

Reaching Home:

Guelph-Wellington Homelessness Plan

2019 – 2024

Note:

All communities receiving funding from Designated Communities stream are required to use this template in order to complete the community plan under Reaching Home. In completing this template, communities are encouraged to develop comprehensive community plans that reflect the contributions of all funding partners, including other orders of governments, not-for-profit organizations, and the for-profit sector.

Please note that in communities that receive funding from both the Designated Communities and Indigenous Homelessness streams, cross-stream collaboration is expected to promote the adoption of a community-wide planning process and support the achievement of community-level outcomes reflecting the needs of the whole community. To support communities in completing their community plans, a Reference Guide has been developed. It is recommended that this be reviewed prior to completing your community's homelessness plan to ensure understanding of the requirements and completeness.

The Community Plan for Reaching Home must be approved by the Community Advisory Board (CAB) of the Designated Community before it is submitted to Service Canada. If your community is developing a joint plan with the Indigenous Community Entity, both Community Advisory Boards must approve the community plan.

In addition to the core requirements provided in this template, communities may also wish to include other components that provide insight into the community's housing and homelessness context or contribute to community-level homelessness challenges, such as a map of the community's current homelessness services and/or gaps in homelessness services or infrastructure (e.g. housing stock). Communities have full flexibility in drafting these sections.

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1. Community Engagement

Please identify the steps taken to engage your community stakeholders in developing this plan

The County of Wellington is the provincially designated Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington. As such the County plays an important leadership role related to system planning, coordination of services and development of partnerships in the area of housing and homelessness. As a service manager of social services, we play a direct role in administering programs to residents in the service area. These include programs funded by all three levels of government, municipal, provincial and federal.

The County has completed the provincially mandated 10 year Housing and Homelessness Plan and recently updated the plan to outline goals for the next 5 years (awaiting provincial approval). Both the original plan and the update plan included an updated need and demand assessment, consultations with individuals with lived experience, housing and community service providers, government officials and County staff to refine the objectives and targets. The recommendations in the 5 year update to the 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan also builds upon a variety of public meetings, interviews, focus groups, committee meetings that the County has participated in since the release of the original plan in 2014. The County is well positioned in understanding the particular needs and the strategies necessary to eliminate homelessness locally. Our 2018 Annual Update on our Housing and Homelessness Plan outlines these strategies and can be found at <https://www.wellington.ca/en/social-services/10-Year-Housing-and-Homelessness-Plan.aspx>.

Our community continues to be actively involved in Built for Zero (BFZ) Canada and striving towards our goal of ending chronic homelessness. The implementation of our Coordinated Entry System has created a dynamic By-Name List in our community. Tracking this information has assisted us with measuring homelessness in our community; identify priority populations; informs future systems planning and service delivery; and our progress towards reducing homelessness. Our local BFZ Operations Committee meets, BFZ Away Team and Community Advisory Board regularly reviews the data from the CES to inform service-planning decisions.

Another important group of stakeholders that informs our community priorities is the Guelph-Wellington Housing Committee. This committee has recently changed its name to the Housing and Homelessness Alliance with that will play an important role for housing and homelessness planning in the future.

Below is a list of regular standing meetings and the stakeholders involved in assisting with forming local priorities:

Committee	Meeting Frequency	Stakeholders
BFZ Operations Committee	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network • Canadian Mental Health Association of Waterloo Wellington • Welcome in Drop In Centre • Wyndham House • Family and Children’s Services of Guelph and Wellington County • Rural Wellington Family Health Team • County of Wellington • Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination • Stonehenge Therapeutic Community • County of Wellington • Guelph Community Health Centre • Indigenous Wellness and Healing
BFZ Away Team	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination • Welcome in Drop In Centre • County of Wellington • Wyndham House • Stonehenge Therapeutic Community
Housing Stability Working Group	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome in Drop In Centre • County of Wellington • Wyndham House • Stonehenge Therapeutic Community • Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis • Family and Children’s Services of Guelph and Wellington County
Housing and Homelessness Alliance	Bi-Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network • Canadian Mental Health Association of Waterloo Wellington • Welcome in Drop In Centre • Wyndham House • Family and Children’s Services of Guelph and Wellington County • Rural Wellington Family Health Team • County of Wellington

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination • Stonehenge Therapeutic Community • County of Wellington • Guelph Community Health Centre • Indigenous Wellness and Healing • Legal Clinic of Guelph Wellington • East Wellington Community Services • City of Guelph • Michael House • Guelph Community Foundation • United Way Guelph • Open attendance from the general public (incl. individuals with lived experience)
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2. Investment Plan

In the table below, please outline your planned allocation of Reaching Home funding (including funding from the Designated Community stream and Community Capacity and Innovation stream) from 2019-24 by investment area. Please note that it is acceptable that your community’s funding priorities change over time. This investment plan is to demonstrate that your community has a vision moving forward for the allocation of Reaching Home funding. An example has been included in the Community Plan Reference Guide.

Total Funding:

- 2019-2020: \$258,206
- 2020-2021: \$245,706
- 2021-2022: \$331,433
- 2022-2023: \$325,283
- 2023-2024: \$325,283
- Total: \$1,485,911

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Housing Services	38%	44%	46%	46%	46%
Prevention and shelter diversion	19%	29%	36%	36%	36%
Support Services	10%	10%	9%	9%	9%
Capital Investments	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Coordination of Resources and Data Collection	27%	12%	5%	5%	5%
Administration	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3. Cost-Matching Requirement

In the table below, please outline all funding for homelessness initiatives your community plans to receive from external partners from 2019 to 2024. This includes both financial and in-kind contributions. If your anticipated community contributions do not project to cost-match funding from both the Designated Community stream and Community Capacity and Innovation stream for each year, explain the circumstances below the table and include a description of the steps you will take to meet the requirement. An example has been included in the Community Plan Reference Guide.

Projected Funding towards Homelessness Initiatives						
Funder	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2019 - 24
Provincial (Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative)	\$3,663,478	\$4,002,383	\$4,002,383	\$4,002,383	\$4,002,383	\$19,673,010
Municipal	\$762,000	\$771,000	\$797,000	\$824,000	\$849,000	\$4,003,000
Total	\$4,425,478	\$4,773,383	\$4,799,383	\$4,826,383	\$4,851,383	\$23,676,010

4. Coordinated Access

*Please discuss the steps you will take to implement a coordinated access system in your community. If your community has a coordinated access system in place, please describe how it presently functions. **Note:** Please also ensure you discuss how Indigenous Organizations have been engaged on the design of Coordinated Access, or how they will be engaged.*

In 2016, the County of Wellington and the Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination signed on to co-lead a local campaign with “20,000 Homes” - a national change movement focused on ending chronic homelessness in 20 communities and housing 20,000 of Canada’s most vulnerable homeless people by July 1, 2020. To kick off the local campaign, the County and Poverty Task Force co-hosted the first ever Registry Week in Guelph-Wellington in April 2016. The data collected during Registry Week 2016 was used to start a By-Name List (BNL). This list identifies individuals experiencing homelessness by name and vulnerability score (captured through a standardized assessment tool), and is used to inform referrals to housing-specific supports and services. Guelph-Wellington was the fourth community in Canada to achieve a quality BNL.

In February 2017, the Guelph-Wellington 20,000 Homes Campaign worked with community partners to develop and implement a Coordinated Entry System (CES). The CES is a client-centered and standardized process for assessing and prioritizing housing related needs. Since its implementation, the CES process is used to prioritize an individual’s housing needs, reducing homelessness, and improving the community’s response to homelessness. The County of Wellington is the lead organization responsible for overseeing CES.

The CES serves the entire region of County of Wellington that includes the City of Guelph, Town of Minto, Township of Wellington North, Township of Mapleton, Township of Centre Wellington, Town of Erin, and the Township of Puslinch. Service Providers that make up the Housing Stability System work together to assess people’s housing-related needs, prioritizes them for resources, and links those in need to housing and a range of supports.

Families and individuals are assessed using OrgCode’s Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) at a door agency. The VI-SPDAT is a pre-screening, or triage tool that is designed to be used by all providers within a community to quickly assess the health and social needs of homeless persons. VI-SPDATs are completed immediately with families and individuals if there has been a previous experience of homelessness. If this is the first experience of homelessness, the VI-SPDAT will be completed after 7-14 days if they have not secured housing.

Door Agencies include: Community Resource Centre of North and Centre Wellington, County of Wellington Social Services, East Wellington Community Services, Family &

Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County, Rural Wellington Community Team, Specialized Outreach Services (SOS), Welcome In Drop In Centre, Women in Crisis, and Wyndham House.

Once assessed, families and individuals are added to the Guelph-Wellington By-Name List (BNL). A By-Name List is a real-time, up-to-date list of all people experiencing homelessness in our community. BNLs allow communities to know every person experiencing homelessness by name to facilitate decisions around how best to refer individuals experiencing homelessness to housing resources.

The By-Name List will inform referrals to appropriate housing services and supports. Families and individuals that are prioritized through the Coordinated Entry System will be referred to the appropriate services and supports through a Housing Stability Working Group, made up of key partners in the housing stability system.

The CES is guided by the principles and goals outlined in "A Place to Call Home" A 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Guelph-Wellington, Five Year Update, the 20,000 Homes Campaign, and the philosophy of Housing First.

The benefits of the CES for our community are:

- Creation of a real time, up to date By-Name List of all people experiencing homelessness in our community and the ability to track each person's progress towards a housing placement
- Enhanced coordination among homeless system providers
- Adoption of a Common Assessment Tool to assess client vulnerability and need
- Ability to prioritize services based on who needs it the most and matching them to resources that fit their needs
- Ability to better understand the inflow and the outflow of clients within the homeless system
- Provides the data required to assist with future system planning and advocacy
- Reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness

Housing First is a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that centers on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing and then providing additional supports and services as needed.

The five (5) core principles are as follows:

- 1) Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements;
- 2) Consumer choice and self-determination;
- 3) Recovery oriented;
- 4) Individualized and client-driven supports; and
- 5) Social and community integration.

The Guelph-Wellington CES governance structure has 4 key committees that provide guidance and oversight to the County. The below chart outlines each groups responsibility:

Committee	Meeting Frequency	Stakeholders
BFZ Operations Committee	Monthly	<p>The purpose of the Operations Committee is to provide strategic guidance and oversight to the Guelph-Wellington BFZ Canada Campaign. The Operations Committee is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving system barriers experienced by system navigators • Providing wide direction to the Guelph-Wellington BFZ Canada Campaign on key elements of the campaign, including advocacy, communications, and finding and maintaining housing.
BFZ Away Team	Monthly	<p>The purpose of the BFZ Away Team is to review CES data and barriers identified by the HSWG and HHA and recommend system or service improvements to effect positive change within CES.</p>
Housing Stability Working Group (HSWG)	Monthly	<p>The Housing Stability Working Group (HSWG) is a community group of service providers that meet regularly to improve the continuity of care for people experiencing homelessness with the highest complexity of needs, by developing a strategic case plan with relevant stakeholders. The main roles and responsibilities of the HSWG are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the BNL is up to date • Address placement of people into programs with available space based on triaging those with the highest need • Problem solve how to reduce barriers for supports and services • Identify gaps and barriers, provide feedback and recommendations for policy changes to the Guelph-Wellington BFZ Operations Committee to become part of the larger policy change that is being undertaken.
Housing and Homelessness Alliance (HHA)	Bi-Monthly	<p>In the past year, the Poverty Task Force conducted a scan of the numerous housing and homelessness tables in Guelph & Wellington. From this work, it was clear that there is great interest in taking action to address our community's housing and homelessness crisis. It was also identified that</p>

		<p>having multiple tables was creating some challenges, including fragmentation and duplication of efforts. In some cases, people were feeling table fatigue, while others wished they had access to more information. In an effort to address these challenges, the PTF has supported conversations to merge a number of tables, including the Wellington Guelph Housing Committee into a new alliance table.</p> <p>The hope is to save time, centralize access to information and create greater capacity for our community to address our housing and homelessness crisis through action and advocating for root cause solutions.</p>
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Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)

Currently our community is using a separate database to monitor and manage the CES. The County of Wellington launched HIFIS 4 in 2018 with key homeless serving system partners. Out of the box, HIFIS 4 does not have the functionality to manage the CES and our BNL. Door Agencies are entering the required data into HIFIS (e.g. Housing History, Housing Placement, VI/SPDAT, etc.) and when the BNL module is released by HIFIS our community will begin using it.

Indigenous Engagement

The Indigenous Wellness and Healing (IWH) program has been a great partner involved in our 2018 Point in Time Count and staff participate in the BFZ Operations Committee. Discussions have begun to train IWH staff members to begin participating as a Door Agency for CES in 2020. IWH will be participating in the 2020 Point in Time Count to ensure inclusion for the Indigenous members of our community. At this time the County and the IWH are working on an ongoing Indigenous engagement strategy.

5. Community-Wide Outcomes

If you would like your community to measure progress on additional outcomes beyond the [federally mandated outcomes](#), please identify those outcomes. Please provide your proposed indicators, targets, and methodology for each of the additional identified outcomes.

Through our work with BFZ our community has set an overall aim statement that Guelph-Wellington will reach functional zero on chronic homelessness by 2023. At each

BFZ Learning Session our local BFZ Away Team reviews the data from our CES and outlines new goals, targets, and projects to reduce homelessness in our community. Each month we are reporting our data to BFZ and our progress can be viewed using the following link: <https://bfzcanada.ca/community-progress/>.

Previous goals were to reduce the number of individuals on our BNL by 10% at each learning session, which we were able to achieve. Our community was recently recognized by BFZ Canada for achieving our goals to reduce our BNL by 10% below our baseline and stay below it for three consecutive months.

At the last BFZ Learning session in June 2019 our BNL had 128 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. We set a goal to reduce our active homeless numbers on our BNL by 32% which equates to reducing by 41 people to reach a total of 87 active chronic homeless by December 21st, 2019.

In order to achieve this goal, our community will need to continue working on reducing inflow and outflow into our homeless serving system. We will continue to analyze the data from CES and the reporting tools for Reaching Home.

6. Official Language Minority Communities

The Government of Canada has a responsibility under the Official Languages Act to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of [Official Language Minority Communities \(OLMCs\)](#). Please describe the steps that you will take to ensure that the services funded under the Reaching Home take the needs of the [OLMCs](#) into consideration where applicable.

Our last Registry Week and PiT Count did not indicate a high level of French OLMC in our area. While the majority of individuals on our BNL and using homelessness services speak the majority Official Language, the services that are provided to OLMC individuals is of equal quality. Interpretation services are provided to anyone in the community that requires them. All documents that are part of the Geulph-Wellington CES or projects funded by Reaching Home are available in alternate languages upon request. The CAB has a representative from Immigrant Services that assists with informing decisions around funding allocation of projects and priorities for OLMC's.

Note: ESDC has removed all personal and identifying information for members of the Community Advisory Board(s) from this document. To validate or change this information, please contact your Service Canada representative.