribution Revenue) is below budget by \$419K. FHI has seen actuals below budget throughout all quarters in the year. The first half of the year was unseasonably mild which decreased consumption. This was partially offset by hot weather in the summer, but the latter months of the year were also more mild than typical years. In addition, there was the loss of one large use customer in February who moved to GS >50kW. The impact of this is approximately \$120K per year.

Other Revenue – Other revenue is above budget by \$341K. \$188K relates to deferral and variance account approvals from the 2025 Cost of Service Application. The remaining is due to increases in administration revenue from billable projects as well as streetlight revenue.

Operating and Maintenance (O & M) Expenses: O&M costs are \$335K below budget. There were several causes for this decrease: 1) a large portion of property taxes were previously included and budgeted in O&M expenses however through the Cost of Service process it was determined that this would be included under the Property Tax USoA which is included in Administration Costs. 2) Tree trimming was unable to be completed in December due to weather and ground conditions so this was completed in early 2025. 3) Underground Distribution Lines and Services continue to be down as FHI has seen less underground issues compared to historical years as well as deferrals made to cable testing.

Billing, Collecting & Admin Costs: Billing and collection costs are \$39K under budget. Admin costs were \$7K under budget. The majority of the billing and collecting decrease is related to a delay in the Customer Information System go live, software maintenance costs did not start until after the system was in production. Postage was also down compared to budget due to increases in e-billing as well as impacts from the Canada Post strike. Administration costs were relatively on budget as a whole with some decreases in office admin, communications and contract services which were offset by the property taxes being moved to this category as noted above.

Interest expense: Interest expense is \$183K over budget. \$82K related to interest on Deferral and Variance accounts (DVAs), this balance can vary greatly year over year depending on the balances in the DVAs.

Current taxes: The main variance from budget to actual was due to lower than budgeted current income tax. This tax calculation is estimated based on planned net income as well as CCA from capital additions. After completion of a detailed tax review, the taxes came in lower than expected.

LOAN COVENANT RATIOS

The Loan Covenant liquidity ratios and debt to equity ratios as prescribed by our major lender, RBC, are being met.

CASH FLOW COMMENTARY:

The cash indebtedness balance at the end of the year is \$4.8M. As noted, there were higher than typical capital spend at the end of the year relating to the completion of the administration building renovation.

FESTIVAL HYDRO INC.

Balance Sheet

For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024		YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024
ASSETS			LIABILITIES		
Current Assets			Current Liabilities		
Accounts Receivable	9,135,134	8,499,148	Bank Indebtedness	3,679,961	4,778,478
Inventory	212,005	410,006	Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	10,364,864	10,587,244
Prepaid Expenses	308,822	650,790	Current Portion of Consumer Deposits	1,256,618	1,186,600
Corporate PILS Recoverable	743,093	1,180,429	Current Portion of Long Term Loans	750,364	1,199,649
Unbilled Revenue	6,915,469	7,166,152	Dividends Declared	233,750	147,478
			Promissory Note	15,600,000	15,600,000
			Loan Advance	2,500,000	—
			Due to FHSI	29,355	94,301
	17,285,168	17,906,525		34,385,556	33,593,749
Property, Plant & Equipment	61,152,857	66,549,243	Other Liabilities		
			Future Payments in Lieu of Income Taxes	3,518,269	3,028,217
Other Assets			Deferred Revenue	3,284,439	4,804,267
Intangible Assets	2,228,625	3,469,096	Employee Future Benefits	1,024,453	1,006,032
Unrealized Gain on Interest Rate Swap	454,755	285,958			
Regulatory Assets	5,989,731	4,543,408	Long Term Debt		
			Consumer Deposits Over One Year	631,651	1,032,050
			RBC Loan - LT Portion	9,061,648	12,861,999
			TOTAL LIABILITIES	51,906,017	56,326,314
			EQUITY		
			Share Capital - Common	9,468,388	9,468,388
			Share Capital - Preferred	6,100,000	6,100,000
			Retained Earnings	19,746,727	20,991,353
			Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income	-109,996	-131,825
			TOTAL EQUITY	35,205,119	36,427,916
TOTAL ASSETS	83,138,112	92,754,230	TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	83,138,112	92,754,230

FESTIVAL HYDRO INC.

Statement of Capital For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD Budget at Dec 31, 2024	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024	Cur to Bdg YTD Var\$	Cur to Bdg YTD Var%
DISTRIBUTION					
Distribution Overhead	1,027,272	1,207,254	1,133,268	-73,986	-6%
Underground Conductor and Devices	715,996	1,200,519	2,156,730	956,211	80%
Distribution Transformers	553,413	415,000	856,197	441,197	106%
Services	242,624	195,000	345,207	150,207	-100%
Distribution Meters	433,583	400,000	346,503	-53,497	-13%
SCADA/Distribution Automation	120,308	76,500	81,805	5,305	7%
Tools and Miscellaneous Equipment	36,453	45,000	41,286	-3,714	-8%
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	3,129,649	3,539,273	4,960,995	1,421,722	40%
OTHER CAPITAL					
Land and Buildings	1,060,506	2,165,000	2,401,240	236,240	11%
Transformer Station	212,043	150,000	132,078	-17,922	-12%
Vehicles and Trailers	92,935	450,000	62,038	-387,962	-86%
Computer Hardware and Software	620,617	1,412,667	1,143,901	-268,766	-19%
Work in Progress	221,461	—	685,295	685,295	100%
Contributed Capital	—	-200,000	-546,819	-346,819	100%
Assumed Capital Assets	—	—	-994,866	-994,866	100%
TOTAL OTHER CAPITAL	2,207,562	3,977,667	2,882,867	-1,094,800	-28%
TOTAL CAPITAL	5,337,210	7,516,940	7,843,861	326,921	4%

FESTIVAL HYDRO INC.

Income Statement

For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD Budget at Dec 31, 2024	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024	Cur to Bdg YTD Var\$	Cur to Bdg YTD Var%
REVENUE					
Service Revenue	75,645,240	73,237,405	81,388,662	8,151,257	11%
Cost of Power	62,317,681	59,529,328	68,099,720	8,570,392	14%
GROSS MARGIN (DISTRIBUTION REVENUE)	13,327,558	13,708,077	13,288,942	-419,135	-3%
Other Operating Revenue	1,128,216	1,053,436	1,393,978	340,543	32%
OPERATING & MAINTENANCE EXPENSE					
Transformer & Distribution Station Expense	419,509	343,730	387,102	43,372	13%
Distribution Lines & Services Overhead	1,711,863	1,961,283	1,736,174	-225,110	-11%
U/G Distribution Lines & Services	235,721	248,456	223,886	-24,570	-10%
Distribution Transformers	70,932	85,823	85,931	108	0%
Distribution Meters	394,578	460,545	368,486	-92,059	-20%
Customer Premises	216,533	252,148	214,985	-37,163	-15%
TOTAL OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE	3,049,137	3,351,985	3,016,564	-335,421	-10%
ADMINISTRATION					
Billing, Collecting & Meter Reading	1,448,423	1,527,186	1,487,925	-39,261	-3%
Administration	3,106,894	3,440,082	3,432,588	-7,494	0%
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION	4,555,317	4,967,268	4,920,513	-46,755	-1%
Allocated Depreciation	-114,241	-135,373	-102,532	-32,841	-24%
TOTAL CONTROLLABLE COST	7,490,213	8,183,880	7,834,545	-349,334	-4%
NET INCOME BEFORE DEP'N, INTEREST & TAX	6,965,562	6,577,633	6,848,375	270,742	4%
Depreciation	2,619,161	2,800,946	2,815,498	—	—
Interest Expense	1,958,442	2,118,661	2,301,391	182,730	9%
Interest Income	-281,671	-320,000	-259,200	-60,800	-19%
NET INCOME BEFORE SWAP, ICM & PBA & INC TAXES	2,669,630	1,978,026	1,990,686	12,660	1%
Current Tax	373,312	171,970	84,187	-87,783	-51%
NET INCOME BEFORE SWAP, ICM & FUTURE TAX	2,296,318	1,806,056	1,906,499	100,443	6%
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Swap	330,131	—	168,797	168,797	—
Future Tax	120,510	—	-44,731	-44,731	—
Marketable Security - recorded as OCI	55,517	—	21,829	21,829	—
NET INCOME	1,790,160	1,806,056	1,760,604	-45,452	-3%

FESTIVAL HYDRO INC.

Cash Flow Statement

For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD Bdgt. as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD Final Audited as at Dec 31, 2024
Cash from Operations			
Net Income	1,790,160	1,806,057	1,760,604
Depreciation	2,619,161	2,800,946	2,815,498
Amortization of Deferred Revenue in Other Revenue	-96,570	-76,869	-21,857
Unrealized Loss on Interest Rate Swap	330,131	—	168,797
Decrease/(Increase) in Receivables	-677,770	—	569,178
Decrease/(Increase) in Inventory	-34,479	—	-198,001
Decrease/(Increase) in Prepaids	-78,381	-425,000	-341,968
Decrease/(Increase) in Due to/from FHSI	151,502	-50,000	64,946
Decrease/(Increase) in PILS	-231,530	750,000	-437,336
Decrease/(Increase) in Unbilled Revenues	-2,131,971	500,000	-250,684
Decrease/(Increase) in Future Tax	278,310	—	-490,052
Decrease/(Increase) in Regulatory Assets	1,271,988	2,000,000	1,446,323
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	701,773	100,000	222,380
Increase/(Decrease) in Deposits	-108,272	—	330,381
Increase/(Decrease) in Employee Future Benefits	14,575	—	-18,421
Contributed Capital	466,382	200,000	1,541,685
Net Cash Provided	4,265,008	7,605,134	7,161,473
Cash from Financing			
Loan Repayments	728,465	750,364	750,364
Loan Advance	-2,500,000	-2,500,000	-2,500,000
Cash Used - Capital Expenditures	5,337,210	7,716,940	9,385,546
Cash Used - Dividends Paid Current Year	390,330	390,330	390,330
Cash Used - Dividends Declared in Prior Year	248,269	200,000	233,750
Net Cash Used	4,204,274	6,557,633	8,259,990
Increase (Decrease) in Cash Position	60,734	1,047,501	-1,098,517
Bank Indebtedness, Beg of Period	-3,740,695	-634,709	-3,679,961
Bank Indebtedness, End of Period	-3,679,961	412,792	-4,778,478
Bank and Line of Credit Analysis	2023	2024	
High balance (YTD)	2,146,529	5,281,013	
Low Balance (YTD)	-6,140,288	-6,552,953	
Overdraft interest (annualized)	199,421	133,767	
Interest rate (avg annual for period)	6.94%	6.75%	
Average overdraft balance	2,872,478	1,983,139	

Key Financial Ratios:	Actual Ratio	Required Ratio
RBC Compliance Ratio - Funded Debt to Total Capital	0.49	Less than 0.65

To: Mark Hunter and the Finance and Labour Relations Committee
From: Alyson Conrad, CFO
Re: Preliminary FHSI Financial Statement Commentary for the year ended December 31, 2024

Balance Sheet Commentary

Capital asset additions: Additions to the end of 2024 are \$156K, or 72% of budget. Due to lower-than-expected revenues, capital spend was deferred where appropriate. Details on the capital spend to date are as noted below:

Computer Hardware and Software: Total Computer Hardware and Software spend for 2024 is \$15K which is \$7K under budget. Capital spend includes the expansion of the Adtran chassis to support the downtown expansion and faster speeds being offered to customers as well as upgrades to equipment serving the City of Stratford Rotary complex to support more customers.

Fibre Capital: Total spend on fibre capital for 2024 was \$136K which was over budget by \$32K but under projections by \$24K. The downtown fibre expansion projects contributed to approximately 50% of total spend. The 2024 budgeted asset remediation work, pole line moves and adjustments based on FHI and civil work contributed to the remaining additions.

WiFi Capital: Total capital WiFi spend for 2024 is \$3K which is \$77K under budget and below projections by \$12K. Capital spend and labour resources in other areas were prioritized and prevented significant projects from being completed. FHSI also planned to capitalize its Aruba WiFi controller/manager in projections, but more favourable terms were presented with a cloud-based solution.

Due from FHI: The balance due from FHI is \$94K as compared to the prior year receivable balance of \$29K. Throughout 2024, the balance was in a large receivable position due to lower-than-expected capital additions however this balance has decreased by \$62K since the end of Q3.

Deferred Revenue and Long-Term Debt: The deferred revenue is comparable to budget. The deferred revenue will be brought into income over the life of the customer contract or the life of the asset depending on the agreement. Long-term debt aligns with the budget which is in accordance with the loan amortization schedule.

To: Mark Hunter and the Finance and Labour Relations Committee
From: Alyson Conrad, CFO
Re: Preliminary FHSI Financial Statement Commentary for the year ended December 31, 2024 – cont'd

Income Statement Commentary

The net income for the period is \$18K, which is \$13K below budget.

Revenues: Revenues are \$60K below budget.

Dark Fibre is down \$13K from budget. FHSI did not meet budget projections on customer growth, however FHSI was able to renegotiate an expiring contract which allowed for improved results against projections. ISP revenue is down by \$55K from budget. A significant portion of the decrease from budget is based on declining revenues through a third party contract. These decreases were partially offset by the addition of downtown customers which were added near the end of 2024. Consulting revenue is down from budget by \$19K. This was trending lower most of the year due to lower than planned work for FHI.

Operating Expenses: Operating expenses are \$7K below. Fibre costs were under budget by \$32K. The decrease from budget was due to joint pole costs being lower than anticipated as well as less contract labour being required. Employee costs and business development were over budget by \$19K. These are due to staffing changes after the budget was prepared but before the end of 2023 so these costs were anticipated throughout 2024. Outside services were lower than budget but the same as projection due to lower than typical professional services required in the year.

FESTIVAL HYDRO SERVICES INC.

Balance Sheet For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024		YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024
ASSETS			LIABILITIES		
Current Assets			Current Liabilities		
Cash	6,194	10,654	Accounts Payable	22,849	56,259
Accounts Receivable & Prepaids	14,348	27,978	Current Portion of LTD	44,156	45,004
Income Tax Receivable	3,859	1,615	Promissory Note	372,000	372,000
Inventory	7,131	7,059			
Due from Festival Hydro Inc.	29,355	94,301			
Total Current Assets	60,888	141,606	Total Current Liabilities	439,004	473,262
Fixed Assets			Other Liabilities		
Gross Book Value	5,464,038	5,620,453	Deferred Revenue	480,259	398,347
Accumulated Depreciation	-2,810,234	-3,142,723	Deferred Tax Liabilities	248,000	227,000
Net Book Value	2,653,805	2,477,730			
			Long Term Debt		
			POP Loan Long Term Portion	233,825	188,821
			TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,401,088	1,287,430
			EQUITY		
			Share Capital	249,236	249,236
			Retained Earnings	1,064,368	1,082,670
			TOTAL EQUITY	1,313,604	1,331,906
TOTAL ASSETS	2,714,692	2,619,336	TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	2,714,692	2,619,336

FESTIVAL HYDRO SERVICES INC.

Statement of Capital

For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD Budget at Dec 31, 2024	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024	Cur to Bdg YTD Var\$	Cur to Bdg YTD Var%
CAPITAL				
Computer Hardware & Software	22,000	14,776	-7,224	-33%
Buildings	10,000	3,113	-6,887	-69%
Fibre	104,000	135,706	31,706	30%
WiFi	80,000	2,820	-77,180	-96%
TOTAL CAPITAL	216,000	156,414	-59,586	-28%

FESTIVAL HYDRO SERVICES INC.

Statement of Operations For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD Budget at Dec 31, 2024	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024	Cur to Bdg YTD Var\$	Cur to Bdg YTD Var%
TOTAL REVENUE	1,408,059	1,478,426	1,418,545	-59,881	-4%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	936,591	1,035,707	1,028,843	-6,864	-1%
NET INCOME BEFORE DEPRECIATION & INTEREST	471,469	442,719	389,702	-53,017	-12%
Depreciation	373,188	340,340	332,489	-7,851	-2%
Interest Expense	38,566	46,969	33,237	-13,732	-29%
Interest Income	-1,544	—	-326	-326	—
NET INCOME FOR THE PERIOD BEFORE TAXES	61,259	55,410	24,302	-31,108	-56%
Current Tax Provision	21,000	1,000	27,000	9,500	54%
Future Tax Provision	1,000	6,500	-21,000	-27,500	-423%
NET INCOME(LOSS) FOR THE PERIOD	39,259	31,410	18,302	-13,108	-42%

FESTIVAL HYDRO SERVICES INC.

Cash Flow Statement

For the period ending December 31, 2024

	YTD as at Dec 31, 2023	YTD Bdgt. as at Dec 31, 2024	YTD as at Dec 31, 2024
Cash from Operations			
Net Income	39,259	31,410	18,302
Future Tax Provision	1,000	6,500	-21,000
Current Tax Provision	21,000	2,500	27,000
Depreciation	373,188	340,340	332,489
Amortization of Contributed Capital	-63,735	-63,735	-77,900
Amortization of Deferred Revenue	-6,167	-19,440	-4,012
Accretion of interest	—	-2,500	—
Due to/from QR Fibre Co.	49,500	—	—
Net Change in Receivables/Payables	-53,981	2,500	-4,903
Net Cash Provided	360,064	297,575	269,976
Cash from Financing			
Capital Expenditures	-165,384	-216,000	-156,414
Loan - Wightman	-43,324	-44,156	-44,156
Loan to/from Festival Hydro Inc.	-151,502	125,000	-64,946
Net Cash Used	-360,211	-135,156	-265,516
Increase (Decrease) in Cash Position	-146	162,419	4,459
Cash Beg of Period	6,341	70,615	6,194
Cash End of Period	6,194	233,035	10,654



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 17, 2025
To: Finance & Labour Relations Sub-committee
From: Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services
Report Number: FIN25-015
Attachments: None

Title: Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet

Objective: To consider the waiving of fees for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025, for the annual To Stratford With Love banquet.

Background: Simple Dreams Ministries Inc. was founded in 2011 by Richard and Ruth Kneider. Since then, they have been serving the community through various projects, including:

- Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway
- Passport to Savings
- Pizza and Pool Party at the Lions Pool
- Picnic in the Park
- To Stratford With Love Banquet

2025 will be the 37th To Stratford With Love Banquet.

Analysis: Historically, requests of this nature were assessed through the Community Grants program as staff do not have authority to waive fees. This is still the case, however, for tracking purposes, fee waivers are now tracked through the facility budgets.

The revenues that would be waived for this event are \$3,627 (excluding HST).

Should the Committee and Council wish to support this request, there is no tax levy impact, rather the impact is measured in lost revenues due to reduced hall availability for fee-paying users.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

If approved, the financial impact is as noted above, with reduced revenues by \$3,627 (excluding HST), does not apply in the case of fee waiver entries.

Insurance considerations:

The facility user will be required to purchase facility user insurance or provide coverage naming the City as additional insured of not less than Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000).

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Work Together For Greater Impact

This report aligns with this priority as the waiving of the fees would assist To Stratford With Love in serving those in need within the community.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Health and Happiness

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

Staff Recommendation: THAT the report titled, "Waive Facility Fees for the To Stratford With Love Banquet" (FIN25-015), be received;

AND THAT direction be provided regarding the facility rental fee waiver request in the amount of \$3,627 for use of the Community Halls on December 13, 2025.

Prepared by:

Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services

Recommended by:

Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services

Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: July 14, 2025
To: Finance and Labour Relations Committee
From: Vicky Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator
Report Number: FIN25-022
Attachments: None

Title: Communities in Bloom Request for Reallocation of 2025 Budget Funds

Objective: To consider the request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee to reallocate funds approved in their 2025 Budget to alternate projects.

Background: At the June 5, 2025 Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee meeting the following motion was passed:

THAT the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee requests up to \$5,000.00 from the Special Project budget line be reallocated to the CiB Symposium Expenses line to assist in offsetting additional expenses related to the 2025 Symposium.

The approved 2025 budget request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee included \$5,000.00 for CiB Symposium Expenses and \$5,000.00 for Special Projects – Landscape Design Project Confederation North & Indigenous Collaboration.

Stratford is hosting the 31st Annual Communities in Bloom (CiB) Symposium in October in conjunction with CiB National. The request for reallocation of funds would be used to pay for expenses including, but not limited to, registration for members of the Committee and delegates, decorations, complimentary refreshments for participants and minor incidentals not covered by CiB National.

The Landscape Design Project Confederation North & Indigenous Collaboration was started with staff and the Indigenous Community early in 2025. A circle of trees has been planted in Confederation North as a starting point for the project.

CiB Stratford has reviewed their project list for 2025 and wish to shift their focus to the Symposium with the understanding the Landscape Design Project will continue in 2026.

CiB will be requesting this \$5,000.00 in their 2026 budget request for the Landscape Design Project Confederation North & Indigenous Collaboration along with some other increases. Preliminary increases are looking to go from \$15,000 to \$22,500 which would be partly a result of this shift, and partly a result of added expenditures for a proposed gateway project. Should the 2026 Budget be approved at that time, this project can resume and collaboration continued into 2026.

Analysis:

Options for consideration:

1. Approve the request: THAT the request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee to reallocate \$5,000.00 from the Special Project budget line be reallocated to the CiB Symposium Expenses line to assist in offsetting additional expenses related to the 2025 Symposium be approved.
2. Deny the request: THAT the request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee to reallocate \$5,000.00 from the Special Project budget line be reallocated to the CiB Symposium Expenses line to assist in offsetting additional expenses related to the 2025 Symposium be denied.

Alternately, a decision could be made to allow a portion of the funds to be reallocated for the 2025 Symposium leaving a smaller budget for the Landscape Design Project.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

There is no impact to the current year operating budget as no additional funds are being requested.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

There is no impact on the future year operating budget as the reallocation request is for the current year budget.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Not applicable: This report does not align with one of the Strategic Priorities as it is a request for reallocation of funds.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Not applicable: This report does not align with the One Planet Principles as it is a request for reallocation of funds.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Committee provide direction on the request from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee to reallocate \$5,000.00 from the Special Project budget line to the CiB Symposium Expenses line in the 2025 budget.

Prepared by: Vicky Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator

Recommended by: Tatiana Dafoe, City Clerk
Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services
Adam Betteridge, Interim Chief Administrative Officer