

DECEMBER 2023

# DURHAM 'MICRO-HOMES' EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

MARCH 2022 TO MARCH 2023

Evaluation Team: Co-leads: Dr. Tyler Frederick (Ontario Tech University) and Lorraine Closs (Durham College). Expert advisors: Doreen Hume-McKenna (Lakeridge Health) and Tom Regehr (CAST Canada). Student Leads: Shannon Wilson (Ontario Tech) and Krista Bentley (Durham College)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation team would like to sincerely thank all of the participants in the evaluation for their involvement and insights, including the micro-homes residents, the case management staff, and the neighbourhood residents. We would also like to thank the Region of Durham for the opportunity to undertake this evaluation and for their financial support, in particular Erin Valant for her assistance with the evaluation. We also want to acknowledge the financial support of Mitacs. We are also thankful for the help of data analysts within the Durham Region Paramedic Services.

## EVALUATION TEAM

The co-leads for the evaluation are Tyler Frederick from Ontario Tech University and Lorraine Closs from Durham College. The expert advisors on the evaluation are Doreen Hume-McKenna from Lakeridge Health and Tom Regehr from CAST Canada. The Research Assistants on the project are Shannon Wilson from Ontario Tech University and Krista Bentley from Durham College.

Collectively the research team has extensive experience in housing and evaluation research, trauma informed practice with people with lived experience of homelessness, community engagement, co-design, mental health supports, social work, and frontline service delivery.

## 03

## OVERVIEW OF THE 'MICRO HOMES' PILOT PROJECT

The micro-homes pilot project was officially **launched at the beginning of 2022**. The project was intended to address the need for more transitional housing in the Region of Durham and is aligned with the At Home in Durham 10-year housing plan (2014 to 2024). The development consists of 10 units of modular style housing that are manufactured offsite and then delivered and connected to utilities and services. The units are currently located on Regionally owned land in central Oshawa: fronting Olive Avenue to the south, Drew Street to the east, and Banting Avenue to the north.

The 10 units are arranged in two, 5-unit pods with individual entrances for residents and no common areas. Each unit is approximately 300 square feet in size with a single bed, cooktop, washer/dryer, bathroom, and a small kitchen table with two chairs. Beginning in the Fall of 2022, a unit of the micro-homes was converted into office space for the case managers to use in order to enhance an onsite staff presence. On the property there are bike rings and picnic benches, and a community garden was added in 2023. For security, the property uses unmonitored cameras and additional lighting was added to the property in the Fall of 2022.



# 04

The first set of residents were selected from the Regional by-name-list for people experiencing homelessness. In the Fall of 2022, however, the process was changed to draw residents from other transitional housing programs who had demonstrated housing readiness. Each resident is supported with a case manager from Cornerstone Community Association who offers support and can provide referrals to community services (at launch, case management was also provided by Regional case managers).

To support resident cohesion, there are quarterly social events and weekly resident meetings. There is also an onsite food pantry. Further, since launch, partnerships have been established with other community organizations including the Backdoor Mission, Redemption House, and Grace Winns peer support. Partnerships are currently being explored with Canadian Mental Health Association Durham and Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work. In June of 2023, residents were provided with laptops.



# 05

## EVALUATION PLAN

The evaluation is structured as a ‘**process**’ evaluation. Process evaluations are designed to understand how a program or initiative operates and to identify areas of improvement. Within this approach, the goal of this evaluation was to understand the operation and experience of the **micro-homes pilot project** from the perspective of three main stakeholder groups: residents of the units, residents of the surrounding community, and the frontline staff involved with the project. The evaluation period is approximately March 2022 to March 2023.

Qualitative interviews were conducted with 9 **unit residents** within a month of moving-in to the units. Follow-up interviews were conducted with 4 residents approximately 6 months after move-in.

To gather the perspective of the **neighbourhood residents**, a survey was distributed to local neighbourhood residents through email and through postcards delivered to houses in the local area. Survey responses were gathered from June 2022 to October 2022 and 11 people participated. Notes were also collected from a resident town hall event hosted by the Region of Durham in response to community complaints. The small sample size for the survey means the findings cannot be considered representative of all neighbourhood community members, but the views in the survey match the concerns raised at the townhall which supports the validity of the survey findings.

Qualitative interviews were conducted with all 4 **case managers**. Follow-up interviews were conducted with three of the four case managers near the end of the evaluation period.

## EVALUATION SUMMARY

Based on our evaluation of the **pilot** housing project, the micro-homes and associated case management supports were, overall, described as having a **positive impact on the residents living there** from the perspective of the residents themselves and the case management staff; however, opportunities for improvement were also identified.

Given the drawbacks of the pod-style modular housing documented by the evaluation, we recommend that this style of modular housing -- -- defined by 10 independent units arranged in five-unit pods with no 24/7 supports or common areas -- may not be the best option for transitional housing and/or Housing First in the Region of Durham.

We found that this model of housing sits within an awkward middle ground between supportive housing and independent living. As designed, the model works best for people with housing readiness as it lacks the onsite, 24/7 supports required to make it most effective as transitional housing, but for individuals with housing readiness direct access to permanent housing is obviously preferred.

Given the low availability of permanent housing in the region, this model may function as a stop-gap, but other options like rent supplements or head leasing for market housing might be preferred because they offer more choice and flexibility. However, cost-benefit comparisons with other models were not within the scope of this evaluation and require further consideration.

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We recommend future transitional and supported housing projects be designed as scattered-site housing with assertive supports; and/or more traditional small-scale congregate living that has 24/7 supports, onsite programming, common areas, and blends more effectively into the existing streetscape. We also recommend a trauma informed lens be used in the design and implementation. For those with housing readiness, we recommend supported access to gaining and maintaining permanent housing.

We base the above recommendation on the following **limitations** of the pod-style modular housing as implemented:

- **Not exactly a 'home'**: The small size of the units, the clustered design, and the lack of an oven limits their ability to function as an actual home. This makes the label of "micro-home" a misnomer. For example, residents described how the size made it difficult to host family and friends -- a feature which is important for integration and recovery.
- **Safety and guest management issues**: The congregated nature of the micro-home units requires 24/7 monitoring and access restrictions to ensure resident safety when being used as transitional housing, which is difficult to achieve with the pod-style modular design. This was identified as a concern by the micro-homes residents, the case management staff, and the neighbourhood residents.

# 08

- **Lack of common areas:** The pod-style of modular housing lacks common areas for socializing, which limits opportunities for establishing group cohesion and makes it difficult to offer onsite programming, both of which are important for transitional, congregated style housing. Case managers and residents recommended more assertive, onsite supports to facilitate successful transitions and common spaces would facilitate that.
- **Neighbourhood integration:** The distinct modular design and placement of the units makes the development highly visible within the neighbourhood and creates a ‘fishbowl’ effect for residents that can limit community integration and exacerbate feelings of stigma.
- **Exterior design:** The modular design was also a source of concern among neighbours because the units do not ‘blend’ well into the neighbourhood thus raising concerns about lowered property values given the stigma surrounding such developments.



## FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

Although we think there are better models for offering transitional and supported housing for the reasons above, we recommend that **future iterations of the micro-homes** continue with the redesigned approach established by the Region in the Fall of 2022 of using the units as transitional housing (1-3 years) for individuals with demonstrated housing readiness.

We recommend that future iterations of the micro-homes enhance the current direction of the model by:

- a) using a co-production approach to engage neighbourhood residents and prospective residents to help establish buy-in and to fine-tune design and implementation when relocating the housing.
- b) more 24/7 supports and on-site monitoring to help ensure resident safety (even for clients with more housing readiness).
- c) providing more onsite supports and programming, including peer and trauma informed supports, better access to meaningful daily activities, and more mental health and addictions support.
- d) integrating the development more effectively into the existing streetscape and providing more semi-private areas for residents to socialize.
- e) having a clearly identified community liaison/ambassador that can share information and address emergent concerns

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## FEEDBACK FROM MICRO-HOME RESIDENTS

This section identifies prominent themes in the feedback from the residents of the 'micro-homes'. This information comes from qualitative interviews with each of the residents (n=9) within in the first month of moving in, and follow-up interviews with four residents after approximately 6 months in the units.

### Positive Feedback

- Residents were grateful for housing and felt like it was having a positive impact despite also identifying opportunities for how to improve the model. Residents often highlighted the 'little things' such as the ability to cook, store their belongings, and have a safe space to sleep. Others made specific note of the positive impact of just being 'seen' and treated like a real person.
- Residents had positive reviews of the units, with clients mentioning the newness of the units, the quality of the appliances, and the availability of natural light.
- Residents described how the housing facilitated productive daily routines involving activities they enjoyed like reading, walking downtown, riding their bike, socializing, visiting service agencies, and tidying.
- Residents made note of how their physical and mental health had improved since being in the micro-homes because of dryer conditions, better sleeping and eating, and healthier routines (including methadone maintenance).
- Later interviews acknowledge an improvement in the environment in response to the eviction of some of the more disruptive residents, and policies changes such as requiring new residents to demonstrate more housing readiness and a stronger presence of staff onsite during the day.
- Residents described good relationships with the case managers. They described the positive impact of receiving non-judgmental emotional support, as well as specific ways in which the support was helping them make improvements in their lives.

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*[...] I feel more human, I guess [...] more of a sense of self.*

**-resident**

*I love poached eggs and I didn't have one for so long and being able to make one was so f\*cking good*

**-resident**

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## Opportunities for Improvement

### *Safety and Wellbeing*

- Safety was a prominent theme with residents describing issues with theft, threats, noise, and unwanted guests. Some improvements were noted after some evictions and policy changes after the first few months. Sadly, there was also a murder on site in the winter of 2023.
- Some residents described past conflicts with other residents and their guests which was a significant source of anxiety.
- Some residents reported that the living environment exacerbated their substance abuse or made it difficult to maintain their sobriety because there were active substance users living in or visiting the micro-homes and so it meant that drugs were easily accessible.
- The transition into the housing was difficult for some residents given their past housing history.

### *Stigma*

- Residents made note that they were aware of the negative view of the micro-homes project amongst the neighbours and that made them feel stigmatized. It was acknowledged that the local neighbours had legitimate concerns about safety and noise issues in and around the homes, but they also felt like some of the reactions were unfounded and rooted in prejudice.

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## Opportunities for Improvement Cont.

### *Supports*

- Some residents described a difficult transition into the housing that caused significant stress and anxiety on them. The feedback received underscores the need for a trauma informed approach to housing and housing transitions.
- Some residents made note that the support model could have benefited from more structure, more onsite support, more activities, and a more goal-oriented approach. Similar thoughts were echoed by a few of the case managers citing a lack of structure, programming, and onsite supports as an area for improvement.
- Not all clients were satisfied with the support they were receiving, including concerns about a lack of contact with their case manager and a lack of understanding about trauma.
- Some respondents reported that they could adequately voice their concerns, whereas others noted it was difficult either because the complaint might generate potential conflict with other residents or because of a perceived indifference amongst program decision makers (upper management, not case managers).

### *Design and Layout*

- Criticisms of the units centered on the congregated style (clients wanting more separation from others), the small size of the units, the lack of an oven, and the lack of emergency exits.

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*“It’s really hard to stay clean. People are offering you dope all the time or, you know, it’s so easy to get”*

*-resident*

*“There should be some stipulations as to, well, so we gave you this home. How are you moving forward?”*

*-resident*

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## FEEDBACK FROM CASE MANAGERS

This section identifies prominent themes in the feedback from the case management staff that were supporting the clients (n=4). This information comes from qualitative interviews with each of the case managers, including follow-up interviews with most of the case managers.

### Services and Supports

- Case managers described that having case management support attached to each of the residents was valuable and that case managers did a good job supporting clients and addressing emerging conflicts and issues. Minor challenges were noted related to differences in the services and support offered by the different case managers, but it was also noted that the initial mix of providers from the Region and from Cornerstone was beneficial because it gave residents access to different agencies and promoted a collaborative environment.
- The move to a stronger onsite presence was viewed as a positive policy change. Some case managers felt that 24/7 supports would be beneficial given the need-level of the clients and the pressures that clients can face to help house and support friends who are still street involved.
- Case managers recommend that more skills programming, with incentives and policies to encourage engagement, would be beneficial given that many of the clients were new to structured housing arrangements and could use help establishing housing skills and healthy routines.
- Case managers recommended that the support model could benefit from more integrated supports for addressing mental health and substance abuse concerns.

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## Layout, Design, and Location

- The case management staff had positive feelings about the overall layout and design of the units, with the acknowledgement that they are small and best suited to temporary stays. The lack of a backdoor was mentioned as a potential safety concern because the front door could be easily blocked by an unwanted guest.
- The downtown location and proximity to services was described as a positive feature of the development.

## Impacts of the Pilot Design

- It was noted that the pilot structure created challenges for the staff and the residents because processes and policies were being changed and revised. For the residents, these changes were frustrating because it was different from their original expectations. For the staff, it was challenging because they must deal with pushback from clients when implementing rule changes and because they are on the front lines of figuring out what works and what does not.



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## FEEDBACK FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD RESIDENTS

The information from neighbourhood residents is drawn from a survey distributed to local neighbourhood residents through email and through postcards delivered to houses in the local area. Notes were also collected from a resident town hall event hosted by the Region of Durham in response to community complaints. The response rate for the survey was limited to only 11 respondents and so the findings cannot be easily generalized, but the views expressed in the survey match closely with the concerns raised in the community townhall which supports the validity of the survey findings. Overall, resident concerns seemed primarily driven by concerns related to the lack of prior consultation and engagement; perceived difficulties getting clear information and raising complaints when the project was first implemented; safety concerns related to the lack of 24/7 onsite supports; broader concerns related to the safety of downtown Oshawa post-Covid; and longstanding worries about the concentration of social services in downtown Oshawa.

### Attitudes towards Homelessness

- The survey and community town hall did elicit some stigmatizing and stereotyped ideas about people experiencing homelessness, but these were matched by perspectives that recognized the need to support people with a history of homelessness.
- From the survey, 8/11 respondents said that supportive housing was strongly/somewhat needed in the Region. Further, 6/11 responded that they personally knew someone experiencing homelessness or who had experienced homelessness in the past.
- However, 6/11 said that, if they had a rental unit, they would be unlikely to rent it to someone with a history of homelessness.

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## Information **Sharing and Community Engagement**

- A major theme of the resident townhall event was that the neighbourhood residents were not actively engaged or consulted prior to the construction of the micro-homes project.
- The position of the Regional representative at the townhall was that human rights law prevented them from consulting the neighbourhood residents about the location of the micro-homes. In our view, this justification overlooks that residents can be engaged in ways that does not lead to discriminatory housing practices.
- Despite efforts by the Region to notify residents with flyers, only 1/11 survey respondents first heard about the micro-homes through an official announcement or notification, with the majority first hearing about it through friends and neighbours.
- Another theme from the townhall was a feeling that it was difficult to find clear and detailed information about the micro-homes project. Residents also noted that there was no clear contact person for raising safety concerns directly to the Region.

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## Safety Concerns and Negative Impacts

- Safety concerns were a major theme at the neighbourhood townhall. Safety concerns included: visible drug use, sex work, property theft, property damage noise complaints, increased traffic, and public indecency. These safety concerns were echoed in the survey.
- At the townhall, the police response was deemed ineffective by residents because the police would either not come out to take a report or would come out and say that nothing could be done. In response to this lack of response, neighbours reported that they stopped calling the police altogether.
- 9/11 people on the survey described large, negative impacts in the neighbourhood since the micro-homes were implemented. It should be noted that the survey was distributed during the summer and early fall of 2022 when the safety issues at the micro-home were particularly intense.
- By the time of the townhall a few months later, neighbourhood residents acknowledged that things had improved, but that problems remained.
- Safety concerns raised at the townhall appeared to be enhanced by broader worries about the safety of downtown Oshawa, in general, post-Covid.

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## LOOKING FORWARD

*The goal of this section is to outline a broader and more detailed set of recommendations, based on the findings of the evaluation, that can be considered for future iterations of the 'micro-homes' and for other types of supported housing projects in Durham Region.*

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## LOOKING FORWARD: SYSTEM LEVEL INTEGRATION

1. The design and implementation of housing projects benefits from a robust community engagement and co-design process that features meaningful, accessible, and ongoing engagement with community members and groups; including, individuals with lived experience of housing instability (see Appendix for an example strategy)
2. Integrating transitional housing projects in a well-established system-level map that outlines client pathways, timelines, expectations, and next steps can help to support individuals and reduce anxiety. Ideally housing pathways will lead to appropriate permanent housing. However, it needs to be noted that widespread affordability issues in the Region of Durham threaten the feasibility of timely pathways to quality, affordable housing, which raises fundamental questions about what that means for 'transitional' housing in the Region.
3. Housing program implementation will benefit from developing a detailed, documented, and evolving set of standard operating procedures (SOPs) prior to the launch of the model that addresses such topics as rule infractions, roles and responsibilities within the service model, steps for addressing public concerns/complaints, and steps for addressing safety concerns. An added benefit is that these documents can be made available to the relevant community members to enhance transparency and information sharing.
4. Making the pay and required experience for staff commensurate with the level of responsibility can ensure that there is adequate experience and decision-making authority available within higher needs setting (i.e. higher needs and/or low barrier housing will benefit when staffed with the most experienced staff members).

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## LOOKING FORWARD: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CO- DESIGN

5. Engaging prospective residents early from a trauma informed lens (including in the design of the housing) and giving them adequate time to transition can be a good way to address anxiety and support wellness. This can include tours, meet and greet opportunities with current residents, welcome packages, advanced opportunities to personalize the space, and staged transitions.
6. Engaging neighbourhood residents early in the design process and in an ongoing and meaningful manner can help ensure community buy-in. This includes advanced notification of the development with opportunities to provide input and ask questions. Responding effectively to early concerns and suggestions can be a useful strategy for building goodwill.
7. Developing a dedicated community liaison/point of contact position to build relationships, share information, and to address emergent concerns is a useful strategy for growing community support.

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## LOOKING FORWARD: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

8. Designing housing to maximize its integration into the existing neighbourhood streetscape and providing adequate places for the residents of the housing project to congregate without disturbing other neighbourhood residents is useful for reducing feelings of stigma amongst project residents and to reduce disruption in the surrounding neighbourhood (i.e. adequate semi-private indoor and outdoor social space).

9. 24/7 staff presence in the buildings or active monitoring and access controls, particularly in the first year of the project can be a valuable strategy for supporting residents while model details are being refined.

10. Including safety plans as part of the intake process can be a valuable strategy for identifying potential conflicts and reducing the risk for victimization and exploitation.

11. Designing and implementing the housing units to create opportunities to include family members and to build natural supports can foster integration and recovery. Strategies can include adequate space to allow for hosting, open houses for family members, and family-inclusive programming.

12. Having an ongoing evaluation and quality improvement strategy can help refine the model and maximize housing satisfaction. An example of a widely used tool for those receiving supports, including supportive housing, in Ontario is the Ontario Perception of Care (OPOC) tool (<http://improvingsystems.ca/projects/ontario-perception-of-care>)

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## LOOKING FORWARD: SERVICE MODEL

13. Understanding the needs of residents and making sure supports are trauma informed, wraparound, assertive, and fully integrated into the housing can help support residents in their stabilization and recovery (e.g. ACT teams; a weekly schedule of onsite supports; incentives for engagement). Reliance on a referral approach and/or an off-site hub model can create barriers to services and skills building opportunities, particularly for those recently transitioning from entrenched homelessness.

14. Clearly articulating roles and responsibilities related to the support model can ensure adequate supports are in place and help to identify gaps.

15. Clearly identifying the support model can be valuable for staff and residents. This includes a clear policy regarding substance use on-site that can be communicated with prospective residents so they can make an informed choice about their own sobriety needs.

16. Providing opportunities to engage in meaningful activities and build community can be a valuable strategy for facilitating integration and addressing issues with isolation. This can include opportunities to contribute to the housing environment itself such as repairs, art, and social events.

17. Programming that address the cohesion and group dynamics of residents can help support residents and reduce conflict. Strategies can include community building activities, pre-move in introductions, weekly meetings, opportunities for mutual support, peer workers, programming to build communication skills, access to mediation, and clear policies related to maintaining safe spaces (preferably designed with the residents themselves).



# 25

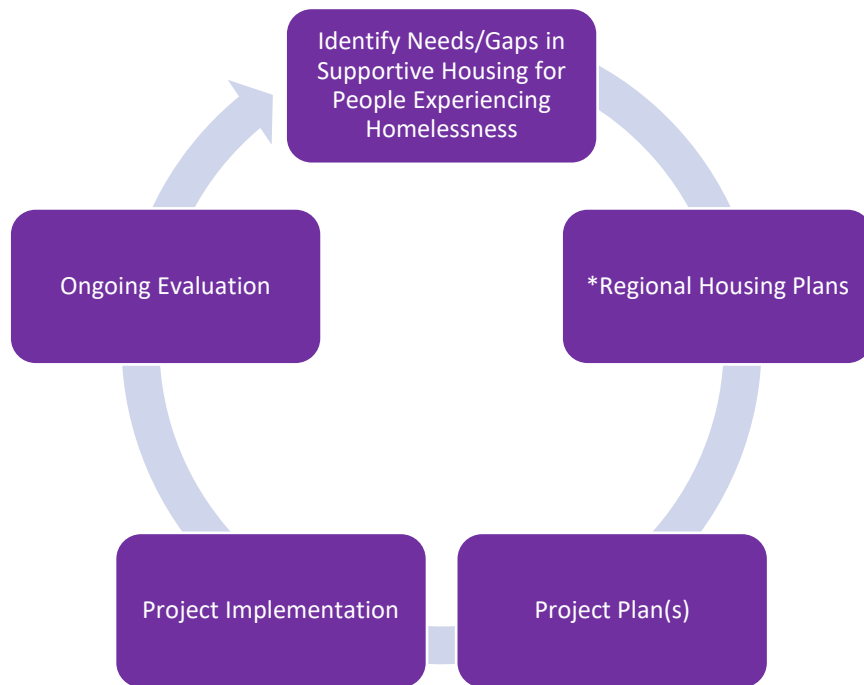
## QUESTIONS OR FEEDBACK

*Thank you. We appreciate you taking the time to read this report. If you have any questions or want to provide feedback, please contact the projects leads at [tyler.frederick@ontariotechu.ca](mailto:tyler.frederick@ontariotechu.ca) or [lorraine.closs@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:lorraine.closs@durhamcollege.ca)*

## Appendix: Engagement Framework Related to Supportive Housing for People Experiencing Homeless

**Overview:** This framework outlines a phased process for conducting housing related community engagement for projects that address homelessness in the Region of Durham. This framework draws on best practices in community engagement and was co-designed with a range of community stakeholders within Durham Region. This framework can be adapted to various stages in the planning and design lifecycle, including development of a multi-year housing plan, as well as design and development of individual capital projects.

### Engagement Lifecycle:



**\*An important note:** A key outcome in the development of the housing plan is a concrete list of priority projects, including project descriptions, proposed location, and proposed program model. A list of priority projects in the Region enhances transparency and facilitates advanced planning.

### Acknowledgement

This framework was designed through a series of 5 co-design workshops with stakeholders in Durham Region, including individuals with lived experience of homelessness. We would like to acknowledge the Region of Durham and Mitacs for their generous financial support. The lead project team includes: Tyler Frederick—Ontario Tech University, Lorraine Closs—Durham College, Doreen Hume-McKenna—Regional Housing Coordinator at Lakeridge Health, Shannon Wilson—Ontario Tech University, and Tom Regehr—CAST Canada. We would also like to thank all of the workshop participants, with special thanks to Kazzrie Cormick, Daniel Cullen, Amanda Hoover, Lisa McIntosh, Brendalee Pekelny, Jocelyn Siciliano, Alyssa Skan, Rhonda Sukumaran, Erin Valant, and Marla Walters.

The framework is organized around 5 main principles of engagement. These principles are designed to ameliorate resistance to new supportive housing projects for people experiencing homelessness and reduce the incidence of NIMBYISM (*a phenomenon where individuals and communities oppose supportive housing projects because they believe it will negatively impact their own surroundings*)

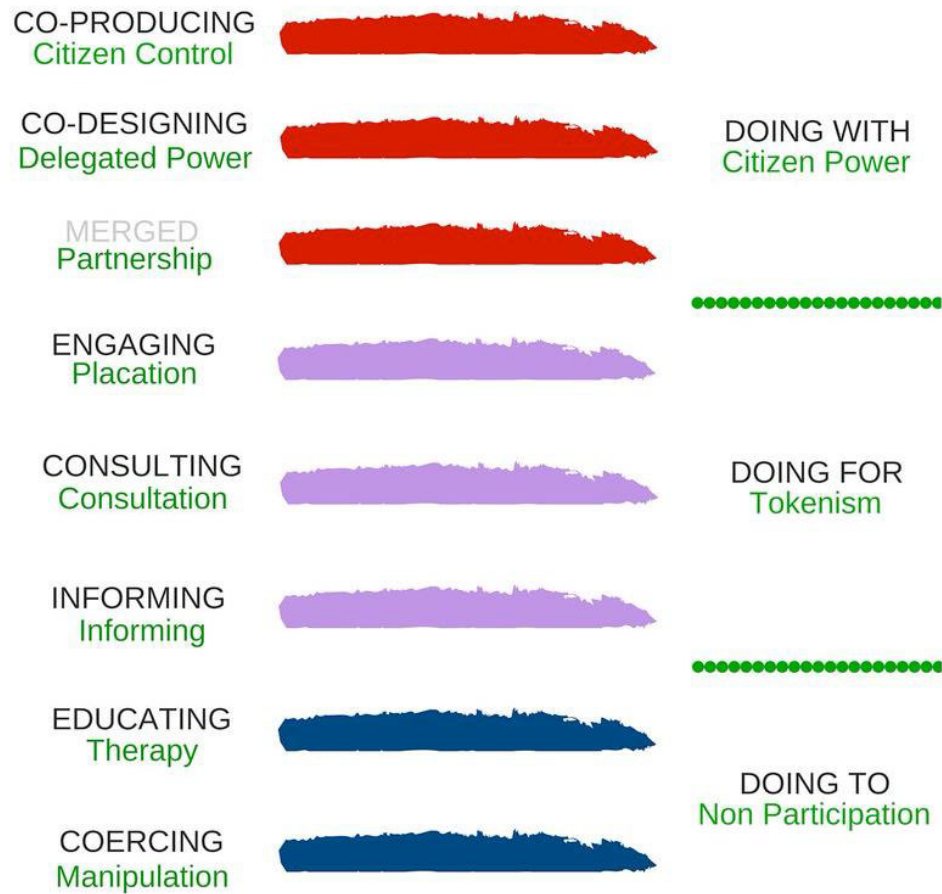
Early Engagement	Stakeholders, including people with lived experience of homelessness, are engaged as early as possible in the planning process.
Deep Engagement	Engagement is ongoing and prioritizes co-design and co-production (rather than just consultation). See Appendix A
Multi-modal Engagement	Provide different opportunities and methods for stakeholders to provide input. This is reflected in the overall process, but also in the design of the community workshops and engagement activities.
Co-production (see Appendix A)	Embrace the principles of co-production and the idea that all stakeholders should have meaningful opportunities to shape the outputs of the process. Co-production also means taking active steps to make sure those with lived experience of homelessness are meaningfully involved in every step of the process.
Transparency	Clear and ongoing communication about the steps of the engagement, who is being included, and the emerging insights from the engagement activities.

- **Phase 1: Establishing the foundation**
- Identify champions for the plan/project. One lead should be a key decision maker related to the plan/project, the other should be a community member with a reputation as a bridge builder.
- Assemble a steering committee: The 8-10-member committee will provide oversight and guidance and should include at least two individuals with lived or living experience of homelessness.. Other members should include regional and/or municipal staff, housing advocates, agency leads, frontline staff, and local experts (academic or non-academic). Any unsalaried members should be remunerated for their participation. Note: The process may benefit from separate municipal steering committees to facilitate planning and the future implementation of projects. In that structure, representatives from the 8 municipal committees will form the Regional steering committee.
- Establish a master list of Organizations/Groups in the Region who are housing stakeholders/service providers.
  - The steering committee assembles a preliminary list of 10-20 stakeholder groups/organizations. In Durham Region this should include the GAP committee which is a committee comprised of individuals who have experienced homelessness.
  - Using a Delphi-inspired method, groups/organizations on the list are contacted and asked to recommend 5-10 additional entries to the list. A new list is compiled and sent to all the members who are asked to identify missing groups/organizations and to recommend up to 5 additional groups/organizations to include. The list is sent around one more time as a final check.
- Create an email list of organizations/groups using the master/list. Developments and updates will be sent to the entire email list as the engagement process unfolds.

- Create an introduction letter that explains the process and introduces the co-leads and steering committee.
- Create a web-portal and social media channels for information sharing and advertise the address through the mailing list. Ask the groups/organizations on the list to notify their members. Post the master list and the introduction letter to the web-portal and social media channels.
- Gather available statistics and data about housing in the region (PIT counts, list of existing housing programs and services, statistics from the by-name-list; vacancy rates, average rent prices, key population-level well-being indicators). Post these informational resources to the web-portal.
- **Phase 2: Informing stakeholders and inviting them into the process**
  - The goal of this phase is to share key data points related to housing and homelessness in the Region and to inform stakeholders about the engagement process/plan.
  - Emails to organizations/groups on the master list.
  - Press releases and social media to inform the public.
  - Additional videos/informational resources posted on web-portal to inform the public and frame the issue.
- **Phase 3: Initial engagement and information gathering**
  - The goal of this phase is to gather initial input and ideas from the stakeholder groups about what is needed.
  - A short survey is sent to the organizations/groups on the master list to gather key information. For development of a supportive housing plan for people experiencing homelessness, stakeholders can be asked to rank the top 5 gaps/needs related to supported housing types in the Region. For development of a specific project, stakeholders could be asked to identify top 5 key requirements/priorities for the project.
  - Post summary and findings on the web-portal.
- **Phase 4: Discussion and additional information gathering (needs identification)**
  - The goal of this phase is to use multi-modal engagement activities to share survey findings and clarify/explore/validate/expand the gaps/needs/priorities identified in the survey.
  - Multi-modal engagement activities: In-person workshops, virtual workshops, UDL module/video and embedded survey, coffee chats in community spaces, table at community centres and community events.
  - In-person and virtual workshops should have a multi-modal workshop design by providing opportunities to give feedback through writing, speaking, and voting.
  - Advertisements for the workshops will be sent through the mailing list developed in Phase 1, posted on the web-portal, and shared through social media channels.
  - Encourage agencies to bring clients and people with lived experience.
  - Develop a homelessness project housing plan by organizing groups thematically but also by allowing groups/organizations to self-select and to attend multiple workshops. These groups could be:
    - Mental health and addictions
    - VAW
    - Youth
    - Indigenous
    - Seniors
    - Lived Experience of Homelessness
  - For development of a specific homelessness project: Offer separate workshops for the different stakeholder groups

- Prospective residents of the housing
  - Local/neighbourhood residents
  - Service providers
  - Local businesses (when relevant)
- The steering committee takes the gathered information and assembles into a draft proposal. In the case of a homelessness housing plan, this will be a preliminary list of priority projects. For the development of a specific project, this will be a preliminary project description and list of design priorities.
- **Phase 5: Deeper discussion and refinement**
  - The goal of this stage is to seek feedback and refine the draft projects list and/or project descriptions.
    - Outline constraints, parameters, and considerations from the perspective of the various stakeholder groups.
    - Explore/discuss specific design elements such as the eligibility criteria, application process, size, location, service model of the project(s).
  - In advance of the engagement activities, the draft list from phase 4 should be distributed via web portal, email, and social media.
  - Multi-modal engagement activities: In-person workshops, virtual workshops, UDL module/video and embedded survey, coffee chats in community spaces, table at community centres and community events.
  - Multi-modal workshop design: Opportunities to write, to speak, to vote.
  - Identify sources of critique/concern and engage in further consultation as required.
  - After this round of engagement, the steering committee will draft a plain language summary/report with a refined list of projects, or an expanded project description/plan. Draft report should be concise and focused, with supplementary information gathered in separate, supporting documents.
- **Phase 6: Review and share**
  - Send out an engagement satisfaction survey via mailing list and consider additional steps to address any concerns or feedback.
  - Circulate draft report via web portal and email list.
  - Seek public feedback/input regarding the draft report at community events and at community centres.
- **Phase 7: Ongoing evaluation**
  - Evaluate the implementation of the homelessness housing project/plan against timelines and benchmarks set by the regional and/or project leaders.

# The Thermometer of Participation



1969 - The Ladder of Citizen Participation - Arnstein  
> 1998 - Updated Ladder of Participation - New Economics Foundation