WHAT DOES AFFORDABLE HOUSING MEAN?

Let's Talk Housing: Community Discussion Guide

Township of Centre Wellington Housing Action Plan

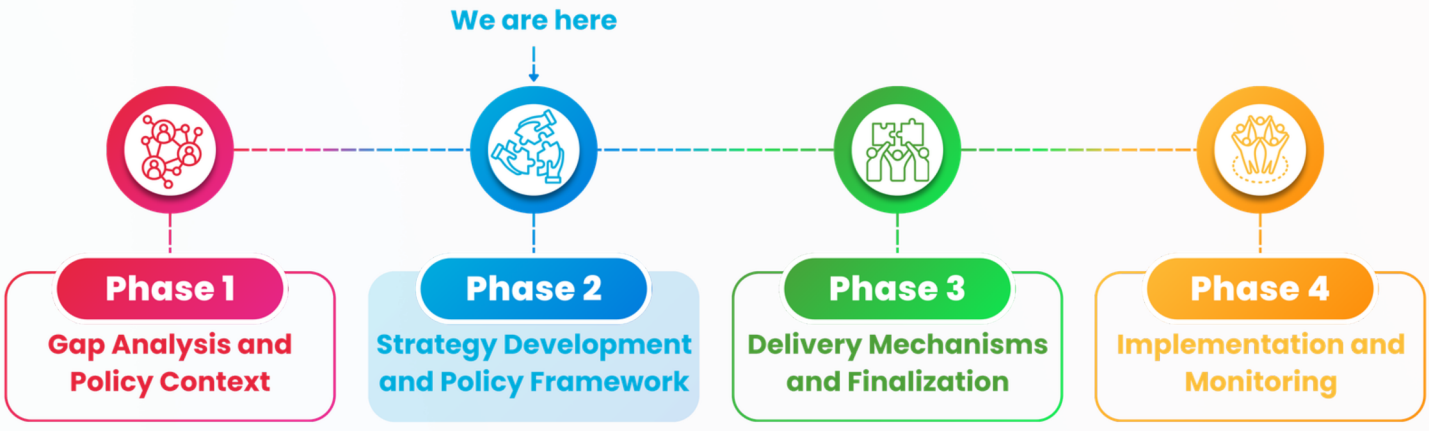
The Township of Centre Wellington is developing a **Housing Action Plan** to guide how the community responds to current and future housing needs. As our community grows and changes, residents of all ages, incomes, and life stages should be able to find housing that meets their needs. Housing influences:

- **Where and how people live**
- **Access to work, school, and services**
- **Connections to neighbours and community**
- **Whether residents can remain in the Township as their needs change**

Providing a range of housing options helps create a complete, inclusive, and resilient community.

This guide is part of a series exploring key housing topics. Your ideas and experiences will help shape the Housing Action Plan and identify ways the Township can support housing that is more attainable, diverse, and responsive to community needs.

Housing Action Plan Process



What is Affordable Housing?

Housing is generally considered affordable when a household spends **no more than 30% of its gross (before-tax) income on housing costs.**

Housing costs may include:

- Rent or mortgage payments
- Utilities, such as heat, water, and electricity
- Property taxes
- Condominium or maintenance fees

When households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, it can become more difficult to afford other necessities, such as food, transportation, childcare, and healthcare.

At the same time, affordability can look different for different households. What is affordable for one person or family may not be affordable for another, depending on income, household size, and life stage. For example:

- Young workers renting their first apartment may have different housing needs than a family purchasing a home.
- Seniors looking to downsize may be searching for a smaller or more accessible housing options within the community.
- Single-parent households may face different affordability pressures than dual-income households.

Affordable housing is therefore not a single type of housing, it is about whether housing costs align with people's incomes.



What Does This Look Like in the Township?

Like many communities across Ontario, the Township of Centre Wellington has experienced significant housing price increases in recent years, while incomes have grown more slowly.

Did You Know?

- The average household income in the Township is $122,400, while the average individual income is about $53,600 according to the 2021 Census data.
- A $461,000 home would be considered affordable for the average household in 2026. The Province sets affordable rental rates at or below an average of approximately $1,450/month.
- The average home price in the Township is currently $815,000, with the average rental price at approximately $2,600/month.
- 1 in 6 households in the Town spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs.

In other words, the typical home price in the Township is currently 77% above what would be considered affordable for the average household. Overall, this means that many households may face challenges when trying to find housing that is affordable based on their income.

Housing affordability pressures can affect many individuals, including:



- Young adults looking to enter the housing market
- Families seeking larger homes
- Seniors looking to downsize
- Workers employed in local businesses and services

At the same time, much of the Township's existing housing stock consists of single-detached homes, which are typically the most expensive form of housing. This means there are few options for smaller or more attainable homes, such as apartments, townhouses, or rental units.

Why Does Housing Affordability Matter?

When housing is affordable, communities benefit from:

Economic stability



Workers can afford to live near their jobs.

Community diversity



People of different ages, needs, and incomes can live in the community.

Housing choice across life stages



Residents can remain in the community as their housing needs change.

Support for local businesses



Employers can attract and retain talented workers.

When housing becomes less affordable, communities may experience:

- Young people leaving the community
- Longer commuting distances
- Increased financial pressure on households
- Fewer housing options for seniors wishing to downsize locally

Ensuring a range of housing options is an important part of creating a resilient and inclusive community.

What are the Possible Approaches?

There is no single solution to housing affordability. Instead, communities often explore a range of approaches that support a greater diversity of housing options. Some approaches include:



Encouraging a wider mix of housing types, such as townhouses, apartments, and smaller homes.



Supporting "missing middle" housing, which includes forms such as duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings.



Allowing additional residential units (ARUs) such as basement apartments or garden suites.



Encouraging infill and intensification in appropriate locations within existing communities.

Supporting mixed-use and higher-density development in areas close to services, shops, and transportation routes.



Exploring innovative housing solutions, including modular housing or new forms of housing delivery.

The Housing Action Plan may not recommend every approach outlined above. Exploring a range of options will help identify tools that are most appropriate and effective for addressing the Township's housing affordability needs.

Get Involved!

We want to learn from you! Share your thoughts and help shape the future of housing in the Township.

Complete the survey by scanning the QR code or visiting:
www.connectcw.ca/housingactionplan