

Immediate Action for Accessible & Affordable Housing Solutions - Lived Experience Advice

We have to start planning resources, supports and partnerships NOW

“Our community needs a spectrum of safe, affordable and accessible homes NOW for people living on low or no income, because they have a heartbeat, they are our neighbours,

If not, we will fall further behind as a community without hope to rebuild healthy, just and balanced society that values everybody’s wellbeing, contributions and life,

Keep your word “ we’re taking steps to make housing more affordable in our city so Kitchener can be an even better place for everyone to call home” by acting immediately, adapting unused public land and properties and mobilize social investors to create modular and supportive housing for a range of human experiences,

Mid-term actions have to be focused on prevention of evictions and further loss of affordable units, and creation of deeply affordable housing, including 30% affordable & 20% visitable/accessible units in all new rental builds.”

Group members that contributed: Disabilities and Human Rights Group, Awareness of Lived Experience Voices, Renters Educating and Networking Together, People’s Action Group, Alliance Against Poverty, Shamrose for Syrian Culture, Coalition of Muslim Women, Bridges to Belonging, Yes in My Backyard.

Immediate action for Accessible and Affordable Housing Solutions

- 1. Emergency Settlements** - Disaster response plan for humanitarian crisis that is homelessness. Research: Edmonton, Ottawa, Toronto responses human rights violations.

Emergency services, heat and sanitary installations provided in locations for people sleeping “rough” with the lack of other alternatives.

- 2. Re-habit Unused Commercial or Public Properties**

Research - Re-habit (initial contact made) <http://ktgy.com/work/re-habit/>
[Homeless Shelter in a mall in Alexandria, Virginia](#)

- Goal is to initially use the property for winter emergency shelter/housing and then once the winter is over, start building transitional housing.
- If it has a kitchen installations, a community kitchen can be run.
- Support staff have to be trained well in advance.
- Can follow the hand up, not hand out, model
- Allowing for step wise and sectional development, from single person ‘pods’ up to family units.

- 3. Modular Settlements - Prefabricated Homes/Container-built Settlements**

Research - Yukon and Tofino projects through National Housing Strategy
<https://www.placetocallhome.ca/stories> ([NOWHousing](#) in Ontario)

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- Able to increase the housing stock quickly while providing longer term housing
- Inexpensive to create, affordable for tenants (hand up not hand out)
- Can be on public lands and can be moved if the land is needed
- Electricity, utility connections subsidized by the cities

4. Expanded Home Sharing Model - existing units and rooms, breaking down the stigma

Research - Homeshare Alliance <https://www.homesharealliance.com/>

- Matching homeowners of unused rooms with low or moderate income tenants
- Below market rents, sharing chores (hand up not hand out model), companionship, etc.
- Requires involvement from case workers, community workers to ensure appropriate match and supports for both the landlord and the tenant

Community wide campaign and system navigation

Call for public, private, nonprofit and technology sector partners working together.

- Affordable Housing Support Systems Navigation Tool

Database represented as a flow chart or a decision tree, that would introduce potential landlords and developers to a range of options, respective regulation and zoning, incentives and sources of funding. Both region and cities have incentives for capital investment in renovation and creation of affordable units. Province is offering guidance regarding creative projects and investment. National Housing Strategy investment through CMHC has many streams and the Challenge funding for creative solutions. Accessibility guidelines, visitable housing and capital investment incentives would be included.

This information would be a foundation for a focused public campaign and a tangible tool for investors in deeply affordable housing.

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