

ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS OTTAWA

ANNUAL REPORT

2019/2020

PREPARED FOR THE

2020 AGM

This report and all of the work done by the Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa has been conducted, written, and published on unceded Algonquin Territory.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

This has been an unprecedented year for all of us. In January, City Council unanimously declared a homelessness and housing emergency.

As COVID-19 arrived in March, service providers pivoted quickly to adapt services to support people experiencing homelessness in our community. At a time when "staying home" is the first defence to stay safe from the virus, it has become more apparent than ever that far too many people in our community are without a safe and affordable home.

The work of the Alliance has always been to advocate with and for people experiencing homelessness. In June 2019, Alliance members developed three strategic directions to focus on for the coming years.

1. *Advocate with governments and the broader community to advance effective policies and actions to end homelessness.*

2. *Gather and share information and knowledge to address gaps, inspire for best practices and maximize members' efforts.*

3. *Promote community-wide collaboration and integration of services within the homelessness service system and related sectors.*

In light of the past year, the urgent need to end homelessness *together* is clear. The Alliance will continue to be a strong advocate on behalf of our members for affordable housing options and stronger policies that prevent and reduce homelessness.

Continued on page 3



ED REPORT CONTINUED

As we look to the coming year the landscape has changed but the mission is more urgent than ever. System-level leadership, advocacy and vision is required to end homelessness. The Alliance has been a leader, connector, and convener for over a decade in this work. And we are focused on this mission more than ever.

Ending homelessness requires affordable housing, person-centred support, and community. As the Alliance moves forward on our three strategic priorities, our aim is supporting the sector-wide work of preventing, reducing, and ending homelessness in Ottawa. Other communities are seeing success and Ottawa has all of the expertise, creativity, and compassion to do it too. We *can* do this here.

We are grateful to be doing this critical work with the ongoing support from the Alliance Board, our members, funders, and community partners.

Thank you for your engagement, passion, and commitment to end homelessness in Ottawa.

Let's get it done.

Kaite Burkholder Harris,
Executive Director

"Things are only getting worse. We know that our shelters are overflowing. We know people aren't able to find affordable housing."

Councillor Catherine McKenney,
Homelessness Liaison

"There's a 14-year wait list for people to obtain affordable housing. It shouldn't happen anywhere, but it definitely shouldn't be happening in our capital city."

Deirdre Freiheit
Chair, Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa



"Lives are at stake and when lives are at stake, we call that an emergency."

Councillor Jeff Leiper

YEAR IN REVIEW

We advocate

Strategic Priority 1:
Advance effective policies and actions to end homelessness.

+ We mobilized for a **housing-focused response to the COVID-19 pandemic**.

- We launched the #Hotels2Homes campaign—an initiative asking the Province to fund hotel acquisition to house people experiencing homelessness in the short term and create more affordable housing in the long term.
- This campaign resulted in the City's Request for Offers and current pursuit to purchase hotels.

+ We continue to work with the City on **evictions prevention** during the COVID-19 pandemic and are advocating to the Province for a reinstatement of the Evictions Moratorium with a campaign from the Ontario Alliance to End Homelessness called Stop Unsafe Evictions.

+ As a part of the **Housing Advocacy Group**, we successfully lobbied the City for **$15 million** of capital money for affordable housing for Budget 2019 - 2020.


NATIONAL POST

Hotels for homeless people could tackle two crises at once: advocates

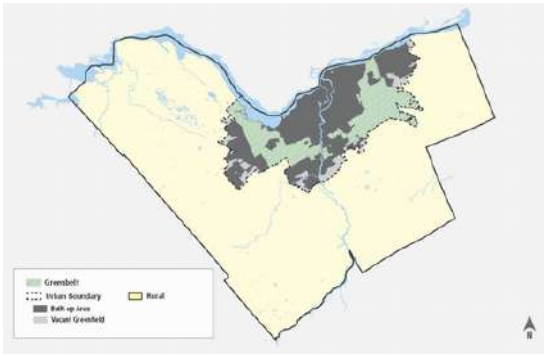
The Canadian Press
Laura Osman





YEAR IN REVIEW









+ We advocated for the sector through public deputations, including:

- A deputation to the Community and Protective Services Committee on Ottawa's revamped 10 Year Plan, focusing on the need for Indigenous leadership, real-time data, and strengthened Coordinated Access.

- A deputation on stopping the urban boundary expansion as this will increase housing costs for all.

- A deputation on the City Budget asking the City to allocate funds to ending homelessness.

- A deputation to the City of Ottawa's Community and Protective Services Committee to provide feedback on the Rental Accommodation Study.

- A submission to the Provincial Budget Consultation advocating for prioritizing and investing in the development of Ontario's affordable housing stock, increasing income levels for people living in poverty, and supporting local efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

YEAR IN REVIEW

We research and lead

Strategic priority 2:
Gather and share information to address gaps, inspire best practices, and maximize members' efforts.

+ Interim ED Emilie Hayes convened the **Annual Community Forum** last winter, engaging local leaders on issues related to ending homelessness.

- 227 people from across the sector convened around topics such as social inclusion, eviction prevention, coordinated access, and so much more!

"Thanks for having me on a panel. It was very satisfying to participate. I don't always have many opportunities to be active and productive, so it was invigorating . . . It was a chance to feel included where I want to be. It was also heartening to see so many who in one fashion or another are trying to find solutions."

Forum Participant

+ In response to the City's annual report on the progress of the 10 Year Plan, the Alliance published **Progress Reports** in 2019 and 2020 related to key components of the Plan: **Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing**; **Stopping the Loss of Affordable Housing**; and **Preventing the Growth in Homelessness**.

+ We reported on **Veteran Homelessness in Ottawa** to assist the community in understanding the ways in which veterans experience homelessness and how they can be connected to appropriate supports.

+ With ACORN Ottawa at the helm, we are co-hosting a **Housing Advocacy Leadership School** with the first session planned for November. The Leadership Schools will provide free training to improve knowledge and skills related to housing policy, advocacy, and tenant rights. The offerings are based on what tenants and frontline housing workers have identified as most needed.

YEAR IN REVIEW

We connect

Strategic priority 3:
Promote community-wide collaboration and integration of services.

+ We launched the **Ottawa Housing Blitz** aimed at housing 100 households as part of a housing-focused response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This campaign is in collaboration with the City of Ottawa, service providers across the sector, Data4Good, and countless volunteers. The results of this will finish up at the end of October, and be transitioned into a longer strategy to engage private sector landlords in finding affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness.



OTTAWA CITIZEN

Local News

City blitzes landlords to find 100 rental units for homeless individuals, families

Jon Willing
Aug 10, 2020 • Last Updated 2 months ago • 3 minute read



YEAR IN REVIEW

+ The Alliance has launched Phase II of the **Systems Mapping Initiative**. Building on the information in Phase I, we are partnering with local Indigenous leaders and Algonquin College to understand the process of how people navigate the local housing and homelessness sector between agencies in order to strengthen further sector-wide coordination.

+ As COVID hit, the Alliance has been a leader in bringing together service providers to deal with COVID challenges. The Alliance now serves as the Co-Chair of the Human Needs Task Force Homelessness Subgroup.

+ The Alliance continues to collaborate with Making Voices Count, the Healthy Transportation Coalition, ACORN Ottawa, CAWI, Refugee613, Ottawa Social Housing Network, the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres, and others on local advocacy and capacity building.

+ We have begun developing a **Lived Experience Council** to feed directly into the work of the Alliance and our partners to create stronger policy at the local level to support people. The first step was hiring our Project Coordinator for Community Engagement who will facilitate this ongoing work.

The Alliance Board of Directors, 2019-2020:

Executive:

Deirdre Freiheit - Shepherds of Good Hope
Catharine Vandelinde - Options Bytown Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Tyler Fainstat - John Howard Society
Joyce Potter - Community Member

Directors:

Melany Chrétien - Ottawa Community Housing
Pete Cranston - Causeway Work Centre
Cathy Robinson - Elizabeth Fry Society
Emilie Hayes - Somerset West Community Health Centre
Tom Kelly - Psychiatric Survivors of Ottawa
Donna Petty - Canadian Mental Health Association

Ex-Officio: City of Ottawa | United Way Centraide Ottawa

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU

In a city as wealthy as Ottawa, no one should be without a home. We can make a difference in our city to create a more prosperous, inclusive Ottawa, where everyone has an appropriate and affordable home. The Alliance is proud to champion our collective efforts.

Thank you to our members and ongoing sponsors for your generous support!

2019 Members: Action-Logement / Action-Housing | Anglican Diocese of Ottawa - Community Ministries | Centre 454 | Cornerstone Housing for Women | Ottawa Pastoral Counselling Centre | St. Luke's Table | The Well | Bruce House | Canadian Mental Health Association | Carlington Community Health Centre | Carty House| Causeway Employment Centre | Catholic Centre for Immigrants | Centre 507 Drop-In | Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services, University of Ottawa | Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation | Centretown Community Health Centre | City of Ottawa, Housing Services Branch | Community Legal Services Ottawa | Cooperative Housing Association of Eastern Ontario | Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa | Gloucester Housing Corporation | Housing Help | John Howard Society of Ottawa | LiveWorkPlay | Matthew House Ottawa | Minwaashin Lodge | Montfort Renaissance Inc. | Multifaith Housing Initiative | Nepean Housing Corporation | Operation Come Home | Options Bytown Non-Profit Housing Corporation | Ottawa Community Housing | Ottawa Food Bank | Ottawa Inner City Health Inc. | Ottawa Innercity Ministries | Ottawa Salus Corporation | PAL Ottawa | Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre | Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre | Royal Ottawa Health Care Group | Sandy Hill Community Health Centre | Shepherds of Good Hope | Somerset West Community Health Centre | South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre | Stepstone House | St. Joe's Women's Centre | The Ottawa Mission | The Salvation Army Ottawa Booth Centre | Tungasuvvingat Inuit | Vanier Community Service Centre | Wabano Centre For Aboriginal Health | Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre | YMCA-YWCA, National Capital Region | Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa | Thank you as well to our many individual members!

Funders: Mitacs, Ottawa Community Foundation, and United Way Ottawa.

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