



**NORTHERN ONTARIO  
SERVICE DELIVERERS  
ASSOCIATION**  
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# **CONSOLIDATED PAN-NORTHERN HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS REPORT**

**NOVEMBER 2014**

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## 1.2 INTRODUCTION

The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) brings together 10 District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSAB's) and 1 Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) who are responsible for the municipal delivery of social services in Northern Ontario. NOSDA members are primarily responsible for the service system management of Social Housing, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Child Care and Ontario Works programs.

The **Ontario Housing Services Act (2011)** requires all Service Managers in the province to develop 10 year strategic housing and homelessness plans. From the legislation, it states that the purpose of this Act is,

- (a) to provide for community based planning and delivery of housing and homelessness services with general provincial oversight and policy direction; and**
- (b) to provide flexibility for service managers and housing providers while retaining requirements with respect to housing programs that predate this Act and housing projects that are subject to those programs.**

The Act goes on to state that housing and homelessness plans must include

- (a) an assessment of current and future housing needs within the service manager's service area;**
- (b) objectives and targets relating to housing needs;**
- (c) a description of the measures proposed to meet the objectives and targets;**
- (d) a description of how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets will be measured; and**
- (e) such other matters as may be prescribed. 2011, c. 6, Schedule 1, s. 6 (2).**

As such, each NOSDA Member, Northern Service Manager has completed 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plans. As part of the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Service Managers expressed an interest in having a Pan-Northern 'roll-up' of provincially mandated Housing and Homelessness Plans. This 'roll up' has been prepared by a consortium – NOSDA, Housing Services Corporation and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association in the Spring of 2014 - to identify common patterns, concerns, programming and advocacy themes across Northern Ontario. Material in the Roll-Up document was provided by Northern Ontario DSSABs in order to share objectives and strategic actions as well as identify areas of common concern. This paper was based on key information from that Roll-Up.

This document has been validated using a brief questionnaire that was circulated to Chief Administrative Officers and Housing Service Managers in each Northern Ontario jurisdiction.

The Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association will use this document to further policy development and advocacy for social housing and homelessness prevention in Northern Ontario.

Gary Scripnick, Chair

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA)

November, 2014

## 2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This review of the Northern Ontario Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plans prepared by each District Social Services Administration Boards and the City of Greater Sudbury has been prepared to share information about strategic directions as well as goals and objectives related to housing and homelessness in Northern Ontario. Common issues, areas for collaboration and collective advocacy at the program, policy and political levels are identified in this review.

Each of the Housing and Homelessness Plans provided a strong platform from which to address the specific challenges in their respective jurisdictions. The desired outcomes identified in this Roll Up include stable housing, priority for vulnerable groups, urban Aboriginal housing, rental housing, homeownership, availability of housing assistance, homelessness prevention, affordable housing, supports, sustainability of social housing, partnerships and asset management.

Common themes identified include:

- A core message is the Service Managers' vision and mission to create stability for residents and families which is key to attracting and retaining people in the work force and to build healthy, sustainable communities
- Northern Ontario, like the rest of the Province, is experiencing an increasing demand for affordable housing, however, with escalating property values in some municipalities, increasing numbers of seniors aging in place, high and increasing energy costs and very little new housing stock, there are more low-to-moderate income households struggling with affordability.
- There is a need for future investments to promote housing stability for residents and support housing and building innovation.
- Plans to improve services for landlords and tenants/residents including Eviction Prevention Programs, Energy subsidies and developing protocols for landlords were identified as means to support low to moderate income households while also working to enhance housing stability.
- The need to increase the capacity of non-profits, expand rent supplements in a manner that will give people more choices, and enable social housing providers to renovate social housing stock in need of major repairs was stated. This would also allow developers to build new units those in need.

- A common commitment to supporting households that have difficulty finding and maintaining, safe, affordable and adequate housing was articulated, including Aboriginal populations, lone-parent families, youth, women and children fleeing violence, as well as the disproportionate number living in homelessness or evidencing core housing need who are spending more than 30 per cent of their income on housing are targets for support.
- There was recognition of the significance of working with partners in the non-profit housing sector and within different levels of government to find new and innovative approaches to ensuring the sustainability of social housing stock. Explicit is the need to ensure that social housing remain viable when operating agreements with the Federal government expire. DSSAB's will be taking a proactive approach to undertaking analysis and assessing impacts related to the expiry of social housing agreements and federal flow of funding.
- The need to engage with sector partners and organizations to identify innovative financing programs that will encourage the private and non-profit housing sectors to build affordable rental housing was discussed. In combination with enhanced rental assistance, this could increase the rental stock to create more options for families and seniors in need.
- The need to work with local government stakeholders to increase density in some communities, including converting stagnant/vacant infrastructure to create housing, allowing zoning flexibilities, using existing municipal infrastructure and supplying public transit systems were identified as effective ways to affordably increase the supply of housing.
- Housing and Homelessness Ten Year Plans show continued commitment to ensuring units are well managed, maintained and sustainable in the long term, including asset management, preventive maintenance, energy efficiencies.
- Plans identified adopting Housing First in the delivery of housing and related supports.
- DSSAB's expressed a willingness to work with the local government and industry partners to create development opportunities that are responsive to the housing needs of the DSSABs, including the development of Secondary/garden suites

- Building strong, collaborative relationships with stakeholders, partner agencies and other levels of governments (i.e., NE/NW LHIN, CCAC's, Friendship Centres, MMAH, MCSS) to find new and innovative ways to meet the needs of renters, homeowners and the most vulnerable was mentioned. These partnerships would build on the strengths of one another, ensuring that scarce resources are used efficiently. DSSABs will play a leading role in facilitating strategic partnerships that increase housing options, decrease costs and promote effective, coordinated programs and services for Northern Ontarians.
- The importance of data gathering and tracking systems will be vital to telling the story and to be informed, and for continuously improving the way DSSAB's do business to meet the higher service demands.

Some key areas for common action include:

- ***An Integrated Services Delivery Approach:*** DSSABs indicated the importance of taking a housing 'systems' approach to address people's needs across the housing continuum by integrating housing and homelessness services; by moving towards broader human services planning; and/or by coordinating with other agencies and stakeholders. Some plans include actions that promote integrated human services planning and delivery (e.g. LHIN's, CCAC, MMAH, MCSS). Several plans specify updating Official Plans or working with land use planning as part of the integrated service systems management and delivery
- ***Working with Local Health Integration Networks:*** all plans make reference to working with the LHIN's to support delivery of services and provide supports to residents. Emphasis has been placed in particular on LHIN partnerships as core components to ensuring housing stability approach.
- ***Common Performance Indicators, Monitoring and Data Tracking:*** Implementing common types of indicators, targets and measures established to assess progress against objectives and goals in their local plans, as well as to assess the health of the housing sector in their service area using both quantitative and qualitative measures was also identified as desirable. This could include setting up reporting structures, possibly adopting HIFIS, creating assessment tools, undertaking homelessness counts and the like.
- ***Private Sector Involvement:*** Engaging private market developers as well as private sources of funds was identified.

- ***Advocacy and Investments in Affordable Housing:*** All plans include an advocacy component for the need to promote renewed federal funding for housing that is declining and/or seeking additional provincial investments. Plans also indicate advocacy in order to provide increased and sustained funding for housing and homelessness services.
- ***Sharing Best Practices to Address the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI):*** All Service Managers are developing ways by which this recent consolidation of homelessness prevention programs can be utilized to the maximum benefit for clients. Best practices for the delivery of this suite of services need to be developed, identified and shared.
- ***Sustainability of Social Housing- End of Operating Agreements (EOA):*** All plans include strategies, goals and actions specific to ensuring social housing capacity is maintained, while acknowledging the environment where operating agreements end and federal funding declines. Several DSSABs are in the process or will be undertaking impact analysis and/or assessment of their portfolio or developing an EOA strategy to support ongoing access to affordable housing by preserving existing social housing capacity.
- ***Redevelopment/Regeneration:*** Several DSSABs have indicated exploring opportunities for the redevelopment and regeneration of existing social and affordable housing. While specific initiatives were not identified through the plans, there is a common commitment to promote redevelopment and regeneration. This encompasses not just the physical and financing issues, but also community development and capacity building.
- ***Preservation and Rehabilitation of Stock:*** All plans take into consideration ways to ensure the preservation of low-cost housing stock through Energy Audits, BCA, Capital Reserve Fund studies, changes to vacant units, retrofits etc.
- ***Asset Management:*** Most plans address employing asset management best practices to keep their housing stock in good order, including plans to address lifecycle repair and replacement needs and capital planning. Some plans include and specify preventative maintenance practices such as training, updating or conducting BCAs and Energy Audits.

- ***Maintaining Rent Supplements:*** The majority of the plans include rent supplements as a means of maintaining social housing capacity and increasing supply of housing.
- ***Capacity Building:*** Plans place emphasis on building the capacity of housing providers to manage their properties through providing training and education in asset management, protocols and processes for property management, developing policies to support providers and residents (i.e., Eviction Prevention Program/Protocols).
- ***Housing Supports/Supportive Housing:*** Plans have addressed ways to improve the delivery of housing and support services to help vulnerable people and the homelessness achieve housing stability. For some DSSABs Housing First is an approach that will be adopted and implemented as part of the commitment in the ten year plans; others have indicated that varying approaches to Housing First will be adopted and included as part of an integrated service delivery.
- ***Housing Development Corporation:*** A few DSSABs have reported considering or setting up a Housing Development Corporation to facilitate and access a broad range of financing.

## **2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**There were four areas where there was universal consensus among all NOSDA members. Joint action is recommended in the following areas where and when possible:**

**2.1.1 Employing an Integrated Service Delivery approach and sharing best practices in the delivery of social housing**

**2.1.2 Advocating for Investments in Affordable Housing**

**2.1.3 Promoting the development/creation of Supportive Housing/Housing with Supports with community partners/stakeholders (e.g. LHIN's, CCAC's, MMAH, MCSS)**

**2.1.4 Preserving existing housing stock within each member jurisdiction and across Northern Ontario**

## **3.0 10-YEAR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PLANS**

The following is an overview of each individual DSSAB's Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan as well as areas for future advocacy as identified in those plans:

### **3.1 Kenora**

#### **3.1.1 Priority Issues:**

The District of Kenora is a vast geographical area containing very different local economies. Booming industrial towns in the District generally have a lack of affordable housing. The KDSB plans to explore new housing construction in areas that require it and begin selling off housing in areas where the demand is not as high. The District also needs to improve and coordinate services.

#### **3.1.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The District of Kenora will address changing demographics by assessing current and future housing needs. This will ensure that accessible housing stock is available for seniors, wait lists are managed appropriately, support services are introduced where needed, and will maintain protocols currently in place with hospitals.

The District of Kenora will also address homelessness by maintaining adequate funding for homeless shelters and developing protocols to move individuals from homeless to housed, in addition to implementing strategies for prevention while supporting a managed alcohol program. The District will also address the needs of the most vulnerable by improving outcomes for victims of violence, developing communication protocols, and aligning their services to better support homeless youth. They will create opportunities to address accessibility challenges as well as support the needs of the Aboriginal population.

The KDSB plans to address issues such as redundant housing stock, energy efficiency and environmental stewardship by ensuring that all future KDSB housing stock is energy efficient. The KDSB is also working towards social services integration in their quest to end homelessness. Monitoring the success of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan will include the generation of annual reports and sustaining lobbying efforts with Senior Government officials.

### **3.1.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

Although no strategic directions/actions were specifically indicated, priority issues and goals/objectives for the Kenora District are outlined above.

### **3.1.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The KDSB plans to advocate for increased Provincial funding for transitional housing. This will provide supports for victims of domestic violence as well as the movement of individuals to safe and adequate housing. They will also support the sustainable funding of Affordable Housing programs.

During community consultations, concern was expressed that communities need more support services for at-risk youth. Given the stated statistics, the lack of appropriate support for youth disproportionately affects the urban Aboriginal population, which has a much higher cohort in this age group than non-Aboriginals. Information sharing between schools, social services, police departments, probation officers, Native Friendship Centres, the Children's Aid Society and other agencies involved with homeless and at-risk youth need to be strengthened. Protocols need to be in place to educate young people as to their rights, options, and opportunities.

Kenora District's goals for improving the housing and homelessness outcomes for Aboriginal residents include establishing mutually respectful relationships with First Nations and other urban Aboriginal communities. Working collaboratively to create culturally appropriate housing solutions, the KDSB will enable the urban Aboriginal community to have greater input in housing and homelessness planning, including working with local agencies to pool resources and increase opportunities for additional affordable housing initiatives. Improvements to the cultural and linguistic accessibility of integrated social services are also necessary.

Liaison must be improved between integrated social services and shelter staff to ensure that individuals applying for housing, OW, or ODSP, apply for and receive all benefits for which they are eligible.

It is recommended that the KDSB implement HIFIS 4.0 in all service area shelters when the program is released. Data collected in HIFIS will contribute to an increased understanding of homelessness issues and challenges at the local level, supporting community planning and facilitating decision making to better address client needs.

## **3.2 Rainy River**

### **3.2.1 Priority Issues:**

The population of the Rainy River District is getting smaller, at the same time, its population is getting older. This aging population is expanding the demand for assisted living, while low-income residents continue to struggle to afford housing. The homeless youth population is underserved, with a definite lack of emergency shelter and affordable housing options.

Existing housing stock in the District is aging, and is mostly made up of single detached units. There are relatively few apartment and rental units available.

The Rainy River District has many of the elements it needs to deliver an effective Housing and Homelessness System. However, coordination and the linking of these elements are still required. The District must restructure its homelessness services, with the ultimate goal of providing Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing to those who are homeless, as well as diversion and prevention to those who are at risk.

Rainy River District's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is designed to meet the unique needs of the District and attempts to maximize existing community assets. Although the RRDSSAB plays a substantial role in the provision of housing and homelessness services, some priorities identified in this plan are beyond the direct control of the DSSAB.

### **3.2.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The RRDSSAB continues to strive towards becoming increasingly financially sustainable, accountable and transparent. The RRDSSAB wishes to advocate for the improvement of senior government policies and funding to support the achievement of its affordable housing goals.

The RRDSAB must also ensure that their information technology and asset management systems support the organization in achieving their goals through improved system efficiency. Increasing public awareness and support will aid the RRDSAB in building strong community partnerships, including improved communications with the public.

### **3.2.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

**3.2.3 a)** Rainy River District's first strategic target is to improve system access and prioritization. This objective will be achieved by:

**3.2.3 a) i.** Building on existing links between community partners at the executive level

**3.2.3 a) ii.** The use of coordinated intake and assessment to direct clients to the services they need

**3.2.3 a) iii.** Making informed decisions based on local data by improving information gathering and sharing

**3.2.3 a) iv.** Maximizing the impact of spending resources in order to end homelessness

**3.2.3 b)** The second strategic target of maximizing existing housing stock can be realized through:

**3.2.3 b) i.** Maintaining existing social housing stock through planned renovation and rehabilitations

**3.2.3 b) ii.** Using existing housing stock in innovative ways to meet community needs

**3.2.3 b) iii.** Enhancing the capacity of the non-profit housing sector

**3.2.3 c)** Rainy River District's third strategic target is focused on closing housing gaps through new development and redevelopment. This can be accomplished by:

**3.2.3 c) i.** Expansion in the range of emergency shelter options for youth

**3.2.3 c) ii.** Expansion in the diversity of the District's housing stock, both in terms of housing type and tenure

**3.2.3 c) iii.** Having the DSSAB act as a local champion for the development of innovative funding mechanisms

**3.2.3 d)** The fourth strategic target involves meeting the current and future needs of seniors and others with accessibility needs. This will be addressed through:

**3.2.3 d) i.** Expanding the range of assisted living options

**3.2.3 d) ii.** Maximizing the impact of capital funding resources by helping those with accessibility needs stay in their homes

**3.2.3 d) iii.** Providing services in an accessible manner

**3.2.3 e)** Rainy River District's fifth strategic target is the enhancement of advocacy and education regarding Housing and Homelessness in the District. This objective can be met through:

**3.2.3 e) i.** Advocacy for better funding commitments from the province, both individually and in concern with other community and regional partners

**3.2.3 e) ii.** Emphasizing public education and communication

**3.2.3 f)** The sixth strategic target is to meet the needs of Aboriginal people in the District living off-reserve. This target can be achieved by:

**3.2.3 f) i.** Continuing to include First Nations organization in the planning of housing and homelessness services

**3.2.3 f) ii.** Ensuring that aboriginal people living off reserve have equal access to housing

**3.2.3 g)** Lastly, the seventh strategic target of the Rainy River District is to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence. This objective can be reached by:

**3.2.3 g) i.** Expanding the range of emergency shelter options for female victims of domestic violence in the west end of the District

**3.2.3 g) ii.** Helping victims of domestic violence find stable housing after leaving emergency shelters

### **3.2.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

A lack of transitional housing remains a problem in the RRDSSAB. There are currently no programs in the District that can be considered Rapid Re-Housing, even though many elements of this model exist in the community. Programs offered by CMHA come the closest to a Housing First model, although with this program, as in the La Verendrye programs, turnover can be low. Additionally, the CMHA housing subsidy is only available to single individuals.

Homelessness services for youth in Rainy River District are not well developed. Reliance on motels for emergency shelter is problematic, as youths are often not accommodated. Similarly, landlords are reluctant to rent to young people. Access to income is another impediment to youth housing stability, as Ontario Works funds are only made available to people who are 16-17 in special circumstances. Firefly acts as a coordinated intake centre for child-focused services, and the United Native Friendship Centre as well as Victims Services provide some emergency support. The absence of youth-focused housing, however, means that these interventions are unlikely to result in long-term solutions.

A more robust estimate of need would be available through the use of a centralized Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) that could track client usage across multiple services.

### **3.3 Thunder Bay**

#### **3.3.1 Priority Issues:**

The TBDSSAB's Housing and Homelessness Plan was developed through extensive District-wide community consultations with a broad range of stakeholders representing the interests of people who are at different stages of the housing continuum. The common themes arising from these consultations have given rise to a set of principles that shape the vision and mission statement for housing in the District of Thunder Bay.

These principles are:

- Access to housing and support services delivered by those mandated to provide these services
- Building partnerships and collaboration between partners to achieve common goals
- A system of housing that is inclusive and maximizes personal growth.

Taking these principles into consideration, priority issues for the TBDSSAB include the establishment of non-senior single housing, and the creation of evidence-based social housing targets for the housing portfolio.

#### **3.3.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The Thunder Bay District's goals regarding the issue of housing and homelessness include advocacy, enhancing RGI and Rent Supplement Systems, improving the sustainability of the existing housing stock, and participating in supportive housing solutions. These goals and the evidenced-based social housing targets will be reviewed biennially as the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is considered a "living document" that will evolve as factors within the District of Thunder Bay change.

#### **3.3.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

**3.3.3 a)** The TBDSSAB will increase its efforts in regards to affordable housing in the following ways:

**3.3.3 a) i.** By advocating for an increased share of new and flexible capital funding, based on an allocation model that considers northern factors, including geography, costs, loss of employment and demographic trends

**3.3.3 a) ii.** By advocating for the development of a national housing strategy that provides sustained funding for existing and future housing initiatives

**3.3.3 a) iii.** Through advocating for parity in rent scales with the private sector and requesting an increase to the minimum rent amount

**3.3.3 a) iv.** By advocating for the legal ability to retain disposition restrictions registered on title post mortgage maturity and operating agreement expiry

**3.3.3 a) v.** Through advocacy for changes to the Residential Tenancies Act to enable victims of abuse to remain in their units, and to allow for the eviction of the abuser

**3.3.3 a) vi.** The establishment of non-single senior housing

**3.3.3 a) vii.** By advocating for increased social assistance shelter rates

**3.3.3 a) viii.** Through lobbying with the City of Thunder Bay to create a by-law ensuring that all new housing starts include at least 20% low income or affordable housing units

**3.3.3 b)** The District of Thunder Bay will enhance the RGI and Rent Supplement System by performing the following actions:

**3.3.3 b) i.** Working with private landlords to promote the benefits of the rent supplement program

**3.3.3 b) ii.** Providing direct RGI to individuals and families in private rental buildings who are unable to afford the market cost of their current residence. This will help to balance supply and demand.

**3.3.3 b) iii.** Enforce the RGI to market rent ratio in the not-for-profit housing portfolio

**3.3.3 b) iv.** Attaching rent supplements to new housing initiatives, such as those funded under the Affordable Housing Program (AHP) and the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH)

**3.3.3 c)** The TBDSSAB will improve the sustainability of existing housing stock in the District by:

**3.3.3 c) i.** Facilitating discussions with non-profit housing providers to determine their interest in amalgamating or transferring assets to other providers in the same general vicinity

**3.3.3 c) ii.** Working with non-profit housing providers and ONPHA to undertake a cost benefit analysis of establishing a bulk purchasing program for goods and services not offered by the Housing Services Corporation (HSC)

**3.3.3 c) iii.** Working with the HSC and housing providers in developing preventative maintenance plans to be implemented by housing providers, and that these plans be mandatory for any provider requesting additional capital or subsidies

**3.3.3 c) iv.** Obtaining a waiver from the Province and CMHC for each project reaching mortgage maturity, indicating the project is no longer subject to the Housing Services Act and the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Agreement and that all obligations of the TBDSSAB have ceased, in particular, the liability for default on any future loans

**3.3.3 c) v.** Considering energy efficiency and conservation in all maintenance and retrofitting in TBDHC units, as well as the use of environmentally friendly building materials

**3.3.3 d)** Participating in supportive housing solutions will include the following strategic actions:

**3.3.3 d) i.** Working with the partners responsible for providing support services to ensure that the support needs of tenants are addressed

**3.3.3 d) ii.** Working with the NW LHIN to create an Aging in Place Plan for residents living in social housing, funded and administered by the TBDSSAB

**3.3.3 d) iii.** Working to co-locate Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) client system navigators or arrange on-site visits

**3.3.3 d) iv.** Ensuring that any newly built or renovated housing is barrier free and accessible in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

**3.3.3 e)** The TBDSSAB will address the issue of homelessness in the following ways:

**3.3.3 e) i.** Conducting a street needs assessment in order to determine the number of homeless people and the services required to keep the homeless housed and safe

**3.3.3 e) ii.** Evaluating Homelessness Prevention Programs to ensure that they are being effective in reducing the incidences of homelessness

**3.3.3 e) iii.** Supporting the development of a designated youth hostel, including engaging with the private sector

**3.3.3 e) iv.** Working with youth outreach programs to ensure that youth in the District are aware of TBDSSAB services

### **3.3.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The District of Thunder Bay plans to take a multi-faceted approach to housing and homelessness. It is important that discussions be held with MOHLTC (NWLHIN), MCSS, MMAH and the Federal Government to implement an approach with the following provisions:

- Permanent supportive housing with rent-geared-to-income (RGI) assistance
- Harm reduction housing
- Crisis beds
- A detoxification facility
- Co-ordinated determination of service and support needs
- Service navigation to link the homeless with services and supports
- The implementation of Housing Loss Prevention measures

In order to break the cycle of homelessness and assist households who are at risk of homelessness, a Housing Loss Prevention Program should be developed, including educating tenants on their rights, life-skills training, early intervention where tenancies are at risk, and a process for dealing with rent arrears. The program should also include expanded property management functions to handle social issues and conflict resolution, as well as increased eligibility and more funding from the Housing Security Fund.

## **3.4 Algoma**

### **3.4.1 Priority Issues:**

The ADSAB is a large service area with many small and remote communities. Its geographic remoteness means long travel distance between centres. There are low and declining population densities, as well as inclement weather conditions in the winter months. There is also a scarcity of resources, services and infrastructure. These geographic challenges, coupled with a lack of social infrastructure (including community agencies to deliver services in parts of the service area) pose a very real threat to people getting access to the services they are entitled to.

Other priority issues include an inequitable reduction in provincial funding for transferred consolidated homelessness initiatives, including matching available financial resources to meet identified needs. Working with a small and declining assessment base makes it difficult to establish funding priorities across the district. Municipalities in the ADSAB service area simply do not have the resources to fund the housing and support service gaps left by the province.

### **3.4.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The ADSAB needs to encourage effective solutions to address homelessness, including promoting and strengthening community partnerships. They will also work to provide increased access to supportive housing.

Meeting these objectives includes the targeting of limited financial resources to initiatives that best serve the ADSABs needs. Linkages with partners to build on existing local opportunities will help to secure effective housing, making the best use of existing housing stock, and planning and facilitating any needed new housing supply are all attainable 10-year plan objectives.

### **3.4.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

**3.4.3 a)** The ADSAB plans to take the following strategic actions to encourage effective solutions to addressing homelessness:

**3.4.3 a) i.** Meet the need for emergency and crisis accommodations for transient and homeless individuals

**3.4.3 a) ii.** Ensure that households in need do not lose their existing housing as a result of economic eviction

**3.4.3 a) iii.** Work to effectively support victims of domestic violence

**3.4.3 b)** The promotion of strong communities and strengthened community partnerships will be achieved by:

**3.4.3 b) i.** Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing with and without supports

**3.4.3 b) ii.** Providing and maintain good quality affordable housing for homeowners

**3.4.3 b) iii.** Supporting housing opportunities for Aboriginal people

**3.4.3 b) iv.** Developing an ongoing relationship with First Nations in the ADSAB service area to better serve residents of both communities

**3.4.3 b) v.** Supporting economic development and partnering with local municipalities and agencies as appropriate.

**3.4.3 c)** The provision of efficient and effective access to Housing and Support Services will be achieved by:

**3.4.3 c) i.** Building on the current level of integration for the delivery of human service programs

**3.4.3 c) ii.** Improving access to information about the programs delivered by the ADSAB, including housing options, programs and support services.

**3.4.3 c) iii.** The promotion of a “no wrong door” approach to accessing services

**3.4.3 c) iv.** Supporting community-based supportive housing solutions that enable residents to remain in their community of choice

**3.4.3 d)** Sustaining the existing social and affordable housing portfolio will be achieved through:

**3.4.3 d) i.** Working to preserve and maintain the existing housing portfolio owned by the ADSAB

**3.4.3 d) ii.** Enhancing supports to applicants and tenants of ADSAB-owned housing

**3.4.3 d) iii.** The effective administration and protection of the non-profit housing portfolio

**3.4.3 d) iv.** Building capacity and establishing successful partnerships with non-profit housing providers

**3.4.3 d) v.** The promotion of environmental sustainability and energy conservation measures

#### **3.4.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The ADSAB requires more transitional housing with supports to help individuals move back into permanent housing. A pressing problem for the ADSAB is homelessness prevention for clients with a wide range in sources of income, such as OW, ODSP, and low-income workers. A comprehensive, adequately funded homelessness prevention program is required to meet the needs of these vulnerable populations. Recent changes to the provincial funding envelope may result in greater incidence of homelessness and of clients migrating to other service areas during the term of this Housing and Homelessness Plan. Thus, the ADSAB requires new, ongoing, long-term federal and provincial funding to adequately address homelessness prevention.

There are no shelters or group homes for youth living in the ADSAB service area. 16 and 17 year olds, who cannot return home for whatever reason, are consistently the most difficult to house. Landlords are reluctant to rent to them, and Ontario Works legislation requires that they have a supervising adult to act as a trustee. A Group Home like Pauline's Place in Sault Ste. Marie is required to address this issue. This home should have a social worker that helps them address personal problems and tries to keep them in school as long as possible.

Municipalities contributing to the ADSAB costs cannot increase funding, particularly at a time when tax assessment bases have been declining. The recent decision to upload a portion of Social Assistance costs could have been a source of additional funding for the ADSAB to address homelessness issues. However, the province also made the decision to include the reduction in social service costs as an offset to the component of the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) that relates to funding social services. In some cases, the reduction in the OMPF was greater than the uploaded costs. This funding gap is an area that member municipalities will be examining over the coming years.

## **3.5 Sault Ste. Marie**

### **3.5.1 Priority Issues:**

Due to the high costs of home ownership and rent in the Sault Ste. Marie area, a top priority is improving the affordability of market-rate housing. This can be achieved through increasing funding for rent supplements, facilitating the development of new rental housing, and by converting existing units into affordable housing units. The development of programs to provide short-term housing for families as well as individuals with disabilities is also necessary.

The Sault Ste. Marie District also suffers from a lack of transitional housing solutions, particularly for men. As a result, a renewed focus on the provision of individually-tailored support services, which may be provided on a transitional or long-term basis as needed, as well as an increase in permanent housing options to meet demands within the community will be initiated. The creation of fully staffed single-site supportive housing programs to address the needs of individuals who struggle to achieve stability in independent housing is also a priority. Recent initiatives such as specialized tenant support worker positions help those staying in emergency shelters to better connect with affordable housing options and supports.

### **3.5.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The Sault Ste. Marie District will continue to use CHPI funding to make a positive difference in housing outcomes throughout the service area. The United Way Community Assistance Trust will also be accessed in order to provide short-term financial assistance to households who are at-risk of homelessness due to rent or utility arrears.

Another important goal includes the implementation of a Housing First approach, in addition to rapid re-housing strategies. The provision of coordinated access to housing support services will allow for greater organization, monitoring and planning for effective social housing programming and initiatives. Additional housing program support initiatives include life skills training necessary for maintaining housing, income support, vocational assistance, and addictions management.

The diversion of individuals and families at-risk of or experiencing homelessness to emergency shelters or community-based resources is also important. Diversion services will include landlord mediation, computer/phone access, housing listing access, and short-term case management solutions. The development of shelter guidelines will ensure that staff employed in emergency shelters have consistent approaches to service as well as consistent training will allow for improved service provisions as well as community outreach efforts.

### **3.5.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

The Sault Ste. Marie District plans to expand access to affordable housing in the area by taking the following 5 main strategic directions/actions:

**3.5.3 a) Expanding access to affordable housing in the service area**

**3.5.3 a) i.** Continuing to encourage and facilitate the addition of new rental housing and affordable homeownership to reduce pressure on the social housing stock.

**3.5.3 a) ii.** Ensuring that existing rental housing in the community is preserved and maintained

**3.5.3 a) iii.** Developing a long-term financial plan, including new social housing stock, preventative maintenance, and capital reserve on existing housing stock

**3.5.3 a) iv.** Supporting environmental sustainability and conservation

**3.5.3 b) Fostering the development of an integrated system of housing and homelessness services**

**3.5.3 b) i.** Ensuring that access to homelessness support services is streamlined

**3.5.3 b) ii.** Enabling all homelessness service staff and ancillary service staff to participate in joint professional development to ensure alignment with best practices

**3.5.3 b) iii.** Allowing all community partners to be engaged in ongoing homelessness service system planning

**3.5.3 c) Enhancing support services for homeless individuals and families**

**3.5.3 c) i.** Ensuring that survivors of domestic violence are able to access safe, affordable housing and support services

**3.5.3 c) ii.** Providing access to housing with supports for individuals and families with mid and high levels of acuity

**3.5.3 c) iii.** Ensuring that all emergency shelters are focused on helping clients return swiftly to housing

### **3.5.3 d) Developing solutions to prevent homelessness**

**3.5.3 d) i.** Ensuring the impact of short-term financial assistance to cover rent deposits and rent and utility arrears is maximized by targeting the most at-risk households

**3.5.3 d) ii.** Increasing access to support services to prevent evictions

**3.5.3 d) iii.** Engaging in additional outreach to vulnerable households to help prevent crises that result in housing loss

### **3.5.3 e) Engaging in ongoing planning**

**3.5.3 e) i.** Improving housing and homelessness data collection strategies

**3.5.3 e) ii.** Implementing an annual performance monitoring process

### **3.5.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The Housing and Homelessness Working Group, in conjunction with the DSSMSSAB has a significant role to play in advocacy and community engagement. The creation of a Housing and Homelessness Service Planning Committee will help to bring together the numerous groups and organizations that are currently addressing housing and homelessness issues in different ways. The purpose of this Committee will be to coordinate their work and create a united voice of advocacy for housing and homelessness issues across the District.

Addressing the asset management of assisting LHC and Non Profit Cooperatives is needed in order to direct funding towards improvements for existing housing stock. The Service Manager needs additional capital to create new affordable housing opportunities, increase affordable rents, and repair aging buildings.

Also, setting up a planning group for the implementation of a Housing First Strategy, consisting of service providers, local health authorities, local police authorities, leaders, representatives from the education and private sectors, community members and individuals with lived experience of homelessness will help to streamline advocacy efforts within the District.

## **3.6 Manitoulin-Sudbury**

### **3.6.1 Priority Issues:**

Priority issues for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District regarding Housing and Homelessness include addressing a constantly changing demand, underserved rural populations, limited services for high numbers of urban Aboriginal and Youth clients, transportation barriers, stagnant employment growth, underfunding and service gaps contributing to difficulties in reducing homelessness. Manitoulin-Sudbury's Housing and Homelessness Plan is centered on housing issues facing the low-income demographic. It is recognized within the 10-year plan that affordable housing is an integral component of building strong families and strong communities. There is also a need for accurate data reflective of current populations which is no longer available due to the Federal government's discontinuation of the long form census.

### **3.6.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board needs to understand and respond to the District's unique demographic. This means that a strong emphasis on seniors housing and support is required. Implementing strategies to support overlooked populations, such as Aboriginals, youth, non-seniors, and individuals with disabilities as well as those with mental health illnesses and/or addictions is necessary.

Imperative action to improve accessibility to transportation is needed, as is expanding employment and training opportunities within the District, particularly in the fields of personal support work, nursing and gerontology. Energy efficiency is also a must for sustainable housing, placing innovation and efficiency at the forefront of all affordable housing projects. The main goal of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is spearheading integrated service delivery.

10-year Manitoulin-Sudbury initiatives will also include increased advocacy roles for civic leaders, increased program evaluations, the monitoring of the release of RFP's and taking advantage of opportunities for funding. An overall rationalizing/re-organization of the social housing stock should also be completed.

### **3.6.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board plans to take the following actions to achieve the aforementioned goals and objectives:

- Activate engagement with LHIN and CCAC to ensure sufficient services are available to keep seniors in their homes as long as possible
- Develop culturally sensitive Aboriginal-specific services to better serve the needs of this population by establishing connections with Aboriginal organizations

- Connect with the school system to help identify homeless or 'at risk' youth
- Connect with hospitals and prisons to develop discharge planning processes
- Complete building condition audits and assess the success of the Northern Repair Program and the effectiveness of energy efficiency projects
- Advocate for more pro-active policies supporting affordable housing targets
- Explore alternative development models (for example, affordable ownership condominiums)
- Develop better communications with tenants about services that are available to them
- Establish a District-wide Integrated Service Delivery Committee
- Implement HIFIS 4.0 (when available)

Barriers to services as a result of ministry funding silos must also be overcome, as these place unnecessary hardships on individuals struggling to obtain and maintain stable affordable housing.

The development of additional employment opportunities and training programs for youth will also help to set a foundation for increased Northern employment opportunities, and thus, help to counter the effects of population decline.

### **3.6.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board would benefit from establishing a plan to improve and increase relations with the aboriginal community both on and off of reserves, and should recognize the importance of offering culturally appropriate services. Also, a partnership among case managers on and off of reserves should be established with the consent of clients in order to provide more effective supports and services.

As a whole, the population of youth (ages 10-19) is fairly high in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District (according to 2006 data). There do not seem to be any specific services for youth, however, which may disproportionately affect the urban Aboriginal population. It is critical to get connected with schools to get a better understanding of what they offer and how youth are connected with services when necessary.

Municipalities need to have a policy in place to provide temporary shelter and assistance finding housing for people who are homeless. The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board also plans to establish relations with Greater Sudbury's emergency shelters and other service providers who provide housing support services (i.e. the Homelessness Network, including the Corner Clinic and 7 other service providers).

It is within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Service Board's capacity to monitor the number of people who use their services. They will obtain quarterly data from Haven House, the only existing shelter within the district. This data should include information about the 'turn aways' or people who do not fit the criteria to stay at the shelter for whatever reason. The District must start to establish a base for what the needs are around homelessness and develop an emergency shelter system.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board will also spearhead the implementation of service delivery committees in order to increase the connectedness between hospitals, prisons, and community service providers in and around the district. While hospital and prison policies are not the mandate of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board, all 3 entities are involved in one cycle of the service, which is evidently disconnected.

## **3.7 Greater Sudbury**

### **3.7.1 Priority Issues:**

The Greater Sudbury CMSM is encountering modest population growth, however, this population is aging. There is strong income growth overall, however the lowest income populations possess the most acute housing needs, including seniors, youth, lone-parent families and urban Aboriginals. Rental units in the City are in declining condition and are older than the provincial average. In addition to these challenges, housing prices are rising. End of operating agreements with providers are quickly approaching. The waiting list for social housing is long, with an increasing demand for smaller units.

Regarding the issue of homelessness, the needs for both singles and families are diverse. Often resources can't meet the diversity of needs with multiple barriers present. Transportation is also an issue when there is a need to move to get services. Also, there is often a lack of coordination between service providers. The supply of shelter beds in the Greater Sudbury CMSM is adequate, but there are still users with complex needs that are not being met, including those with special needs.

In general, there are issues with affordability in housing within the Greater Sudbury CMSM, with a significant percentage of renters in core need, and increasing utility costs acting as a barrier to long-term sustainability.

The Greater Sudbury CMSM has identified 6 key priorities:

1. The Greater Sudbury CMSM plans to improve housing options across the continuum
2. There is a need to improve housing access and affordability for low income households
3. There is a need to strengthen approaches to preventing homelessness, increasing diversity of emergency shelter options, and supporting people with multiple barriers to obtaining and maintaining their housing
4. There is a need for additional supportive services coupled with permanent housing (both supportive housing and supports in private homes)
5. There is a need to improve coordination, collaboration, and partnerships along a broad range of stakeholders
6. There is a need to monitor and report on progress toward meeting the Housing and Homelessness Plan objectives and targets

### **3.7.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The goals of the Greater Sudbury CMSM regarding housing and homelessness over the next 10 year span include various initiatives for the improvement of housing options across the continuum. The CMSM wishes to strengthen approaches to preventing homelessness, including increasing the diversity of emergency shelter options. They will also aim to provide additional supportive services coupled with permanent housing (including in private homes). Improved coordination, collaboration and partnerships among a broad range of stakeholders is needed, as is monitoring and reporting on progress toward meeting the Housing and Homelessness Plan objectives and targets.

### **3.7.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

**3.7.3 a)** The Greater Sudbury CMSM plans to improve housing options across the continuum by:

**3.7.3 a) i.** Improving and maintaining existing housing stock:

- Develop a community strategy to educate and improve energy efficiency and compliance with safety and property maintenance standards
- Devote a portion of future senior government housing funding towards rental housing repair and energy efficiency
- Complete long range planning related to the social housing portfolio to address declining senior government funding and increasing project costs
- Provide ongoing training and support for non-profit housing providers regarding governance, sustainability, asset management, regeneration, energy conservation, risk management, and financial planning

**3.7.3 a) ii.** Improving the accessibility of new housing and full utilization of existing housing stock:

- Continue to work with community-based accessibility organizations to disseminate information about the need for barrier-free housing
- Devote a portion of future senior government affordable housing funding allocations to incorporate accessibility, energy efficiency, and mobility modifications
- Collaborate with housing providers and support service agencies to distribute information on modified units in social housing

**3.7.3 a) iii.** Increasing the diversity of affordable housing options:

- Communicate and build support and partnerships for the Plan housing priorities in the private sector and economic development circles
- Work with stakeholders to disseminate information on the range and variation of seniors housing needs
- Update the Official Plan and by-laws to reflect the new legislated second suite requirements
- Review Official Plan polices to ensure they promote a wide range of affordable housing options (i.e. rooming houses, group homes, and neighborhoods that offer a full range of housing and amenities)
- Review existing policy around surplus municipal land, ensuring that surplus municipal properties are made available for affordable housing where appropriate

**3.7.3 a) iv.** Increasing community acceptance of, and providing consistent support for multi-residential dwellings:

- Work with the public and local stakeholders to promote the benefits of multi-residential housing

**3.7.3 b)** The Greater Sudbury CMSM will improve housing access and affordability for low-income households:

- Devote the majority of future senior government affordable funding allocations for new affordable housing projects and rent supplement programs
- Work with local support agencies to distribute information on accessing affordable housing
- Advocate for senior government funding programs and legislation changes to help local providers better respond to local housing needs

**3.7.3 c)** The CMSM will also strengthen approaches to preventing homelessness, increasing the diversity of emergency shelter options, and supporting people with multiple barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing by:

**3.7.3 c) i.** Ensuring emergency accommodation is available when needed, but focusing on transitioning to permanent housing:

- As a 10-year goal, with increases in permanent affordable housing stock and monitoring or shelter usage, work over time to gradually retire some of the capacity of the emergency shelters and redirect funding to support individuals and families in transitioning to and in maintaining permanent housing

- Review eligibility criteria for existing shelters and/or reallocate funding to ensure emergency accommodation meets the diverse range of needs, including emergency accommodation that does not have a zero alcohol tolerance

**3.7.3 c) ii.** Addressing the needs of the most vulnerable homeless populations by:

- Prioritizing the most vulnerable for rehousing, case management, and homelessness prevention, particularly those who may be chronically homeless and/or with multiple barriers to housing, including those interacting with health care, the Children’s Aid Society, and addictions treatment
- Redistributing funding for homelessness services to increase the focus and provide more intensive case management to individuals with multiple barriers to housing

**3.7.3 c) iii.** Stopping the discharge of people into homelessness from key points of contact such as hospitals and correctional facilities:

- In collaboration with community stakeholders, develop a structured process that plans for the safe and successful transitioning of individuals from institutions

**3.7.3 c) iv.** Addressing the need for additional educational awareness by social housing providers and landlords of available crisis services and supports for tenants with special needs:

- Develop and maintain a detailed services directory of community homelessness resources
- Increase the capacity of the social housing sector and private landlords to respond to client needs by providing educational materials, training, and professional development to social housing providers and private landlords on available services and supports for tenants in crisis and tenants with complex needs

**3.7.3 d)** The CMSM will also provide additional supportive services coupled with permanent housing (both supportive housing and supports in private homes) by:

**3.7.3 d) i.** Ensuring that supports are available for individuals to achieve and maintain housing stability:

- Collaborate with support agencies and housing providers to expand life skills training/mentoring to encourage successful tenancies for vulnerable populations (i.e. victims of domestic violence, seniors, etc.)

**3.7.3 d) ii.** Ensuring adequate permanent housing is linked with supports:

- Support investments in permanent housing linked with supports and collaborate with agencies and senior government ministries to increase the supply of supportive housing targeting seniors and other vulnerable populations

**3.7.3 d) iii.** Reducing barriers to accessing housing, services and supports:

- Collaborate with community organizations to support anti-discrimination education and opportunities to work with private sector landlords, housing providers and other community groups to disseminate information on human rights as they relate to housing
- Support enhanced access to programs by collaborating with housing providers and community service providers to improve outreach
- Support community outreach and education efforts to help tenants and landlords learn about their rights and responsibilities
- Advocate with senior levels of government for more capital and operating funding for the development of ongoing operation of supportive housing projects

**3.7.3 e)** Coordination, collaboration and partnerships along a broad range of stakeholders will be addressed through:

**3.7.3 e) i.** Improving the effectiveness of the local housing system by increasing coordination, collaboration, and partnerships among a broad range of stakeholders involved in housing:

- Facilitate connection, discussions, and systems planning between stakeholders in housing, social services, and health (including the City, housing providers, support service providers, the hospital, the LHIN, and the CCAC)
- Advocate for senior government funding and legislation changes to better respond to local housing needs (i.e. funding long term capital deficits, energy efficiency, and providing predictable long-term funding)
- Build community support by increasing public awareness about housing needs and the benefits of homelessness services and affordable housing
- Create opportunities for community partners and stakeholders to network, identify priorities and goals, and work collaboratively on solutions to ending homelessness
- Engage the business and faith communities to play a greater role in meeting community homelessness needs

**3.7.3 f)** The Greater Sudbury CMSM will also monitor and report on progress toward meeting the Housing and Homelessness Plan objectives and targets by:

- Annually evaluating and reporting on progress towards fulfilling the Housing and Homelessness Plan objectives
- In conjunction with the completion of the Official Plan update, fully review the Housing and Homelessness Plan objectives and Housing First Strategy
- Based on review of the local housing market and consultations with stakeholders, identify gaps in programs, services, and supports
- Revise the Official Plan as well as the Housing and Homelessness Plan and Strategy to address identified gaps
- Work with the Provincial government on the establishment of provincial housing and homelessness indicators, including participating in provincial reporting as required

**3.7.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

In order to meet the priority of improving housing access and affordability for low income households, the Greater Sudbury CMSM will advocate for senior government funding, programs, and legislation changes to help local providers better respond to local housing needs such as sustained operating and capital funding, regeneration programs, and energy upgrades.

The Greater Sudbury CMSM recognizes there is a need for additional supportive services coupled with permanent housing. To reduce barriers to accessing housing services and supports, the CGS will advocate with senior levels of government for more capital and operating funding for the development of an ongoing operation of supportive housing projects.

Finally, the Greater Sudbury CMSM will advocate for ongoing Federal and Provincial participation in the housing sector to provide programs and funding towards creating and sustaining affordable housing, and will work with the Provincial government on the establishment of provincial housing and homelessness indicators.

## **3.8 Nipissing**

### **3.8.1 Priority Issues:**

The Nipissing 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan emphasizes the need for more housing support services and programs to help people remain housed. Additionally, the poor condition of housing has surfaced as a major theme. While there is still a need for more (new) housing stock at various points along the housing continuum, maintaining and maximizing the existing stock, and preventing people from losing their homes is a priority. This is reflected in the plan's objectives, strategies and action framework.

### **3.8.2 Goals/Objectives:**

Six strategic objectives form the core of the Nipissing plan. These objectives include:

- Preventing homelessness and shelter diversion
- Improving housing stability
- Increasing housing affordability and options
- Sustaining and expanding the housing portfolio
- Increasing integration, coordination and advocacy
- Providing more information, education and awareness

The means for achieving these objectives is through various strategies (listed below). Progress will be measured through a series of Key Performance Indicators. For example, reducing annual shelter admissions by 20% and increasing the affordable housing supply by 20%.

### **3.8.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

**3.8.3 a)** Regarding homelessness prevention and shelter diversion, the Nipissing District plans to achieve this objective through the following strategies:

**3.8.3 a) i.** Improving the homelessness prevention and shelter diversion system so that it better assists citizens in finding appropriate and sustainable housing in the shortest amount of time.

**3.8.3 a) ii.** The development of a Housing First definition and program options for the District.

**3.8.3 a) iii.** The establishment of an Emergency Homelessness and Housing Response Team.

**3.8.3 a) iv.** Find a solution to meeting the chronic requirements of individuals who are homeless, in both urban and rural settings.

**3.8.3 a) v.** Work with community partners and agencies to advocate for those who are at risk of becoming homeless and those who are homeless.

**3.8.3 b)** Improving housing stability in the Nipissing District can be achieved through the following strategies:

**3.8.3 b) i.** The development of a Housing Eviction Prevention Program.

**3.8.3 b) ii.** Ensuring that community housing workers are available to provide advocacy and support services to tenants and/or homeowners.

**3.8.3 b) iii.** Consistent and coordinated discharge planning from hospitals, and youth and adult correctional facilities.

**3.8.3 b) iv.** The development of Rural Outreach and Transportation Services to support seniors and others in stable housing.

**3.8.3 b) v.** Improving senior citizen's ability to Age in Place.

**3.8.3 c)** In regards to increasing housing affordability and options along the housing continuum, the District plans to implement the following strategies:

**3.8.3 c) i.** Assist qualified homeowners to create secondary suites in their homes as a means of increasing the supply of affordable rental housing where permitted through Official Plans.

**3.8.3 c) ii.** Explore the feasibility of establishing a shared housing registry with related support services.

**3.8.3 c) iii.** Explore opportunities to expand Rent Supplement and Housing Allowance programs.

**3.8.3 c) iv.** Aligning various funding sources with the Strategic Objectives of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

**3.8.3 c) v.** Review the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund.

**3.8.3 c) vi.** Leverage resources in order to maximize affordable housing options.

**3.8.3 c) vii.** Increase the supply of affordable rental housing.

**3.8.3 c) viii.** Increase the supply of transitional/second stage housing.

**3.8.3 c) ix.** Increase the supply of supported/supportive housing.

**3.8.3 d)** Strategies regarding sustaining and expanding the housing portfolio will be achieved by:

**3.8.3 d) i.** Renewing and/or redeveloping social housing assets

**3.8.3 d) ii.** Realizing economies in the social housing portfolio

**3.8.3 d) iii.** Reviewing the social housing portfolio

**3.8.3 d) iv.** Maintaining Nipissing's service level standards in social housing

**3.8.3 d) v.** Creating opportunities to facilitate new housing projects

**3.8.3 e)** Leadership, integration, coordination and advocacy objectives can be achieved through:

**3.8.3 e) i.** Ensuring the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan is implemented.

**3.8.3 e) ii.** Strengthening the partnership with the Nipissing District Housing Registry Inc. and non-profit housing providers.

**3.8.3 e) iii.** Increasing the collaboration between the DNSSAB and community partners, municipalities, and provincial and federal governments.

**3.8.3 e) iv.** The DNSSAB recognizing and supporting the Nipissing District Homelessness and Housing Partnership.

**3.8.3 e) v.** The DNSSAB acting as a leader and advocating in supporting homelessness prevention initiatives and affordable housing solutions.

**3.8.3 e) vi.** Developing Indigenous housing solutions

**3.8.3 f)** Strategies to achieve a greater level of awareness, education, information and best practices will include:

**3.8.3 f) i.** Improving the public's access to information on housing and homelessness programs, including housing options and support services.

**3.8.3 f) ii.** Increasing awareness concerning housing and homelessness issues in the District.

**3.8.3 f) iii.** Facilitating and promoting professional development and networking opportunities for community partners.

**3.8.3 f) iv.** Increasing Indigenous cultural awareness and safety.

**3.8.3 f) v.** The development and implementation of a Social Housing Quality Standards Framework and Best Practices Program.

**3.8.3 f) vi.** The DNSSAB becoming a repository of housing information, data and knowledge.

**3.8.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The DNSSAB will advocate on behalf of all of the citizens of the District for acceptable housing and related support programs and services to meet their housing needs. They will also advocate for urban Aboriginal housing needs. Communication between citizens and government leaders related to urban Aboriginal housing, as well as partnerships between non-Indigenous service providers, elders and community members are vital in achieving this task.

Advocacy will also take place on behalf of all citizens in the District for acceptable housing and related support programs and services for victims of violence. It should be noted that there are other target populations beyond the scope of Nipissing's 10-year housing and homelessness plan that are in need of acceptable housing and/or are negatively affected by housing instability. These groups require additional inquiry and supports, and include individuals with mental health concerns (including addictions and substance abuse), individuals with a criminal history of convictions and incarceration, and children.

## **3.9 Cochrane**

### **3.9.1 Priority Issues:**

Priority issues for the Cochrane District include addressing a lack of senior supports and social programming in private and public residences. Other priorities consist of a shortage of home care supports available for vulnerable groups, including 24 hour support for individuals with mental health issues. An increase in the number of personal support workers in the District is greatly needed. There is also a lack of transitional housing that has to be addressed as well as the issue of a crisis centre for emergency housing situations.

A larger and more varied housing stock is needed, including multi-bedrooms, seasonal, granny flats, and larger units to accommodate extended families. There is also a large social housing wait list in the District. Communication and coordination of services locally, regionally and provincially for housing services needs improvement.

A general increase in affordable housing within the District is needed. Housing sustainability must also be maintained through the support of integrated services. The creation of partnerships including, but not limited to non-profit and social housing organizations is necessary to achieve this aim.

### **3.9.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The Cochrane District is aiming for the implementation of a Housing First strategy supported by wrap-around services tailored to individual needs. The completion of the transitional 6-plex to relieve pressure on the existing shelters will aid in re-entry to community living for victims of domestic violence. Another CDSSAB objective includes improving communication between local employers, OW caseload and employment programs. The launch of a community para-medicine program and the monitoring of its usage versus emergency department visits will also contribute to the fulfillment of the Northern Growth Plan Guiding Principles.

The CDSSAB plans to support the development of supportive housing units, utilize increased partnerships with support service providers and continue participation on local health planning committees (such as Health Links and ALC). The stimulation of housing development, which will result in lower demand and thus lower average rents, should aid in maintaining a stable 'market to affordable development' ratio of 4:1. Continuing membership with the Chamber of Commerce and playing an active role in it should also aid in achieving these objectives.

Statistical analysis must be coordinated with local economic development corporations to determine the initial viability of development projects, as well as the continued

marketability of current assets. The development of strategies to market the Cochrane area as a destination of choice will help to encourage migration to the District.

### **3.9.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

In recognition of current limited capacity, the CDSSAB will partner with local supportive service providers and CDLHC to form a committee where service needs can be met. The goal of this committee will be developing a supportive affordable housing model to serve multiple needs (i.e. addictions, mental illnesses, mobility restrictions, victims of domestic violence, and/or those with developmental challenges). Homeless shelters and service agencies will also collaborate to pool resources and develop appropriate models that optimize limited funding (i.e. Housing First).

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, NELHIN, and CCAC must work to optimize the 'hub' service strategy, whereby housing assets in all communities can be used to serve the needs of residents. This is particularly important in the smaller communities along Highway 11. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the NELHIN must join with representatives from the CDSSAB to quantify current local service delivery costs and commit to reinvesting local fund surpluses realized via the successful implementation of the Hub service model, the Health Links program, and the Community Para-medicine program.

To enable and optimize mutually beneficial development strategies, the Ministry of Education and local school boards must acknowledge DSSABs as municipal entities entitled to receive information regarding the disposal of surplus school properties. Further, local school boards must participate in local planning strategies that incorporate the development of affordable housing. Also, post-secondary institutions should partner with the CDSSAB and CDLHC to offer practical community placement opportunities in the skilled trades and soft service fields.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing must revisit funding allocation models when rolling out all future housing programs. This will ensure that all funds are available and create a depth of affordability in projects that is not tied to a fixed amount per unit, but based on the viability of the project business case. In order to enable and sustain future development, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing must engage the CDSSAB to develop a Northern Cost Factor that can be applied to future funding allocations.

### **3.9.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The Cochrane District's focus in regards to advocacy includes the following Guiding Principles for Action from the Northern Growth Plan:

- Focusing on achieving positive outcomes for individuals and families
- Addressing the housing needs of individuals and families in order to help address other challenges they face
- Having a role for non-profit corporations and non-profit housing co-operatives
- Having a role for the private market in meeting housing needs
- Providing for partnerships among governments and others in the community
- Treating individuals and families with respect and dignity
- Coordinating with other community services
- Being relevant to local circumstances
- Allowing for a range of housing options to meet a broad range of needs
- Ensuring appropriate accountability for public funding
- Supporting economic prosperity

## **3.10 Timiskaming**

### **3.10.1 Priority Issues:**

The District of Timiskaming's population is both aging and declining. A large segment of the population is seniors. The District contains 23 municipalities with a population of 32 000 people in total. Different economies in the South part of the District (agriculture and services) and North part (mining and forestry) are very cyclical in nature. There is also a shrinking tax base in the area.

### **3.10.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The DTSSAB wishes to expand partnerships with community-based service agencies in order to increase new supply across the housing continuum (especially in underserved market segments such as Assisted Living) and use greater flexibility in program funding to expand the use of housing allowances.

### **3.10.3 Strategic Directions/Actions:**

In order to achieve these goals, the DTSSAB will take the following actions:

- Continue to encourage, support, and promote community partnerships to address housing challenges. They will also work to promote awareness within the community of services provided through its office.
- Engage municipalities to invest in housing across the housing continuum in Timiskaming.
- Advocate for federal and provincial government funding to access funding under the IAH program for the Ontario Renovates component. IAH allocations currently fall short of what is needed for the housing needs of Timiskaming, and the funding ends in March 2015.
- The DTSSAB as a Service Manager will engage HSC to conduct a study on the End of Operating Agreements (EOA) in Timiskaming to assess the current state of the social housing stock and be able to plan for ensuring its viability into the future.
- Ensure the delivery of the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) through programming and activities that will successfully meet the province of Ontario's two CHPI objectives: those experiencing homelessness obtaining and retaining housing, and those at risk of homelessness remaining housed.
- The DTSSAB as a Service Manager will explore the possibility of lowering the household income limits (HILS) in the District's north.
- Lobby senior levels of government for funding through the IAH program for the creation of a housing allowance program to address the affordability of housing in Timiskaming.

- Lobby senior levels of government for continued funding for the Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program past March 2023.
- Support the creation of an outreach services worker position to address gaps in programming and provide support to tenants and clients in order to ensure housing stability and the prevention of homelessness. The outreach services position will be in place by the end of October 2013.
- The DTSSAB will conduct a formal review of existing policies, local rules and practices addressing housing and homelessness in Timiskaming pertaining to social housing units.
- Investigate the need for shelter beds in Timiskaming for women, men, families and youth. This would involve working alongside the pavilion to establish current levels of service and identify gaps in services offered.
- Investigate the barriers to senior housing in Timiskaming by lobbying senior levels of government to obtain funding to ensure that buildings meet the accessibility standards, as set out in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).
- Work with private sector and community partners to develop assisted living facilities in the district.
- Explore the need for a respite care bed facility to address individuals transitioning back into their homes after major medical treatments.
- Lobby senior levels of government to provide funding to maintain existing public and social housing.

#### **3.10.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The DTSSAB is constantly trying to mitigate the effects of its cyclical economy. Under the Housing Services Act, District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) are responsible for providing social housing. Drawing on 6 provincial homelessness funding programs, DSSABs can adequately address housing issues under typical conditions. However, sudden population booms that increase vulnerable populations and rates of homelessness place pressure on the limited resources of the DSSAB and supporting organizations, such as community service agencies, Aboriginal organizations, and Local Health Integration Networks. Opportunities for funding and cooperation between these organizations must increase so that they may adequately assist and protect vulnerable populations within a boom community.

## **3.11 Parry Sound**

### **3.11.1 Priority Issues:**

In the Parry Sound District, a lack of affordable housing, including a high percentage of renters designated in the core need, is a major priority. This shortage in acceptable rental housing is especially challenging for groups such as low income seniors, young single adults, lone parent families, persons with disabilities and Aboriginal people living off-reserve. Unstable, seasonal employment is another factor affecting housing, as is a lack of support services, particularly in-home supports for seniors. Housing stock that does exist is often poor quality or in a state of disrepair.

In addition to these barriers, many small towns are simply poorly connected. A lack of social and transportation infrastructure affects employment opportunities as well as service delivery. Other challenges include overcoming unusual administrative boundaries, as the West portion of the District is oriented to Parry Sound for services while the East drives its population toward North Bay. Many Northern communities in the area lack sufficient infrastructure to provide a full-range of services.

### **3.11.2 Goals/Objectives:**

The PSDSSAB's main objectives regarding homelessness reduction and stabilization include reducing the number of single adults of working age on the social housing wait list, as well as the number of lone parent families living in core housing cost need (i.e. housing costs are greater than 30% of gross income). Progress must be assessed in 2019 on the reductions of single working age parents on the social housing caseload and lone parent families and re-adjust objectives for the period 2019-2024.

The PSDSSAB is working to maintain seniors living alone and senior couples in their own homes and/or in alternative small-scale community settings with the appropriate health and social supports. In addition, similar strategies will be applied to assist persons with disabilities in maintaining community living arrangements. An integrated common client database needs to be put in place to outline housing needs across the District in all sectors.

### **3.11.3 Strategic Actions/Directions:**

**3.11.3 a)** The PSDSSAB plans to achieve homelessness stabilization and reduction in the following ways:

**3.11.3 a) i.** The PSDSSAB will develop a Housing and Homelessness network of community partners to further increase the coordination of services throughout the District.

- 3.11.3 a) ii.** Outreach tools will be developed along with information for each Municipality in the District.
- 3.11.3 a) iii.** The PSDSSAB will meet with municipal officials and the relevant local/regional economic development organizations and business groups to explore the potential for linking affordable housing development with local economic development strategies and plans.
- 3.11.3 a) iv.** Both the non-profit and for-profit housing sector will be engaged to identify potential housing development projects that will address priority housing needs, including meeting environmental and energy efficiency standards.
- 3.11.3 a) v.** Friendship Centres as well as Urban Native and Aboriginal Housing Partners will be engaged to identify and consider the housing needs of Aboriginal peoples living off reserve as well as identifying potential housing development projects that will address priority area housing needs.
- 3.11.3 a) vi.** The PSDSSAB will identify 2-3 communities who are committed to proceeding with joint housing and economic development initiatives. These communities will have a high proportion of single working age adults and lone parent families struggling to maintain stable and affordable housing.
- 3.11.3 a) vii.** Continue with the PSDSSAB plan for the allocation of additional provincial funds available for housing supports, in accordance with joint planning with municipalities that addresses the objectives of homelessness reduction and stabilization.
- 3.11.3 a) viii.** Continue to advocate for coordinated services for victims of domestic violence through the Parry Sound Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee.
- 3.11.3 a) ix.** Continue the close collaboration between the staff within the DSSAB departments of Espirit Place, Ontario Works and Housing and Community Services for the housing needs of victims of domestic violence.
- 3.11.3 a) x.** The PSDSSAB will advocate for provincial funding for transitional housing in the District that will provide supports for victims of domestic violence as well as transitioning people to safe and adequate housing.
- 3.11.3 a) xi.** Additional partners from the public and community sectors will be invited and encouraged to participate in the Housing and Homelessness Network, such as Boards of Education and secondary schools in the District (in order to include the interests of youth who are at risk of homelessness or leaving the District for lack of employment opportunities), community service agencies providing family support, skill-building and employment training assistance (literacy and numeracy upgrading, for example) to low income individuals and families, agencies representing and advocating for accessible housing for persons with disabilities, and agencies representing and advocating for accessible housing for persons with disabilities and victims of domestic violence.

**3.11.3 a) xii.** The PSDSSAB also plans to advocate for sustainable ongoing funding of Affordable Housing programs with flexibility, focusing on a homelessness reduction and stabilization strategy for the next 5 years for the non-senior and single adults and lone parent families in the district.

**3.11.3 b)** Regarding the homelessness prevention, the PSDSSAB plans to move forward with the following initiatives:

**3.11.3 b) i.** Advocating with the NE LHIN at all levels so that that NE LHIN is engaged with the PSDSSAB and Health Sector agencies to commit to an Aging in Community Strategy based on coordination of supports with the NE LHIN, as well as integrated housing and supporting services for seniors living alone, senior couples, and persons with disabilities in the District.

**3.11.3 b) ii.** Engaging the Housing and Homelessness Network to prioritize communities in the District with high proportions of seniors living alone requiring alternative supportive housing and more intense supports to remain in the community.

**3.11.3 b) iii.** The PSDSSAB outreach process with municipalities will include those priority communities in order to create alternative housing options for seniors living alone and senior couples in their communalities, such as the removal of by-law barriers to secondary suites, the provision of surplus municipal land and buildings to non-profit and private developers for affordable housing projects for seniors, and providing incentives to condominium developers to include affordable housing units for seniors in their building projects.

**3.11.3 b) iv.** The PSDSSAB will engage the ALC (Alternative Level of Care) Committee in taking short-term action to identify all seniors living alone and persons with disabilities in the District whose major risk factors for loss of housing stability include major repair and upkeep of their existing homes, and periodic to moderate in-home and community support (for example, meal delivery, socialization, and housekeeping).

**3.11.3 b) v.** The PSDSSAB will continue as an active partner in the ALC in pursuing further ways of maximizing the use of existing resources that will enable more seniors and persons with disabilities to remain in their own homes.

**3.11.3 b) vi.** The development of Asset Management tools will also be continued in order to ensure that the existing allocation of seniors buildings within the current social housing stock is preserved.

**3.11.3 b) vii.** Further review of the End of Operating Agreements with Social Housing Providers also must occur to better understand the implications to seniors housing stock for the best use of seniors housing to be realized in the communities. Focusing on developing housing alternatives and support services for seniors living alone, senior couples, and persons with disabilities in the District means that these populations have a decreased risk of losing their place in their communities.

**3.11.3 c)** The need for a Housing Risks/Needs Database will be addressed in the following ways:

**3.11.3 c) i.** The PSDSSAB will develop a Housing and Homelessness Network of community partners to further increase the coordination of services throughout the District.

**3.11.3 c) ii.** Housing providers, health and social service agencies serving residents in the District will be engaged to support the development of a Housing Status and Risk Assessment tool to use in the field to collect data on their client base housing needs/risk factors.

**3.11.3 c) iii.** A Housing Status and Housing Need/Risk Assessment tool will be developed to collect information on the housing needs of clients experiencing homelessness, unstable housing situations, and who are at risk of housing destabilization or loss.

**3.11.3 c) iv.** Engaging the Housing and Homelessness Network in the creation and implementation of a Housing Needs/Risk Assessment tool that will involve finding a host agency to enable planning for targeted affordable housing developments and homelessness reduction and prevention action at the District-level.

**3.11.3 c) v.** The Housing and Homelessness Network will review annual reports on housing and homelessness.

**3.11.3 c) vi.** An annual report will be provided to all municipalities and communities in the District of Parry Sound for the purpose of individual and joint planning and action on affordable housing and homelessness. Creation of a central database on the affordable housing needs and homelessness risks at the District and community levels will enable coordinated planning for the reduction and prevention of homelessness among high priority groups within the population.

### **3.11.4 Areas for Advocacy:**

The PSDSSAB will advocate for provincial funding for transitional housing in the District to provide supports for victims of domestic violence as well as moving people to safe and adequate housing. They will also advocate for the sustainable, ongoing funding of Affordable Housing programs.

Progress in this area will be measured in the following ways:

- A Housing and Homelessness Network, established in 2014-2016
- The development of Outreach Information/tools for municipalities in 2014-2016
- Identifying key municipalities for joint collaboration in 2014-2016
- Housing projects identified and joint agreements established that increase the availability of housing for non-senior single adults and lone parent families in the core housing need
- Establishing contact with the local Friendship Centre, Urban Native and Aboriginal Housing partners to begin looking at the housing needs of the off-reserve Aboriginal population.

The PSDSSAB will also focus on developing housing alternatives and support services for seniors living alone, senior couples, and persons with disabilities. Actions to achieve these objectives include advocating with the NELHIN at all levels to ensure that the NELHIN is engaged with the PSDSSAB and Health Sector agencies to commit to an Aging in Community Strategy based on integrated housing and supportive services. Increased coordination with the NELHIN for supportive housing outside of urban hubs is also needed.

The PSDSSAB will also engage the Housing and Homelessness Network to create alternative housing options for seniors living alone and senior couples, such as:

- Removal of by-law barriers to secondary suites
- Provision of surplus municipal land and buildings to non-profit and private developers for affordable housing projects for seniors
- Providing incentives to condominium developers to include affordable units for seniors in their building projects.

The PSDSSAB also plans to engage the ALC (Alternative Level of Care) Committee to identify all seniors living alone and persons with disabilities in the District whose major risk factors for loss of housing stability are the major repair and upkeep of their existing homes, including in-home and community support (for example, meal delivery, socialization, housekeeping). The PSDSSAB also wishes to help enable more seniors and persons with disabilities to remain in their own homes in the District of Parry Sound.

## 4.0 KEY AREAS OF COMMON ACTION

	KENORA	RAINY RIVER	THUNDER BAY	ALGOMA	SAULT STE. MARIE	MANITOULIN-SUDBURY	GREATER-SUDBURY	NIPISSING	COCHRANE	TIMISKAMING	PARRY SOUND
Integrated Services Delivery Approach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Data Monitoring and Tracking	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓
Private Sector Involvement			✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Advocacy and Investments in Affordable Housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sharing Best Practices for CHPI					✓					✓	
EOA Sustainability			✓				✓			✓	
Redevelopment	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Preservation of Existing Stock	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Maintaining Rent Supplements			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Capacity Building		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Asset Management			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Housing Supports/Supportive Housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Working with LHINs						✓	✓		✓		✓
Housing Development Corp.					✓				✓		

## 5.0 RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Websites:

1. Kenora: <http://www.kdsb.on.ca>
2. Rainy River: <http://www.rrdssab.ca>
3. Thunder Bay: <http://www.tbdssab.ca>
4. Algoma: <http://www.adsab.on.ca>
5. Sault Ste. Marie: <http://www.ssm-dssab.ca>
6. Manitoulin-Sudbury: <http://www.msdsb.net>
7. Greater Sudbury: <http://www.greatersudbury.ca>
8. Nipissing: <http://www.dnssab.on.ca>
9. Cochrane: <http://www.cdssab.on.ca>
10. Timiskaming: <http://www.dtssab.com>
11. Parry Sound: <http://www.psdssab.org>

### Publications:

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association. *A Pan-Northern Ontario Inventory of Homelessness Problems and Practices*. February, 2011.

Northern Ontario Services Deliverers Association. *Voices in the Wilderness: A Pan Northern Ontario Homelessness Summit*. June, 2012.

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association. *NOSDA Strategic Plan 2013-2016*. October, 2013.

Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association. *Homelessness in Northern Ontario Pre-feasibility Study for Implementing the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System in Northern Ontario*. July, 2014.

Ontario Municipal Social Services Association. *Enabling the Service System Management Role in Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention*. August, 2014.