

Housing Needs and Demand Report

Priorities Committee
October 20, 2020

Affordable Housing

- Housing that requires less than 30% of a household's income
- Affordable housing is critical to well-being and the community

THE HOUSING CONTINUUM



Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

History

- Mayor's Task Force Recommendations
- Council history
- Strategic plan alignment



Goal 1

Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents



Goal 6

Provide facilities and services that are available and accessible to residents

Community Needs

- Canadian Rental Housing Index ranked Strathcona County as 'severely unaffordable' in their Fall 2019 report
- In 2019, financial need and housing were the top two reasons for accessing navigation supports
- Growing waitlists for affordable housing and increasing demand for seniors housing
- The 2019 *Youth Needs and Assets Report* revealed that youth and young adults would like to see more services and support around affordable housing in the County.

Local Experiences



Housing Needs and Demand Assessment

Key Findings

- Over 14% of residents are spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs
- Roughly 2,000 households are in core housing need
- Most impacted are single-parent families and those living alone
- Few purpose-built rentals and low availability of affordable rental options

Conclusion

Housing is unaffordable for many Strathcona County residents and low income households may face challenges finding and maintaining suitable housing.

Housing Needs and Demand Assessment

Recommend that Strathcona County develop *a community-led approach to affordable housing*

Four specific recommendations:

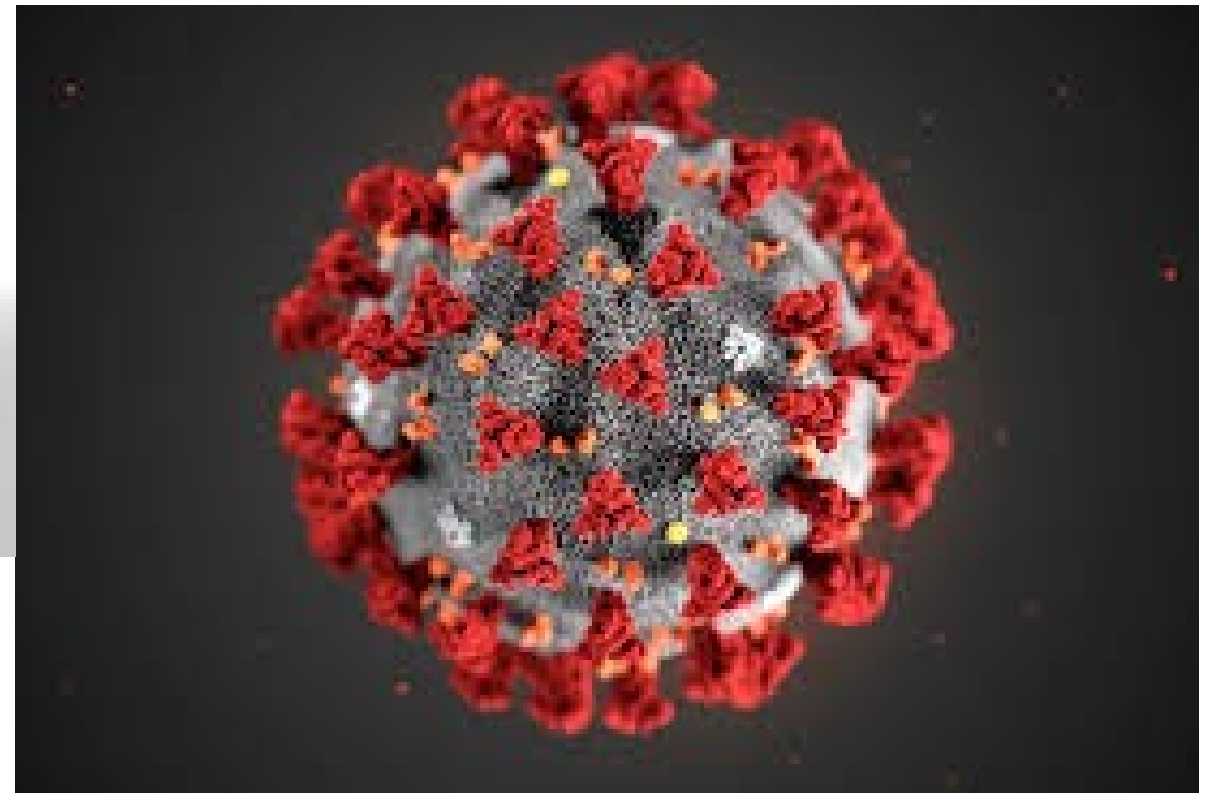
1. Review best practice strategies to mitigate housing gaps
2. Prioritize the Land Use Bylaw amendments for the Urban Service Area
3. Conduct a homeless estimation to better understand housing needs
4. Continue to build local and regional partnerships to respond to housing and homeless needs

Housing Estimate

- From November 1-30, 2020, in partnership with members of the Social Framework Leadership Table, the County will conduct the County's first housing estimate



Emerging Impacts



Affordable Housing Facts

Myth	Fact
Strathcona County residents do not need affordable housing.	Approximately 2,000 households are in core housing need and 5,000 households are paying more than 30% of their income on housing.
Affordable housing drives down property values.	Repeated research has shown that affordable housing does not negatively impact home prices or the speed/frequency of neighbouring homes selling, and may improve property values. ¹
Working people do not require affordable housing.	An IT technician makes \$19/hour at 40 hours a week with an annual salary of \$40,000, or \$3,333 per month. With average rent in the County at \$1,550, a technician would spend 45% of their income on housing.

¹Thomas, M.A. (2017). ON THE BENEFITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING An Assessment of Recent Literature for Municipalities 2017.

Affordable Housing Facts

Myth	Fact
Affordable housing is an ongoing burden to taxpayers and municipalities.	The operation of affordable housing can be revenue-neutral without requiring ongoing support from taxpayers.
Affordable housing does not have economic benefits.	Affordable housing has a net positive economic benefit for local businesses and the economy resulting from consumers with increased spending power. Affordable housing also contributes to community growth and a growing tax base. ²
Affordable housing brings increased crime.	Research has not found a direct correlation between affordable housing and crime rates. ³

² Thomas, M.A. (2017). ON THE BENEFITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING An Assessment of Recent Literature for Municipalities 2017.

³ Ibid

Federal Funding Opportunity

- In late September, the Federal Government has launched a Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI)
- In partnership with the CMHC, the RHI will make \$1 billion in funding available to municipalities, provinces, territories, NGOs and non-profit organizations