



## **Housing and Homelessness Plan**

**This document contains the 2022 report of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan for the United Counties of Prescott and Russell.**

The United Counties of Prescott and Russell (UCPR) introduced, in 2014, a Housing and Homelessness Plan, striving to improve the residents' housing conditions.

Our plan is divided into **16** strategic initiatives in order to end homelessness in our county. This document provides to the reader a glimpse of the key projects and services that were introduced or facilitated in 2022.

## **A. Partnerships and Collaborations**

- Meeting virtually biannually with all agencies providing services to the community. The virtual meeting gathers **56** agencies with the attendance of more than **120** participants. In 2022, the following agencies presented their services to the networking group:
  - Tel-Aide Outaouais
  - Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell
  - Réseau des services de santé en français de l'est de l'Ontario
  - Employment Services Centre of Prescott-Russell
  - United Counties of Prescott and Russell–Housing Services
- The agency meeting provided opportunities for our Community Relations Worker to learn more about services offered and connect with individuals from the agencies that provide these services as well as share our housing programs and services.

## **B. Access to CMSM Services and Programs**

- We have centralized access at our head office which represents 3 services, such as Housing Services, Early Years Services and Ontario Works.
- We have begun the process of consultation/awareness-raising with all department staff in order to implement a customer-focused strategy and centralize the department's three services in three additional strategic locations: our Casselman, Rockland and Hawkesbury office childcare centres.
- Services and programs are available on our website at: [www.prescott-russell.on.ca](http://www.prescott-russell.on.ca)

## **Homeownership Program**

Buying a house can be one of the single largest expenses someone can experience during their lifetime. It can also be a great investment. Nowadays, finding a house at an affordable price can be an overwhelming task.

The *Homeownership* Component under the IAH provides an opportunity for a forgivable loan to allow low-to-moderate-income renter households to purchase their first home. The amount of the loan for down-payment assistance is equivalent to **10%** of the purchase price. Through this program, the UCPR also have access to a revolving loan fund, whereby money is reinvested back into the fund when the houses are sold, for use by potential future buyers.

Unfortunately, due to rising property prices in the real estate market, we had to postpone this program.

### **Rent Supplement**

*The Rent Supplement Component* has been designed to help address affordability issues of households in modest rental units across the province. The “rent supplement” is a subsidy (up to \$230 per month) paid to the landlord on behalf of a household in need of rental assistance. It is meant to help bridge the gap between the rent that a household can afford to pay and the actual market rent of a modest unit.

The UCPR helped approximately **52 households** with their monthly rent; **\$156,590 invested in 2022.**

*The Housing Allowance Component* has been designed to help address affordability issues of households in modest rental units across the province. A “Housing Allowance” is a subsidy paid to the tenant in need of financial rental assistance. It is meant to help bridge the gap between the rent that a household can afford to pay and the actual market rent of a modest unit.

The UCPR helped approximately **83 households** with their monthly rent; **\$ 220,304 invested in 2022.**

### **Ontario Renovates**

As the years go by, houses are aging and are in need of renovations and repairs. Ontario Renovates is a 10-year forgivable loan that provides financial assistance to homeowners so they can conduct urgent home repairs that will allow for continued safe occupancy of their home. Through this program, the UCPR also have access to a revolving loan fund, whereby money is reinvested back into the fund when the houses are sold, for use by potential future buyers.

The UCPR helped approximately **15 households** with their home repairs; **\$300,000 invested in 2022.**

## C. Prevention

- We use a large amount of IAH funding for the *Rent Supplement* program, as this provides more units for our dollar. This also helps renters in locations where no other Social or Non-Profit Housing exists.
- In 2022, a total of **52** households received a rent supplement of **\$230/month**. In total, **\$156,590** was awarded in this program.
- **83** households received a rent supplement for a total of **\$220,304**.

### **By-Name List (BL)**

The By-Name List was implemented to keep track of homeless people in real time. We have designated a person to identify homeless people, and to offer resources as needed in the community. We have begun outreach work with our community partners so that they can refer homeless people to us.

Housing Services has added an amount to the budget for the hiring of a person who will go out into the community to forge links with people experiencing homelessness and follow up with them.

Housing Services has also adopted a policy of prioritizing homeless people on the waiting list for community housing.

### **Regional Plan for Community Safety and Well-Being (RPCSWB)**

In 2020, the United Counties of Prescott and Russell adopted a regional community safety and well-being plan. This plan includes objectives such as the fight against homelessness and the creation of affordable housing. These objectives are aligned with the 10-year homelessness and affordable housing plan.

In 2022, a subcommittee including the Canadian Mental Health Association, Centre de Santé de l'Estrie, Ontario Provincial Police, Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Maison Interlude House, United Way, Prescott-Russell Victim Services, United Counties of Prescott and Russell Social Services, Habite Action and Russell Township was created to implement strategies to combat homelessness and create affordable housing.

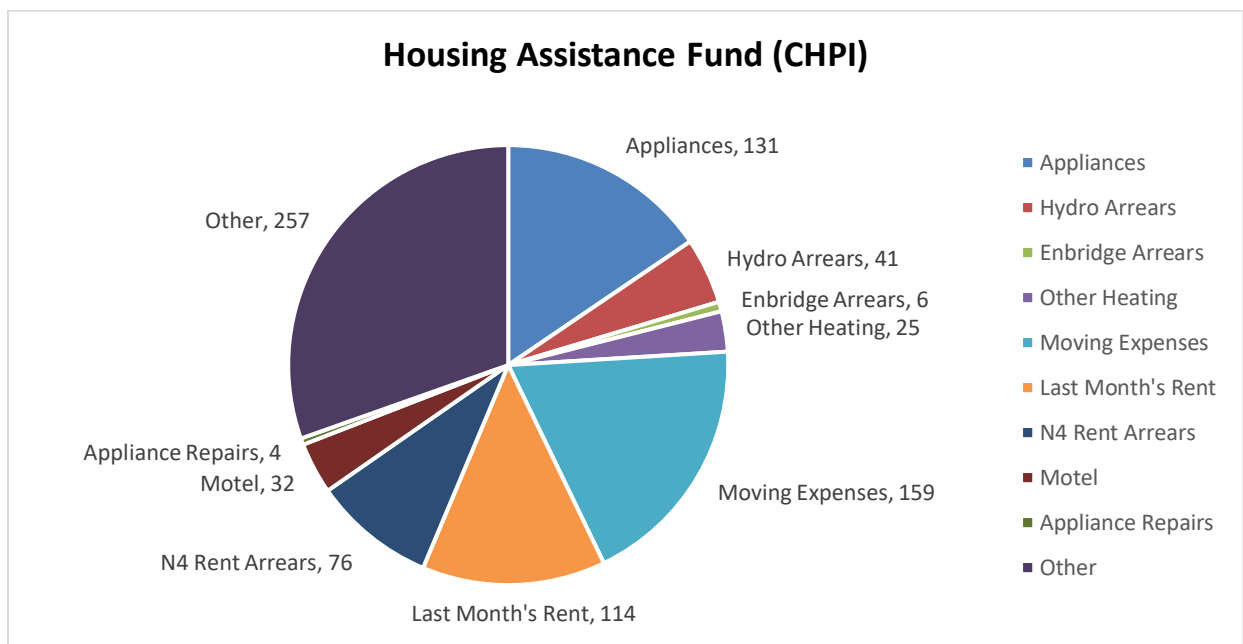
### **Residential Services Homes Program**

As part of its Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP), UCPR subsidizes housing and food costs for **450** people in the eight UCPR municipalities. Residential Homes Services (RHS) are private residences offering long-term housing to vulnerable adults who, despite their autonomy, require additional assistance to carry out the activities of daily living.

The Social Services Department has 29 collaborative agreements with RHS operators located in the Prescott-Russell territory, offering a per diem of **\$55.50/day; \$1688.12/month**. Effective January 2023, the per diem has been increased to **\$56.61/day**. This financial assistance is provided to eligible individuals to bridge the gap between their monthly room and board costs and their income. A personal needs allowance (\$149/month) and discretionary benefits, where applicable, are also provided to subsidized residents.

### **Housing Assistance**

Housing and energy assistance funds are available in the form of financial assistance programs. These funds are available to low-income people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. In order to prevent homelessness and/or to encourage the retention of housing, financial assistance is available to eligible persons for rent and utility arrears, for expenses such as last month's rent deposits, repairs or replacements of essential household appliances, moving and energy costs, or other necessities for the prevention and alleviation of homelessness (costs for starter items, transportation, etc.).



The maximum amount that could be paid over a 12-calendar-month period is:

- Up to \$1,000 for a single person
- Up to \$1,800 for a couple or a family with child (ren)

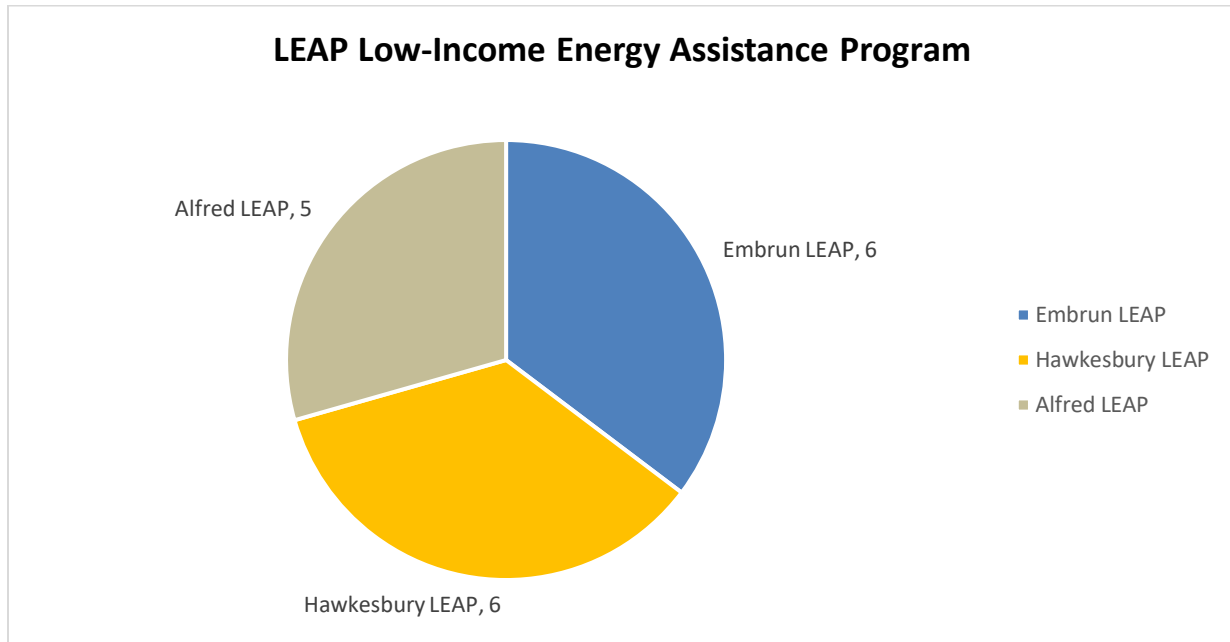
In 2022, the UCPR provided financial assistance to **72** households with their **Energy Arrears (electricity, gas, propane and wood)**.

Also, we provided financial assistance to **159 households** for their **moving expenses**, **114** with their **Last Month Rent**, and **76** with their **Rent Arrears** following the reception of a Notice to End a Tenancy Early for Non-payment of Rent.

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### **Housing Assistance Fund (CHPI)**

<b>Reason for Financial Assistance</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>
Moving Expenses	159
Last Month's Rent	114
Appliances	131
Appliance repairs	4
Hydro Arrears	41
N4 Rent Arrears	76
Motel	32
Other Heating	25
Enbridge Arrears	6
Autres	257



LEAP is a grant program intended to provide emergency relief to eligible low-income customers who may be experiencing difficulty paying current arrears. This program assists consumers with limited financial resources, through **three** unique programs:

- Emergency Financial Assistance;
- Special rules for qualified low-income customers;
- Energy conservation [established by the utility company].

When we know someone is in arrears and at risk of service interruption, we refer them to the LEAP program to verify their eligibility for financial assistance. If the financial assistance offered by LEAP does not cover the balance owing, we will verify the housing assistance program to help maintain service. In some cases, we will contact the service provider to suspend the disconnection notice until an eligibility decision is made and a payment is made if eligible.

In 2022, **17 households** benefitted from this program with **6 in Hawkesbury**, **6 in Embrun**, and **5 in Alfred**.



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### **LEAP (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program)**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>
Embrun LEAP	6
Hawkesbury LEAP	6
Alfred LEAP	5

### **Emergency Shelter Solutions**

UCPR has a Memorandum of Understanding with Victim Services of Prescott and Russell. Victim Services offers an after-hour emergency service to help homeless people. It aims to provide a short-term solution for people experiencing homelessness in Prescott and Russell, such as a short stay in a hotel (because UCPR has no emergency shelter), transportation and food. Each person served by this service will be referred to Social Services to assess their need.

In 2022, there were **47** referrals to Victim Services in Prescott and Russell.

### **Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit**

Between January 1, and December 31, 2022, **\$207,471.04** was allocated to **57** clients in the Prescott and Russell area to make their home more affordable.

## **D. Transportation**

- In the fall of 2022, the buses of the Prescott and Russell intermunicipal transit system, PR Transpo, which are fully accessible and adapted, were suspended temporarily.

## **E. Education and Training**

- We continue to encourage tenants to seek legal advice as needed with Legal Aid.
- Our Community Relations Worker continues to organize a lunch each year and presentations from agencies such as Services Canada to our seniors' tenant portfolio.
- We invite partner agencies to educate our Non-Profit providers at the biannual meetings.
- We send a bulletin each fall and spring on tenants' rights and obligations as well as available resources.

## **F. Delivery of Programs and Services**

- Our Community Relations Worker maintains good working relations with community agencies.

## **G. Resources (Financial, Human, Material)**

- The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative [CHPI] funding is managed by two [2] full-time employees of the Ontario Works program. We refer people in need of funding to these individuals.
- We have a full-time IAH Coordinator to administer all programs mentioned above.
- We continue to use all funding allocation for Ontario Renovates, homeownership and rent supplements.

## **H. Input of Municipalities**

- No activity.

## **I. Needs assessment**

- No activity.

## **J. Performance measurements**

- Monthly statistics of the waiting list is provided to Council members.

## **K. Housing Stock**

- No development in 2022.

## **L. Public Awareness**

- Through biannual agency networking meetings, we promote programs and raise public awareness.
- We maintain updated information about our programs on our website.

## **M. Awareness Among Government Authorities**

- No new development in 2022.

## **N. Complementary between Programs and Services**

- No specific measures were taken in 2022.

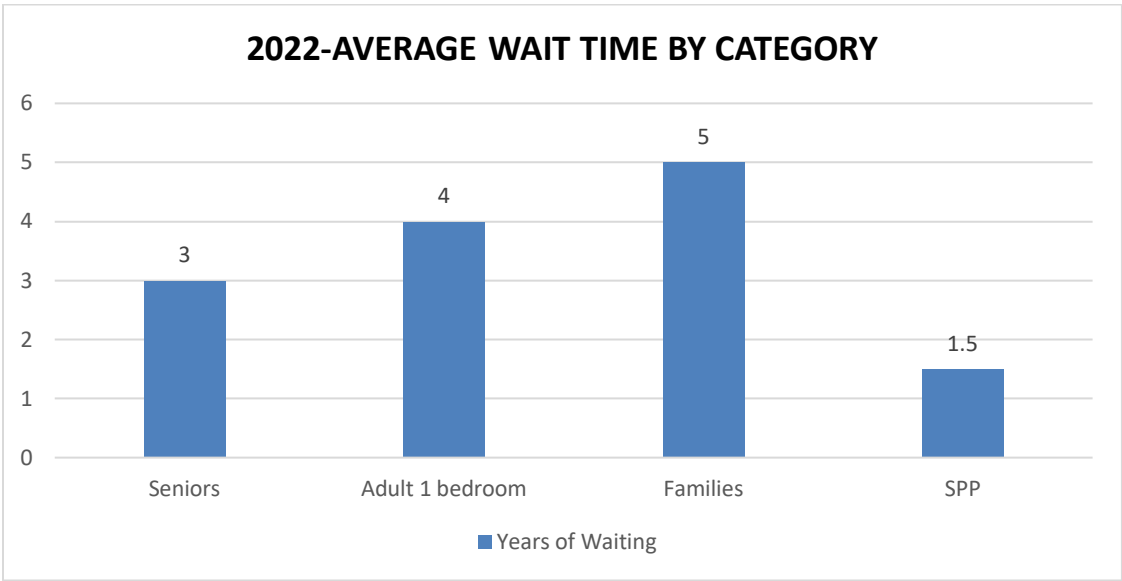
## **O. Policies, Standards and Guidelines**

- We make sure that CHPI funding can be used before we go to a tribunal for arrears or damages to the units.
- On an ongoing basis, we try to make repayment agreements.
- Tenants can now make e-transfer rent payments.
- Consent forms were designed and used for all three [3] services [OW, Early Years and Housing].

## **P. Social Services Relief Funds (SSRF)**

- Following the Covid-19 pandemic, we received funds under the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) initiative. These funds were distributed to community agencies to help the most vulnerable population of Prescott and Russell:
- The total SSRF-Phase 5 allocation for 2022 is \$1,337,400.00. Of this fund, \$397,278.00 has been paid out to 625 households in need of support services.
- An amount of \$900,000.00 was approved to support the construction of a 2<sup>nd</sup> stage home for victims of abuse.

Q. Waiting Lists



The average wait time in 2022 for the Housing Services in the UCPR is approximately **3.25 years**.

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**2022 AVERAGE WAIT TIME BY CATEGORY**

Category	Years of Waiting
Seniors	3
Families	4
Adult 1 Bedroom	5
SPP	1.5