



News Release

United Way Waterloo Region Communities

For Immediate Release – November 13, 2023

Bringing Affordable Housing Home

United Way leads sector-wide collaboration bringing non-profit expertise to the Provincial Housing Crisis

Waterloo Region – In collaboration with nonprofit sector partners, United Ways across Ontario have facilitated a province-wide sector engagement on Affordable Housing. Almost 400 non-profit leaders across Ontario participated in this initiative, bringing experience and expertise on nonprofit, emergency, shelter, and transitional housing; tenant legal support services; immigration and settlement services; financial and wrap-around supports; mental health and addictions; and food security. Today, we are pleased to announce the release of [*Bringing Affordable Housing Home: An Action Plan for Housing Stability in Ontario*](#). The report identifies Seven Key Recommendations, identifying concrete steps needed to actualize the full potential of the sector and the solutions that can be made possible if governments and businesses will listen and engage.

“The non-profit sector represents the people with true lived experience, and we must be considered partners with government, and the private sector, in order to grow sustainable housing here in Waterloo Region and in the province”, stated Joan Fisk, United Way Waterloo Region CEO. “Locally we had inspiring participation from local partners that clearly showed the importance and potential of non-profit involvement – I am honoured to advocate for the inclusion of these important voices.”

A safe, affordable, and accessible home is foundational to building a stable life. It is a necessity for accessing employment, education, food, and social services. It is unacceptable, and unignorable, that an affordable home is out of reach for so many in our region. The devastating impacts of housing unaffordability affect, not only individuals and families, but communities, government supports and services, and our economy.

Creating immediate solutions to the housing shortage must be a priority for all.

The community housing sector is a critical part of the equation in solving Ontario's affordable housing crisis. With its mission written into its bottom line, the sector is an indispensable partner for government to lead the charge on this piece of the housing solution. Non-profit housing and co-operative housing providers are eager to deliver affordable and deeply affordable housing for lower income households, in perpetuity. They are ready to provide the supports and services needed to increase the well-being of communities facing myriad social and economic challenges.

The role of the non-profit housing sector in growing housing choices for Ontarians will be critical in helping the Government of Ontario to meet its 1.5 million homes target. With *Bringing Affordable Housing Home: An Action Plan for Housing Stability in Ontario*, the non-profit sector is offering 7 practical recommendations, which they believe can make the greatest difference for those in most dire need of affordable and deeply affordable housing.

For governments to support all Ontarians and help lift people out of core housing need and homelessness, a full spectrum of housing options, that meet actual housing affordability needs, are required. The approach must reflect the unique and varying challenges facing urban, rural and remote communities, with flexibility to build on local strengths and needs.

Bringing Affordable Housing Home: An Action Plan for Housing Stability in Ontario Recommendations Summary

Recommendation 1: Land and Assets

Federal, provincial, and municipal governments make surplus lands and assets available to non-profit and co-operative housing providers to grow deeply affordable and supportive housing options across Ontario.

Recommendation 2: Investments

Federal, provincial, and municipal governments increase investment in and improve greater access to financing for the development of affordable and deeply affordable homes across Ontario.

Recommendation 3: Incentives

The provincial government, in partnership with municipal governments, provides development incentives that prioritize non-profit housing organizations and establishes flexible programs that maximize the community housing sector's capacity to compete in the housing market effectively.

Recommendation 4: Preservation

The provincial government, in partnership with federal and municipal governments, provides consistent and predictable long-term funding to preserve existing deeply affordable housing and supportive housing options offered by the community housing sector.

Recommendation 5: Supports and Protections

All levels of government provide housing stabilization and eviction prevention supports and strengthen tenant protections to help renters access and maintain affordable and secure homes.

Recommendation 6: Indigenous Housing

The federal and provincial governments address and prioritize persistent housing and homelessness challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples through a dedicated strategy, programs and supports developed and implemented in partnership with Indigenous leaders, diverse Indigenous communities, housing providers, and all levels of government.

Recommendation 7: Collaboration and Partnerships

The federal and provincial governments coordinate housing strategies, plans and programs with municipal governments while promoting cross-sector collaboration and resource sharing.

Digital Assets:

Please visit www.uwaywrc.ca/about-us/communications/ to download our digital assets and further information, including photos, CEO bio and photo, and other United Way materials.

Please visit [Bringing affordable housing home: An action plan for housing stability in Ontario - United Way Greater Toronto \(unitedwaygt.org\)](https://www.unitedwaygt.org/bringing-affordable-housing-home) for more information on the Provincial collaboration and the full report

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About United Way Waterloo Region Communities

United Way Waterloo Region Communities is dedicated to helping people live better lives in every one of the seven communities we serve, and we focus on understanding issues and solutions unique to our community. Thanks to generous donors and partners, we are privileged to collaborate with people, non-profits, and businesses to empower multiple innovative, impactful and measurable solutions. We are fundraisers and local community builders that support a network of agencies whose programs and services are locally focused, informed, connected, and deeply invested in helping people reach their full potential. To ensure critical agencies, programs and services get the funding they need, and to ensure donors have a clear line of site to the work we do, we have focused on cause-based giving. Campaign for a Cause is a targeted community campaign that provides the opportunity for you or your workplace to give back in a way that aligns directly with your values and goals. To learn more, connect with us at www.uwaywrc.ca.

For more information or interviews, please contact:

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