

Renfrew County Housing Corporation

2023 Annual Report



County of
Renfrew
Ontario . Canada

Renfrew County Housing Corporation respectfully acknowledges that we are on the unceded, unsurrendered traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg. We are grateful to the Algonquin Anishinaabeg for their rich cultural history and teachings, care for the land, and many continued displays of friendship. We are committed to collaborative relationships with Pikwàkanagàn First Nation and all Indigenous peoples, honouring their stewardship from time immemorial of the beautiful land and water where we live across Renfrew County.



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Message from the Manager of Community Housing

The Renfrew County Housing Corporation is about people, community, and safe, affordable housing. We work together and collaboratively with our community partners to support people with the services, resources and programs to help create a place to call home. Along with my colleague, Real Estate Manager Kevin Raddatz, it is my pleasure to present the Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC) Annual General Report for 2023, highlighting our accomplishments and vision moving forward.

Our key highlights include the priorities that we place on how we work, why we are committed to a collaborative, person-centred approach and understanding how our team can ensure compassion is woven into our process.

1. Trauma Informed Care Approach: This is a person-centred approach that emphasizes personal and psychological safety. We launched several initiatives to support this during 2023:

- She C.A.N Fund was implemented using Homelessness Prevention Program funds at the direction of County Council in response to the coroner’s inquest and resulting recommendations regarding the murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam. This funding enables service providers to issue up to \$5,000 to victims of intimate partner violence so they may purchase what is necessary to establish and maintain a safe and affordable home.
- Introduction of “occupancy agreements” versus traditional “tenancy agreements”. Occupancy agreements allow tenants to maintain their primary tenancy status when adding new adults or spouses to their home. This increases the ability for both parties to be eligible for the highest possible rates of social assistance and rent subsidies, while recognizing relationship complexities and the importance of ensuring that the primary tenant’s housing remains secure.

2. Supportive Housing: Initiatives integrating support services within housing programs were launched, enhancing our ability to serve vulnerable populations through partnerships with local health and social service organizations.

- A responsive case manager model ensures that wrap around supports and interventions are timely and in collaboration with the tenant and other community service partners.
- Increased community housing staff presence at RCHC properties, meeting tenants where they are at to facilitate enhanced supports.
- Bi-weekly or monthly walk-in appointments are available for tenants in the common rooms.
- In-office appointments are available for all tenants to provide wellness and tenancy supports.
- Commencement of high content and hoarding supports.
- Introduction of “wellness checks” versus traditional “inspections” that put the person at the centre of care while also recognizing property condition issues.

Looking Ahead:

Renfrew County Housing Corporation is poised for continued evolution and growth. A strong person-centered focus, combined with a deep appreciation for the implementation of the Mesa philosophy, forms the foundation of everything we do. The Mesa philosophy emphasizes collaborative and compassionate care, serving as both an inspiration and a benchmark for our actions. This approach is universally applicable across all facets of community housing. In 2024, we will enhance supportive housing, increase affordable units, and refine our programs based on community feedback. Our commitment to providing safe, affordable housing and a place to call home remains our priority.

Warm Regards,

Jennifer Dombroskie

Jennifer Dombroskie
Manager of Community Housing



Message from the Manager of Real Estate

Throughout and prior to 2023 ongoing assessments of properties have prompted the procurement of a consultant to conduct a comprehensive Building Condition Assessment of Renfrew County Housing Corporation stock during 2024. The outcomes and recommendations will guide future property planning for maintenance and an overall community housing viability and revitalization plan.

A noticeable trend of increasing maintenance requirements has emerged due to the aging property stock and unit damages. The resulting and accumulating property maintenance workload has led to higher vacancy rates and underscored the need to enhance capacity in service procurement and internal processes.

As a result, we are implementing staffing model enhancements. Approved during the 2024 budget planning process, changes include the addition of a second Building Infrastructure Coordinator, an Administrative Assistant, and the addition of two full-time custodian positions. Additionally, we are adopting innovative approaches by grouping work when units are vacant to maximize efficiencies. Our dedicated staff are committed to ensuring safe housing that is in good repair and that the properties are well maintained. To address these challenges, we are focused on developing and implementing meaningful capital plans that not only meet current needs but also anticipate future requirements. Creating well-maintained, safe homes is a priority for providing compassion-based housing.

Our strategic approach aims to maintain the integrity of the housing portfolio, ensure long-term sustainability and provide high quality, respectful living conditions for our residents.

Sincerely,



Kevin Raddatz
Manager of Real Estate

Executive Summary

Home is an essential part of our sense of place and belonging. The Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC) was established in 2001 to support access to affordable housing and manage rent-geared-to-income housing in the County of Renfrew for low to moderate income households. It was founded as a response to a local need.

The RCHC plays an essential role in shaping and providing a sense of place and belonging for people, responsible for the infrastructure and support systems that make up affordable and accessible housing. Currently, we are an important part of an innovative and collaborative community wide approach to address a housing and homelessness crisis across the region. 2023 marked a transformative year for RCHC as we shift our model to effectively address the housing and homelessness crisis and work collaboratively with our partners and community members.

Housing is inextricably linked to our health and well-being. It is an essential foundation to support improved health and positively address mental health, addiction and trauma related challenges. Providing safe, supportive and affordable housing is at the core of what we do as the Renfrew County Housing Corporation. We are an essential point of contact for our most vulnerable populations, playing critical service provider and housing provision roles in the housing continuum.

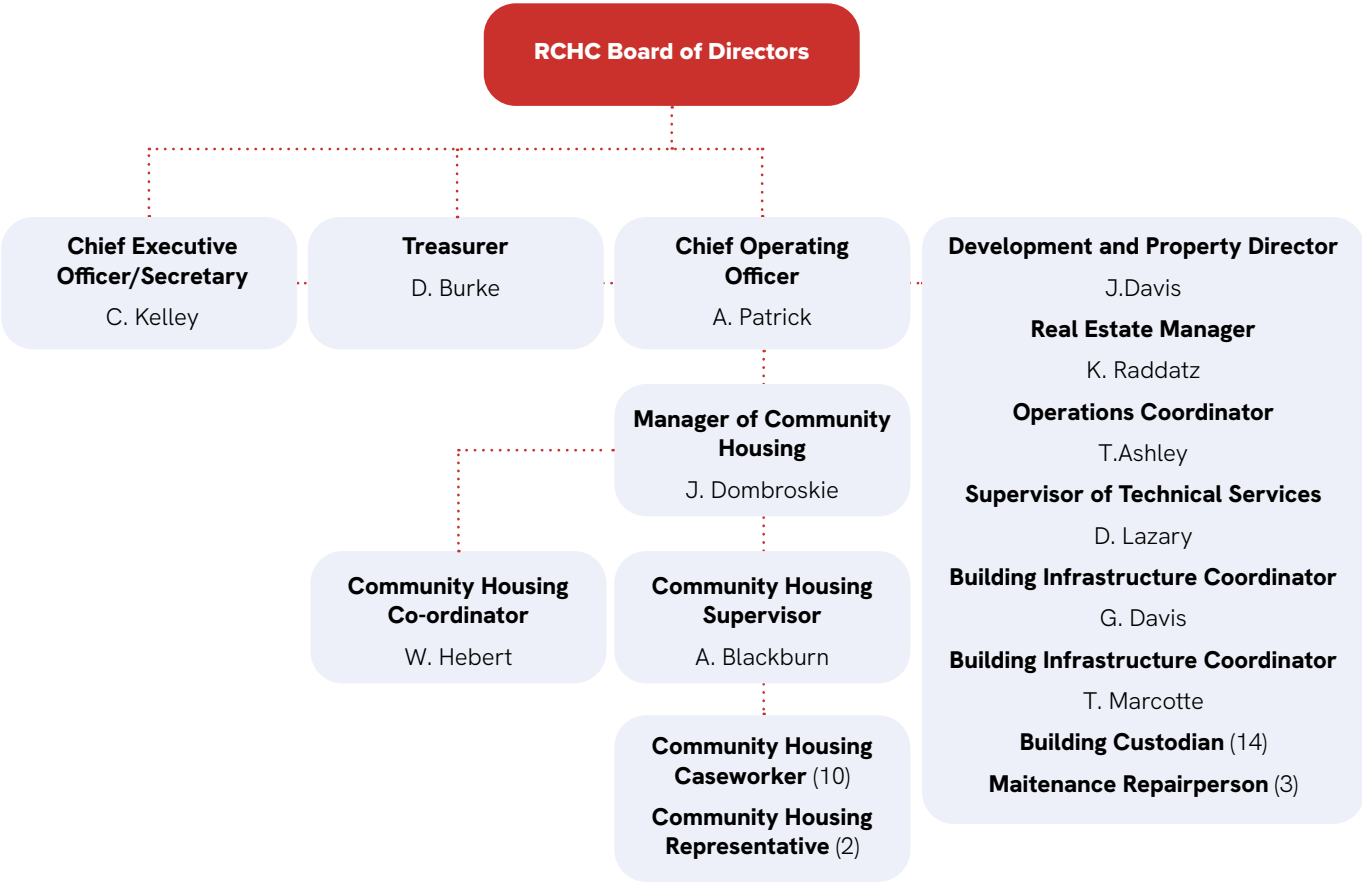


Who We Are

Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC) is a community service organization, in the business of providing supportive housing and direct service provision to community members. We humanize the bricks and mortar when community members need a place to call home.

With the direction and support of our Board of Directors and a strong team of staff, we work collectively to provide safe, accessible and supportive housing and the programs, resources and supports to meet community members' needs.

Organizational Chart



Board of Directors

The RCHC Board of Directors are responsible for providing overall operational direction. Board members are appointed by County Council and include members of the Community Services Committee, the Director of Community Services, the Treasurer, and the Chief Administrative Officer. Geographic representation is important for a balanced and knowledgeable Board.



Debbie Grills

Vice-Chair, Township of
Head, Clara & Maria



Peter Emon

Town of Renfrew



Ed Jacyno

City of Pembroke
Representative



Anne Giardini

Chair, Town of
Laurentian Hills



David Mayville

Township of Killaloe,
Hagarty, Richards



Gary Serviss

Town of Petawawa



Neil Nicholson

Township of Whitewater
Region

Timeline

2024

Spring marked the initial stages of a new housing and homelessness needs assessment and strategy in collaboration with OrgCode.



2024

May 22nd community launch of Mesa at Mirimichi Lodge. Media, housing experts, people with lived experience and community leaders shared knowledge and input to inform Mesa's direction.



April 2024

Renfrew County Affordable Housing Summit, a multi-sector community engagement event to share affordable housing knowledge and launch the Expression of Interest program. This initiative opens up County properties, including existing aging stock within the Renfrew County Housing Corporation portfolio and other County-owned lands, for potential affordable housing development.

February 2024

Mesa was presented to County Council as an innovative, compassionate and integrated local approach to address the mental health, addictions, affordable housing and homelessness crisis.

November 2023

Building Condition Assessment contract awarded and started.



June 2023

On June 28th, Renfrew County Council passed a Housing and Homelessness Resolution highlighting the housing and homelessness crisis. The resolution calls on the Province of Ontario to acknowledge the housing affordability crisis, commit to ending homelessness and provide adequate, predictable and sustainable housing infrastructure renewal funding.



2022

A new staffing model is implemented to transform service delivery for ongoing tenancies and new applicants. Organizational changes are designed to improve access to services, focus on life stabilization for clients and improve housing stability.



May 2021

County Council approved changes to RCHC property management model. Collaboration with the Development and Property department designed to improve building maintenance and asset management.

2019 & 2021

10 year Housing and Homelessness Plan was written in 2013 and updated in 2019 and 2021.

2005

RCHC assumed sole shareholder responsibilities of the Ottawaska Housing Corporation, consisting of 57 units (1,2 and 3-bedroom homes).



May 2021

County of Renfrew Community Services department forms a partnership with Built for Zero Canada and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, The Grind, Safe Shelter for Youth, Mental Health Services of Renfrew County to measure and end chronic homelessness and provide support for housing stability.



2020

Ownership of "Vimy Family Units" was transferred to RCHC, adding 42 units of 2 and 3-bedroom homes to RCHC inventory.

2018

Opeongo Non-Profit Community Residential Inc. requested that their assets, liabilities and operations of units be transferred to RCHC.

2001

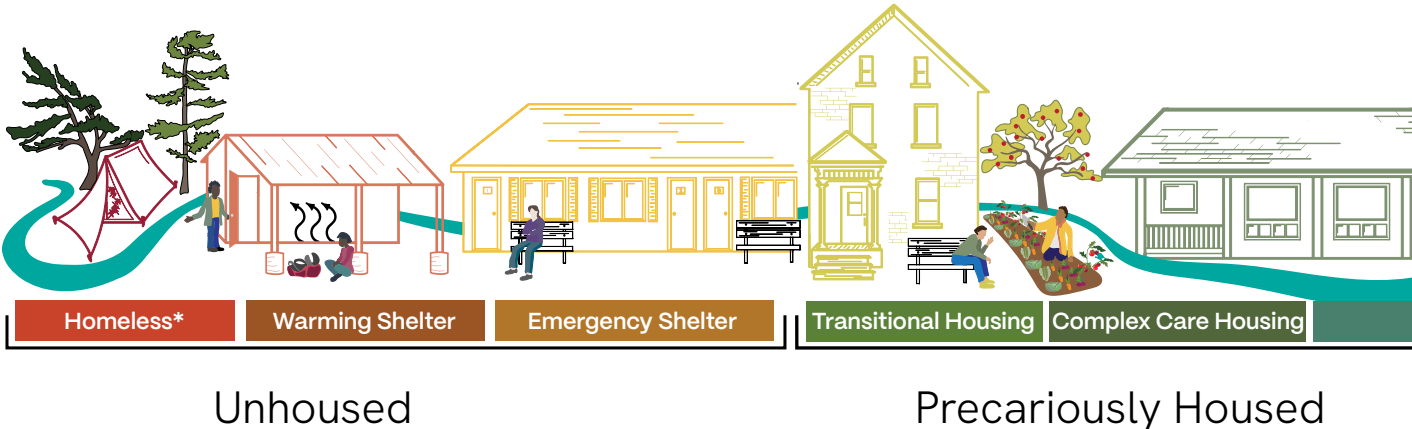
Renfrew County Housing Corporation established to manage rent-g geared-to-income housing in the County of Renfrew for low to moderate-income households.

What We Do

Renfrew County Housing Corporation is responsible for the maintenance and procurement of physical community housing properties and the provision of programs, and resources that provide direct services to community members who are in need of housing support.

Over the past few years, Renfrew County Housing Corporation has been aligning operations with the Development and Property department, recognizing that service delivery and the maintenance of physical properties were intertwined and needed a collaborative approach. We serve our community members better when we all work together. In collaboration, we provide housing, support services and programs to improve the quality of life for residents across Renfrew County.

Using in person surveys, community engagement, data analysis, data management software and online systems, RCHC is working with real-time, actionable data to triage services, collaborate with partners, and address system changes. We are working together to provide homes, supportive policies and the resources necessary to end homelessness across Renfrew County.



Local Knowledge and Data

Accurate and current data collection is essential to develop and provide effective, person-centred services and determine local housing needs. The accuracy of information that is collected locally informs how we serve and support our community. This data both determines a fair process and provides RCHC with an complete understanding of needs, supply and demand for housing. Local knowledge is about understanding numbers and needs as well as people’s stories and the root causes of homelessness.

Programs and Resources

RCHC offers programs and the support systems needed to help move people along the housing continuum. Access to financial support and both social and health services address community needs from a social determinants of health perspective. Housing instability and homelessness are a result of complex and layered contributing factors. It is important for us to cultivate a trauma-informed practice and weave trust into the relationships that we build with clients through our programs and services.

Properties — Bricks and Mortar

The bricks and mortar are the physical housing units that make up the RCHC portfolio. In 2023, there were a total of 1,020 units located across the geographic region of Renfrew County. How we support tenants and maintain our housing assets are intertwined. Maintenance and the relationships that we build with tenants creates a supportive and safe, secure space that community members can call home. Together, we are working to build enough deeply affordable and well-maintained homes to both end the crisis of homelessness across Renfrew County and to move people towards housing stability where they can thrive and enjoy a high quality of life. The number of properties, distribution of units and both function and form of units have a direct correlation to how well community members and tenants are doing.



Precariously Housed

Securely Housed

Current Property Inventory

594

units in 19 apartment buildings

(Pembroke, Renfrew, Arnprior, Cobden, Beachburg, Eganville, Barry's Bay, Palmer Rapids, Deep River)

60

single family units

(Pembroke, Renfrew, Arnprior)

154

family duplex units

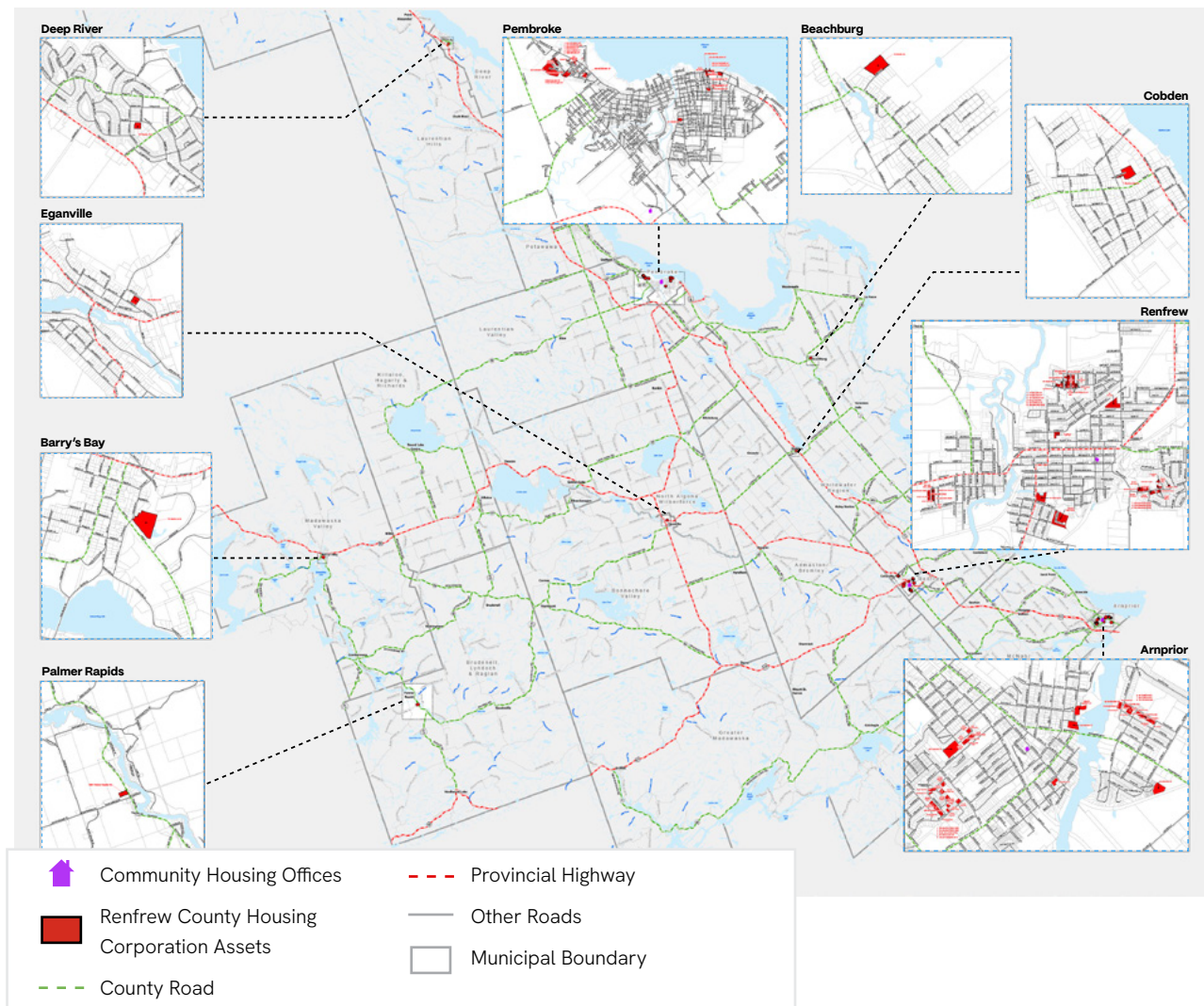
(Pembroke, Renfrew, Arnprior)

221

family row housing units

(Pembroke, Renfrew, Arnprior)

Renfrew County Community Housing Sites



How We Do It

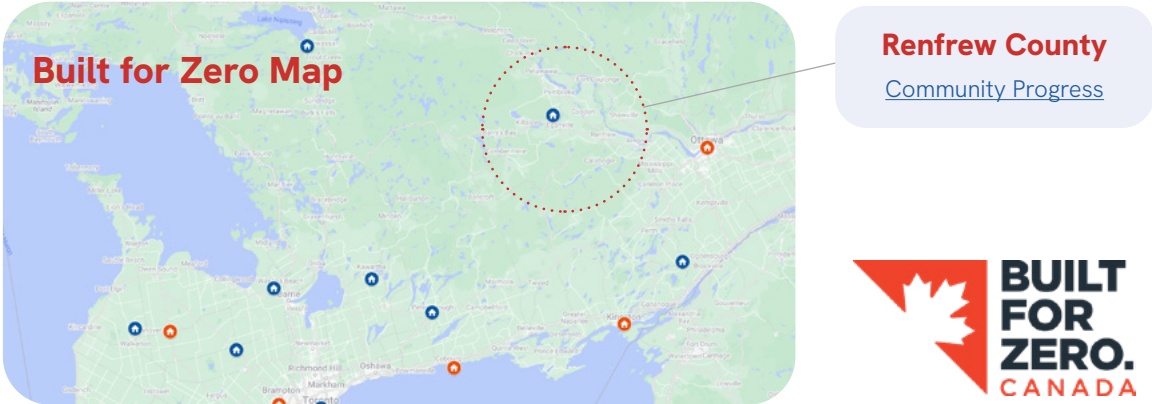
Housing, Homelessness Enumeration and Waitlist Data

Accurate data and information technology (IT) helps Renfrew County to efficiently co-ordinate the processes, programs and supports to optimize housing services. How we collect data and use storage systems and processes to create, process, secure and exchange information is a critical component to meeting community needs. These measures and systems provide information to better understand how the RCHC can most effectively invest in affordable housing efforts. Two important measures that inform local investments and support the nation-wide initiative, Built for Zero, are the By-Name List and annual Point-in-Time data collection.

In collaboration with partners, the Community Services department compiles and uses the By-Name List to identify and register community members who are experiencing homelessness. This real-time data is tracked, shared monthly and contributes to an up to date online Built for Zero dashboard. Built for Zero Canada is a national change effort to end chronic homelessness and Renfrew County has been participating in their Community Progress Indicators measurement efforts since 2021. Individuals are only added to the By-Name List with their personal information attached to a unique identifier to support confidentiality. Confidential information is shared as needed and only with service workers included on the consent form. With the By-Name List information, the Community Services Department is able to maintain a registry to prioritize supports and fill housing availability.

The Point-in-Time (PiT) captures a snapshot of one short period of time and includes non-identifying information over the period of one day. As a survey, it is used to better understand the circumstances and demographics of people experiencing homelessness, increase public awareness and improve services and programs.

Both of these measures contribute to a robust set of data points that help to support coordinated access to the right services at the right time.



Point-in-Time

The Point-In-Time measure in Renfrew County took place on October 27 and data was gathered through to November 7 in 2023. This is what we learned.

55

Households experience homelessness

53

Are chronically homeless

(experience homelessness for 6 months or more)

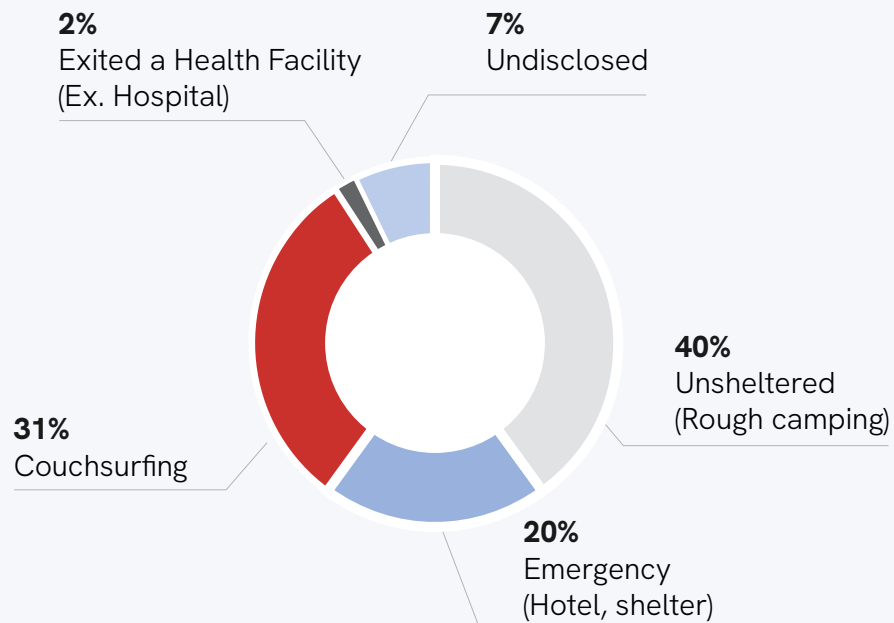
42%

Experienced intimate partner violence

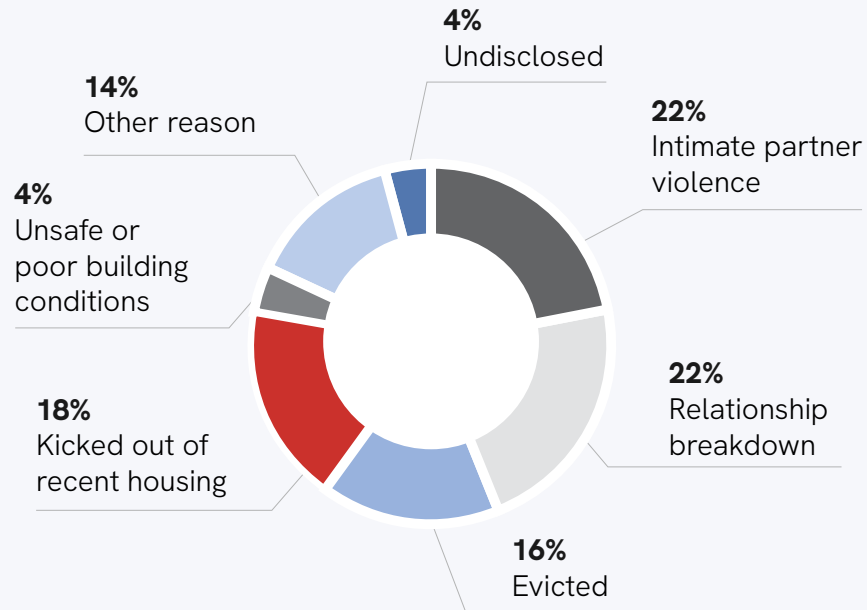
38%

Self-identify as Indigenous

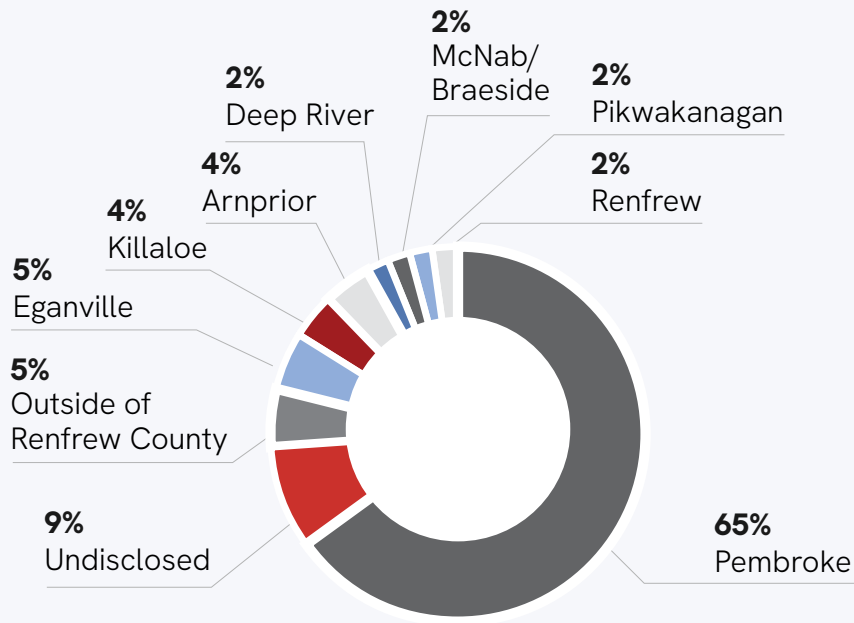
Current Situation



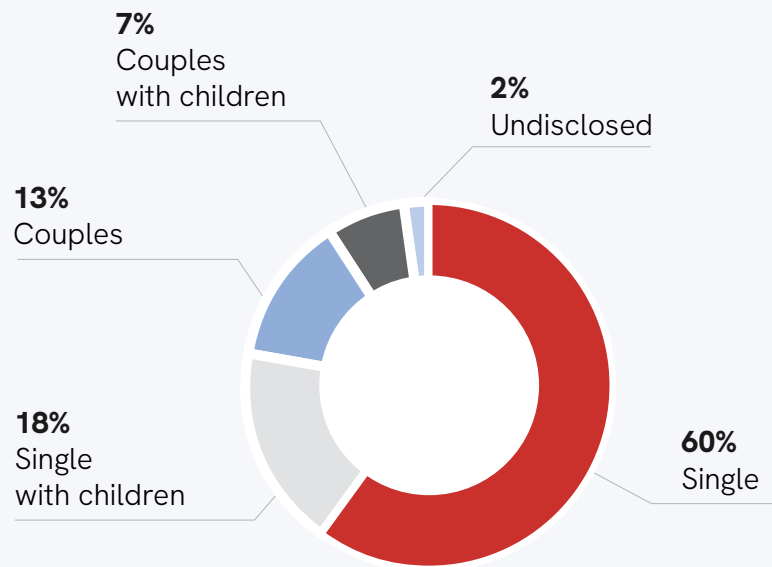
Reason for Experiencing Homelessness



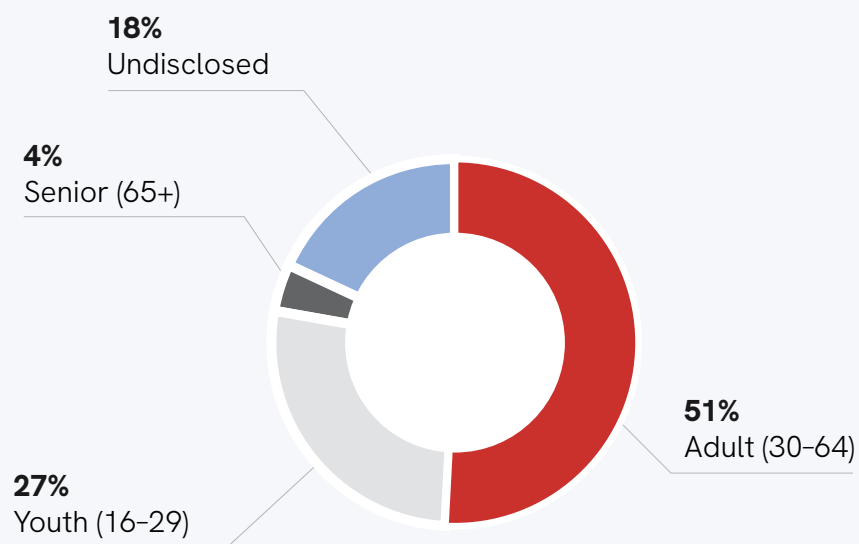
Location



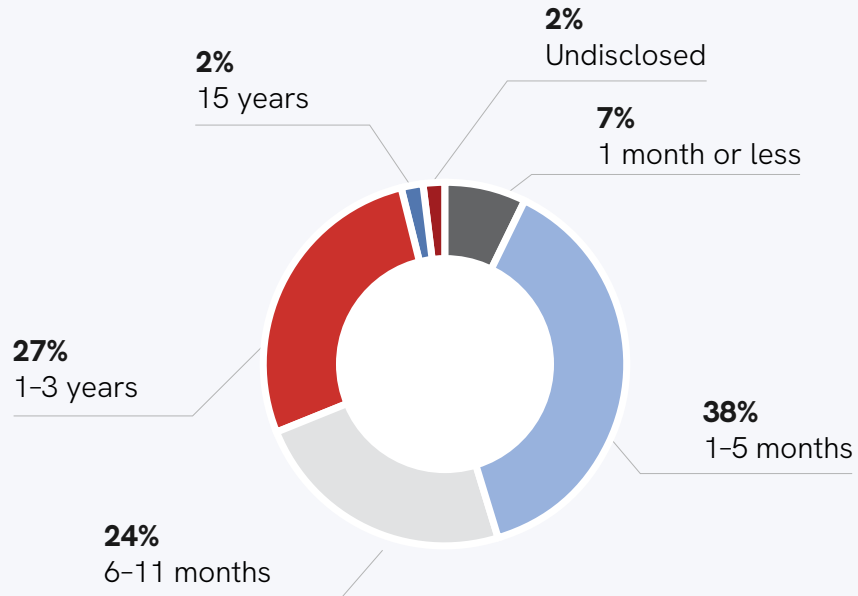
Household Type



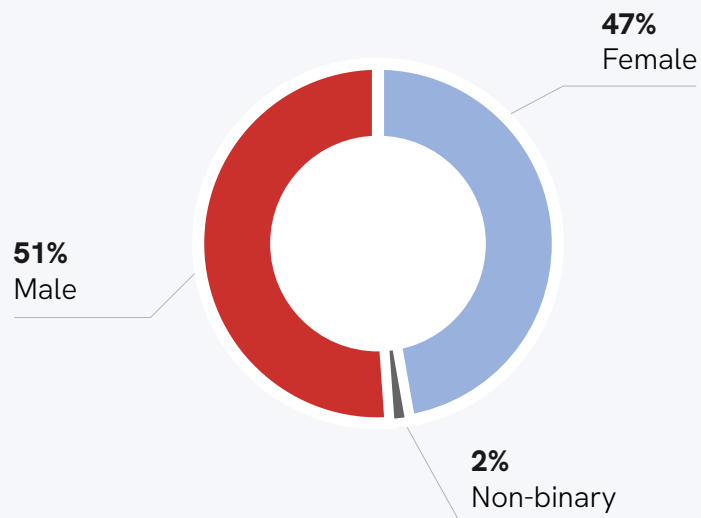
Age



Length of Time Experiencing Homelessness



Gender

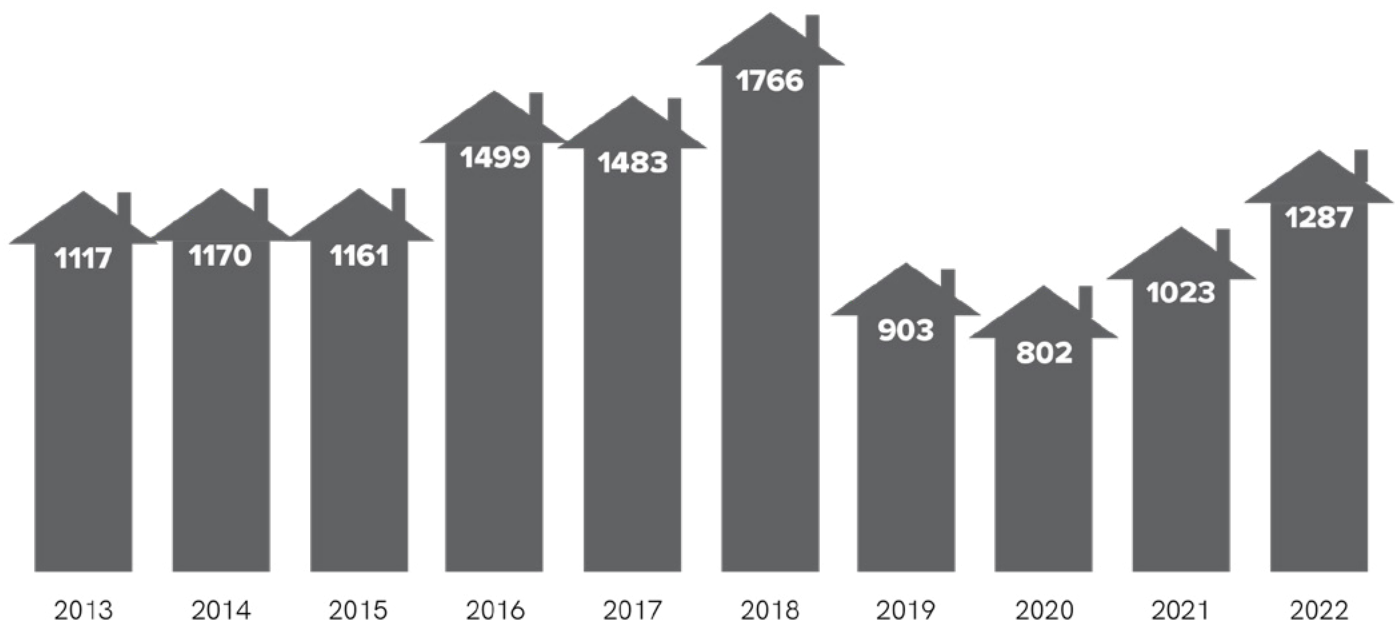


Number of Households Waiting for Rent-Geared-To-Income Housing

In 2023, the number of households waiting for rent-geared-to-income housing was ~1,465. Currently, the wait for a housing unit ranges between 7 and 10 years with approximately 1,500 names currently on the local waiting list.

RGHC 2023 Waitlist Statistics	
Number of Households on the Chronological Waitlist	1,465
Number of Households with Special Priority Status	87
Total Number of Households on the Centralized Waitlist	1,552
Chronological Waitlist Households moved into an RGI unit	39
Special Priority Status Households moved into an RGI unit	37
Total Number of Households moved into an RGI unit	76
Average Wait-Time to be Housed Special Priority Status (months)	24
Average Wait-Time to be Housed Chronological Waitlist	7-10 years approximately
Internal transfers	18

Number of Applicants Waiting for Housing with RGHC



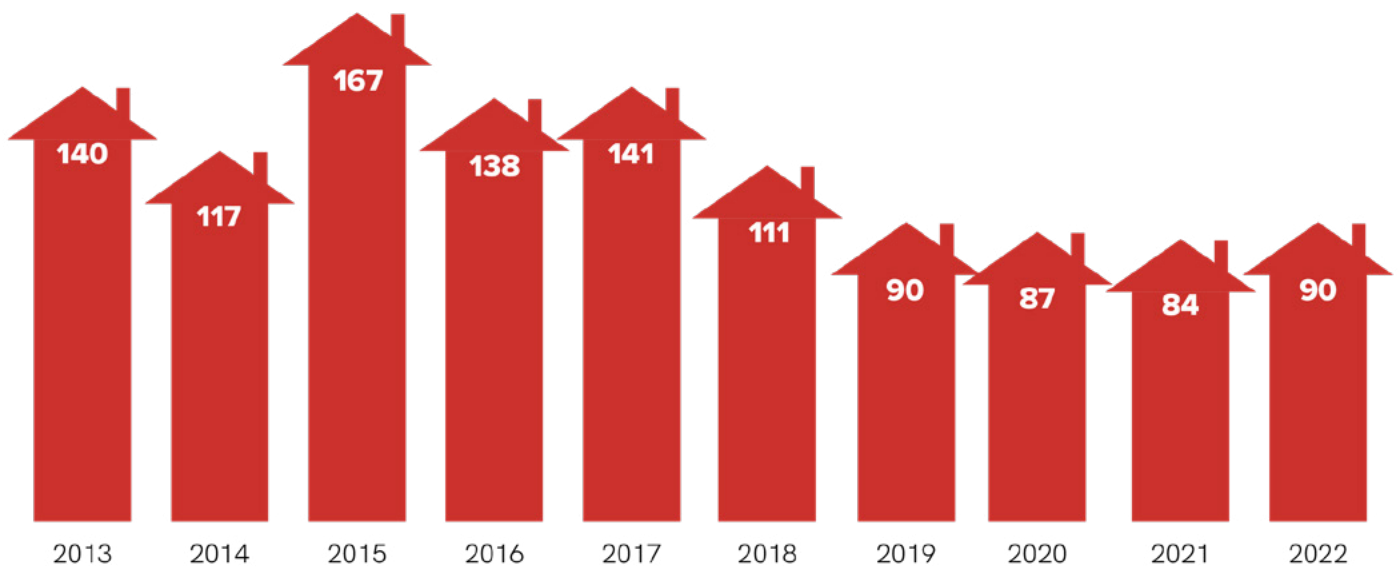


This 2023 data shows the number of bedroom household applications requested. Applications for unit sizes indicate that we have a high demand for single bedroom units, followed by 2-bedroom units.

*Total Number of Applications — Bedroom Size Requested			
Bedroom Size Requested	Senior	Adult	Family
1	59	852	0
2	4	43	213
3	0	4	161
4	0	1	82
5	0	0	46
Totals	63	900	502

Move outs provide us with a clear understanding of movement on our existing units. This contributes to planning and knowing what supports are required for stabilization of housing for community members. In 2023, the move outs were 84. This number has been relatively stable over the past four years.

RCHC Move Outs



Housing Registry

The Housing Registry is a process and registration list that provides equitable access to rent-geared-to-income opportunities across Renfrew County. This digitized process accepts applications for RCHC housing, private market RGI (rent supplement), and RGI housing through local non-profit housing providers such as Killaloe and District Housing, Petawawa Housing Corporation, St. Joseph's Housing Corporation, Kinsmen Court, and Baskin Place.

Housing Registry Objectives

- Provide a centralized wait list database and chronological record of applications
- Manage records and document refusals, request and arrears, vacancies and offers
- Provide transparency and consistency for rules and policies
- Ensure confidentiality
- Collect data around housing needs and requests

The registry is supported by RENTCafé, a waitlist database management application. The online portal provides applicants and housing providers with the ability to update their applications and provide the RCHC with an up to date dashboard of housing providers and housing applications. Special priority policy status is documented in this secure database for victims of domestic violence as determined by the Housing Services Act. There is also special priority for people who are victims or vulnerable to human trafficking.

Technical support systems are implemented to house documents and records. Yardi is the software used by the RCHC to maintain tenancy and rent supplement data. Yardi efficiently and confidentially supports record keeping of leases, letters, notices and rent calculations, tenant ledgers, payment information, work order tracking and case management records.

In addition to technical registry systems, RCHC works closely with the Development and Property department to align the assets of units with the demand for units. Capital asset management is an important part of this. Continuous condition assessment with strategies for housing revitalization and a viability plan is how the Development and Property department is co-ordinating efforts to ensure properties are safe, secure and in high quality condition for tenants. This process provides us with a detailed understanding of which properties have greater financial risk and will inform remediation, sales and replacement strategies.

Homelessness Prevention Programs (HPP)

The Province of Ontario provides annual funds to the County of Renfrew, specifically to be allocated to homelessness prevention programs. These programs follow provincial guidelines and address local needs. In 2023, the allocated amount of \$3,569,200 supported the following programs:

Rent Supplement Program	\$200,000
Rent Allowance Program	\$845,000
Emergency Minor Home Repair Program	\$200,000
Emergency Housing Assistance Program (delivered by Ontario Works)	\$845,740

The Emergency Minor Home Repair Program provides up to \$7,500 in a one-time grant to help low-income homeowners with essential repairs (e.g.: roof repair, furnace replacement, accessibility). In the 2023–2024 fiscal year, 13 households benefited from the program. Total funds allocated were \$69,769.42 and remaining funds were allocated to the Carefor Transitional Housing Plan.

The Emergency Housing Assistance Program operates through Ontario Works. It provides up to \$1,500 for households without children and \$2,000 for households with children 1x every 12 months to cover urgent expenses necessary to prevent homelessness. Eligible expenses include temporary hotel stays, rent and/or utility arrears and extraordinary expenses. 1,117 applications were approved in 2023–2024.

In collaboration with community partners and The Grind, \$80,000 of RCHC HPP funds were allocated to the creation of a **Warming Centre** in Pembroke. This was a responsive and invaluable need in the community for emergency shelter and a warm, safe place.

Rent Programs and Services

Rent-Geared-To-Income (RGI)

Access to the rent-geared-to-income program is available for units located at properties owned by RCHC, and properties managed by Renfrew County based non-profit corporations including, St. Joseph’s Non-Profit Housing Corporation, Petawawa Housing Corporation, Kinsmen Court Home, Killaloe and District Housing Incorporated, and Baskin Place Senior Residence. Applications to qualify for RGI are completed online through the Housing Registry and eligible applicants are placed on the Housing Registry waitlist where there is a chronological multi-year wait (see table on pg. 19).

To qualify for RGI, applicants need to have a household income that is less than the Household Income Limits (HILs). These income levels are determined by the province according to the Housing Services Act. The rate of rent subsidy is calculated by using line 236 of the Income Tax Notice of Assessment (most recent year) and in most cases, RGI rent is 30% of a household's monthly Adjusted Family Net Income. Separate RGI rates are determined for households that receive Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits. If a household income rises above the Household Income Limit prior to (precluding) RGI eligibility, tenants are charged a maximum rent rate based on the unit's number of bedrooms. On average, approximately 12% of RCHC tenants pay the maximum rent rate.

Rent Supplement (Private-Market Rent-Geared-To-Income)

Rent Supplements are rent-geared-to-income subsidies that are approved within private market rentals and the eligibility is consistent with rent-geared-to-income at RCHC properties. Eligible tenants are determined by the chronological housing registry waitlist and units are selected to ensure that building conditions are adequate and that the Residential Tenancies Act is followed. The total average Rent Supplement for 2023 was 74 households. This program is funded in part by the RCHC budget (provincial transfers) and the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP).

Rent Allowance Program

The Rent Allowance Program is funded by the Homelessness Prevention Program and provides a monthly amount of \$300.00 for households with no children and \$400.00 for households with children. To qualify, applicants need to be registered with the housing registry and intake is based on one of the following:

- Chronic homelessness, validated the By-Name List (Built for Zero initiative) or;
- Have been waiting on the housing registry for more than four years. Offers are based on chronological waiting time and the program is offered to the applicants waiting the longest first.

In 2023-2024, the HPP allocation for the Rent Allowance Program was \$845,000 and the average monthly caseload for the fiscal year was 147 households.

Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit provides a direct monthly payment to eligible households to help with the expense of rent. The benefit is transferable (moveable) and is based on household income and local average market rent rates. To qualify, households need to be on the rent-geared-to-income housing registry waitlist. Funding is based on predetermined annual allocations set by the province for each service manager area. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the County of Renfrew was allocated \$287,600. As of March 31, 2024, this benefit supported 272 total households with an average monthly rent subsidy of \$449.16.

Housing Improvement Funds

In 2018, Ontario and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) signed a bilateral agreement around the National Housing Strategy. This aligned federal and provincial funds with joint housing renewal strategy priorities, creating the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI). These are a part of the National Housing Strategy with funding allocations committed between 2019-2028.

RCHC administers and manages these provincial and federal programs. The financial contributions to improving housing in our region are essential parts of improving aging housing assets.

Affordable Home Ownership

RCHC acknowledges that home ownership does not always mean secure housing for low-income households. We co-ordinate home improvement and emergency fund programs to support people with home ownership stability. These are detailed in our investments and collaborative funding programs with both the provincial and federal governments. The Emergency Minor Home Repair program supports home owners and is detailed as a part of our Homelessness Prevention Program.

Renovation and Design-Build Investments

In 2018, the federal and Ontario government signed a bilateral agreement under the National Housing Strategy. Under the terms of the partnership, there are three cost-matched initiatives to support affordable home ownership.

1. Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)
2. Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)
3. Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)

In order to support homeowners to maintain secure home ownership, the RCHC administers provincial programs. Ontario Renovates is a program that provides financial assistance to homeowners by way of a forgivable loan to help pay for necessary repairs. This program is funded by the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario Revolving Loan Fund. In addition, the Emergency Minor Home Repair Assistance Program is open to low-income homeowners who require minor home repairs that will allow for continued safe occupancy of their home.

On March 1, 2023 County Council adopted a by-law to enter into an agreement with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) for the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, an investment of \$5 million in capital for the renovation and repair of existing affordable and community housing units.

Building a Culture of Responsiveness and Collaboration

Renfrew County Housing Corporation is building a culture where we have the skills and competencies to respond to local needs and improve our understanding of the complexities people face when there are housing challenges. Our staff are an important part of where community members in need of stable housing intersect with available programs and systems. We are committed to continuously building a trauma-informed practice that responds quickly and collaboratively to our communities' needs.

An example of how we are approaching complex needs is the Housing Stability Supports for Tenants, the caseworker model. This support has transformed the way that clients interact with services by simplifying communications, with one lead caseworker per property and increasing staff presence and availability. The caseworker model provides unique services for specific housing stability circumstances where the tenant requires more complex care to stay safely in their home. This is specialized tenancy support that focuses on communication and the strengths of RCHC staff to build relationships and trust to help tenants live successfully in their units. Examples of services include support around hoarding, high content issues, wellness checks, and a consistent, friendly contact person. The caseworker model in the RCHC portfolio brings services to where people are, helping to reduce transportation barriers and improve overall accessibility and efficiency of services. We are also working with the Mesa team to provide on site health clinics.

Education, relationships, trust and awareness are building blocks to cultivating a safe space for clients. We are committed to providing staff and community members with educational opportunities and training that supports trauma-informed approaches, cultural safety knowledge, innovations in housing and homelessness and collective, compassionate action.

Accomplishments and Strengths

We are and will continue to improve as a responsive community service. We know that complex issues require collaborative solutions and we are proud to keep working with a growing team of community partners. Our strengths are in our relationships and collaboration with partners and community members. We all learn from our clients.

The RCHC is solution-focused and builds on our successes to date and innovative strengths. Our focus is on the ongoing need for navigation support, collaborative approaches and meaningful initiatives such as the She C.A.N. Fund. The She C.A.N. Fund demonstrates how we are responding to local needs, informed by local issues.

The She C.A.N. Fund is a direct response to the 86 recommendations from the Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam Inquest, an in depth inquiry into the murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Natalie Warmerdam in Renfrew County. These recommendations were included in a Joint List of 86 Proposed Recommendations from Inquest Counsel, EVA (End Violence Against Women) and Valerie Warmerdam to help prevent future acts of intimate partner violence. It is an emergency fund for women seeking protection from their abusers in honour of Carol, Anastasia and Nathalie to support women living with IPV who are taking steps to seek safety. It provides up to \$5000, is easy to access, is used to improve safety, has no impact on social supports, and considers the needs of rural and geographically remote survivors of IPV. The C.A.N. in She C.A.N. represents the first names of the femicide victims, Carol, Anastasia and Nathalie.

2023 Capital Projects over \$50K

Investing in the quality of the living conditions for our housing residents is an important part of supporting them in their homes. Housing improvements through capital investments is an ongoing priority for the Renfrew County Housing Corporation. In 2023, we invested in nine capital projects over \$50,000. See Appendix B for details and progress on improvements in locations across the County.

Bright Spots — Case Studies



Lea and Douglas 8-plex

1030 Lea Street is a multi-unit affordable and supportive housing complex at the corner of Lea and Douglas Streets in Pembroke, Ontario. The 658-square-metre complex features four-one-bedroom and four-two-bedroom units; including accessible and/or barrier-free accommodations for seniors and individuals with mobility challenges. This design-build is a response to the growing demand for affordable, supportive, and secure housing in the Ottawa Valley.

202 Cecil St. Duplex

202 Cecil Street, in Pembroke, is a conversion project, transforming a single family home to a duplex with two 1,058 sq. ft. two bedroom units. This resourceful transformation is contributing to inclusive and diverse neighbourhoods, and leveraging the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI), a funding opportunity administered by the Provincial Government under the National Housing Strategy. The project is a cost share between the federal and municipal governments.



260 Elizabeth St.

260 Elizabeth Street, Pembroke, tenants formed a Community Watch Zone in 2023. Tenants have an active role in promoting a safe community. This demonstrates a successful model for co-creating safe, secure and inclusive affordable housing. It is a diverse community that includes supportive navigation, on site well-being clinics, gardens and strong social support systems to meet resident needs.

Challenges

Affordable housing and homelessness is an extraordinary challenge in communities across Ontario. Rural challenges are unique and homelessness is often invisible. Remote and isolated communities and living conditions can result in hidden housing and social issues and complex needs that don't have easy access to community services. The Renfrew County Housing Corporation recognizes the important role, as a service and affordable housing provider, that it plays in our communities. As the RCHC shifts to a direct service and supportive housing provider model, our organization is adapting and learning. Transformative change is a difficult process and requires a collaborative and compassionate approach.

Properties and property management, including building maintenance, is often a complex challenge. Building condition assessments are currently underway and will be completed by July, 2024.

We are committed to building a deeper understanding of the complexities of housing insecurity and homelessness. Our team is working to build a trauma-informed approach into our systems. Focused on relationships, trust and providing the right support to achieve the goal of housing stability, we are moving forward with compassion and in collaboration with our community members.



Vision Moving Forward

Mesa [mey-sa]

The Renfrew County Housing Corporation is a foundational component to Renfrew County’s innovative evidence to action model, Mesa. Mesa is designed as a co-ordinated and integrated multi-sector work to address the intersections of the affordable housing crisis and community-wide struggles with mental health, substance use and addictions and toxicity related emergencies. Our collaborative approach to compassionate care defines our working model moving forward. The RCHC is responsible for critical parts of the Mesa initiative across the region, the bricks and mortar and access to affordable housing programs. We are using our expertise and assets to build a network of support for community members in need of secure, more affordable, more supportive, more accessible, and safer housing.

How we design the bricks and mortar and the systems that help us operate as a social housing organization is pivotal. Designing spaces to support common room visits, wellness checks, touch points and check ins for clients as well as service delivery at the right time and in the right place, are keys to success. Navigation supports and integrated, shared platforms contribute to a person-centred approach. Working seamlessly, we will continue to collaborate with our partners to provide the programs, supports and bricks and mortar to end homelessness and move everyone to secure places to call home.



Appendix A — Homelessness Prevention Program Investment Plan

Proposed Services 2024–2025	Allocations for 2024–2025	Allocations for 2023–2024
<p>Emergency Minor Home Repair Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximum \$7,500 for urgent home repairs ▪ Total estimated applications: ▪ 20 or more approved applications 	\$150,000	\$150,000
<p>Rent Supplement Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Private Market Rent-Geared-To-Income ▪ Total Estimated Caseload — 35 paid by HPP ▪ Approximately 45 cases are funded through the RCHC budget 	\$200,000	\$200,000
<p>Rent Allowance Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$300/month households without children ▪ \$400/month households with children ▪ Total estimated caseload: ▪ Without children — 135 households \$486,000 ▪ With children — 70 households \$336,000 	\$822,000	\$845,000
<p>Emergency Housing Assistance Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rent arrears and utility arrears, other emergency expenses to aid in housing retention or acquisition ▪ Up to \$1,500 per year for households without children ▪ Up to \$2,000 per year for households with children 	\$850,000	\$845,740
<p>She C.A.N</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants of up to \$5,000 to help victims of intimate partner violence with housing stability ▪ Endorsed by Council on March 28, 2023, in follow up to the Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam inquest recommendations 	\$100,000	\$100,000

Proposed Services 2024–2025	Allocations for 2024–2025	Allocations for 2023–2024
Hoarding and High Content Supports Pilot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchase of service for training, mentorship of RCHC staff, and clinical care of RCHC tenants ▪ To improve & promote safe housing through health-focused practices 	\$105,000	\$0
Homelessness Coordinator - Contract	\$90,100	\$0
Supportive Transitional Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For capital and/or operating expenses 	\$823,640	\$0
Food Security and Winter Warmth Programs	\$250,000	\$250,000
Capital (affordable housing units)	\$0	\$1,000,000
Administration (maximum 5% allowed)	\$178,460	\$178,460

Appendix B — RCHC-2023 Capital Projects Over \$50K

Location	Work Description	Status			Comments
		Budget	Quote	Status	
75 Stafford, Barry's Bay	Plumbing fixture replacement (including bathroom vanities)	\$75,000.00	\$20,719.17	100% complete Majority of work done in house	Completed in September
174/178, 202 Massey, 220/350 Arith Blvd — (14) Duplex, Renfrew	Massard roof asphalt shingle replacement	\$150,000.00	\$149,500.00	100% complete	Completed in September
260 Elizabeth, Pembroke	Flat roof replacement	\$250,696.00	\$242,699.00	100% complete	Completed in September
55 Poplar, Deep River	Flat roof replacement	\$175,000.00	\$170,567.00	100% complete	Completed in September
8 Burwash, Arnprior	Flat roof replacement	\$174,304.00	\$244,014.00	100% complete	Completed in June
Lea St — (6) Townhome Blocks, Pembroke	B30 — Roofing	\$290,000.00 (COCHI) \$121,845.00 Total \$411,845.00	\$349,000.00	100% complete	Completed in November
Lea St — (2) Townhome Blocks, Pembroke	B2020 — Exterior Windows	\$125,000.00	\$100,564.00	100% complete	Completed in July
26 Spruce, Arnprior	Front steps	\$50,000.00	\$50,600.00	100% complete	Completed in July
202 Cecil, Pembroke	New duplex	\$545,471.00	\$50,600.00	70% completed in 2023, remainder in 2024	Completed in May 2024

